Nadis & Kundalini
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If the spinal channel is likened to an elevator, the chakras are the various floors in the body-building. In any building, the basement is usually dark and enclosed, the first floor busy with activity and the penthouse refined, offering a wide view of the city below. Similarly in man. The darker states of mind become reality when we live on the lower floors; the mental-emotional realms engage us while we inhabit the main floors of the building; and the divine, superconscious regions are the experience for those who have reached the supernal upper stories. God, the landlord, may prefer the penthouse, but His presence permeates the whole building.

The first floor, the muladhara chakra, should be viewed as our friend not antagonist. Though "basic," the forces of this "root chakra" are not negative. Used positively by the higher centers, the powers of time, memory and potent sex energy are transmuted into the very fuel that propels the kundalini up the spinal climb and into the head. Similarly, the mature lotus blossom cannot, in wisdom, criticze the muddy roots far below which, after all, sustain its very life.

One assumption of the chakra system is that man is complete, containing within himself the whole. As the modern siddha Baba Muktananda said, "You are the entire universe. You are in all, and all is in you. Sun, moon and stars revolve within you." Everything is within man: fear and superstition when consciousness falls toward the feet, inspiration and illumination when it rises above the head. Religion is not just the final climb to the summit, it is the entire journey from bottom to top.

Gender Transcendence

The aggressive/intellectual current, pingala, is masculine, mental in nature and represented by the the color blue. The passive/physical current is feminine, material in nature. This current is rose/pink, or red. The third white current, sushumna, is spiritual in nature and flows directly through the spine and into the head. It is the channel for pure spiritual eneries that flood into the body, through the spine and out

into the 6,000 miles of nerve currents. Depending on the nature and dharma of each individual, this pure energy generally expresses itself as predominantly physical or intellectual, passive or aggessive. However, in the sannyasin or sannyasini, the monk or nun, the two forces are so precisely balanced that neither is dominant and one therefore lives almost totally in the sushumna. The renunciate is neither male nor female, but a being capable of all modes of expression. Within the family, the man is predominantly in the masculine current and the woman is predominantly in the feminine current. When they are harmonious and have awakened enough knowledge of the relation of their forces to balance them, then both naturally flow into the spiritual current and radiate as spiritual beings. Children born of such couples come into earthly life through the deeper chakras and tend to be highly evolved and well-balanced.

One of several meanings iconographically represented in the half-male and half-female image of Siva, Ardhanarishvara (pictured above) is this perfect balancing of the feminine and masculine forces so that the spiritual current predominates.

Journeys Within

Gopi Krishna: (1903-1984) Eminent Kashmiri yogi, author, a state official and social servant who was married with four children.

I distinctly felt an incomparably blissful sensation in all my nerves moving from the tips of fingers and toes and other parts of the trunk and limbs towards the spine, where, concentrated and intensified, it mounted upwards with a still more exquisitely pleasant feeling to pour into the upper region of the brain a rapturous and exhilarating stream of a rare radiating nerve secretion, exceeding many times in intensity that most pleasurable of bodily sensations, the orgasm, which marks the

climax of sexual union. Although linked to the body and surroundings I had expanded in an indescribable manner into a titanic personality, conscious from within of an immediate and direct contact with an intensely conscious universe, a wonderful inexpressible immanence all around me. My body, the chair I was sitting on, the table in front of me, the room, the lawn outside and the space beyond including the earth and sky appeared to be, most amazingly, mere phantoms in this real, interpenetrating and all-pervasive ocean of existence which seemed to be simultaneously unbounded, stretching out immeasurably in all directions. From this marvellous point the entire existence, of which my body and its surroundings were a part, poured out like radiations as if a reflection as vast as my conception of the cosmos were thrown out upon infinity by a projector no bigger than a pinpoint. The shoreless ocean of consciousness in which I was now immersed appeared infinitely large and infinitely small at the same time, measureless, without form or size, nothing and yet everything.

(Excerpt from his book Kundalini)

Hiroshi Motoyama: (1925-) Founder of the Institute for Religious Psychology, Tokyo, author and head Shinto priest of Tamamitsu Shrine, Tokyo.

One of the practices I performed regularly in my initial program of discipline is a Taoist form called Shoshuten, a method of purifying sushumna by the circulation of energy in the upper part of the body, which is done by raising the kundalini shakti along the sushumna to the top of the head and letting it fall to the ajna chakra during inhalation. While I was doing Shoshuten, I could see the inside of the sushumna, the sahasrara and two or three other chakras shining. After I had practiced yoga for six months a year, a shining golden light began to enter and leave my body through the top of my head and I felt as if the top of my head protruded ten to twenty centimeters. In the astral, but not the physical dimension, I saw what looked like the head of Buddha, shimmering purple and blue, resting on the top of my own head. There was a golden white light flowing in and out through the gate at the top of the Buddha's crown. Gradually I lost the sensation of my

body, but I held a clear awareness of consciousness of super-consciousness. I was able to hear a powerful, but very tender, Voice resounding through the universe. Then I experienced a truly indescribable state, in which my entire spiritual existence became totally immersed within an extraordinary calmness. After some time, I descended, following the same path, and returned to my body through the gate at the top of my head.

(Excerpt from his book Theories of the Chakras)

C. W. Leadbeater (1854-1934) clairvoyant, author and well-renowned Western authority on chakras.

The chakras, or force centers, are points of connection at which energy flows from one vehicle or body of a man to another. Anyone who possesses a slight degree of clairvoyance may easily see them. When quite undeveloped, they appear as small circles about two inches in diameter, glowing dully in the ordinary man; but when awakened and vivified, they are seen as blazing, coruscating whirlpools, much increased in size, and resembling miniature suns. We sometimes speak of them as roughly corresponding to certain physical organs; in reality, they show themselves at the surface of the etheric double, which projects slightly beyond the outline of the dense body. If we imagine ourselves to be looking straight down into a the bell of a flower of the convolvulus type, we shall get some idea of the general appearance of a chakra. The stalk of the flower in each springs from a point in the spine, so another view might show the spine as a central stem, from which flowers shoot forth at intervals, showing the opening of their bells at the surface of the etheric body. The centers are in operation in every one, although in the undeveloped person they are usually in comparatively sluggish motion. The seventh centre, the coronal [sahasrara] at the top of the head, is, when stirred into full activity, the most resplendent of all, full of indescribable chromatic effects and vibrating with almost inconceivable rapidity. It is described in Indian books as thousand-petalled, and really this is not very far from the truth, the number of the radiations of its primary force in the outer circle being 960. In addition to this, it has

a feature which is possessed by none of the other chakras-a sort of subsidiary central whirlpool of gleaming white flushed with gold in its heart.

(Excerpt from his book The Chakras)

Scripture

The senses should be controlled by will inside the hrit, eight-petalled lotus inside the heart chakra. -Svetasvatara Upanishad 2.8

Having worshiped mentally in all the chakras, with unwavering mind, he should repeat the Ajapa-gayatri... Then he should meditate on the kundalini as moving upwards and downwards, as making a tour of the six chakras, placed in three and a half coils. -Garuda Purana

Here in the adhara chakra, muladhara, dwells Dakini by name. Her four arms shine with beauty and her eyes are brilliant red. She is resplendent like the lustre of many suns rising at one and the same time. -Satchakra-Nirupana, Verse 7

Unto kundalini fire across chakras six and in two-petalled center (ajna) ended; the sacred fire engulfed worlds seven entire, from top to bottom unintermittent. Those who witnessed it have indeed gained all riches great. -Tirumantiram 1040

I seized the thief of my vital airs, and controlled my breath. When by concentration of my thoughts I brought the prana under my control, I made my body like a blazing coal. The six paths [chakras] I traversed and gained the seventh and then did I, Lalla, reach the place of

illumination. -Lalla, Kashmiri mystic