

*The Kundalini Process: A Continuum of Biopsychospiritual Evolution within the Sociocultural Context of the Hindu Yogic Tradition*

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Abstract

This dissertation will research the problem of defining the phenomenon known as kundalini in the Hindu yogic tradition. In order to define the kundalini experience as a whole, common or general themes will be identified, followed by further categories of more specific, differentiated aspects of this experience.

In many writings on this subject, kundalini is discussed as a separate phenomenon. This dissertation will present kundalini as an experience within a continuum of spiritual development. In the Hindu tradition, yoga, or more specifically, the various yogic paths, and meditation are the necessary spiritual practices that ideally or theoretically precede the kundalini experience to ensure proper preparation for it. These spiritual practices also must continue through the many stages of experience that the kundalini process entails, as the findings will portray.

The most significant focus of this research is and has been the lengthy, emergent, exploratory approach of learning and researching the many divergent facets of the kundalini process, culminating in a synthesis of this diversity through a focus on the spinal nadi system. Except for rare, brief descriptions in few writings, which are included throughout this dissertation, I have brought together these scattered references in order to create a rich, lengthy, narrative description of each of the nadi systems within the kundalini process, both as subcategories and as a united whole.