

# Śrī Chakra Sādhana

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Śrī Vidyā, Śrī chakra,  
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**Śrī Vidyā is an ancient concept that has both individual and universal aspect. In fact, it is both a process and a name of Lalitā, one of the Ten Mahāvidyās. The understanding of Śrī chakra is a part of Śrī Vidyā. The model of the created universe inherent in the Śrī chakra provides also a way for sādhana. The paper attempts to present a do-able sādhana which, even though does not touch on pujas, gives a powerful possibility to walk on the Inner path towards the discovery of samhāra – absorption into the Source of everything.**

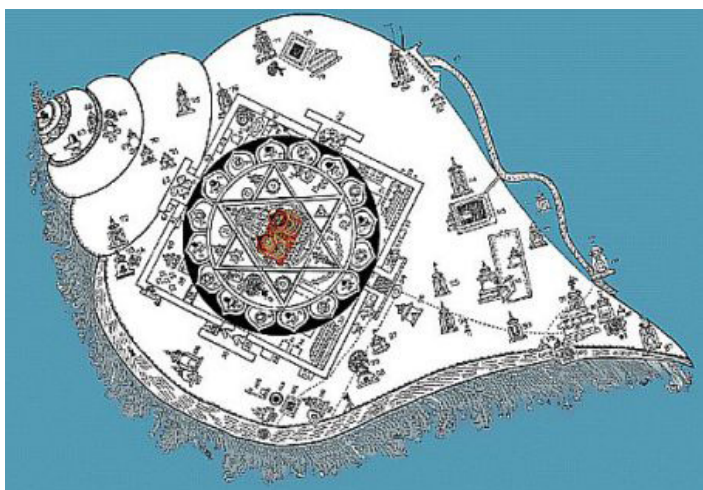
## 1 Introduction

*Śrī chakra* is a very specific geometric model of the life related processes present in the Creation. It is a part of the mysterious *Śrī Vidyā* – the science of creation (Veda Bharati 2011). *Śrī chakra* is an excellent example of sacred geometry, where the principles on the basis of which it is created, have many meta-dimensions. *Śrī Vidyā* is a science in the non-orthodox sense and it has apparent manifestations – like temple designs (Fig. 1). One can find related hidden cryptic information also in temple grounds (Fig. 2). *Śrī Vidyā* related philosophy is considered more present in South India, but has a universal appeal.



### About the author

**Doc. Ing. Gejza M. Timčák, PhD.** (1942) is a yoga tutor and author of a number of yoga related books like *Joga 1–4* in Slovak (6 editions), *Joga 1–2* in Hungarian (2 editions), *Yoga 1* in German (1 edition), *Personal Development Strategies in Yoga*, translation of the *Gheranda Samhita*, *Goraksha Shatakam*, *Aparoksha Anubhuti*, *Sarva Upanishad*, *Satkarma Sangraha* or *Shat Chakra Nirupanam*. On conferences and courses he had countless presentations on diverse yoga subjects. He co-authored books (e.g. teaching materials for Slovak Yoga Association's yoga teacher courses), films (e.g. *Disregarded Possibilities*), and videos (e.g. *Hitting the Bull's Eye*) on yoga. He is a co-developer of the *Savita Yoga* style, president of the Slovak Yoga Association, and chairman of the Association for the Advancement of Yoga. His activities relate also to the European Union of Yoga. He teaches yoga in various European and Asian countries. His email contact is [timcak.gejza@atk.sk](mailto:timcak.gejza@atk.sk).



**Fig. 1.**  
**Śrī chakra as a basis for Vastu Shastra**  
**temple design (Sreenivasa Rao 2017).**

The Śrī chakra has been in the center of interest also of mathematicians, who tried to unravel the hidden message in its geometry (Kulaichev 1984). There findings, though are more of academic interest, even if they make the design of the Śrī chakra more exact.

The Indian spirituality is much centered around offerings (*pūja*) and coming "behind" the outer manifestation through addressing the Patrons or Deities related to their various aspects and levels (Ramachandra Rao 2008, Ravi 2013). This is a devotional approach, which for Europeans who do not have the same cultural and spiritual background, is difficult to practice authentically. The interpretative explanation of the Śrī chakra, however has a great number of aspects which offer an excellent *sādhana* that is not dependent on *pūjas*.

The Śrī chakra and the related *sādhana* is governed by Śrī Lalitā – who is called also *Rāja-rājeśvarī* or *Tripura Sundarī* as well as by other names and attributes (Narayana Menon 2011) –, is one of the Ten Mahāvidyās, representatives of the non-conformist aspects of the Divine Feminine.

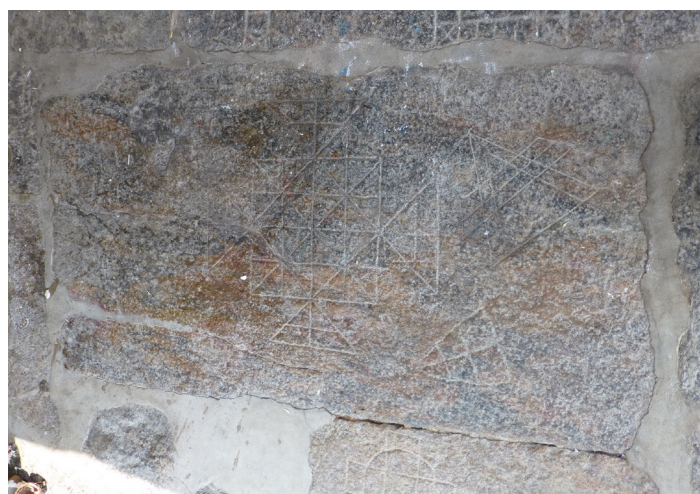
It was in the Swami Rama where the thought about transforming the Śrī chakra system of *sādhana* into a set of practices suitable for western practitioners matured. The presented *sādhana* structure uses elements that appear in the traditional system of Śrī chakra interpretation, but is projected into a *sādhana* frame that take into consideration modern trends in yoga.

## 2 The Śrī Chakra Sādhana

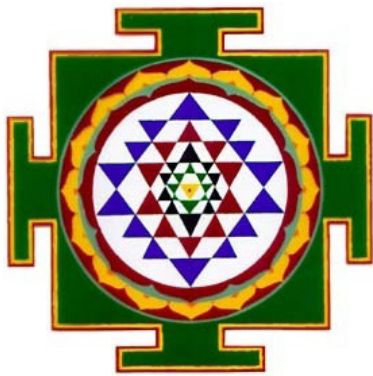
The construction of the Śrī chakra is such that it includes nine levels. These levels represent certain aspects of creation, both on the individual level as well as on the universal level. The nine levels have their names, Patrons and Guardians, mantras and associated parts of the human *kośas*. Fig. 3 shows a 2D version of the Śrī chakra and Fig. 4, shows the 3D version of Śrī chakra.

The Śrī chakra is composed of a square base surrounded by three "lines of protection" and with four gates, then it contains three circles, two lotus flowers – one with sixteen petals and one with eight petals. Then the triangular composition comes. There are nine triangles positioned in such a way that they form four levels of triangular "spikes", plus a central triangle and a dot in the center. The dot (which is above the level, where the *sahasrāra* is present) symbolizes the undifferentiated Śiva and Śakti (*Tripura Sundarī*, *Lalitā*, *Kāmakalā*, *Parā Bhaktārikā*, *Mahā Kāmeśvarī*, *Śrī Vidyā*). Of the whole theory of the Śrī only the basics are discussed in order to enable the understanding of the *sādhana* (practical part) and its implications.

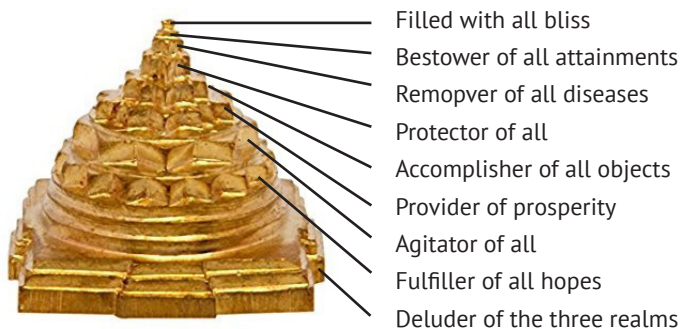
The Śrī chakra represents the Centre of the manifested universe in which we live. Technically, it does not deal with the energies and emanations that lead to the creation described in the *Saundariya Lahiri* (Subrahmanya and Ayyangar 1977), but deals with the processes linked to the life that is created through the burden of *avidyā* (improper understanding of the essence of life) and that is placed into the perceptible universe.



**Fig. 2.** Śrī Vidyā related drawings cut into floor  
slabs in the Arunachala Temple in Tiruvannamalai.  
Visitors will rarely pay attention to them.



**Fig. 3. A colored version of 2D Śrī chakra. It is built of a square base, two lotus flowers, five downward pointing, four upward pointing triangles and a dot. The colors are added only for clarity.**



**Fig. 4. The nine levels and their names of the Śrī chakra shown on a 3D Śrī chakra model (Devshoppe 2017).**

The various elements and sub-elements of the Śrī chakra levels, possess a number of Guardian principles. The Guardian principles or simply Guardians can be understood in two ways: either as a spiritual entity inducing certain moods into the sādha's (or anyone's) mind, or as a continuum which has the possibility to induce its information content into the mind of anyone. Thus, the sādha learns how to avoid their negative aspects. On the lower level the Guardians have mainly a protective function – they guard off those sādhas, who are not yet qualified for the sādhanā. Thus, the first part of the sādhanā is related to either "off-line" reflection (*viparita paramarsha*) on the day and reviewing how far could one discover the projections of the Guardians or "on-line" awareness of the processes in the mind and preventing identification with the moods induced by the Guardians. To aid this process, the Śrī chakra sādhanā contains also a series of āsanās, where during upkeeping the āsana, one's mind does the *viparita paramarsha* – trying to remember events related to a given mood or mental state projected by the selected Guardians [1] and other practices.



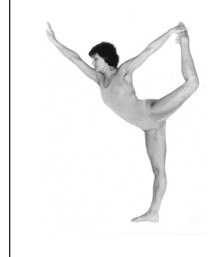
First, the protection of the practitioner (*sādhaka*) is considered, where he is supposed to have siddhis in order to protect him/herself. This is not very realistic, but everyone can have "virtual siddhis". This e.g. means that everyone knows situations, when one would like to be bigger – in order to match a life situation. Still, during the actual process, it may not be possible, due to lack of energy, but at home, when remembering the situation one may imagine that he/she grows to a size that enables to cope with the given situation. This may encourage one to work harder towards a better energy level.

Below, a set of Guardian principles which govern certain mental states are given. Here only their scope of influence is enumerated:

1. Passionate longing, violent anger, insatiable avarice, dazed fascination for the world, obstinacy, tormenting jealousy, "sinful" disturbances of mind, benign inspiration towards merit;
2. Dark looking appearance (gloominess), indignation, fierce mentality, thoughtlessness, intoxication, enviousness, capacity to absorb;
3. Further, Guardian influence may cause the impulse to agitate all; chase all, fascinate all, subjugate all, driving all mad, goading all, moving around in thin air (to become ungrounded), sprouting everything (making things happen), then one may have the need of the power of great Source of everything and desire to rule all.

It can be seen, that it is a demanding task to cope with them. In order to keep the attention on the above mentioned *viparita paramarsha*, a series of āsanās are to be learned and used for the *viparita paramarsha*. Three of the set of āsanās are given in Tab. 1. During upkeeping the āsana one is reflecting on the appropriate Guardian induced mood or mental process with the emphasis on whether it occurred in the past period and whether it left an imprint in our mind, with a projected effect on our present state of mind and future intentions. If yes, then the appropriate mantra given below (Sedláček and Timčák 2017) is being used in such a way that it "dissolves" the traces left behind by the selected life event. Then the sādha can come out of the āsana. Then a short period of relaxation comes, and one either continues with the same Guardian induced mood or mental process related to another life event, or can proceed to the next Guardian induced mood or mental process. As this process may take more than 20 minutes, one has to decide, how many āsanās and reflections would one do each day. When the mind is able to ward off the improper reactions on-line process, āsanās are no longer needed.



Ability to desire – "materialize things"	Question of staying with the feeling of indignation	Ability to be- come light
<i>Trikonāsana</i>	<i>Ardha Chandrāsana</i>	<i>Hamsāsana</i>
		
<i>siddhi</i>	<i>Ruru</i>	<i>siddhi</i>
am ám sauh	am ám sauh	am ám sauh

**Tab. 1. The āsana part of the Śrī chakra sādhanā. The first line represents the selected Guardian induced mood or mental process, the second the āsana name, the third the image of the āsana, the fourth the Guardian or principle, and the fifth the mantra of the given level ("enclosure"). There are 55 āsanās for this practice (Photographs Timčák *et al.* 2003).**

It has to be noted, that it is important to see how we reacted to some Guardian induced mood or mental process. This is because even in case of *benign inspiration towards merit*, what matters is, whether we do it naturally, or we feel "great", as someone who is a bit better than those, who did not do a good deed. If such tendency is discovered, then one has to learn to dissociate from such impulses through using the appropriate mantra.

After the āsana, comes the second part, which is meditative. One can visualize oneself as if placing oneself on the basic square of the Śrī chakra shown in Fig. 4 and align oneself with the center of the Śrī chakra. This is a classical projection that indicates our intention to merge into our Source, or into the "Universal Mother". This is in tune with the Indian Vedic tradition of identification with the Principle which will be aimed at in the subsequent meditation.

In the sādhanā, mantras have an important role. As shown by Alper (2012), mantras may not be effective right from its first use. But by every use, one will get to a point, when they suddenly open their energies to us and allow the Realization to happen. In the Laksmi Tantra (39:35) it is said: "*The meditated repetition of a mantra is for achieving success in every endeavour.*"

Mantras are a key element of this training and so it is important to say that they represent a vocal, vibrational and rhythmic code of internal experience discovered usually by ancient

yogis. They may be as short as a syllable or long as a verse. Their correct recitation evokes the same experience the code of which they are. In the Śrī chakra sādhanā usually only *bīja* ("seed") *mantras* are used and they differ for every level.

Before starting Śrī chakra sādhanā, it is beneficial to practice the Śrī Vidya Gayatri for the period of several weeks to prepare the mind for the sādhanā (Sedláček 2015).

*Aim Tripuradevi vidmahe  
Klīm Kameshvarī cha dhīmahi  
Sauh tanno klinnā prachodayat.*

The *bīja mantras* do not have translation, and convey the respective energies of the Śrī (Śakti) in an undiluted form. It is important though that their recitation follows the ancient tradition. Therefore, they were worked into a recorded rendition (Sedláček and Timčák 2017). At this resource, a detailed guide for the sādhanā is also given.

To have an overview of the areas covered by the Śrī chakra sādhanā, the basic data on the nine levels are listed below.

#### **The first level: "Deluder of the three realms" (*Trailokyamohana*)**

Chakra: there is no chakra associated to this level.  
Key mantra: *Om Am ām sauh.*

For the relevant part of the Śrī chakra see Fig. 5. The three realms mentioned in the name of this level are perceived as the underworld, material world and spiritual world. The relevant part of the Śrī chakra represents a square with four gates surrounded by lines. They represent the three groups of Guardian principles already given above.

#### **The second level: "Fulfiller of all hopes" (*Sarvāśāparipūraka*)**

Chakra: Mūlādhāra.  
Key mantra: *Aim klīm sauh.*

This level is symbolized by a lotus flower of sixteen petals. Below the lotus there are three circles. These three circles are protecting symbols. This level is associated with the concept of chakras. The chakras are energy and information distribution centers.

There are also sixteen associated guardian principles here. These Guardians are considered "hidden" (they seem to be a part of us and of our life processes) and are testing one by:

Attractions pertaining to desire, intellect, ego (*ahamkāra*, the source of our individual consciousness and personality traits), sounds, perceptible forms, taste, smell, thoughts, fortitude, recollections, verbal labels, self-hood, immortality and body.

### The third level: "Agitator of all" (*Sarvasankshobana*)

Chakra: Svādhīsthāna, Manipūra.

Key mantra: *Om Hrīm klīm sauh.*

This level is characterized by a lotus flower with eight petals. There are eight Guardian principles associated with this level. The Guardian principles are even more "hidden" than in the previous level as they are hidden in our body and mind. They are: speech and expression, apprehensions and receptions (that, what we receive through our senses or through other beings), locomotion, urges of the body and eliminations, pleasurable feelings, rejections and reactions, attention, detachment and dispassion. To give an example of incorrect perception of these principles: we may be detached or dispassionate, but in improper context (e.g. detached from processes, where our dharma requires us to be active).

### The fourth level: "Provider of all prosperity" (*Sarvasaubhāgyadāyaka*)

Chakra: Anāhata.

Key mantra: *Om haim hklīm hsauh.*

Within this level, we have the first girdle of triangular "spikes" that symbolize the energies granting "all prosperity". There are fourteen triangular "spikes" that correspond with fourteen Guardian principles. Here the Guardian principles are linked to *nāḍīs*.

Yoga defines are 72,000 *nāḍīs* (subtle energy channels), but fourteen are the most important (as given for this level). From these three are most important: *idā*, *pingala* and *susumnā*. Fig. 6. shows the assumed network of *nāḍīs* that emerge from the *prāṇāyāma kośa* and penetrates the body (neither the chakras, nor the *nāḍīs* as physical in character). Here it is interesting to note that the concept of *nāḍī* is not that well defined as those of the meridians of Chinese medicine. Below are listed the description of the fourteen *nāḍīs*.



**Fig. 5. Example of the selected region (enclosure) of the Śrī chakra – the first level, "The deluder of the three realms (Trailokyamohana)", where the sādhanā starts.**

The Guardian principles represented by the fourteen *nāḍīs* are: agitator of all – *alambushā*, chaser of all – *kuhū*, attractor of all – *visvodarā*, delighter of all – *varunā*, deluder of all – *hastijihvā*, arrestor of all – *yasashvini*, releaser of all – *payasvinī*, controller of all – *gāndhārī*, delighter of all – *pūsā*, maddener of all – *śāṅkhinī*, accomplisher of all objectives – *sarasvatī*, provider of all wealth – *idā*, made up of all the mantras – *pingala*, destroyer of all duality – *susumnā*.

To make these twin concepts more understandable, we can note that e.g. *alambushā* starts in the lower abdomen in a center called *kanda* and ends in the mouth. Thus, what goes into the mouth can agitate the whole body, what goes out from the mouth can agitate the environment where we live.

*Susumnā* starts from the base of the spine to the crown of the head, up through the center of the spine. Its function is to ensure *sattva*, illumination. Thus, when it is active, the dual perception of the world and existence ceased to be manifested in us.

*Idā* is starting from the left nostril, moving to the crown of the head and descending to the base of the spine. Its function is cooling (*tamas*), inertia. Wealth is related to an ability to retain and thus here *tamas* may help to retain all wealth we could have in whatever form.

*Pingala* starts at the right nostril moving to the crown and down the spine to the base. Its function is burning (*rajas*), action. Mantra is a tool for communicating the power given to it by its Source. Mantras are expressions of the Śakti or Śrī. All the mantras help to achieve specific abilities and goals. In

ordinary life they are to be expressed through our life and if used properly, we can see their impact.

*Gāndhārī* is one of the *nādīs* said to be behind the *idā nādī*, terminating near the left eye, regulating the function of sight. The eye is the means how we monitor and in a way control processes that happen around us.

*Hastijihvā* is located in front of the *idā nādī*, terminating near the right eye, regulating the function of sight, seeing. The world as we see it is a delusion as the version of outer world presented through the sight is produced by our mental software and does not really correspond to the reality.

*Yasashvini nādī* (before *pingala*, between *gāndhārī* and *sarasvatī*) ends in the left ear and starts at the left big toe. The impulse to arrest/restrict may them from the reactions to heard information.

*Pūsā nādī* is situated behind *pingala*, terminating at the right ear. Its function is hearing. The ability to delight all may come from the skill to translate that what was heard to a constructive and positive form.

*Alambushā* connects the mouth and *kanda* (its functions are given in the text above).

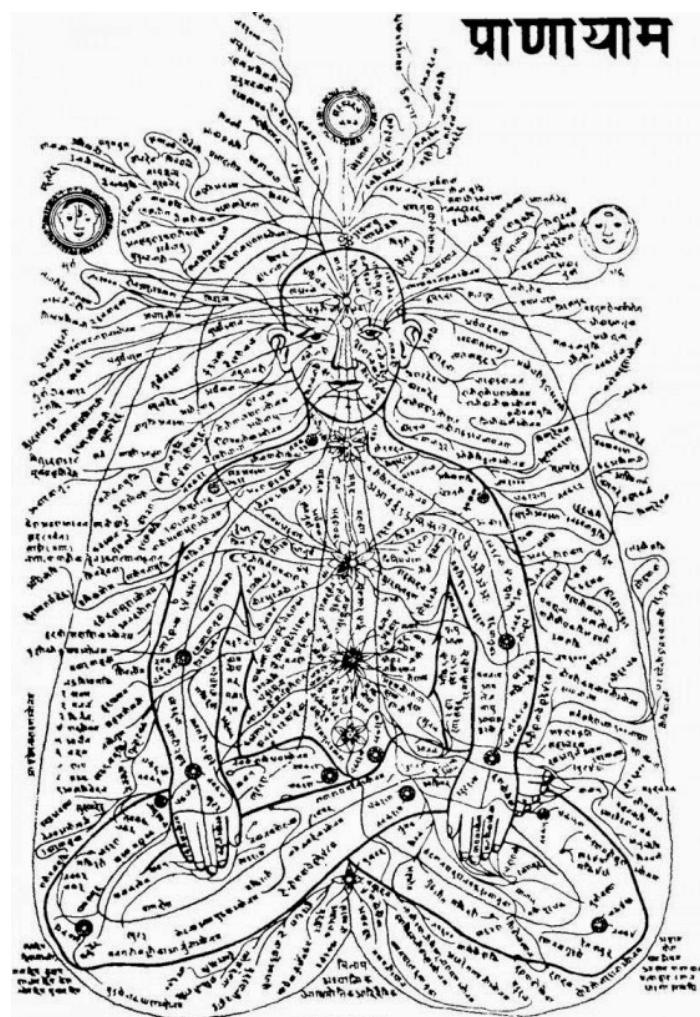
*Kuhū* is one of the *nādīs* that is located in front of the *su-sumnā*. Its function is to evacuate. Thus, "chaser of all" means also that there may be in us a drive to express excessively.

*Śāṅkhinī* terminates at the genital organs and is situated between *gāndhārī* and *sarasvatī*. It carries the essence of food. Thus it may express also the will to charm ("madden") the opposite gender.

*Sarasvatī nādī* which is behind the *susumnā*, terminates at the tongue, controlling speech and keeping the abdominal organs free from disease. Accomplishing of all objects could be related to speech and health.

*Payasvinī* is one of the *nādīs* starting at right ear that terminates at the right big toe. Releasing all could mean the ability to relax from reactions to information that was heard.

*Visvodarā nādī* has a function related to absorption of food. Its position is between *hastijihvā* and *kuhū*. It is linked with the functions of stomach. If the digestion is in a good shape, then we tend to have a nice, attractive complexion.



**Fig. 6. The system of *nādīs* that infiltrate the *annamaya kośa* from *prāṇāyāma kośa* and secure the flow of vital energy (*prāṇa*) and information needed for proper function of the human system.**

The course of *nādīs* is described in various ancient scriptures like the *Shandilya Upanishad*, *Chhandogya Upanishad*, *Goraksha Shatakam*, etc. (Frowley et al. 2003, Dzsohari 1993, Motoyama 2016). Motoyama did extensive research to discover, whether the Chinese meridians and the *nādīs* have common functional pattern, but the results were not sufficient to verify this hypothesis.

The Guardian principles – *nādīs* – are associated with the *kośas* – functional systems merged one into another as defined by the yogic "anatomy". They are the *annamaya* (physical body), *prāṇāyāma* (energy management system, where the *nādīs* take the energy and information), *manomaya* (discursive mind), *vigyananamaya* (higher mind responsible for decisions), *ānandamaya* (the basic feeling of joy and transcendental happiness).



### The fifth level: "Accomplisher of all objects" (*Sarvārthasādhaka*)

Chakra: Viśuddha.

Key mantra: *Om hśaim hsklīm hśauh.*

The set of triangular "spikes" associated with this level of the Śrī chakra are ten in number. This level, termed as the accomplishment of all the objects, has Guardians that are helpful to the practitioner and the challenge is more in the area of right choice from the possible achievements and supports.

The areas of influence of the ten Guardians are characterized as (1) ensuring all attainments; (2) bestowing all wealth; (3) doing only the most desirable; (4) bringing all the good things; (5) fulfilling all the desires; (6) removing all the sufferings; (7) counteracting all signs of approaching death; (8) overcoming all obstacles; (9) giving beauty of all limbs; (10) granting full prosperity. They are associated also with the ten prāna types (*prāna, āpana, udāna, samāna, vyāna, nāga, kurma, krkala, devadatta, dhānanajaya*).

The ten prānas are process supportive energies responsible for intake (on physical and mental level), output, directing energies upward, assimilation and circulation. The minor prānas regulate shutting/wetting the eye, hunger and thirst, sneezing/coughing, sleep, hiccup and post-mortem energy transfers. The prānas are the vehicles through which we can live with our attainments, wealth, etc.

### The sixth level: "Protector of all" (*Sarvarakshākara*)

Chakra: Bhrūmadhya.

Key mantra: *Hrīm klīm blēm.*

The sixth level of Śrī chakra is called as "The protector of all" and the ten Guardian principles have their competences termed accordingly. The energies at this level of the 3D Śrī chakra are emanating through ten triangular "spikes". They represent the power of "vital fire". Within the body, they represent the processes that are needed for protecting the life of the individual.

The Guardian principles (within the body and related also to digestion) are called (1) knowing all (*Sarvajñā*); (2) bestowing all powers (*Sarvaśakti pradā*); (3) bestowing all wealth (*Sarvaiśvaryapradā*); (4) full of all-knowledge (*Sarva jñāna mayī*); (5) undoing all diseases (*Sarva vyadhi vinaśinī*); (6) supporting all things (*Sarvādhāra svarūpa*); (7) dispelling all misery (*Sarva pāpa harā*); (8) bringing all bliss (*Sarva ānanda mayī*); (9) pro-

tecting all beings (*Sarva rakshā svarūpinī*); (10) granting the fruits of all desires (*Sarvepsita phala pradā*).

### The seventh level: "Remover of all diseases" (*Sarvaroga-harā*)

Chakra: Lalata (forehead).

Key mantra: *Om hrīm śrīm sauh.*

This level of the Śrī chakra is represented by eight triangular "spikes". The eight "spikes" represent the eight fundamental motives, perceptions and its associates.

The Guarding principles and their links: The ailments to be removed can be biological, but in Vedānta, the cycle of transmigration itself is called an ailment. The Śrī makes one to cross easily the sea of phenomenal existence, its ups and downs. The eight Guarding principles at this level are devoted to perceptions regarding which one should develop mastery/tolerance:

urge to subjugate linked to *śīta*, "cold"; urge to master the desires linked to *uśna*, "heat"; urge to cause confusion or happiness linked to *sukha*, "happiness"; urge to purify linked to *dukkha*, "pain"; urge to attain Śivahood (identity with Absolute Being) linked to *iccha*, "desire"; urge to conquer linked to *sattva*, "insight"; urge to lord over all linked to *rajas*, "activity"; urge to stay in a family linked to *tamas*, "inertia", "stability".

### The eighth level: "Bestower of all attainments" (*Sarvasiddhi-pradā*)

Chakra: Sahasrāra.

Key mantra: *Om Hśraim hsklrīm hśrauh.*

The eighth enclosure is represented by one triangle. Here the Śrī principle is called Kāmakala, the personification of fulfilment. She signifies the desire of Īśvara ("The Lord") for cosmic creation.

The associated Guardian principles are related to processes of creation, upkeep and dissolution of the universe: Moon – Vāma (projection) – Brahma (creation), the unmanifested aspect of *prakṛti*; Sun – Jyēsthā – Viṣṇu (power to preserve the creation), Mahat (here a high level of consciousness); Fire (Agni) – Raudrī – Rudra's power to dissolve and representing also *ahamkāra* (individualized consciousness).



### The ninth level: "Filled with all bliss" (*Sarvānanda-maya*)

Chakra: There is no chakra associated with this level.

Key mantra: *Hrīm ka e ī la hrīm ha sa ka ha la hrīm sa ka la hrīm* (*Sodaśī mantra*).

The ninth or innermost enclosure is the *bindu*, a dot, and a minute triangle with edges almost falling into each other. The principle of Śrī resides here, united with the Absolute consciousness. Traditionally it is called *Śiva-Śakti-eka-rupini*.

Here the principle of consciousness – Śiva and Śrī (Śakti) are united, and are undifferentiated.

From the above it can be clear that the Śrī chakra sādhanā works with all the major parts of the human system of physical, mental and spiritual level. Therefore, the sādhanā as such needs patience and perseverance. When the practitioner reaches the higher levels ("enclosures"), the systemic support needed for success is increasing – as it can be seen from the names of the levels.

## 3 Conclusions

The described Śrī chakra sādhanā is a very effective way, how to look at the *yamas* and *niyamas* (not only as given by Patañjali, but also in other yoga texts) from a different perspective. The practices work with all the five systemic parts of humans – the *kośas*. The mantras give the power needed for leading a dharmic life on physical, mental and spiritual level. It also helps to practice awareness, as well as detachment from unsuitable mental impulses. Finally, it helps to be con-

structive – to seek the best solution for any life situation. The āsanās help to maintain health and simultaneously to master the *vāsanās*. The practice is a full-fledged sādhanā that – if the time is ripe – can lead the practitioner up to the ninth level. It can also facilitate an experiential understanding of the universal aspects of Śrī Vidyā in a way that is suitable for the Western mind.

## Note

- [1] These mental processes have a number of models and explanations, but for the purpose of Śrī chakra sādhanā, the above cited is being considered. The type and frequency of occurrence of Guardian induced moods or mental states depend on karma and within it on personality, *vāsanās*, etc. Under karma the set of situations, tendencies and actions are considered that one is experiencing in his life.

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