

The Silver Cord and the Seed Atoms

WE ARE TOLD in the *Cosmo-Conception* (p. 10) that the Silver Cord grows anew in each life: “Other new and important discoveries have been made:

for instance, we know now that the Silver Cord is grown anew in each life (i.e., during the uterine period), that one part sprouts from the seed atom of the desire body in the great vortex of the liver, that the other part grows out of the seed atom of the dense body in the heart, that both parts meet in the seed atom of the vital body in the solar plexus, and that this union of the higher and lower vehicles causes the quickening.

“Further development of the cord between the heart and solar plexus during the first seven years has an important bearing on the mystery of child-life, likewise its fuller growth from the liver to the solar plexus, which takes place during the second septenary period (seven to fourteen), is a contributory cause of adolescence. Completion of the Silver Cord marks the end of child-life, and from that time the solar energy, which enters through the spleen and is tinted by refraction through the prismatic seed atom of the vital body located in the solar plexus, commences to give a distinctive and individual coloring to the aura which we observe in adults.”

In notes first published January, 1928, in *Rays from the Rose Cross*, Max Heindel says: “It is the Silver Cord which binds the higher and lower vehicles together. During the first twenty days of the gestation period the blood of the foetus is nucleated by the life of the mother, and she regulates the process of body building. Then the Ego begins to work on the foetus from outside, similarly to the way a Group Spirit works with his charges. At this time some corpuscles are nucleated, and cell life is dominant in a measure. The Ego is in the uterus, but has not yet permeated its vehicles. Then the lower part of the Silver Cord begins to grow out of the seed atom in the heart and stretches upward,

and the upper part grows out of the central vortex in the desire body in which the Ego is clothed.

“As the Spirit commenced to draw into its vehicles in the fourth or Atlantean Epoch and gradually interpenetrated them and became dynamically active, so the individual Spirit commences to permeate the foetus in the fourth month and gradually takes possession of the forming organism. When the lower and higher parts of the Silver Cord unite, sentient life begins, and we have the period of quickening. As the physical seed atom is at the pointed end of the heart, called the apex, so the seed atom of the desire body is at the bottom

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of the great central vortex of that vehicle, which vortex is located in the liver.

“The seed atom of the vital body during the daytime is located in the vulnerable spot called the solar plexus. This seed atom is formed of the two lower ethers, and is the root of that part of the vital body which dies after each embodiment, sometimes confused with the soul. The vital body seed atom gathers around it the two lower ethers from which the matrix of the new vital body is formed. Then the Ego descends to birth. There is no seed atom of the two higher ethers; they are the immortal part, or the part capable of becoming immortal.”

We may say in passing that as the Ego works more efficiently to spiritualize the body, these two “immortal” ethers gradually take the place of the two lower ethers. In various places in Max Heindel’s writings we find statements which show that each of the vehicles is enclosed in a kind of sheath, like the “caul” in which a child is enclosed during intrauterine life.

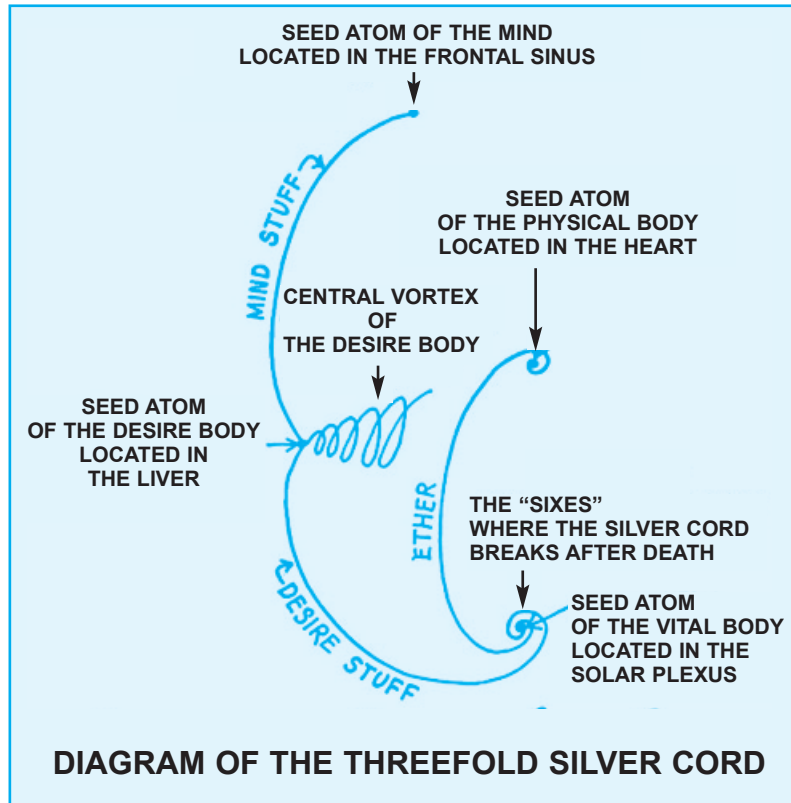
As in physical birth, during which the physical infant body emerges from its uterine sheath, so the vital body emerges from an etheric sheath at the age of seven (approximately); the desire body emerges from an astral sheath at the age of fourteen (again approximately) and the mental body from a planetary mental sheath at about the age of twenty-one. The individual vehicles are, of course, living and working more or less passively within the sheath, guided and protected by the planetary forces in which every human being

lives and evolves.

It may be inferred, however, that the Silver Cord is something more than a mere “link” between the Ego and its vehicles. It is also the channel for special forces which emanate from the threefold Spirit itself, and without which the vehicles would neither develop in the first place, nor grow.

Take note that the two lower segments of the Cord must be present before birth from the womb, but that they undergo fuller development during the three septenary periods which lead to physical adulthood in the body.

In another context (*IIQ&A*, p. 428), Mr. Heindel describes the third segment of the Cord, the part made of mind-stuff, which grows down from the seed atom of the mind in the frontal sinus to join the



seed atom of the desire body in the liver. It is not present in intrauterine life, nor at birth. The path it will take is, however, shown in the archetype, and it exists with, or in, the seed atom of the mind as a root, or sprout—a potential, as we shall see later.

The child has the link of mind but little individual thought activity; it lacks control over its body (unlike animals, which can take care of themselves very soon after birth, due to the link with the Group Spirit).

The third segment of the Cord develops from the root in the seed atom of the mind, in mind-stuff, during the third septenary period. There is reason to believe that it has been growing slowly during the entire period of childhood and adolescence, but its growth is especially

noted during the third septenary period, from fourteen to twenty-one, and its juncture with the astral cord in the great vortex of the desire body marks the beginning of adulthood. At the age of twenty-one we say that “the mind is born,” in the same way that the desire body is born at the age of fourteen and the vital body is born at the age of seven. Max Heindel also describes this occurrence as a kind of quickening, like that of the infant in the womb. The mind, he says, is quickened at the age of twenty-one.

This birth or quickening signals a special act of the Ego in connection with its incarnational vehicles. The emergence of the vital body at the age of seven from its sheath marks the end of babyhood. During the next seven years the segment of the Cord between desire body and vital body continues to develop, and at fourteen the desire body emerges from its sheath. During the next seven years, while the third or mental segment of the Cord is maturing, which connects the seed atom of the desire body in the liver with the seed atom of the mind in the frontal sinus, the mind itself is growing strong enough to cast off its sheath at the age of twenty-one. It is only incidental that the juncture is in the liver, as viewed from the physical body. The two segments are joined in the great astral vortex even when the Ego takes its desire body out of the physical body in sleep, initiation, astral journeys, or death.

The diagram accompanying this article is a simplification. The third segment actually follows a complicated path in its growth. The overall picture is as follows: the Silver Cord is composed of ether, desire-stuff, and mind-stuff. It is shaped much like two figure sixes reversed, one of which is upright and the other horizontally placed, the two being connected at the extremity of the hooks in the solar plexus. The mind-stuff or third part of the Cord grows from the seed atom of the mind located in the mind-stuff which interpenetrates the frontal sinus area, and from this point it passes downward between the pituitary and pineal

glands, touching upon the thyroid and thymus glands, turns left to connect with the spleen and crosses back right to the adrenals, and finally joins the second part of the Cord, which is made of desire stuff and is rooted in the great astral vortex interpenetrating the liver.

From here the astral cord goes to the solar plexus, where it joins the etheric cord coming from the seed atom of the heart. But, as Heindel’s subsequent investigations on this subject revealed, the etheric portion of the Silver Cord was rooted in intrauterine life, and then a secondary development takes place after birth, during the time from birth to twenty-eight years of age. The union of the first and second segments marks the quickening in the womb, but twenty-one years (and as much as twenty-eight) are required for the full maturation of the mental segment and its permanent juncture with the seed atom of the desire body in the great astral vortex permeating the liver.

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Let the student take note here of a point often misunderstood: the before-birth panorama, which the Ego sees reflected in the etheric body as a preview of the coming life, is seen at the time when it first contacts the foetus, at the end of twenty days, and not at the quickening, which occurs in the fourth month. Max Heindel informs us that of the four points where the Cord is attached—heart, solar plexus, liver, and frontal sinus—only the end of the Cord in the seed atom in the heart is immovable; the other parts with their seed atoms are movable. During the daytime when we are awake in the body, the threefold Silver Cord is coiled in a spiral within the dense body, principally about the solar plexus or epigastrium; but at night when the Ego withdraws from its dense and vital bodies, leaving them on the bed to recuperate after the labors of the day, the Silver Cord protrudes from the skull. The ovoid desire body usually floats above, or near, the sleeping body, resembling a captive balloon. (To be continued.) □