

Prana and Kundalini - Secret Fire of the Alchemists -

Prana and Kundalini, two words used in yoga, have equivalents in alchemy in the oratory work.

The fact that the names given to these energies neither express their meaning nor nature leads to confusion and misunderstanding.

As said in the beginning of the alchemy course*, the cycle of the original undifferentiated energy divides into two opposing energies: an active energy, Niter, and a passive energy, Salt. We can say that Kundalini corresponds to the energies of Niter, and Prana corresponds to Salt energies. To adopt a language consistent with our traditions and culture, we will now call Prana: "Vital Energy" and Kundalini: "Spiritual Energy". Spiritual Energy is also called "Secret Fire" by the alchemists.

These two energies are omnipresent in the universe. They have a variety of supports whose nature varies their quantity and quality. By analogy, copper and silver are good conductors of electricity, and iron is a good conductor of magnetism.

The Vital Energy is manifested in the body by a kind of radiation. Not that the body radiates in the dark, but rather the body expresses a beauty, a kind of physical harmony.

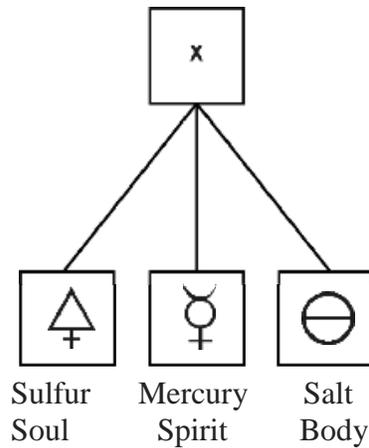
Vital Energy is abundant in plants and animals, and its primary role is to keep them alive. Surrounded with special care, plants and animals are capable of strongly radiating.

Conversely, Spiritual Energy is found only in the world in the human species, and it is what makes the difference between animals and men. But we must also add that it is still a potential in most beings because it is locked at the bottom of the spine, at the end of the spinal cord. The strong currents of the Vital Energy hold it prisoner there.

A further important difference between the two energies is the nature of their presence. The Spiritual Energy has a constant presence and a constant force independent of the cycles of nature. Conversely, the Vital Energy has variable presence and strength based on lunar and solar cycles. The Spiritual Energy is likened to the Sun as a constant light source, and by analogy with consciousness, which has a permanent spark. It is both attractive and contractive while Vital Energy is externalized as beautiful blooming flowers.

The Spiritual Energy is the realm of Eternity and nothing in this world can affect it. We must say that it being locked at the base of the spine is not total. A small portion escapes and it is this weakened energy that gives man his self-consciousness, the sense of I. The thought of "I am" is a sign of the activity of the infinitesimal part of the Spiritual Energy that crosses the barrier of the currents of the Vital Energy. But the trapped Spiritual Energy is in endless supply. In the body of man, it is linked to the breathing rhythm. With each inhalation, it rises through Sephirotic centers to a certain height that characterizes the level of consciousness reached by the individual, and it goes down as we exhale.

The levels attained by the Spiritual Energy can be divided into three areas corresponding to the alchemical Salt, Sulphur and Mercury.



- When consciousness resides in the lower parts of the body, the Salt dominates: consciousness is attached to material pleasures. The people concerned are generally of a very limited mind and the primitive instincts are strong within them. They do not easily comprehend abstract concepts of truth, virtue and crime does not frighten them.

- When Sulphur dominates, consciousness lies in the heart area. These people are very active, and they easily amass riches. Their spirit is awakened by all things, both by those of the world and by those of religion. They painfully feel the frustrations of their conscience.

- In the Mercury stage, consciousness resides in the head, neck and throat. The persons concerned are attracted by the mystical and occult sides of life and nature, and it is in them that the awakening of the Spiritual Energy most surely happens.

All levels of consciousness are accessible to people in whom this energy is not yet awake, because a person can, with a small portion of Spiritual Energy, escape their lower nature, dominate it, and raise and concentrate that energy in the highest levels.

If one manages to first weaken, and then momentarily remove the currents of Vital Energy, the spiritual currents are released and, with tremendous force, they wrap the body for a moment, and this body is perceived in an instant as a bright unlimited light.

This experience occurs when the vital currents cease with death, but it can also be produced by various methods. It is obviously easier during the Winter solstice, around Christmas, when the Vital Energy is at a minimum in nature. It can present various ways:

- The bright light may, for the person concerned, take on the appearance of an angel or a "self" or a spiritual teacher.

- It can cause astral projection with the corresponding perception of the surrounding environment.

- It can cause operation at the second state of the intellect without relation to the normal nature of logic.

- It can also cause uncontrolled physical movements: tremor, rapid breathing, spinning, swinging or hieratic position.

This awakening experience of Spiritual Energy is one of the keys to entering the occult path and corresponds to a rebirth. Shortly after, the disruption of Vital Energy ceases and the Spiritual Energy is again locked at the base of the spine.

After the experience, body and mind are readjusted to fit the new light of this initiation. The body changes subtly, becoming sensitive to various modes of perception different from current perceptions. Unconsciously, the physical changes but the mental change mainly depends on the conscious effort made at this stage.

The second experience on this mystical path will be of great importance. Indeed, the rise of Spiritual Energy will be from its rest position to the top of the head. This will be the beginning of spiritual regeneration. In this second experience, the Spiritual Energy will trace a path that can no longer be completely blocked by the Vital Energy.

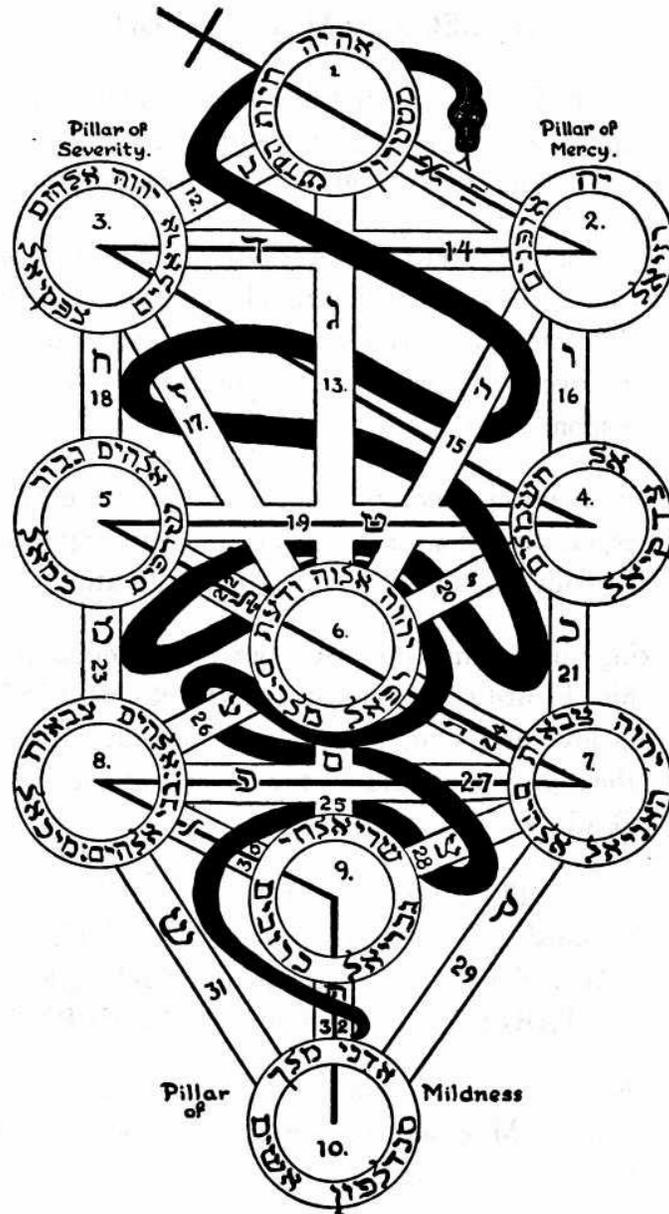
There is much confusion about the different methods for the rise of Spiritual Energy. It is best to remember that this energy is full of Intelligence, that this increase should not be artificially induced without completing the correct preparation.

We said at the beginning of this text that we translate the word Kundalini into "Spiritual Energy". This is not entirely possible, because the word Kundalini is used in two different ways: the one we have given it of Spiritual Energy and one to indicate where the energy enters and remains blocked.

Before describing the effects of the Spiritual Energy, we must say that its arousal disrupts and destabilizes the currents of Vital Energy. These give more dramatic effects than those of the Spiritual Energy but should not be confused with them. Thus, it can produce feelings of "light" that accompany strong warm currents along the spine. The Vital Energy can concentrate heavily in some areas, especially in the top of the head, near the center of Kether, and this acts like a diamond on this center; so that the researcher may believe that he had an awakening of the Spiritual Energy on the center of Kether but the phenomena are due only to the Vital Energy. This confusion, due to poor information, presents no real danger but may discourage the researcher in the pursuit of his awakening.

The Spiritual Energy is much less spectacular in its ascent and the various following phenomena may occur:

1. A series of severe pains that can create the idea of disease.
2. A feeling of ants slowly climbing and jumping here and there instead of heading to the center of the head.
3. The Energy may, with a sense of calm like the waters of a lake and without awe or fear, go from one center to another to the center of the head.
4. The rise can be achieved in zigzag as if following the undulating body of a snake, hence the fire-serpent name.
5. The Energy may skip one or more centers and stop only after a jump.
6. The energy can reach the center of the head in a flash of light.



When the Spiritual Energy reaches the skull and goes beyond by forming a kind of flower, there is a well-defined feeling and consciousness is awakened to a high level of bliss, while the vital forces are again reinforced and revitalize the body. This state is represented in the Qabala by the head of the snake turned towards Kether, its tongue touching the eleventh Path. This causes, a symbol of this Path, the scintillating intelligence. The Spiritual Energy then withdraws again to the base of the spinal column. The result is a surprise for the aspirant because the body and mind are strongly revitalized and the strengths and weaknesses of character are greatly exaggerated. It is therefore quite possible that the aspirant is strongly disrupted by sexual urges the next day.

A long period of gradual progress begins. At this stage of awakening, conscious work on the vital force becomes possible. It follows a spiritual regeneration, and the various aspects of intelligence begin to shine. Sometimes the energy awakens only one center and the consequences are:

Centers	Consequences
Base of the spine	Mastery of the 4 elements
Genitalia region	Power of pleasure
Heart	Understanding
Throat	Clairaudience
Base of the nose	Clairvoyance

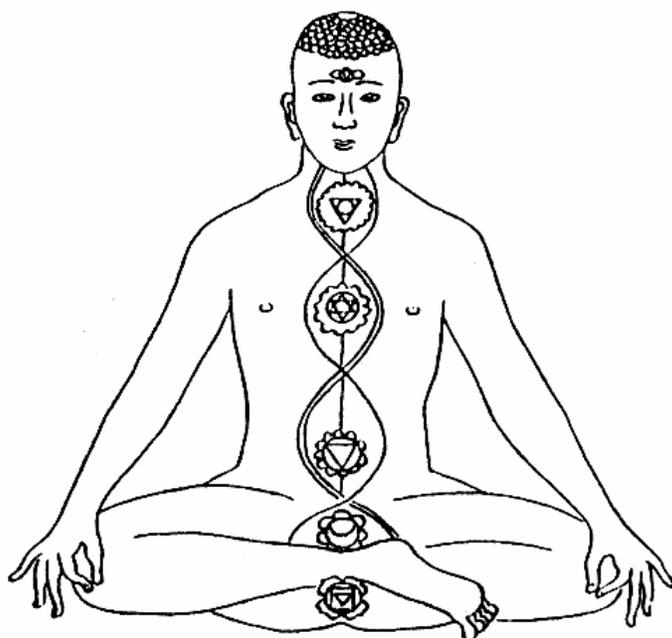
Theoretically, no center can be opened before the center of the top of the head. The original purpose of the rise of Spiritual Energy is to allow the beginning of conscious work with this energy. The successive opening of the centers is the second goal but there is danger in overemphasizing especially on the lower centers, the conscience of the believer can be damaged in this case. Each experience encourages aspiring students to persevere on the path.

It has been said that the awakening gradually gave a power to control and use the Vital Energy. But it is useful now to understand that the revitalization or the awakening of the centers by either energy does not give the same result.

If the center has not been awakened by the Spiritual Energy, the concentration of the Vital Energy on the center immediately gives a number of conscious results such as color perceptions, sounds or, in other areas not easy to explain such as global sensations giving at once an identical perception to the simultaneous integration of the five senses.

But these experiences will only be temporary and related to the activity cycle of the Vital Energy. By contrast, the concentration of the Spiritual Energy and resulting awakening will not give immediately conscious results: there will be no cycle or decline but an irreversible progress proportionate to the efforts of the aspirant.

With the beginning of regeneration through Spiritual Energy commence other experiences, the main one being a specific feeling of entering another dimension where an inner education gradually becomes accessible. It can also happen that an altered state of consciousness occurs wherein a person perceives that state of consciousness, different from the ordinary physical condition. This often ends in a slowing of breathing and a kind of spiritual trance that brings vitality and renewal to the body. This condition sometimes brings a cataleptic state where speech itself is no longer possible. Prior long preparation is necessary, because the benefit provided is beyond the physical world and can result in a kind of distress and disorientation of the mind.



The Spiritual Energy does not obey physical man. This pervasive energy is comparable to a pressure just waiting to act.

Modification of the Vital Energy, as well as the composition of the adept's blood (which can be changed by plants and metal elixirs), causes a gradual release of the Spiritual Energy.

The successive development of the centers, after the Spiritual Energy reaches Kether, gradually leads to a definitive state which can be understood through several words. This may be the State of Grace described by some religions, but we can also say that the aspirant has become a Child of God and has attained eternal life.

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** The alchemy course by Jean Dubuis, was published by the association The Philosophers of Nature and is available on this site (Editor's note)*