



## A STUDY ON THE CONCEPTS OF SRI CHAKRA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO KAKKANADAN'S "SRI CHAKRAM"

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### Abstract

The ancient enquiries of India discovered that consciousness and energy are not separate factors, two aspects of the same reality. They are one in essence. The evolution and manifestation of the material universe takes place through the polarization of these two aspects of the one, symbolized by Lord Siva and Goddess Sakti. Sri Chakra symbolizes the stage of this evolution, and the way of spiritual expansion of man.

Sri Chakra or Sri Yantra is considered to be the king of all Yantras. Sri Chakra worship is considered as the highest worship of Devi. It is the source of all energy, power and creativity. Sri Yantra is considered as the body of Sri Lalita Tripura Sundari. Its worship will bestow blessings for physical, emotional and material well being. It helps to attain superior planes of consciousness. Sakti unites with Siva in the thousand petalled lotus (Sahasrara) in the human body. This union of Siva and Sakti is the underlying principle of Sri Chakra. An attempt has been made in this article to bring out the ancient tantric concepts of Sri Chakra, how it has influenced the vision of writer like Kakkanadan through his story "Sri Chakram".

**Keywords:** Sri Chakra, Sri Yantra, Sahasrara, Siva – Sakti , liberation, Conciousness.

### Introduction

Sri Chakra represents the grand evolutionary theme behind the universe and it reveals the stages through which man can condition himself and expand to higher stages of consciousness. The central Bindu represents the supreme transcendental truth, Brahman. Brahman has an inherent creative power that is known as Sakti. Siva represents the consciousness aspect of Brahman and Sakti the energy aspect.

Sri Chakra is considered to be the body of Siva and Sakti. Sri Chakra consists of a series of triangles around a small point called the Bindu. The Bindu represents the Siva-Sakti in union. Siva and Sakti are not dual aspects; they are one. Siva is in Sakti, Sakti is in Siva. In every object in the universe, there

underlies the static nature of Siva and the dynamic nature of Sakti. Sakti , the divine mother, exists with ecstasy of love towards her husband Siva in the central point(Bindu).The universe itself is evolved out of Siva and Sakti. Sir John Woodroffe points out this concept as:

"The Bindu symbolically described as being like a grain which under its encircling sheath contains a divided seed. This Param-Bindu is Prakriti-Purusa, Siva-Sakti. It is known as Sabda Brahman (the sound of Brahman)". (Introduction to Tantra Sastra 70)

Kakkanadan's "Sri Chakram" gave a new philosophical mode to Malayalam literature. Kakkanadan portrays a painter, sensuous model and a guru in this story. The painter in this story tries to

paint the Almighty Mother by using the sensuous model. Finding her as an obstacle, he kills her. The story shows Kakkanadan's devotion to the goddess; for him, she is the embodiment of power and sacrifice. The painter tries to paint Sakti, by imitating the model before him. He says:

"I can draw you. I can paint the external charm of woman on my canvas. But, I do not need it. I do not need a woman's picture. I need Sakti's picture. I need the picture of sound (nada). I need the picture of nadabrahman (sound of Brahman). The sound (nada) itself is Sakti and I want your picture". (15)

The painter is a devotee, who wants to paint Sakti's picture, she is the source of sound and meaning. This vital power itself pervades in the form of Serpent Power in human body. According to Sir John Woodroffe :

"Kundalini is a form of the supreme Sakti who maintains all breathing creatures. She is the source from which all sound or energy, whether as ideas of speech manifests". (Serpent Power 165)

The painter's efforts to portray Sakti become in vain. He cries out:

"You are the beauty queen of three worlds, Mother please do not close your eyes. I am praying. Mother, when you close your eyes, the universe perishes. When you open them, creation occurs. Mother, please open your eyes to present this universe from great dissolution". (15)

The painter begs the Almighty Goddess to open her eyes to protect this world from its impending doom. The painter glorifies the goddess as:

"Mother, your heart is the abode of Siva. In order to purify us, you created Saraswathi. Ganga, Yamuna from your eyes. Your divine eyes synthesize colours like red white and black. Mother, do not close your compassionate eyes". (15)

These sentences are crystal clear proof to show the affection and bond between Siva and Sakti. Sakti's

heart is the abode of Siva. Sakti is most powerful to purify our body by the meeting of three rivers. She is merciful. The painter only needs her bliss for salvation. Kakkanadan shows his in depth knowledge of Sri Chakra through the story "Sri Chakram". He gives a glimpse of the tattvas as:

"Sattva was white  
Rajas as red  
Tamas as black  
Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra". (16)

The supreme energy (Sakti) is endowed with sattvik, rajasik and tamasik qualities. The three gunas such as sattva, rajas and tamas are included in Sakti. And each quality (guna) represents its colours as white, red and black respectively. The presiding deities are Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra. This is the fundamental principle of Sri Chakra. The central point (Bindu) of Sri Chakra consists of these concepts and hence shows union of Siva and Sakti.

The painter becomes desperate due to the inability to portray Almighty Mother on the canvas. His brush fails to portray her. He begs Almighty Mother to help him as:

"Mother, I meditated on you to see your blessed form by neglecting the nude shivering body during rain, in soaring heat of Sun, cold and dark. Eight rasas of the goddess danced in front of my inner eye. Colours of sattva, rajas and tamas danced around me. Did I see the purifying meeting? Did I see the Chakra with white, red and black colours embalmed on my mind? Did I get the secret of your picture? When I awake, I could not acquire the secret of your Chakra. Your grandeur form and meeting of three rivers, everything left me". (16-17)

These words clearly depict how Kakkanadan skilfully draws the painter's efforts to evoke Goddess. They clearly show the painter's ardent desire to get liberation. The goddess is said to have assumed three forms such as white, red and black. These three rivers represent Ida, pingala and susumna. Sri Chakra consists of white, red and black at the centre. These colours represent the Kamakala. All these evidences show that the painter's intense desire to

explore the secret of Sri Chakra. Sri Chakra is the abode of Siva and Sakti, the painter continues:

“I was watching your Chakra by somebody, and recalled all I have learned. By the union of nine triangles, there arise forty three triangles with a Bindu at the centre. Sakti’s five triangles and Siva’s four, give rise to nine. One who reaches up to nine win. I tried a lot, but not reached yet. Mother, I must reach up to nine. In order to explore the secret of your Sri Chakra I sat in front of it and then became a fool. When I took the brush to portray you, I became unconscious”. (18)

The painter wants to get the secret of knowledge of the Almighty Mother. He tries to reach up to nine. Nine symbolizes the union of Siva’s four triangles and Sakti’s five triangles. The union of Siva triangles and Sakti triangles is the fundamental basis of Sri Chakra. One who wants to explore the secret of Sri Chakra should reach up to nine. The central point (Bindu) represents the union of Siva and Sakti. The painter tries a lot to explore the secret to paint the goddess on his canvas. But fell down unconsciously and was awakened by the guru. Through the words of the guru he realizes that a mere model cannot represent the Divine Mother. The guru says he has reached up to nine. He says:

“I have reached up to nine. Om Sakti”. (20)

Through the eyes of guru, Kakkanadan portrays the Goddess. The author shares the ecstasy of those who have got the secret of Sri Chakra .Guru shares his experiences:

“I cannot believe it. I cannot believe it. I cannot draw it. I cannot write it. I cannot speak on it. Still i am experiencing that bliss.....Om Sakti, Sakti” (21)

Guru explains the celestial bliss has bestowed on him. He cannot express it to others. His words fail to explain that ecstasy. As a true devotee, Kakkanadan shows the bliss stage and the effect of it through the words of guru. Guru continues:

“Mahamaya, it is your blessing Sakti, it is your compassion. Your boon has bestowed on me.

Four triangles of Siva and five triangles of Sakti, this union leads to nine”. (21)

These words clearly depict guru’s stage as he acquired the secret of Sri Chakra. He attains the secret of Sri Chakra which is symbolized by nine. The painter could not attain the secret of Sri Chakra; hence he acts like an insane. He kills the model without considering her heart rendering cries. His inner urge to attain the secret knowledge of Sri Chakra is evident throughout the story.

### Conclusion

Guru’s state of ecstasy shows his bliss, unlike the painter he could reach up to nine. Even though he could not explain it or express through words. The painter’s efforts became fruitless. This story shows a plethora of images on tantric concepts of Sri Chakra through the words of the painter and the guru. Even though the painter’s effort became in vain, he tried a lot to attain that state of ecstasy which would have lead him to liberation. Kakkanadan writes about the three qualities sattva, rajas and tamas. This concept refers to the central point (Bindu) in Sri Chakra. He considers Almighty Mother as nadabrahma, source of all sounds and knowledge. Kakkanadan shows his deep knowledge by encompassing the details of Sri Chakra. He uses nine as a symbol, the union of four Siva triangles and five triangles. Hence Kakkanadan tries to explore a modern Soundaryalahari through this story.

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