

The Yoga of Delight, Wonder, & Astonishment The Tantra of Self-Realization Vijnana Bhairava Tantra

This is a rough, “phonetic” version of the Sanskrit, by Dr. John Casey, with some emendations by Lorin Roche.

For the more formal Sanskrit transliteration with diacritical marks, check out this link, from the website [vijnanabhairavatantra.com](http://www.vijnanabhairavatantra.com), courtesy of Lorin Roche:
<http://www.vijnanabhairavatantra.com/vbt/vbt/faliero.html>

The **translations** are by Swami Lakshman Joo, with some edits by Bettina Baumer.

I have appended notes on the first few verses, which are filled with tantric esoterica. We won't be discussing these esoteric verses, mainly because in verse 8, Bhairava dismisses them as irrelevant! But it's good to know what they refer to!

Shree Vijnana Bhairava Tantra

shree devee uvaacha
shrutam deva mayaa sarvam
rudrayaamala sam-bhavam
trika bheda a-sheshena
saaraat saara vi-bhaagashah 1

The Goddess said: O God, I have already heard the essence of the Trika schools of thought in its entirety, which has originated from the *Rudrayaamala* along with its subdivisions, but still, O Supreme Lord, my doubts are not fully removed.

adya api na ni-vritto me
sam-shayah parama eeshvara
kim roopam tattvatah deva
shabda raashi kalaa mayam 2

kim vaa nava aatma bhedena
bhairave bhairava aa-kritau
tri-shirah bheda bhinnam
vaa kim vaa shakti tri-aatmakam 3

naada bindu mayam vaa api
kim chandra ardha ni-rodhikaah
chakra aa-roodham an-achkam
vaa kim vaa shakti sva-roopakam 4

O God, what is the essential nature of the energies of the collection of letters (phonemes)?***

And how does it reside in the form of Bhairava**** according to the Bhairava Tantras in a nine-fold division? How is it differentiated in the Trishira*****, the three-headed deity? And how does it consist of the three Shaktis?*****

para-a-paraayaah sakalam
a-parayaah cha vaa punah
paraayaa yadi tat vatsyaat
paratvam tat vi-rudhyate 5

na hi varna vi-bhedena
deha bhedena vaa bhavet
paratvam nish-kalatvena
sakalatve na tat bhavet 6

Again, what is the form of the transcendent-and-immanent (paraaparaa shakti) and of the immanent (aparaa Shakti), which has 'parts? Is the transcendent (para) Shakti the same, or is it incompatible with the immanent Shakti (aparaa)?

The transcendent cannot be differentiated in the letters (of mantras) or in bodily forms, because of its undivided nature, for it cannot be of composite nature.

pra-saadam kuru me naatha
nih-shesham chhinddhi sam-shayam
bhairava uvaacha
saadhu saadhu tvayaa prishtam
tantra saaram idam priye 7

O, Lord, give me your grace. Please remove my doubts completely.

gooha neeyatamam bhadre
tatha api kathayaami te
yat kinchit sakalam roopam
bhairavasya pra-keertitam 8

Bhairava says, O Blessed one, this knowledge is secret, but I will reveal it to you.

tat a-saaratayaa devi
vi-jneyam shakra jaalavat
maayaa svapna upamam cha eva
gandharva nagara bhramam 9

Whatever is known as the composite form of Bhairava, that, O Goddess, is deceptive like magic, because it has no essence. It is delusion. It is the net of Indra (shakra-jala)*****, it is only maya (illusory), like a dream-city castle made by sky creatures (Gandharva-nagara).

dhyaana artham bhraanta buddheenaam
kriyaa aa-dambara vartinam
kevalam varnitam pumsaam
vi-kalpa ni-hataa aatmanaam 10

The description of all this is given to people whose minds are scattered, who are caught up in divisive thoughts, or distracted by worldly activities.

tattvato na nava aatmaasau
shabda raashih na bhairavah
na cha asau tri-shiraa devah
na cha shakti tri-aatmakah 11

In reality, Bhairava is neither nine-fold nor does he consist of a multitude of letters; he is neither a three headed God nor does he possess three Shaktis.

naada bindu mayah vaa api na
chandra ardha ni-rodhikaah
na chakra krama sambhinah
na cha shakti sva-roopakah 12

He neither consists of naada (primordial sound) nor of bindu (the sesame seed-sized light said to be the form of God before manifestation). He is not the stages that you pass through in meditation***** as your awareness ascends to the highest chakra.

aprabuddha mateenaam hi etaa
baala vi-bheeshikaah
maatri modakavat sarvam
pravritti artham ud-aahritam 13

All this is just like a phantom used for frightening naughty children, or a sweet given by the mother to draw a child. This process is not meant for great souls, but as stepping stones for those whose intellect is not developed.

dik kaala kalanah un-muktaa
deshah ud-deshaa a-vi-sheshinee
vi-apa-deshtum a-shakya asau
a-kathyaa parama arthatah 14

This state of Bhairava is free from the limitations of space, time and form. It is not made particular by a specific place or symbol. In reality, it is inexpressible, because it cannot be described.

antah sva-anubhava aanandaa
vi-kalpah un-mukta gocharaa
yaa ava-sthaa bharita aakaaraa
bhairavee bhairava aatmanah 15

It is filled internally with the bliss of one's own experience, and it is beyond the realm of thought. This state which is always full is the state of Bhairavi (Shakti) who is Bhairava himself.

tad vapuh tattvatah jneyam
vi-malam vishva pooranam
evam vidhe pare tattve kah
poojyah kah cha tripyate 16

His body of glory should be known as immaculate, all-inclusive fullness.

In this supreme reality, who can be the object of worship and who is there to be pleased?

evam vidhaa bhairavasya
yaa ava-sthaa pari-geeyate
saa para-a-para roopena
paraa devee pra-keertitaa 17

This state of Bhairava which is praised (in the Tantras) is the supreme state, which is known as the highest Goddess in transcendental form.

shakti shaktimatoh yadvat
abhedah sarvadaa sthitah
atah tat dharma dharmitvaat
paraa shaktih paraa aatmanah 18

Since there is never any difference between Shakti and the Lord of Shakti, and between the attribute and the possessor of the attribute, therefore the supreme Shakti (paraashakti) is not different from the Supreme Self (paraamaatman).

na vanheh daahikaa shaktih
vi-ati-riktaa vi-bhaavyate
kevalam jnaana sattaayaam
praa-rambhah ayam pra-veshane 19

The power to burn is not different from fire. To enter into the state of fire—to heat a kettle or light a candle—is to enter the state of fire.

shakti ava-sthaa pra-vishtasya
nir-vi-bhaagena bhaavanaa
tadaa asau shiva roopee syaat
shaivee mukham iha uchyate 20

When one who enters the state of Shakti realizes the non-distinction from it, then she becomes one with Shiva. Shakti (supreme energy) is called the entrance (mouth) leading to Shiva.

yathaa aa-lokena deepasya
kiranaih bhaaskarasya cha
jnaayate diç vi-bhaaga aadi
tad vat shaktyaa shivah priye 21

Just as parts of space are known by the light of a lamp or the rays of the sun, in the same way, o dear one, Shiva is known through Shakti

shree devee uvaacha
deva deva tri-shoola-anka
kapaala krita bhooshana
diç desha kaala shoonya cha
vi-apa-desha vi-varjitaa 22

yaa ava-sthaa bharitaa kaaraa
bhairavasya upa-labhyate
kaih upaayaih mukham tasya
para-devee katham bhavet
yathaa samyak aham vedmi
tathaa me broohi bhairava 23

The Goddess said: O God of gods, whose emblem is the trident and who has skulls as an ornament, by what means can the supreme state which is free from any sense of direction, space and time and which cannot be described, the state of fullness of Bhairava—by what means can that be realized? How is the supreme goddess the entrance into Bhairava? O Bhairava, please tell me this, so I may know perfectly.

shree bhairava uvaacha
oordhve praano hi adhas jeevah
visarga aatmaa paraa ud-charet
ut-patti dvitaya-sthaane
bharanaad bharitaa-sthitih 24

Bhairava answered: The exhaling breath (prana) should ascend and the inhaling breath (jeeva) should descend, both forming a visarga (consisting of two points. Their state of fullness is found by fixing them in the two places of their origin.

marutah antah bahir vaa
pi viyat yugma a-ni-vartanaat
bhairavyaa bhairavasya ittham
bhairavi vi-ajyate vapuh 25

Oh Bhairavi, by focusing one's awareness on the two voids (at the end) of the internal and external breath, thereby the glorious form of Bhairava is revealed through Bhairavi.

na vrajet na vishet shaktih
marut-roopa vi-kaasite
nir-vi-kalpatayaa
madhe tayaa bhairava roopataa 26

The energy of breath should neither move out nor enter; when the center (sushumna nadi) unfolds by the dissolution of thoughts, then one attains the nature of Bhairava.

kumbhita rechitaa vaa api pooritaa
yaa yadaa bhavet
tadante shanta naama asau
shaktyaa shantah pra-kaashate 27

When the energy of breath is retained either outside or inside, at the end of this practice the peaceful state is revealed by means of Shakti.

aa-moolaat kirana aa-bhaasaam
sookshmaat sookshma-tara aatmikam
chintayet taam dvi-shat kaante
shyaam yanteem bhairava udayah 28

Be aware of the Shakti rising from muladhara chakra, which is luminous like rays of the sun and which gets subtler and subtler until it dissolves in dvaadashanta. Then the state of Bhairava will awaken.

ud-gat çanteem tadit roopam
prati-chakram kramaat kramam
oordhvam mushti-trayam
yaavat taavad ante mahaa-udayah 29

Meditate on the rising Shakti in the form of lightening, as it moves upward from one chakra to the other until it reaches Dvadashanta. At the end is the great awakening.

kramah dvaa-dashakam samyak
dvaa-dasha akshara bheditam
sthoola sookshma para-sthityaa
muktvaa muktvaa antatah shivah 30

There are twelve successive centers associated with twelve letters. One should concentrate on their gross, subtle and supreme states (respectively). Transcending each each center successively, in the end, Shiva is realized.

tayaa pooryaashu moordha-antam
bhanktvaa broo kshepa setunaa
nir-vi-kalpam manas kritvaa
sarva oordhve sarva gah ud-gamah 31

Having filled (te body up to murdaanta (the third eye center) with the same energy of breath, and having crossed it like a bridge by contracting the eyebrows and making one's mind free from thoughts, one become all-pervading in the highest state.

shikhi pakshaih chitra roopaih
mandalaih shoonya panchakam
dhyaayatah an-uttare shoonye
pra-veshah hridaye bhavet 32

By meditating on the five voids of the senses which are like the various colors of the peacock's feathers, the yogi enters the heart of the absolute void.

eedrishena kramena eva
yatra kutra api chintanaa
shoonye kudye pare paatre
svayam leenaa vara pradaa 33

In the same way, if one concentrates one's awareness on anything, be it an empty space, a wall, or a worthy disciple, this (energy of concentration will merge by itself and bestow grace.

kapaala antah manas nyasya
tishthat meelita lochanah
kramena manasah daardhyaat
lakshayet lashyam uttamam 34

By fixing one's mind on the inner space of the skull and sitting motionless with closed eyes, gradually, by the stability of the mind, one attains the supreme goal.

madhya naadee madhya samsthaa
bisa sootrabha roopayaa
dhyaataa antar vyomayaa
devyaa tayaa devah pra-kaashate 35

The central channel (Madhya nadi) which is situated in the middle (between the ida and pingala nadis in the center of the body) is subtle like the fiber of a lotus stalk. By meditating on the space within it through that goddess (of the inner space) God is revealed.

kara ruddha drish astrena
broo bhedaad dvaara rodhanaat
dirshthe bindau kramaat leene
tad madhye paramaa sthitih 36

By closing the openings of the senses by the hands and by piercing the center between the eye-brows, when the bindu (point of light) is perceived and there is a gradual merging, then the supreme state is found in the center.

dhaaman antah kshobha sam-bhootah
sookshma agnih tilaka akritim
bindum shikhaante hridaye layaante
dhyaayatah layah 37

By agitating the eyes a subtle flame in the form of a tilaka mark (the spot Indian women apply to the forehead) appears within. One should meditate on this point at the upper space of twelve (the Sahasrara) and in the heart. When the concentration is complete, there is Samadhi.

an-aahate paatra karne
a-bhagna shabde sarit drute
shabha brahmani nish-naatah
param brahma adhi-gachchhati 38

He attains the supreme absolute who is deeply merged in the Absolute-as-sound (shabdha brahman), which is vibrating within, without striking (Anahata) and is perceived by the ear; this sound is uninterrupted like that of a waterfall.

pra-nava aadi-sam-ud-chaaraat
plutaante shoonya bhaavanaat
shoonyayaa parayaa shaktyaa
shoonyataam eti bhairavi 39

Oh Bhairavi, by uttering the pranava (the mantra Om, hum, or hreem) and by meditating on the void at the end of the protracted sound, one attains the state of the Void by means of the supreme Shakti of the Void.

yasya kasya api varnasya
poorva antau anu-bhaavayet
shoonyayaa shoonya bhootah asau
shoonya aa-kaarah pumaan bhavet 40

One should meditate on the beginning and end of (the sounding of any letter (or mantra) by becoming void due to the power of the void; one will reach the state of pure void.

tantri aadi vaadya shabdeshu
deergheshu krama sam-sthiteh
ananya chetaah prati-ante
para vyoma vapuh bhavet 41

If one listens with undivided attention to the sounds of string instruments and others which are played successively and are prolonged, then one becomes absorbed in the supreme ether of consciousness.

pinda mantrasya sarvasya
sthoola varna kramena tu
ardha indu bindu naada antah
shoonyah ud-chaaraat bhavet shivah 42

ni-ja dehe sarva dikkam
yuga-pad bhaavayet viyat
nir-vi-kalpa manaah
tasya viyat sarvam pra-vartate 43

One should meditate on the void in one's own body on all sides simultaneously. When the mind has become free from thoughts, one experiences everything as the Void.

prishtha shoonyam moola shoonyam
yuga-pad bhaavayet cha yah
shareera nir-a-pekshinyaa
shaktyaa shoonya manaa bhavet 44

Meditating simultaneously on the void above and the void at the base, by the power of the energy that does not depend on the body, one's mind attains the state of Void.

prishtha shoonyam moola shoonyam
hrid shoonyam bhaavayet sthiram
yuga-pat nir-vi-kalpa tvaat
nir-vi-kalpah udayah tatah 45

If one meditates firmly on the void above, the void below, and the void in the heart, thus being free from all thoughts, then there arises simultaneously the thought-free state.

tanoo deshe shoonyataa eva
kshana maatram vi-bhaavayet
nir-vi-kalpam nir-vi-kalpah
nir-vi-kalpa sva-roopa bhaaj 46

If one contemplates in a thoughtfree way on any point in the body as mere void even for a moment, then, being free from thoughts, one attains the nature of the thought-free (Nirvikalpa Samadhi).

sarvam deha gatam dravyam
viyat-vi-aaptam mriga-eekshane
vi-bhaavayet tatas tasya
bhaavanaa saa sthira bhavet 47

O gazelle-eyed Goddess, if one contemplates on all the elements constituting the body as pervaded by Void, then one's contemplation (of the Void) will become firm.

dehaantare tvak vi-bhaagam
bhitti bhootam vi-chintayet
na kinchit antare tasya
dhyayam na dhyeya bhaaj bhavet 48

One should meditate on the body as only enclosed by the skin with nothing inside. Meditating in this way, one attains the one who is not an object of meditation.

hridya aakaashe nileena akshah
padma sam-puta madhya gah
an-anya chetaah su-bhage
param sau-bhaagyam aapnuyaat 49

If one merges one's senses in the space of the heart, ie, at the center between the two halves of the heart-lotus with an undistracted mind, then, O Blessed One, one attains supreme blessedness.

sarvatah sva-shareerasya
dvaa-dasha-ante mano-layaat
dridha buddheh dridhee bhootam
tattva lakshyam pra-vartate 50

If one's mind is absorbed at the dvaadashaanta, (considering that) the body is void in all parts, with firm intellect, then the firmly established Reality is revealed.

yathaa tathaa yatra tatra
dvaada shaante manah kshipet
prati-kshanam ksheena vritteh
vai-lakshanyam dinaih bhavet 51

If one fixes one's mind on dvaadashaanta every moment, in any way and wherever one is, then the fluctuations of the mind will dissolve and within days one will experience an extraordinary state.

kaala agninaa kaala padaat
ud-thitena svakam puram
plushtam vi-chintayet ante
shaanta aa-bhaasah tadaa bhavet 52

Meditate on one's own body as if it were consumed by the Fire of Time, rising from the foot. At the end of this meditation, the peaceful state will appear.

evam eva jagat sarvam
dagdham dhyaatvaa vi-kalpatah
an-anya chetasah pumsah
pum-bhaavah paramah bhavet 53

Meditating in this way by imagining that the entire world has been burnt, a person whose mind is undisturbed will attain the highest human condition.

sva-dehe jagatah vaa api
sookshma sookshma-taraani cha
tattvaani yaani ni-layam
dhyaatva ante vi-ajyate paraa 54

If one meditates on the subtle and subtlest elements in one's own body or of the world as if they are merging one after another, then in the end the supreme is revealed.

peenam cha dur-balaam shaktim
dhyaatvaa dvaa-dasha gochare
pra-vishya hridaye dhyaayam
muktah svaa-tantryam aapnuyaat 55

If the energy of breath is meditated upon as gross and feeble at dvaadashaanta, and enter the heart (at the time of sleeping) then one will attain mastery over one's dreams.

bhuvana adhva aadi roopena
chintayet kramashah a-khilam
stoola sookshma para-sthityaa
yaavat ante manas layah 56

One should meditate successively on the entire universe in the form of the stages of the world, in their condition of gross, subtle and supreme, and in the end the mind will dissolve.

asya sarvasya vishvasya
pari-anteshu sam-antatah
adhva pra-kriyayaa tattvam
shaivam dhyaatvaa maha udayah 57

While perceiving the Reality of Shiva in this whole universe up to the ultimate limit by the method of stages, one will experience the great wawakening.

vishvam etan mahaa devi
shoonya bhootam vi-chintayet
tatra eva cha manah leenam
tatah tat laya bhaajanam 58

O Great Goddess! If one imagines this whole universe as being void, one's mind gets dissolved in it and one becomes worthy of merging in that (Supreme Void).

ghata aadi bhaajane drishtim
bhittih tyaktvaa vi-ni-kshipet
tat layam tat kshanaat gatvaa
tat layaat tat mayah bhavet 59

One should cast one's eyes in the empty space of a jar or any other vessel, ignoring the enclosing walls. Then one merges instantaneously in that empty space and by virtue of this merging one becomes united with That.

nir-vriksha giri bhitti aadi
deshe drishtim vi-ni-kshipet
vi-leene manase bhaave
vritti ksheenah pra-jaayate 60

Cast your gaze on an open land devoid of trees, mountains, walls, etc. When the state of mind is fixed there, then the fluctuating thoughts dissolve.

ubhayoh bhaavayoh jnaane
dhyaatvaa madhyam sam-aashrayet
yuga-pad cha dvayam tyaktvaa
madhye tattvam pra-kaashate 61

Meditating on the knowledge of two things or states one should rest in the middle. By letting go of both simultaneously, the Reality flashes forth in the center.

bhaave tyakte ni-ruddhaa
chit na eva bhaava antaram vrajet
tadaa tat madhya bhaavena
vi-kasatyati bhaavanaa 62

When the awareness has abandoned one object and remains fixed without moving on to another object, then through the state in between the two the supreme realization will unfold.

sarvam deham chit mayam hi
jagatvaa pari-bhaavayet
yuga-pad nir-vi-kalpena
manasaa parama udayah 63

Contemplate simultaneously that your entire body or the world consists of nothing but Consciousness. Then the mind becomes free of thoughts and the supreme awakening occurs.

vaayu dvayasya sanghattaat
antar vaa bahir antatah
yogee samatva vi-jnaana
sam-ud-gamana bhaajanam 64

By the coming together of the two breaths at the extreme point, either inside or outside the body, the yogi becomes able to experience the rise of knowledge of harmony—that is, supreme oneness.

sarvam jagat sva-deham vaa
sva-aananda bharitam smaret
yuga-pad sva-amritena eva
para aananda mayah bhavet 65

You should contemplate simultaneously the whole world or your own body as filled with the bliss of the Self. Then by your own blissful nectar you become one with the supreme Bliss.

kuhanena pra-yogena
sadya eva mriga eekshane
sam-udeti mahaa aanandah
yena tattvam pra-kaashate 66

O gazelle-eyed one! By applying a trick (such as, being tickled under the armpits), there arises suddenly great bliss by which Reality is revealed!

sarva srotah ni-bandhana
praana shakti oordhvayaa
shanaih pipeela sparsha velaayaam
prathate paramam sukham 67

Closing all the openings of the sense, by the slow upward rise of the energy of breath (pranashakti), one feels a sensation like the movement of ants. At that time, the supreme joy is revealed.

vahneh vishasya madhye tu
chittam sukha mayam kshipet
kevalam vaayu poornam
vaa smara aanandena yujyate 68

One should place one's mind full of bliss between 'fire' and 'poison' (vahni and visha), i.e., between the experience of sexual arousal and the experience of orgasm, or filled with breath. Then you will be united with the blissful union (of Shiva and Shakti).

shakti sangama sam-kshubdha
shakti aa-vesha ava-saanikam
yat sukham brahma tattvasya
tat sukham svaakyam uchyate 69

The delight you feel in sexual union when the female (or male) energy is excited and when the absorption into her (or him) is completed, is similar to the spiritual bliss and that bliss is said to be that of the Self.

lehanaa manthanaa aa-kotaih
stree sukhasya bharaanat smriteh
shakti a-bhaave api deveshi
bhavet aananda sam-plavah 70

O Goddess, even in the absence of a partner there is a flood of delight by merely remembering the sexual joy experienced while kissing, embracing, pressing, etc.

aanande mahati praapte drishte
vaa baandhave chiraat
aanandam ud-gatam dhyaatvaa
tat layah tat manaa bhavet 71

When you experience great bliss, or the joy of seeing a friend or relative after a long time, meditate on the rising of this bliss and, while merging with it, your mind will become one with it.

jagdhi paana krita ullaasa
rasa aananda vi-jrimbhanaat
bhaavayet bharitaa ava-sthaam
mahaa aanandah tatah bhavet 72

When you are filled with the joy arising from the pleasure of eating and drinking, meditate on the state of (total) fullness. Then, great bliss will arise.

geetaa aadi vishaya aasvaadaa
sama saukhya ekataat manah
yoginah tat mayatvena
manas roodheh tat aatmataa 73

When your mind is one with the joy of music and other (aesthetic delights), then are identified with it because of the expansion of your consciousness, which has merged with the music.

yatra yatra manas tushtih
manas tatra eva dhaarayet
tatra tatra paraa aananda
sva-roopam sam-pra-vartate 74

Wherever your mind finds satisfaction, let it be fixed there, for there itself the nature of the supreme bliss will reveal itself.

an-aa-gataayaam nidraayam
pra-nashte baahya gochare
saa ava-sthaa manasaa
gamyaa paraa devee pra-kaashate 75

Concentrate on the state when sleep has not yet come, but your awareness of the outside has disappeared. In this state between sleeping and waking, the supreme Goddess reveals herself.

tejasaa soorya deepaadeh
aakaashe shabalee krite
drishtih ni-veshyaa tatra eva
sva-aatma roopam pra-kaashate 76

Direct your gaze on space filled with sunlight or the light of a lamp. There itself your own essential nature is revealed.

karankinyaa krodhanayaa
bhairavyaa lelihaanayaa
kecharyaa drishti kaale cha
paraa ava-aaptih pra-kaashate 77

At the time of the vision (of oneness) while in particular body postures (mudras) the pervasiveness of Supreme Consciousness is revealed.

mridu aasane sphijaikena
hasta paadau nir-aashrayam
ni-dhaaya tat pra-sangena
paraa poornaa matih bhavet 78

Sitting on a soft seat you should hold your hands and feet without support. By holding this position the mind reaches a state of supreme fullness of consciousness.

upa-vishya aasane sam-yak
baahoo kritva ardha-kunchitau
kaksha vyomni manah kurvan
shamam aayaati tat layaat 79

Sitting on a seat, place your arms in a curved position, and fixing your mind on the void under the armpits, it will merge (in emptiness) and attain peace.

sthoola roopasya bhaavasya
stabdhaam drishtim ni-paatya cha
achirena nir-aa-dhaaram
manah kritvaa shivam vrajet 80

Fix your gaze without blinking on an external form, and make the mind supportless. In a short time, you will attain Shiva.

madhya jihve sphaaritaasye
madhye ni-kshipya chetanaam
ha ud-chaaram manasaa
kurvan tatah shaante pra-leeyate 81

Keep the tongue in the center of that wide open mouth, and focus your mind there. Uttering the letter h mentally, you will be dissolved in peace.

asane shayane sthitvaa
nir-aa-dhaaram vi-bhaavayan
sva-deham manasi ksheene
kshanaat ksheena-aa-shayah bhavet 81

Sit on a seat, or lie on a bed. Meditate on your body as being without support. When your mind becomes empty and support-free, in a moment you are liberated from mental dispositions.

chal-aasane sthitas yaatha
shanaih vaa deha chaalanaat
pra-shaante maanase bhaave
devi divya augham aapnuyaat 82

Sitting in a moving vehicle, or moving your body slowly, you attain a peaceful mental state. Then, O Goddess, realize the divine flood.

aakaasham vi-malam pashyan
kritvaa drishtim nir-antaraam
stabdha aatma tat-kshanaat
devi bhairavam vapuh aapnuyaat 83

Look at the clear sky and fix your gaze there without blinking. Make your body motionless. In that very moment, O Goddess, you attain the Divine essence.

leenam moordhni viyat sarvam
bhairavatvena bhaavayet
tat sarvam bhairava aa-kaara
tejas tattvam sam-aa-vishet 84

Contemplate the entire sky, which is of the nature of Bhairava, as if it is pervading your head.

Then (you experience) everything as the form of Bhairava, and enter into the glory of his nature.

kinchit jnaatam dvaitadaayi
baahya aa-lokah tamah punah
vishva aadi bhairavam roopam
jnaatvaa an-anta pra-kaasha bhrit 85

When you realize the nature of Bhairava in the states of waking, dream, and deep sleep, you are filled with infinite splendor.

evam eva dur-ni-shaayaam
krishna paksha aa-game chiram
taimiram bhaavayan roopam
bhairavam roopam eshyati 86

In the same way on a dark night, at the beginning of the dark fortnight, while meditating on the darkness, one attains the nature of Bhairava.

evam eva ni-meelyaadau netre
krishna abham a-gratah
pra-saarya bhairavam roopam
bhaavayan tat mayah bhavet 87

In the same way, by first closing your eyes and meditating on the darkness in front, then opening the eyes and contemplating the (dark) form of Bhairava, one becomes one with that state of Bhairava.

yasya kasya indriyasya api
vi-aa-ghaataat cha ni-rodhatah
pra-vishtasya advaye shoonye
tatra eva aatmaa pra-kaashate 88

If any organ is obstructed by striking (something outside) or if you strike yourself, you enter the non-dual state of void, and there the Self shines forth.

a-bindum a-visargam cha
a-kaaram japatah mahaan
ud eti devi sahasaa
jnaana aughah parama eeshvarah 89

If you recite the great 'a' sound without bindu (making it 'am') or visarga (making it 'aha'), the supreme Lord who is a torrent of wisdom, arises at once.

varnasya sa-vi-sargasya
vi-sarga antam chitim kuru
nir-aa-dhaarena chittena
sprishet brahma sanaatanam 90

Fix your awareness with a mind free of thoughts at the end of a letter (ending in ha) and you will be in contact with the eternal absolute.

vyoma aa-kaaram svam-aatmaanam
dhyaayet digbhih an-aa-vritam
nir-aa-shrayaa chitih shaktih
sva-roopam darshayet tadaa 92

Meditate on your Self in the form of a vast sky, unlimited in all directions. Then the Power (Shakti) of Consciousness is free from any support and reveals her own nature.

kinchit angam vi-bhidya adau
teekshna soochi aadi naa tatah
tatra eva chetanaam yuktvaa
bhairave nir-malaa gatih 93

If you pierce any limb or part of the body with a sharp needle or any other instrument, then by concentrating on that point you attain the pure state of Bhairava.

chitta aadi antah kritih na asti
mama-antah bhaavayet iti
vi-kalpaanaam a-bhaavena
vi-kalpaih ujhitah bhavet 94

Imagine that there is no mind, intellect or ego within me. Then, you will become free of all thoughts.

maayaa vi-mohinee naama
kalaayaah kalanam sthitam
iti aadi dharmam tattvanaam
kalayan na prithak bhavet 95

Understanding that Maya is deluding, and that all notions of time, space and limitation are fragmenting, let them do what they do (ie, create the illusion of separation), and recognize that nonetheless you are not really separated from the All.

jhagit eechchhaam sam-ut-pannaam
ava-lokya shamam nayet
yata eva sam-ud-bhoota
tatah tatra eva leeyate 96

If you observe a desire as it arises spontaneously, and put an end to it immediately, it will merge (into consciousness) at that point from where it has arisen.

yadaa mama ichchhaa na ut-pannaa
jnaanam vaa kah tadaa asmi vai
tattvatah aham tathaa bhootah
tat leenah tat manaa bhavet 97

“Who am I when neither my will (icchaa) nor my knowledge (jnaanam) has arisen? I am this in reality!” Having become that, one should be merged in that and one’s mind should be identified with that. (In the secret teaching, ‘icchaa’ and ‘jnaana’ are code for inbreath and outbreath. So this verse refers to the space between the breaths.)

ichchhaayaam atha vaa jnaane
jaate chittam ni-veshayat
aatma buddhya an-anya chetaah
tatah tattva artha darshanam 98

Once will (the inbreath) and knowledge (the outbreath) have arisen, fix your mind (on the point where they emerge) with undivided attention of the Self. Then you gain insight into the essence of Reality. (Again, this verse refers to the space between the breaths).

nir-nimittam bhavet jnaanam
nir-aa-dhaaram bhrama aatmakaam
tattvatah kasyachit na etat
evam bhaavee shivah priye 99

All knowledge is without a cause, without a support, and deceptive. In reality, this does not belong to anyone.

Contemplating this way, O dear One, you become Shiva.

chit dharmaa sarva deheshu
vi-sheshah na-asti kutrachit
atah cha tan mayam sarvam
bhaavayan bhavajit janah 100

The one whose nature is Consciousness resides in all bodies; there is no differentiation in anything. Therefore, if a person realizes that everything is full of Consciousness, (s)he conquers the world of becoming.

kaama krodha lobha moha
mada maatsarya gochare
buddhim ni-stimitaam kritvaa
tat-tattvam ava-shishyate 101

Make your mind stable in the various states of desire, anger, greed, delusion, intoxication, or envy. Then the Reality that underlies them will be all that remains.

indra-jaala mayam vishvam
vi-astam vaa chitra karmavat
bhramad vaa dhyaayatah sarvam
pashyatash cha sukhah ud-gamah 102

If you meditate on the universe as a magic show, a painting, or as a movie, you will experience bliss.

na chittam ni-kshipet duhke
na sukhe vaa pari-kshipet
bhairavi jnaayataam madhye
kim tattvam ava-shishyate 103

Your mind should neither be engrossed in suffering nor in pleasure. O Bhairavi, know the middle state between both—then Reality alone remains.

vihaaya nija-dehasthaam
sarvatra asmi iti bhaavayan
dridhena manasaa drishtyaa
na anya-eekshinyaa sukhee bhavet 104

Let go of the attachment to your own body and realize “I am everywhere” with firm mind and undistracted vision. Then you attain Bliss.

ghataadau yat cha vi-jnaanam
ichchhaad yam vaa mama antare
na eva sarva gatam jaatam
bhaavayan iti sarva gah 105

Knowledge, will, etc are not only found within me, they are also present in jars and other objects. Meditating in this way on te omnipresent, one becomes all-pervading.

graahya graahaka sam-vittih
saamaanyaa sarva dehinaam
yoginaam tu vi-sheshah asti
sam-bandhe saa-vadhaanataa 106

The perception of object and subject is common to all embodied beings. The characteristic of a yogi is that (s) is aware of this relationship.

svavat anya shareere api
sam-vittim anu-bhaavayet
a-pekshaam sva-shareerasya
tyaktvaa vyaapee dinaih bhavet 107

One should experience the consciousness also in the body of another as in one's own. Giving up the concern for one's own body, one becomes all-pervading in days.

nir-aa-dhaaram manah kritvaa
vi-kalpaan na vi-kalpayet
tat aatma parama-aatmatve
bhairavah mriga-lochane 108

Freeing the mind of all supports, let no thought arise. Then, O Gazelle-Eyed Goddess, you attain the state of Bhairava as the self merges into the Absolute Self.

sarvajnah sarva karttaa cha
vi-aapakah parama eeshvarah
sa eva aham shaiva dharma iti
daardhyaat bhavet shivah 109

"The supreme Lord is omniscient, omnipotent and all-pervading; I myself am He." Meditating firmly on this, you become Shiva.

jalasya iva urmayah vahneh
jvaalaa-bhangyah pra-bhaa-raveh
mama eva bhairavasya etaa
vishva bhangyah vi-bheditaah 110

Just as waves arise from water, flames from fire and rays from the sun, in the same way the different aspects of the universe have sprung from me, Bhairava.

bhraantvaa bhraantvaa shareerena
tvaritam bhuvi paatanaat
kshobha shakti vi-raamena
paraa sam-jaayate dashaa 111

If you move round and round and suddenly fall on the ground, then, when the energy of agitation comes to an end, the Supreme State arises!

aa-dhaareshu atha vaa ashaktyaa
ajnaanaat chitta-layena vaa
jaata shakti sam-aa-vesha
kshobha-ante bhairavam vapuh 112

When, you lose your capacity to know objects, or by the dissolution of the mind, there is cessation of agitation and your true self will be revealed.

sam-pra-daayam imam devi
shrinu samyak vadaami aham
kaivalyam jaayate sadyah
netrayoh stabdha maatrayoh 113

O Goddess, listen to this mystical tradition. I shall reveal it to you completely. If the eyes are fixed without blinking, the state of liberation (kaivalya, or the experience of being the One Alone) will be revealed.

sam-kocham karnayoh kritvaa
hi adhas dvaare tathaa eva cha
an-achkam a-halam dhyaayan
vishet brahma sanaatanam 114

Closing your ears and closing the lower opening (anus), meditate on the sound without vowel or consonant. Then, you will enter the eternal Absolute.

koopadike mahaa garte
sthitvaa upari nir-eekshanaat
a-vi-kalpa mateh sam-yak
sadhyah chitta layah sphutam 115

Standing above a deep well or any abyss, and fixing your eyes (on the bottom of the abyss), you become completely free of thoughts and immediately the mind will be dissolved.

yatra yatra manah yaati
baahye vaa abhi-antare api vaa
tatra tatra shiva ava-sthaa
vi-aa-pakatvaat kva yaasyati 116

Wherever the mind goes, whether outside or within, there itself is the state of Shiva. Since Shiva is all-pervading, where can the mind go that he is not?

yatra yatra aksha maargena
chaitanyam vi-ajyate vi-bhoh
tasya tat maatra dharmitvaat
chit layaat bhrataa aatmataa 117

Whenever the universal consciousness of the all-pervading Lord is revealed through any of the sense organs, since their nature is the same (universal Consciousness), then by absorption into pure Consciousness the fullness of the Self (is experienced.)

kshut aadi ante bhaye shoke
gahvare vaa ranaat drute
kutoohale kshudhaa aadi ante
brahma sattaa mayee dashaa 118

At the beginning and end of sneezing, in a state of fear or sorrow, on top of an abyss or while fleeing from a battlefield, at the moment of intense curiosity, at the beginning and the end of hunger, such a state comes close to the experience of the Absolute.

vastushu smarya maaneshu drishte
deshe manah tyajet
sva-shareeram nir-aa-dhaaram
kritvaa pra-sarati pra-bhuh 119

While looking at a particular space the mind should abandon the thought of all remembered objects and thus making the body free from all support, the Lord reveals himself.

kvachit vastuni vi-nyasya
shanaih drishtim ni-vartayet
tat jnaanam chitta sahitam
devi shoonya aa-layah bhavet 120

Having fixed your eyes on a particular object, slowly withdraw the gaze from it, and withdraw your knowledge of that object along with the thought of it. Then, O Goddess, you become the abode of the Spaciousness.

bhakti ud-rekaat vi-raktasya
yaa drishee jayaate matih
saa shakti shaankaree nityam
bhaavayet taam tatah shivah 121

The intuitive insight born from intense devotion and longing in one who is detached is the very Shakti of Shiva; then one becomes Shiva Himself.

vastu antare vedya maane
sarva vastushu shoonyataa
taam eva manasaa dhyaatvaa
viditah api pra-shaamyati 122

When you perceive a particular object, other objects gradually appear empty. Meditating on this void in the mind, you attain peace, even when still perceiving the object.

kinchit jnaih yaa smritaa
shuddhih saa shuddhih shambhu darshane
na suchir hi a-shuchih
tasmaat nir-vi-kalpah sukhee bhavet 123

The 'purity' prescribed by people of little understanding is considered impurity in the Shaiva system. There is neither purity nor impurity. There fore, become free from such thoughts and attain happiness.

sarvatra bhairavah bhaavah
saamaanyeshu api gocharah
na cha tat vi-ati-rekena
parah asti iti a-dvayaa gatih 124

The reality of Bhairava is present everywhere, even in common people. If you know that nothing exists apart from him attains the non-dual state.

samah shatrau cha mitre cha
samah maana ava-maanayoh
brahmanah pari poornatvaat iti
jnaatvaa sukhee bhavet 125

Having the same feeling towards friend and enemy, who stays the same in both honor and dishonor, the one who knows that the absolute is always full (in everything and everyone) remains happy.

na dvesham bhaavayet kva api
na raagam bhaavayet kvachit
raaga dvesha vi-nir-muktau
madhye brahma pra-sarpati 126

When you feel neither hatred nor attachment towards anyone, being free from both, in the center between the two extremes, Brahman unfolds.

yat a-vedyam yat a-graahyam
yat shoonyam yat a-bhaavagam
tat sarvam bhairavam bhaavyam
tad ante bodha sam-bhavah 127

The unknowable, the ungraspable, the void, that which pervades even non-existence—contemplate all this as Bhairava. At the end of this contemplation, illumination will dawn.

nitye nir-aa-shraye shoonye
vi-aa-pake kalana ujjhite
baahya aakaashe manah kritvaa
nir-aakaasham sam-aa-vishet 128

Fix your mind on the external space which is eternal, supportless, empty, all-pervading and free from limitation, in this way you will be absorbed in non-space.

yatra yatra mano yati
tat tat tena eva tat kshaanam
pari tyajya ana-vasthityaa
nis-tarangah tatah bhavet 129

When the mind moves towards an object, withdraw it from that at that very moment. By leaving the mind without support, you will become free from mental agitation.

bhayaa sarvam ravayati
sarvadah vi-aa-pakah a-khile
iti bhairava shabdasya
santatah ud-chaaranaat shivah 130

Bhairava is the one who makes everything resound (ravayati) with fear (bhaya), and who pervades the entire universe. He who utters this word 'Bhairava' unceasingly becomes Shiva.

aham mama idam iti aadi
pratti patti pra-sangatah
nir-aa-dhaare manah yaati
tat dhyaana preranaat shamee 131

While making statements like "I am, this is mine," the mind goes to that which is supportless. Inspired by this meditation you become peaceful.

nityah vi-bhuh nir-aa-dhaarah
vi-aa-pakah cha a-khila adhipah
shabdaan pratikshanam dhyaayan
krita arthah artha anu-roopatah 132

Meditate every moment on these words: "Eternal, omnipresent without any support, Lord of all that is." As you meditate like this, you attain fulfillment in accordance with their meaning.

a-tattvam indra jaalah aa-bham
idam sarvam ava-sthitam
kim tattvam indra jaalasya
iti daardhyaat shamam vrajet 133

"All this universe is without reality, like the net of Indra, for what reality is there in a magic show?" By firmly thinking in this way, you obtain peace.

aatmanh nir-vi-kaarasya kva
jnaanam kva cha vaa kriyaa
jnaana yattaa bahih bhaavaa
atah shoonyam idam jagat 134

How can the immutable Self have any knowledge or activity? All external objects depend on our knowledge of them. Therefore, this world is void.

na me bandhah na mokshah me
bheetasya etaa vi-bheeshikaah
prati bimbam idam bhuddheh
jaleshu iva vi-vasvatah 135

There is neither bondage nor liberation for me. They are just bogey-men for the fearful. This world is like a reflection in the mind, just as the sun is reflected in water.

indriya dvaarakam sarvaam
sukha-duhkha aadi sangamam
iti indriyaani sam-tyajya
sva-sthah sva-aatmani vartate 136

All association with pleasure and pain occurs through the senses. Therefore, detach your mind from the senses and abide within your own Self.

jnaana pra-kaashakam sarvam
sarvena aatmaa pra-kaashakah
ekam eka sva-bhaavatvaat
jnaanam jneyam vi-bhaavyate 137

Knowledge illumines everything in this world; and the Self is the one who illumines. Since they have the same nature, knowledge and the known should be contemplated as one.

maanasam chetanaa shaktih
aatmaa cha iti chatushtayam
yadaa priye pari-ksheenam
tadaa tat bhairavam vapuh 138

O dear one, when the mind, the individual consciousness, the vital energy and the limited self have disappeared, then the nature of Bhairava appears.

nis-tarangah upa-deshaanaam
shatam uktam samaasatah
dvaa-dasha abhi-adhikam devi
yat jnaatvaa jnaanavit janah 139

O Goddess! I have revealed 112 methods of reaching the waveless state of mind, knowing which a person becomes wise.

atra cha ekatame yuktah
jaayate bhairavah svayam
vaachaa karoti karmaani
shaapa anu-graha kaarakah 140

If you are established in only one of these, you become Bhairava himself. Such a person can achieve anything by word alone; his curse or blessing will be powerful.

a-jarah a-marataam eti
sah anima aadi guna anvitah
yogineenaam priyah devi
sarva melaapaka adhi-pah 141

O Goddess! (Such a yogi) attains freedom from old age and death and is endowed with powers like become tiny and other siddhis.

jeevan api vi-muktah asau
kurvan api na lipyate

(S)he becomes the beloved of the Yoginis and the master over spiritual gatherings.

(S)he is truly liberated in this life itself, and though performing all activities, is not affected by them.

shree devee uvaacha:
idam yadi vapuh deva
paraayaah cha maha eeshvara 142

evam ukta vi-ava-sthaayam
japyate kah japah cha kah

The Goddess said:

O Great Lord! If this is the wonderful essence of the Supreme Energy, then who will recite (mantras) and what will be the proper recitation?

dhyaayate kah mahaa naatha
poojyate kah cha tripyati 143

Who will meditate, O great Lord, who will worship and who will be gratified by worship?

hooyate kasya vaa homah yaagah
kasya cha kim katham

Who will offer oblations into the sacrificial fire, and whose is the offering? Who will perform sacrifice and how is it to be offered?

shree bhairava uvaacha
eshaa atra pra-kriyaa baahyaa
sthooleshu eva mriga eekshane 144

Bhairava answered: O gazelle-eyed Goddess, the ritual tradition is external and meant for them on the gross level.

bhooyah bhooyah pare bhaave
bhaavanaa bhaavyate hi yaa
japah sah atra svayam naadah
mantra aatmaa japya eedrishah 145

The continuous contemplation on the supreme state is true mantra repetition (japa) in this esoteric tradition. The sound (nada) that is sounding by itself is the real mantra to be recited.*****

dhyaanam hi nish-chalaa buddhih
nir-aa-kaaraa nir-aa-shrayaa
na tu dhyaanam shareera akshi
mukha hasta aadi kalpanaa 146

Meditation is truly an unwavering awareness, formless and without support. Meditation is not imaginative visualization of the body (of the deity) with organs, face, hands, etc.

poojaa naama na pushpa aadyaih
yaa matih kriyate dridhaa
nir-vi-kalpe mahaa vyomni
saa poojaa hi aa-daraat layah 147

Worship does not mean to offer flowers and other substances. The real worship consists of settling your mind firmly on the supreme void of thought-free consciousness. This worship is an absorption with great fervor and respect.

atra ekatama yuktisthe
yaa ut-padyeta dinaat dinam
bharitaa kaarataa saa atra
triptih atyanta poornataa 148

If anyone is established in any of the ways described here, what he experiences is fulfilled day by day, until his spiritual satisfaction reaches the utmost fullness.

mahaa shoonya aa-laye vahnau
bhootaa aksha-vishaya aadikam
hooyate manasaa saardham
sa homah chetanaa sruchaa 149

Real oblation (offering to the sacred fire) consists in offering all the elements, the senses, and sense objects along with the mind into the fire of the Great Abode of Spaciousness, using awareness as the sacrificial ladle.

yaagah atra parama eeshaani
tushtih aananda lakshanaa
kshapanaat sarva paapaanaam
traanaat sarvasya paarvati 150

O supreme Goddess, real sacrifice consists in satisfaction full of bliss.

rudra shakti sam-aa-veshah
tat kshetram bhaavanaa paraa
anyathaa tasya tattvasya
kaa poojah kah cha tripyati 151

O Parvati! The sacred place of pilgrimage consists in supreme contemplation and absorption into the Shakti of the Supreme, by which all faults are removed and all beings are saved. How can there be any other worship and fulfillment in relation to this (non-dual) reality?

sva-tantra aananda chit maatra saarah
sva-aatmaa hi sarvatah
aa-veshanam tat sva-roope
sva-aatmanah snaanam eeritam 152

The real sacred bath is called absorption into the essential nature of your own Self. This Self is the universal essence of freedom, bliss and awareness.

yaih eva poojyate dravyaih
tarpyate vaa para-a-parah
yah cha eva poojakah sarvah
sa eva ekah kva poojanam 153

The offerings with which worship is performed, the Transcendent-and-Immanent Reality who is worshipped with these offerings, and the worshipper himself, they are all one. When is worship, then?

vrajet praanah vishet jeeva
ichchhayaa kutilaa kritih
deergha aatmaa saa mahaa devee
para kshetram para-a-paraa 154

The outgoing breath goes out and the ingoing breath comes in, in a crooked way (to and from the heart) by the energy of Divine Will. The great Goddess (Kundalini) straightens herself (rising into the central channel). This is the real sacred space which is Transcendent and Immanent.

asyaam anu-charan tishthan
mahaa aananda maye adhvare
tayaa devyaa sam-aa-vishtah
param bhairavam aapnuyaata 155

Reciting and being continuously immersed in her, and being established in the sacrificial ritual of great bliss, one is united with this Goddess and attains union with Bhairava.

sa-kaarena bahir yaati
ha-kaarena vishet punah
hamsa hamsa iti amum mantram
jeeva japati nityashah 155b

The breath is exhaled with the sound SA and inhaled with the sound Ham. Then, recitation of the mantra is continuous.

shat-shataani divaa raatrau
sahasraani-eka-vimshatih
japah devyaah sam-ud-dishtah
su-labhah dur-labhah jadaih 156

In one day and night this recitation of breath takes place 21,600 times. This japa (mantra repetition) of the Goddess which is prescribed is easy for everyone; only for the ignorant is it difficult.

iti etat kathitam devi
parama amritam uttamam
etat cha na eva kasya api
pra-kaashyam tu kadaa-chana 157

O Goddess! I have explained this excellent supreme immortal nectar to you.

para shishye khale kroore
a-bhakte guru paadayoh
nir-vi-kalpa mateenaam
tu veeraanaam unnataaatmanaam 158

Never disclose this secret to anyone who is a disciple of another tradition, who is of bad or cruel nature, or who has no devotion to the Master.

bhaktaanam guru vargasya
daatavyam nir-vi-shankayaa

But it should be given without hesitation to those whose mind is free from doubts, to spiritual heroes, to those whose heart is open, and to those who are devoted to the Master.

It should doubtless be imparted to those devoted to the lineage of Gurus.

graamo raajyam puram deshah
putra daara kutumbakam
sarvam etat pari-tyajya
graahyam etat mriga eekshane
kim ebhih a-sthiraih devi
sthiram param idam dhanam
praana api pra-daatavyati
na deyam parama amritam 159-160

O Gazelle-eyed Goddess! One should take hold of this teaching, renouncing everything: one's village, kingdom, city and country, one's son, daughter, family. O Goddess! These are all impermanent, but this alone is the permanent treasure.

shree devee uvaacha
deva deva mahaa deva
pari-tripta asmi shankara
rudra yaamala tantrasya
saaram adya ava-dhaaritam 161

One may even give up one's life, but one should not give up this supreme nectar of immortality.

The Goddess said, O God of Gods, O Great God! O Shankara, I am fully satisfied.

sarva shakti pra-bhedaanaam
hridayam jnaatam adya cha
iti uktvaa aananditaa devee
kanthe lagnaa shivasya tu 162

Today I have understood the essence of the tantra, and the heart of all the various energies. Having said this, the Goddess, full of bliss, embraced Lord Shiva and became one with Lord Shiva.

*Trika: The philosophy and practice often known as Kashmir Shaivism, referring to the fact that it deals with three aspects of reality—God, the world and the individual, or the three states of awareness known as Para (supreme or non-dual or Shiva), parapara (both dual and non-dual Shakti) and apara (dual, the individual and the objective world.)

** Literally, the pair—the union of Shiva and Shakti, also a lost text of tantra.

***Bhairava: a fierce form of Shiva; an acronym meaning the Absolute. Bha stands for the principle that maintains the world, ra for that which destroys it, and va for the creative principle. Bhairavi is Shiva's consort, Shakti, also known as Devi (Goddess) and Parvati.

****In Sanskrit lore, the energies of the alphabet are considered to contain all aspects of reality from the subtlest to the most concrete. The '9-fold' division describes the essential stages of manifestation (tattva-s). In traditional tantric sadhana, to return to the Absolute you practiced meditations that dissolved the gross levels of reality into the subtle, until all was absorbed (laya) into the one. The core of this path was mantra. One form of practice made use of the 'nine', letters that corresponded with the tattvas. These were h, r, ks, m, l v, y, n, um.

*****The "divinity with three heads" is the name of a text, as well as a mythological depiction of Shiva. The three energies (Shaktis) are the Para (undifferentiated) Shakti, Parapara (dual non-dual), and Apara (dual). The tantric path offered practices for moving from duality to a dual-non-dual viewpoint, to non-duality, each of which was associated with an aspect of the supreme Energy, Shakti.

*****The net of Indra (King of the Gods, also known as Shakra) depicts the absolute interconnectedness of the manifest universe, which in Indian and Buddhist mythology is described as a vast web of jewels, each of which contains the wholeness in holographic form.

*****geometric forms that can be seen in meditation and which are associated with the progressive subtilization of consciousness as it passes through the topmost chakra. These forms are also associated with the ascent of Om through the chakras.

*****the verses that follow refer to the practices of the Hindu ritual tradition—japa (mantra repetition, offerings, bathing in sacred waters, visiting holy places, which are superseded by non-dual practice.

Nada refers both to the inner sound (heard in the ears in meditation) and also to the sound of the breath as HamSa.