

त्रिपुरसुन्दरी अष्टकं

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त्रिपुरसुन्दरी अष्टकम्

Octad to tripurasundarl

by shrlmad 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, mahAtripurasundarl, 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

tripurasundarl . 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 saundrayalahiri, 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), sUkShhma (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 sundarl: sarvA.nga sundarl (IalitiA 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

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କଦମ୍ବନଚାରିଣୀଂ ମୁନିକଦମ୍ବକାଦମ୍ବିନୀଂ
ନିତମ୍ବଜିତ ଭୂଧରାଂ ସୁରନିତମ୍ବିନୀସେବିତାମ୍ ।
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କଦମ୍ବନବାସିନୀଂ କନକବଲ୍ଲକୀଧାରିଣୀଂ
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କଦମ୍ବନଶାଲୟା କୁଚଭରୋଲ୍ଲସନ୍ନାଲୟା
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କନ୍ୟାଽପି ଘନନୀଲୟା କବଚିତା ବନ୍ଦଂ ଲୀଲୟା ॥ ୩ ॥

କଦମ୍ବନମଧ୍ୟଗାଂ କନକମଣ୍ଡଲୋପସ୍ଥିତାଂ
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କୁଚାଞ୍ଚିତବିପଞ୍ଚିକାଂ କୁଚିଲକୁନ୍ତଲୀଲଂକୃତାଂ
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ସକୁଞ୍ଜୁମବିଲେପନାମଲକରୁଂବିକସ୍ତୁରିକାଂ
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॥ ଇତି ଶ୍ରୀମଦ୍ ଶଂକରାଚାର୍ଯ୍ୟବିରଚିତଂ

ତ୍ରିପୁରସୁନ୍ଦରୀଅଷ୍ଟକଂ ସମାପ୍ତଂ ॥

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