

TRADITIONAL WISDOM

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the goal is reached!

Tripura Upanishad

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त्रिपुरोपनिषत्

तिस्रः पुरस्त्रिपथा विश्वचर्षणी अत्राकथा अक्षराः सन्निविष्टाः ।
अधिष्ठायैना अजरा पुराणी महत्तरा महिमा देवतानाम् ॥ १ ॥

*Tisrah purastripatha vishvacharshani atrakatha aksharah sannivishtah.
Adhishhtayaina ajara purani mahattara mahima devatanam.*

(1)

She rules over three cities [or abodes of moksha, which are attained by the Divine Mother's grace by], three paths [or this Sri Chakra, for her] children of the universe. [Hence, she is called Tripura. She has as her forms, the letters starting with] *a, ka*, [and] *tha* [representing twelve vowels and thirty-two consonants—a total of forty-eight letters], [in which she is] fully present. She is present in these letters [as three points, *bindus*, in three groups of letters and that is why she is called Tripura]. She is ageless, birthless, the greatest [among gods and goddesses], [and] she is the glory of all gods [and worshipping her will please all the gods and goddesses].

(1)

नवयोनिर्नवचक्राणि दीधिरे नवैव योगा नव योगिनीश्च ।
नवानां चक्रे अधिनाथाः स्योना नव मुद्रा नव भद्रा महीनाम् ॥ २ ॥

*Navayonir-nava-chakrani didhire navaiva yoga nava yoginishcha.
Navanam chakre adhinathah syona nava mudra nava bhadra mahinam.*

(2)



[From each of the three points, *bindus*, come three centres, and], nine *yonis* created nine centres, [and three centres together form a triangle and there are totally nine lines in these three triangles], nine yogas [or chakras], nine yoginis, the nine rulers of the nine centres [having nine different planes, one on top of the other, forming the *meru* of Sri Chakra], [and Chakreshvari] the cause of happiness [and misery], nine mudras [the *sankshobhini* mudra, the *vidravani* mudra, the *akarshini* mudra, the *vashankari* mudra, the *sarvonmadini* mudra, the *mahankusha* mudra, the *khechhari* mudra, the *bija* mudra, and the *yoni* mudra], nine *bhadras* [merit, sin, Atman, the indwelling soul, the Paramatma, the all-knowing Self, the knower, the object of knowledge, and knowledge], [and] for each base of the triangles [on the Sri Chakra]. (2)

एका सा आसीत्प्रथमा सा नवासीदासोनविंशदासोनत्रिंशत् ।
चत्वारिंशदथ तिस्रः समिधा उशतीरिव मातरो मा विशन्तु ॥ ३ ॥

Eka sa asitprathama sa navasidasonavimshadasonatrimshat.
Chatvarimshadatha tisrah samidha ushatiriva mataro ma vishantu.

(3)

She was alone [in the beginning], the primal [cause of the universe], [she was the indwelling power of and] she became nine [*yonis*], she became nineteen [nine *yonis* and ten internal *yonis*], she became twenty-nine [nine *yonis*, ten internal *yonis*, and ten external *yonis*], then [was born] forty-three [nine *yonis*, ten internal *yonis*, ten external *yonis*, five organs of action, five organs of knowledge, mind, intellect, ego, and *chitta*]. [She] is glowing intensely, as if desirous. Let the Mothers, [identified with the Sri Chakra] enter me [or my body through mantras and rituals because my body is a form of the Sri Chakra]. (3)

ऊर्ध्वज्वलज्ज्वलनज्योतिरग्रे तमो वै तिरश्चीनमजरं तद्रजोऽभूत् ।
आनन्दनं मोदनं ज्योतिरिन्दोरेता उ वै मण्डला मण्डयन्ति ॥ ४ ॥

Urdhva-jvalaj-jvalana-jyotiragre tamo vai tirashchinamajaram tadrajo'bhut.
Anandanam modanam jyotirindoreta u vai mandala mandayanti. (4)

[There is] a flame rising up [in the chakra to the north of *sthati*-chakra] the circle of light [called] *jvalana*, indeed having the cloud of *tamas* on the top. [Then], the horizontal ageless circle of light, was born out of *rajas*. [Then] the circle of radiating light, [producing] sense enjoyment [was born out of] *sattva*. Thus, [these three] circles beautify [the Mothers associated with them]. (4)

तिस्रश्च रेखाः सदनानि भूमेस्त्रिविष्टपास्त्रिगुणास्त्रिप्रकाशाः ।
एतत्पुरं पूरकं पूरकाणामत्र प्रथते मदनो मदन्या ॥ ५ ॥

Tisrashcha rekhah sadanani bhumes-trivishtapas-trigunas-triprakashah.
Etatpuram purakam purakanamatra prathate madano madanya. (5)

On the substratum of the three lines [or spheres of light, are], the three worlds, the three *gunas*, and the three sources of light—the sun, the moon, and fire. This city [the Sri Chakra, the abode of the Divine Mother along with her attendants, which] is the fulfiller [of the desires, even of gods like Shiva and Vishnu, who fulfil the desires of countless devotees], of Shiva and Parvati, who play their divine sport here. (5)

मदन्तिका मानिनी मङ्गला च सुभगा च सा सुन्दरी शुद्धमत्ता ।
लज्जा मतिस्तुष्टिरिष्टा च पुष्टा लक्ष्मीरुमा ललिता लालपन्ती ॥ ६ ॥

Madantika manini mangala cha subhaga cha sa sundari shuddhamatta.
Lajja matis-tushtir-ishta cha pushta lakshmir-uma lalita lalapanti. (6)

[The Divine Mother] is variously known as Madantika, joyous; Manini, proud [of Kedarnath]; Mangala, auspicious [of Sri Lanka]; and Subhaga, prosperous [of Assam]. And she is Sundari, beautiful [of Trikuta]; Shuddhamatta, pure; Lajja, modest [of Amaravati]; Mati, intelligent; Tushti, satisfied; Ishta, desired [of Srinagar]; Pushta, nourished [of Jageshwar]; Lakshmi, wealthy [of Kolhapur]; Uma, splendorous [of Mithila]; and Lalita, eloquent [of Prayaga].(6)

इमां विज्ञाय सुधया मदन्ती परिस्रुता तर्पयन्तः स्वपीठम् ।
नाकस्य पृष्ठे महतो वसन्ति परन्धाम त्रैपुरं चाविशन्ति ॥ ७ ॥

Imam vijñaya sudhaya madanti parisruta tarpayantah svapitham.
Nakasya prishthe mahato vasanti parandhama traipuram chavishanti. (7)

Knowing [through proper spiritual initiation and instructions from the guru] this [supreme goddess as residing within] one's own seat [the body, which is not different from the Sri Chakra] they [the attendants of the Divine Mother] please [her] by being completely absorbed by [consecrated] nectar-like substances and live in heaven [enjoying the fruits of the first three goals of life—dharma, artha, and kama] and attain the highest abode of moksha. (7)

कामो योनिः कमला वज्रपाणिर्गुहा हसा मातरिश्वाऽभ्रमिन्द्रः ।
पुनर्गुहा सकला मायया च पूरुच्येषा विश्वमाताऽऽदिविद्या ॥ ८ ॥

Kamo yonih kamala vajrapanir-guha hasa matarishva'bhramindrah.
Punarguha sakala mayaya cha puruchyeshha vishvamata'dividya. (8)

[The Sri Vidya mantra is revealed secretly through the words] *kama*, desire [the syllable of the four-faced god Brahma]; *yonih*, womb [indicating the vowel *e*]; *kamala*, lotus [indicating the vowel *ī*]; *vajrapanih*, one who holds the thunderbolt [indicating *la*]; *guha*, cave [indicating the *bija*, seed, mantra of Bhuvaneshvari, *brim*]; [followed by the letters] *ha*, [and] *sa*, *matarishva*, the wind [the syllable of the four-faced god Brahma]; *abhra*, cloud [indicating the letter *ha*]; [and] Indra [indicating *la*]. Again, [the mantra contains the letters denoted by the words] *guha*, cave [indicating the *bija*, seed mantra of Bhuvaneshvari, *brim*]; [and the letters] *sa*, *ka*, *la*, and *maya* [indicating the *bija*, seed mantra of Bhuvaneshvari, *brim*]—this is the primal mantra, original knowledge, the Mother of the universe, the ancient. (8)

षष्ठं सप्तममथ वह्निसारथिमस्या मूलत्रिकमावेशयन्तः ।
कथं कविं कल्पकं काममीशं तुष्टुवांसो अमृतत्वं भजन्ते ॥ ९ ॥

*Shashtam saptamamatha vahnisarathimasya mulatrikamavesbayantah.
Kathyam kavim kalpakam kamamisham tushtuvamso amritattvam bhajante.* (9)

Of this [the mantra described in the previous verse], removing the [first] three root syllables, [the letters *ha*, *sa*, and *ka* represented by the words], *shashta*, six; *saptama*, seven; and *vahni*, fire; have to be added [and it will form the Lopamudra mantra]. By praising and praying the Lord—who is described in the Vedas, the substratum of the imagined universe, [and] who is described in the scriptures—they attain immortality. (9)



त्रिविष्टपं त्रिमुखं विश्वमातुर्नवरेखाःस्वरमध्यं तदीले ।
बृहत्तिथीर्दशपञ्चादिनित्या सा षोडशी पुरमध्यं बिभर्त्ति ॥ १० ॥

*Trivishtapam trimukham vishvamatur-navarekha-svaramadhyam tadile.
Brihattithir-dashapanchadinitya sa shodashi puramadhyam bibhartti.* (10)

I praise the Mother of the universe [who resides in] the three worlds, on the three sides [triangles], having nine lines [formed by the nine *yonis*], with *visarga* [*ab*] in the middle [of the central triangle of Sri Chakra, which is the place of her worship]. She shines in the primal eternal sixteenth in the centre of the city [that is, Sri Chakra, she who is] great [and the cause of] the fifteen *tithis* [or dates, who are the fifteen deities of the fifteen lunar days of a month, beginning with Kameshvari and ending with Chitra]. (10)

द्वा मण्डला द्वा स्तना बिम्बमेकं मुखं चाद्यस्त्रीणि गुहा सदनानि ।
कामीं कलां काम्यरूपां विदित्वा नरो जायते कामरूपश्च काम्यः ॥ ११ ॥

Dva mandala dva stana bimamekam mukham chadhastrini guha sadanani.
Kamim kalam kamyarupam viditva naro jayate kamarupashcha kamyah. (11)

[In *Kamalakala* meditation], the two circles [of the *vahni*-mandala, fire circle; and *surya*-mandala, sun circle] are the two breasts, one reflection is the face and half [the letter *ha* is the female organ and also refers to the *bhupura* chakra in the outermost gateways of Sri Chakra]. The three [limbs of human body divided into three sections: from the head to the throat, from the throat to the breasts, and from the heart to the anus] are the secret houses [identified with the outermost three lines of the *bhugriha* chakra within the Sri Chakra]. Meditating upon the desired [and transforming oneself into] the aspect [of the consciousness of Shiva and] that which has a desirable form, a person [the worshipper] is born as the embodiment of desire [who creates a disturbance in the minds of onlookers because of one's beauty]. (11)

परिस्तुतं झषमाद्यं पलं च भक्तानि योनीः सुपरिष्कृतानि ।
निवेदयन्देवतायै महत्यै स्वात्मीकृत्य सुकृती सिद्धिमेति ॥ १२ ॥

Parisrutam jhashamadyam palam cha bhaktani yonih suparishkritani.
Nivedayandevatayai mahatyai svatmikritya sukriti siddhimeti. (12)

[The ritual offering and consuming of, in the stipulated order], *madya*, wine [or the intoxicating bliss of meditation]; *palam*, meat [or the control of taste]; *jhasha*, fish [or the control of breath]; *bhaktani*, cooked food grains [or meditations on the guru]; and *yonis*, wombs [or attaining the knowledge of the Divine Mother in all her manifestations], have to be done properly. Offering food to the great Goddess, the expert performer [of the external sacrifices] should consume it oneself [and] attain fulfilment [of the sacrifice]. (12)

सृण्येव सितया विश्वचर्षणिः पाशेन प्रतिबध्नात्यभीकान् ।
इषुभिः पञ्चभिर्धनुषा च विध्यत्यादिशक्तिररुणा विश्वजन्या ॥ १३ ॥

Srinyeva sitaya vishvacharshanih pashena pratibadhnatyabhikan.
Ishubhih panchabhirghanusha cha vidhyatyadishaktiraruna vishvajanya. (13)

[She] has, as it were, [because in reality she is beyond name and form], a white [elephant]

goad and is the Mother [Tripurasundari] of the universe. [She] binds persons having desires or a passionate nature [by the rope of their own desires]. She strikes down the [desires] with a bow and five arrows [one arrow each for the five senses]. She is red and is the primal power, the Shakti, from whom the entire universe is born. (13)

भगः शक्तिर्भगवान्काम ईश उभा दाताराविह सौभगानाम् ।
समप्रधानौ समसत्त्वौ समोतयोः समशक्तिरजरा विश्वयोनिः ॥ १४ ॥

Bhagah shaktir-bhagavankama isha ubha dataraviha saubhaganam.
Samapradhanau samasattvau samotayoh samashaktirajara vishvayonih. (14)

[The Lord] having the qualities of power, righteousness, fame, prosperity, knowledge, and discernment is the blessed Shakti, who is both the Lord [or Shiva] and desire. [Shiva and Shakti], both are givers of prosperity. Both are of equal importance and are of the same essence, completely identical, and have the same power. [She is] ageless [and] the womb of the universe [or from her the entire universe is born]. (14)

परिस्रुता हविषा पावितेन प्रसंकोचे गलिते वै मनस्तः ।
सर्वः सर्वस्य जगतो विधाता धर्ता हर्ता विश्वरूपत्वमेति ॥ १५ ॥

Parisruta havisha pavitena prasamkoche galite vai manastah.
Sarvah sarvasya jagato vidhata dharta harta vishvaruptvameti. (15)

Purified [by rituals and mantras], by what remains after offering [in the worship of the Goddess], by drinking [in the bliss of meditation on the Goddess], by [what is] born out of contemplation, [and] the obstacles [to Self-realisation] being dissolved [by inactivity]. [The Self of] all is [called] the creator of the universe, the sustainer, [and] the destroyer [and by practising complete detachment, one] attains the form of the universe [that is the form of the Lord]. (15)

इयं महोपनिषत्त्रिपुराया यामक्षरं परमे गीर्भिरीट्टे ।
एषर्ग्यजुः परमेतच्च सामेवायमथर्वेयमन्या च विद्योऽम् ॥ १६ ॥ ॐ ह्रीं ॐ ह्रीमित्युपनिषत् ॥

Iyam mahopanishat-tripuraya yamaksharam parame girbhiritte.
Eshargyajuh parametachcha same-vayamatharveyam-anya cha vidyo'm. (15)
Om. Hrim. Om. Hrimityupanishat.

This is the great Upanishad [explaining the secret meaning] of Goddess Tripura [through various statements]. The supreme indestructible [Brahman] praises that [Upanishad], which is the highest knowledge, [that] this Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda, Atharva Veda, and other sciences [that is, the rest fourteen branches of the total eighteen traditional branches of knowledge, contain]. Om. Om. Hrim. Om. Hrim. Thus ends the Upanishad. (15)

Translated into English by
Swami Narasimhananda

