

Historical Sources & Knowledge of Kundalini



Kundalini as the
primordial snake

The word Kundalini is derived from a Sanskrit word 'Kundal' meaning coiled up. It is the primordial dormant energy present in three-and-a-half, coils at the base of the spine in a triangular bone called the Sacrum. The Latin name 'Os Sacrum' suggests that it is a holy or sacred part of the body. The ancient Greeks were aware of this and therefore they called it the 'Hieron Osteon', noting that it was the last bone to be destroyed when the body is burnt, and also attributed supernatural powers to it. Egyptians also held this bone to be very valuable and considered it the seat of special power.

In the West, Sacrum is symbolised by the sign of Aquarius and by the Holy Grail, container of the water of life.

The Kundalini, which is to nourish the tree of life within us, is coiled up like a serpent and therefore it has been called, 'The Serpent Power'. It has been described in great detail in the Upanishads. Kundalini Yoga is supposed to be supreme in all the Yogas. Guru Vashistha asserted that Kundalini is the seat of absolute knowledge. The awareness of the presence of this primordial energy Kundalini within the human body was considered by the sages and saints to be the highest knowledge. The Kundalini and Chakras have been vividly described in Vedic and Tantric texts.

Adi Sankaracharya

He lived in the 7th-8th century AD. and wrote:

'Having filled the pathway of the Nadis with the streaming shower of nectar flowing from the Lotus feet, having resumed thine own position from out of the resplendent Lunar regions and Thyself assuming the form of a serpent of three and a half coils, sleepest thou, in the hollow of Kula Kunda (Kula Kunda means the hollow of Mooladhara Sacrum bone).'



'Saundarya Lahari': 'Thou art residing in secrecy with Thy Lord (The spirit) in the thousand petalled Lotus, having pierced through the Earth situated in 'Mooladhara', the Water in Manipura, the Fire abiding in the Svadhithana, the Air in the Heart ('Anahata'), the Ether above (Visshuddhi) and 'Manas' between the eyebrows ('Agnya') and thus broken through the entire 'Kula Path'.'



Gyaneshwara

Gyaneshwara, another famous saint of Maharashtra born around 1275 AD, described Kundalini in the 6th chapter of his famous book 'Gyaneshwari'. He wrote:

'Kundalini is one of the greatest energies. The whole body of the seeker starts glowing because of the rising of the Kundalini. Because of that, unwanted impurities in the body disappear. The body of the seeker suddenly looks very proportionate and the eyes look bright and attractive and the eyeballs glow.'

- (Gyaneshwari, Chapter VI).

Guru Nanak Dev

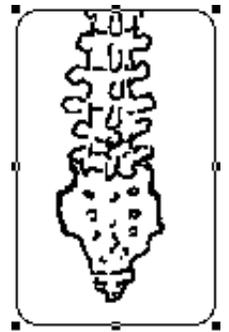
(born in 1496 AD) has made references to Kundalini awakening as mentioned below:

"A pure heart is the golden vessel to fill the Divine Nectar which is to be sucked from the 'Dasham Dwar' through the two channels 'Ida' and 'Pingala'." Dasham Dwar means Brahmrandhra. (Sahasrara Chakra).

'God has made this human body a house with six Chakras and has established the light of spirit in it. Cross the ocean of Maya and meet the eternal God who does not come, who does not go, who neither takes birth nor dies. When your six Chakras meet in line, Surati (Kundalini) takes you beyond distortions.' (Sri Guru Granth). Note that the seventh Chakra was not open at this time.

In the Holy Koran

Prophet Mohammed Sahib talked of the day of resurrection when he says that the 'hands will speak'. 'That day, we set a seal on their mouths, but their hands will speak to us, and their hands bear witness to all that they did.' When Kundalini awakening occurs, a flow of energy in the form of cool vibrations from the hands is experienced, and the various Chakras can be felt on parts of the hand and fingers.



The Sacrum
Bone:
Abode of the
Kundalini



Roman
God
Mercury

In the West

Christians called it a reflection of the Holy Ghost, and worshipped its manifestations as tongues of flames over the heads of apostles during the Pentecost reunion.

Moses

Moses saw it in the form of the burning bush. During the exodus the israelites lost faith and were smitten by fiery serpents so God told Moses "make thee a serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that everyone that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it on a pole, and it came to pass, that if a fiery serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived" An apt description of the healing qualities of the awakened Kundalini. Some of the Israelites even began to worship this symbol, and the practice of worshipping the brazen serpent on the pole as a god was either passed on, or was revived later. Bronze and stone serpent artifacts have been found in excavations in Canaan, Gezer and other parts of Israel!

Jesus

The Old Testament symbol becomes significant in christianity when Christ suggests Kundalini awakening, not just for the tribe of Israel but as the true destiny of all Christians: *“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even as the son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have eternal life”*

He says unequivocally in the Gnostic Gospel of Thomas and elsewhere, that *‘The Holy Spirit is My Mother’*. *‘The Kingdom of God is within you’* (Luke 17:21).

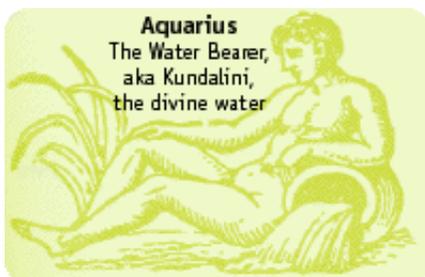


Tao

In the Tao Te Ching the primordial power is described as that of a mother. Lao Tze described Kundalini as the *“spirit of the valley”* (in which flows the Nadi of Sushumna). The spirit of the valley never dies. The spiritual instrument within us can be described as a microcosm (miniature form of creation) which links us with the Divine. The ancient esoteric text *“Scripture of the Golden Flower”* also spoke of the effects of the awakened kundalini energy.

Buddhist

The Lord Buddha spoke of the *“middle path”* to achieve nirvana. He was actually describing the central channel (sushumna) through which the Kundalini ascends. Later Buddhist masters considered that the existence of the path of liberation within a human being was the greatest secret. They transmitted it to only a few deserving disciples.



Other Cultures

One also finds symbols of Kundalini in many different cultural legacies, such as Mercury’s serpent which is an alchemical symbol for the process of psychic metamorphosis. The Gnostics understood the serpent to represent the spinal cord. In ancient Greek and later, Roman mythology, we find Asclepius, the god of healing. He is seen holding a staff which is entwined with a serpent (or sometimes two). Why did the Greeks relate this symbol

to healing? The staff represents the central support of the human body or spinal cord (physical location of the sushumna. In Rome Aesculapius came to be represented mercury who usually held a healing staff called the Caduceus. The one or two coiled snakes or serpents entwined around the staff, represent the kundalini which rises along the central subtle channel in a spiral double helical movement.



Summary

The Kundalini is there to nourish, to heal and look after and to give an individual a higher and deeper personality. The power of Kundalini is absolute purity, auspiciousness, chastity, self respect, pure love, detachment, concern for others and enlightened attention, to give infinite joy and peace to an individual.



From The Varieties of Religious Experience — by William James, 1902

Kundalini, living Fountain

“Between twenty and thirty I gradually became more and more agnostic and irreligious, yet I cannot say that I ever lost that ‘indefinite consciousness’ which Herbert Spencer describes so well, of an Absolute Reality behind phenomena. For me this Reality was not the pure Unknowable of Spencer’s philosophy, for although I had ceased my childish prayers to God, and never prayed to It in a formal manner, yet my more recent experience shows me to have been in a relation to It which practically was the same thing as prayer. Whenever I had any trouble, especially when I had conflict with other people, either domestically or in the way of business, or when I was depressed in spirits or anxious about affairs, I now recognize that I used to fall back for support upon this curious relation I felt myself to be in to this fundamental cosmical It. It was on my side, or I was on Its side, however you please to term it, in the particular trouble, and it always strengthened me and seemed to give me endless vitality to feel its underlying and supporting presence. In fact, It was an unfailing fountain of living justice, truth, and strength, to which I instinctively turned at times of weakness, and It always brought me out. I know now that it was a personal relation I was in to It, because of late years the power of communicating with It has left me, and I am conscious of a perfectly definite loss. I used never to fail to find It when I turned to It. Then came a set of years when sometimes I found it, and then again I would be wholly unable to make connection with it. I remember many occasions on which at night in bed, I would be unable to get to sleep on account of worry. I turned this way and that in the darkness, and groped mentally for the familiar sense of that higher mind of my mind which had always seemed to be close at hand as it were, closing the passage, and yielding support, but there was no electric current. A blank was there instead of It: I couldn’t find anything.

Now, at the age of nearly fifty, my power of getting into connection with it has entirely left me; and I have to confess that a great help has gone out of my life. Life has become curiously dead and indifferent; and I can now see that my old experience was probably exactly the same thing as the prayers of the orthodox, only I did not call them by that name. What I have spoken of as ‘It’ was practically not Spencer’s Unknowable, but just my own instinctive and individual God, whom I relied upon for higher sympathy, but whom somehow I have lost.”

Healing Power of the kundalini

“I went into town to do some shopping one morning, and I had not been gone long before I began to feel ill. The ill feeling increased rapidly, until I had pains in an my bones, nausea and faintness, headache, all the symptoms in short that precede an attack of influenza. My husband wished to send for the doctor. But I told him that I would rather wait until morning and see how I felt. Then followed one of the most beautiful experiences of my life.

“I cannot express it in any other way than to say that I did ‘lie down in the stream of life and let it flow over me.’ I gave up all fear of any impending disease; I was perfectly willing and obedient. There was no intellectual effort, or train of thought.

My dominant idea was: ‘Behold the handmaid of the Lord: be it unto me even as thou wilt,’ and a perfect confidence that all would be well, that all was well. The creative life was flowing into me every instant, and I felt myself allied with the Infinite, in harmony, and full of the peace that passeth understanding. There was no place in my mind for a jarring body. I had no consciousness of time or space or persons; but only of love and happiness and faith.

“I do not know how long this state lasted, nor when I fell asleep; but when I woke up in the morning, I was well.”

Awakening of the Kundalini

I experienced entire sanctification on the 15th day of March, 1893, about eleven o’clock in the morning. The particular accompaniments of the experience were entirely unexpected. I was quietly sitting at home singing selections out of Pentecostal Hymns. Suddenly there seemed to be a something sweeping into me and inflating my entire being- such a sensation as I had never experienced before.

When this experience came, I seemed to be conducted around a large, capacious, well-lighted room. As I walked with my invisible conductor and looked around, a clear thought was coined in my mind, ‘They are not here, they are gone.’ As soon as the thought was definitely formed in my mind, though no word was spoken, the Holy Spirit impressed me that I was surveying my own soul. Then, for the first time in all my life, did I know that I was cleansed from all sin, and filled with the fullness of God.”

Kundalini as Holy Spirit, the source of Christ’s Baptism

“All my feelings seemed to rise and flow out; and the utterance of my heart was, ‘I want to pour my whole soul out to God.’ The rising of my soul was so great that I rushed into the back room of the front office, to pray. There was no fire and no light in the room; nevertheless it appeared to me as if it were perfectly light. As I went in and shut the door after me, it seemed as if I met the Lord Jesus Christ face to face.

It did not occur to me then, nor did it for some time afterwards, that it was wholly a mental state. On the contrary, it seemed to me that I saw him as I would see any other man. He said nothing, but looked at me in such a manner as to break me right down at his feet. I have always since regarded this as a most remarkable state of mind; for it seemed to me a reality that he stood before me, and I fell down at his feet and poured out my soul to him. I wept aloud like a child, and made such confessions as I could with my choked utterance. It seemed to me that I bathed his feet with my tears; and yet I had no distinct impression that I touched him, that I recollect. I must have continued in this state for a good while; but my mind was too much absorbed with the



Above
Two ancient Chinese symbols, resembling the snake-like form of the Kundalini

interview to recollect anything that I said. But I know, as soon as my mind became calm enough to break off from the interview, I returned to the front office, and found that the fire that I had made of large wood was nearly burned out. But as I turned and was about to take a seat by the fire, I received a mighty baptism of the Holy Ghost. Without any expectation of it, without ever having the thought in my mind that there was any such thing for me, without any recollection that I had ever heard the thing mentioned by any person in the world, the Holy Spirit descended upon me in a manner that seemed to go through me, body and soul. I could feel the impression, like a wave of electricity, going through and through me. Indeed, it seemed to come in waves and waves of liquid love; for I could not express it in any other way. It seemed like the very breath of God. I can recollect distinctly that it seemed to fan me, like immense wings.

“No words can express the wonderful love that was shed abroad in my heart. I wept

aloud with joy and love; and I do not know but I should say I literally bellowed out the unutterable gushings of my heart. These waves came over me, and over me, and over me, one after the other, until I recollect I cried out, ‘I shall die if these waves continue to pass over me.’ I said, ‘Lord, I cannot bear any more;’ yet I had no fear of death.

“How long I continued in this state, with this baptism continuing to roll over me and go through me, I do not know. But I know it was late in the evening when a member of my choir- for I was the leader of the choir – came into the office to see me. He was a member of the church. He found me in this state of loud weeping, and said to me, ‘Mr. Finney, what ails you?’ I could make him no answer for some time. He then said, ‘Are you in pain?’ I gathered myself up as best I could, and replied, ‘No, but so happy that I cannot live.’”

Kundalini elevates to a state of effulgent happiness

“My tears of sorrow changed to joy, and I lay there praising God in such ecstasy of joy as only the soul who experiences it can realize.” – “I cannot express how I felt. It was as if I had been in a dark dungeon and lifted into the light of the sun. I shouted and I sang praise unto Him who loved me and washed me from my sins. I was forced to retire into a secret place, for the tears did flow, and I did not wish my shopmates to see me, and yet I could not keep it a secret.”- “I experienced joy almost to weeping.”- “I felt my face must have shone like that of Moses. I had a general feeling of buoyancy. It was the greatest joy it was ever my lot to experience.”- “I wept and laughed alternately. I was as light as if walking on air. I felt as if I had gained greater peace and happiness than I had ever expected to experience.”

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