

തൃപുരസുന്ദരീ അഷ്ടകം

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Octad to tripurasundari

by shrImad sha.nkarAchArya

Introduction

The transliteration of Sanskrit terms is according to

ITRANS scheme, which is close to the pronunciation.

The translation and commentary on this text can be found in

<http://www.geocities.com/RodeoDrive/1415/tripura8-itx>

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Before we begin, let us offer ourselves at the feet of

the Divine Mother, mahAtripurasundari, who as Ishvara rules the

world but is none other than the indwelling spirit (Atman) within

us and which pervades us all that exists.

This introduction deals with the background on the name of

tripurasundari . It is one of the best epithets to describe the Devi

meaning that she is the belle of all the three worlds . The word tripura

can be interpreted variously . The kAlika purANa says that by the will of

pradhAna, the body of Lord Shiva became triple : the upper part became

Brahma, the middle part became ViShNu and the lower part became Rudra . As

these three pura-s (bodies) are in Lord Shiva, he is called Tripura (three

bodied) and his wife is known as tripurA . In the kAmakalA vilAsa

(13,14), the honored sage, abhiyukta, mentions that Devi created all the

three forms and she is before all (purobhava), because she is in the form

of all the three (trayImayi) and exists even after the dissolution of the

three worlds and recreates them again . In the brahmANDa-purANa, it is mentioned that the Goddess tripurasundarI rules over the entire universe and She is the supreme empress, and Brahma, ViShNu and Shiva are mere functionaries in her empire . The LalitA SahasranAma portrays Her as being attended by LakShmi and Saraswati on either side.

Shankaracharya, in his saundrayalahri, mentions that Brahma, ViShNu and Shiva started their cosmic processes when the Supreme Shakti knitted Her brow for a split second.

The Devi mantra consists of three syllables, and her fifteen lettered mantra panchadashAkShari is composed of three kUTa-s (peaks).

She resides in three nADi-s (nerve channels), namely suShumNA, pingalA, and iDA . She is the ruler of the three Shaktis - ichchA (will), kriyA (action), and j-nAna (knowledge). She pervades all the three worlds - heaven, earth and the nether world . She is the controller of all the three bodies - sthUla (gross), sUkShma (subtle), and kArANA (causal). She is the self which is present through the three states of existence - jAgrat (waking), svapna (dream), and suShupti (deep sleep). Though she is above all guNa-s, She pervades the three modes of energy- sattva (purity), rajas (mobility) and tamas (inertia).

Love and joy are the inherent qualities of beauty . SundarI means belle and beauty . Shankaracharya, while explaining Chandogya upaniShad 7, 31:1, mentions that all longing and desire is a source of pain, and in what is finite there is no bliss . He mentions that the Infinite alone can produce bliss . When bliss takes on a form, it is sundarI: sarvA.nga sundarI (lalitA trishati, verse 130) and Shankara comments on this name of the

Devi as the one who possesses all the marks of beauty and has all the

qualities of perfection and is thus the source of Bliss.

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May the Divine Mother guide us in our every action and thought, and may She confer upon us the greatest gift of all, mokSha (liberation) by removing the veil of maya which She weaves.

At Her feet, AUM tat sat

ഒന്നെകൂമന

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കദമ്ബവനമധ്യാഗാമം കനകമൺഡലോപസ്ഥിതാമ്
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കുചാഞ്ചിതവിപഞ്ചികാം കുടിലകുന്തലാലംകൃതാം
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സകുങ്ക്വമവിലേപനാമലകചുംബികസ്തുരികാം
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പുരംദരപുരംധപ്രികാം ചികുരബന്ധസൈരംധപ്രികാം
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ഭജാമി ഭുവനാംബികാം സുരവധുടികാചേടികാമ് ॥ ൮ ॥

॥ ഇതി ശ്രീമദ് ശങ്കരാചാര്യവിരചിതം

തപ്രിപുരസുന്ദരീഅഷ്ടകം സമാപ്തം ॥

Encoded and proofread Madras Giridhar giridhar at chemeng.lsc.ernet.in

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