

## CADUCEUS – AN EASTERN VIEW

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### ABSTRACT

The Caduceus - the symbol of medical profession carries with its origin many concepts. The symbol has in its composition, parts totally unconnected to our physical body and yet it represents symbolically the art of healing. On the other hand, the symbol might have been to mean something else, invisible, located within our body which is beneficial for the human as a whole. Charles W. Leadbeater presented the concept of Kundalini as the basis for the symbol Caduceus.

### INTRODUCTION :

Symbol by definition, is supposed to represent something invisible like an idea. An idea is nothing but a conviction or an opinion produced, after thought or observation. No wonder, then, the Caduceus – the symbol of medical profession carries with its origin many concepts. Its components namely the Hermes wand, pair of serpents criss crossing each other and a pair of wings of hawk bird depict their sacred nature (Fig. 1). Hermes wand which forms the back bone of this symbol is

known for its healing powers. The serpents stand for element of eternity and the hawk bird wings are supposed to represent the Sun God (1,2). The symbol thus formed, has in its composition, parts totally unconnected to our physical body and yet it represents symbolically the art of healing. On the other hand, the symbol might have been to mean something else, invisible, located within our body which is beneficial for the human as a whole. The object of this article is to discuss such an idea which has not been discussed in the medical literature.

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## DISCUSSION

KUNDALINI CONCEPT – AN  
EASTERN VIEW

In later part of 18th century, Charles W. Leadbeater a well known savant of occult and mysticism literature brought home the concept of Kundalini as the basis for the symbol Caduceus. It's meaning in medicine, though not denote physical healing, indicates the hidden energy which can take us to higher levels of consciousness by transcending the body and ego.

The sanskrit word KUNDAL means "coiled" and KUNDALINI means "coiled up". Serpent, while resting lies in a coiled position. Likewise, this hidden energy in our body lie coiled in the base of our spine. The subject of KUNDALINI is described in the Hindu scripture of Tantras (3). The philosophy of Tantras is based on the Upanishads, which is essentially non dualistic, meaning the individual Soul and Brahman (God) are one and the same. Our purpose of being born as a human is to merge with the source – the one who created us. This can be achieved only by means of transcending our basic nature of desire, ego, attachment to our physical body and materialistic life. It requires great discipline, rigid moral and ethical code of conduct of our lives. These practises coupled with meditation

and yoga awakens the dormant KUNDALINI energy. It has no form or organ. It is a vital and an occult force which sustains all beings by means of inspiration and expiration. The energy thus created travels along the two NADIS (Channels). The channel on the left of the spinal column is called IDA which is connected to left nostril. The channel on the right is called PINGALA which is connected to the right nostril. The central channel known as SUSHUMNA is situated in the hollow of the spinal column which runs from the lower lumbar segment to the brain (Fig. 2). The channels of IDA and PINGALA coil around the channel of SUSHUMNA like two serpents coil round in Caduceus. The central SUSHUMNA channel is believed to represent the Hermes' wand.

The dormant energy of KUNDALINI when awakened travels along the channel of SUSHUMNA in an upward direction. On its path are located seven CHAKRAS or wheels (Fig. 3). These are subtle psychic centres and thought to be present in our Etheric body, which Dr. William Tiller describes as negative frame of our body. He incorporates these CHAKRAS in his scientific model (4). They are closely related to the endocrine system of our body. The first two CHAKRAS are related to adrenal gland and gonads and are located in connection with the anal and genital system. According to

Dr. Samuel Sandweiss (5), Freud's description of anal and sexual attitudes arise from these two CHAKRAS. Such an individual acting from these two CHAKRAS are very aggressive and hostile in nature. He goes on to state that several of psychiatric illnesses are related to anal and sexual attitudes in different proportions, and psychiatrists ought to elevate such individuals to the higher CHAKRAS in order to achieve a total and wholesome person, by channelling the energy to arise from these two basic and coarser centres. The third CHAKRA is situated in relation to pancreas, the fourth one near the heart in relation to thymus gland, the fifth one in the neck in relation to thyroid, the sixth one situated on the brow in between the eyes (the third eye) in relation to pituitary gland. The seventh one is situated over the crown of the head in relation to pineal gland, which is believed to receive the Cosmic vibrations. Corresponding changes occur in our consciousness, emotion and mind depending upon the successive awakening of the different CHAKRAS. Once we reach the seventh CHAKRA, the soul is able to leave by transcending the physical body and a mystic union takes place with the Supreme Lord

who resides here (6). The rising from the base CHAKRAS— one and two—to these higher levels of consciousness is represented by the two wings of the caduceus. The nerves connected to the spinal cord act like a channel to carry the message from these CHAKRAS (7). Swami Vivekanand, the great Hindu wandering saint stated that 'wherever there was any manifestation of what is ordinarily called supernatural power or wisdom, there a little current of KUNDALINI must have found its way into the SUSHUMNA. The man who thinks that he is receiving responses to his prayers does not know that the fulfilment comes from his own nature that he has succeeded by the mental attitude of prayer in waking up a bit of this infinite power which is coiled up within himself' (8).

## CONCLUSION

The Eastern concept of caduceus reveals a hidden system of energy in our anatomy, which has the potential of merging us with the Source of our origin— God which is the purpose of every human birth. Writing on this subject Dr Evans—Wentz states that "we see again how that esoteric symbol of the West corresponds to that of the east" (9)

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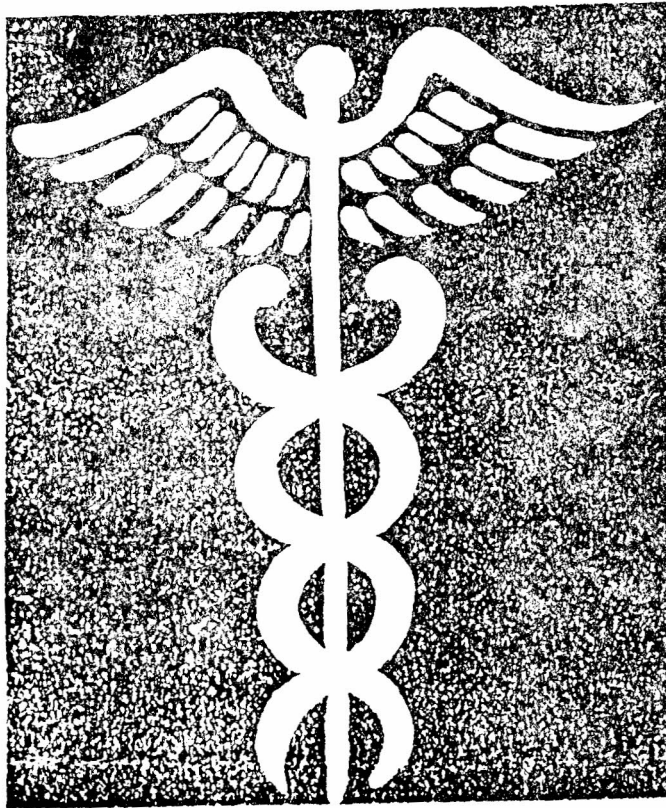


Figure 1. Caduceus

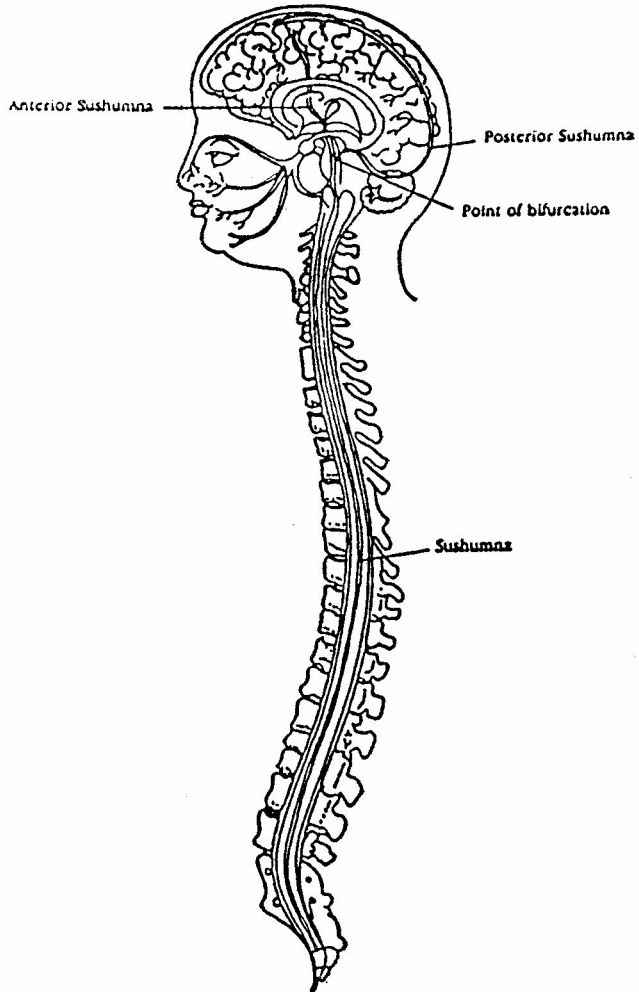


Fig. 2. Origin and Termination of Susbumna

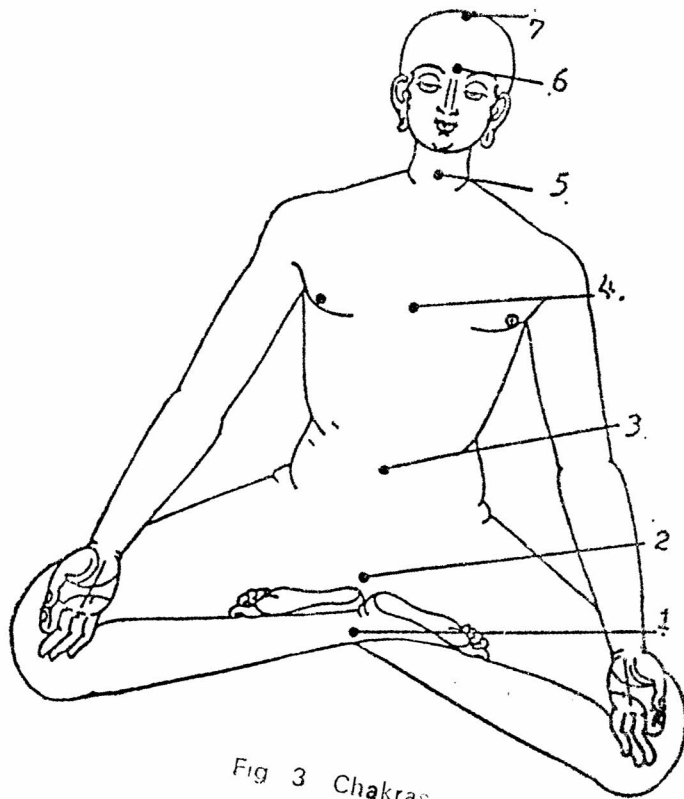


Fig 3 Chakras

सारांश

## केड्जूसिएस-पूर्वी दृष्टिकोण

— एस. सिवा

चिकित्सा व्यवसाय का चिह्न-केड्जूसिएस प्रारम्भ से ही अनेक विचारों का प्रतीक माना जाता है। इस चिह्न की संरचना में समाविष्ट अंगों का हमारे शरीर के साथ किसी भी प्रकार का सम्बन्ध न होने पर भी यह चिकित्सा कला का प्रतिनिधित्व करता है। इसके अतिरिक्त यह चिह्न हमारे शरीर के कुछ और अदृश्य विषयों का भी चोख हो सकता है जो कि मानव के लिए हितकारी होते हैं। चार्ल्स डब्ल्यू लेडबीटर ने कुण्डलिनी को इस चिह्न के आधारभूत विचार के रूप में प्रस्तुत किया है।