

# THE CENTRES IN THE ASTRAL BODY known as Chakras

(Note: In these passages, the terms "astral body," "ethereal body," "inner body," "subtle body," etc. are all used synonymously and refer to the Linga Sharira principle in the human constitution.)

"The astral body . . . has a **complete system of nerves and arteries of its own** for the conveyance of the astral fluid which is to that body as our blood is to the physical." (William Q. Judge, "The Ocean of Theosophy" p. 42)

"The inner anatomical structure should also be known. **The ethereal body has its own currents — nerves, for want of a better word**, changes and method of growth and action, just as the gross body has. It is, in fact, the real body, for it seldom alters throughout life, while the physical counterpart changes every moment, its atoms going and coming upon the matrix or model furnished by the ethereal body.

"**The inner currents emanate from their own centers and are constantly in motion.** They are affected by thoughts and the reflection of the body in its physiological changes. They each act upon the other incessantly. (**Every center of the inner body has its appropriate correspondent in the physical one, which it affects and through which it is in turn acted upon.**) It is by means of **these subtle currents — called vital airs** when translated from the Sanscrit — that impressions are conveyed to the mind above, and through them also are the extraordinary feats of the *seance* room and the Indian Yogi accomplished.

"**And just as one may injure his body by ignorantly using drugs or physical practices, so can the finer currents and nerves of the inner man be thrown out of adjustment if one in pride or ignorance attempts, uninstructed, to deal with them.** (WQJ, "Replanting Diseases for Future Use")

"The structure of the inner astral man is definite and coherent. . . . Just as the outer body has a spine which is the column whereon the being sustains itself with the brain at the top, so the astral body has its spine and brain. It is material, for it is made of matter, however finely divided, and is not of the nature of the spirit. . . .

"Now, as in our physical form the brain and spine are the centres for nerves, so in the other there are the **nerves which ramify from the inner brain and spine all over the structure. All of these are related to every organ in the outer visible body.** They are more in the nature of **currents** than **nerves**, as we understand the word, and may be called *astro-nerves*. **They move in relation to such great centres in the body outside, as the heart, the pit of the throat, umbilical centre, spleen, and sacral plexus. . . .**

"The astro-spinal column has three great nerves of the same sort of matter. They may be called ways or channels, up and down which the forces play, that enable man inside and outside to stand erect, to move, to feel, and to act. In description they answer exactly to the magnetic fluids, that is, they are respectively positive, negative, and neutral, their regular balance being essential to sanity. **When the astral spine reaches the inner brain the nerves alter and become more complex, having a final great outlet in the skull.** (WQJ, "Mesmerism")

"The resulting calm ignorance of these vital matters might be pleasant, but it would not destroy the existence of the subtle form of matter called akasha, nor the subtle body temporarily called sukshma sharira, nor the Mayavi rupa, nor **those negative and positive astral currents** known as Ida and Pingala but not yet perceived distinctly by either scientific men or "metaphysical or divine healers."" (WQJ, "Of "Metaphysical Healing"")

"It is held that **a certain nerve, or psychic current**, called Brahmarandhra-nadi, passes out through the brain near the top of the head. In this there collects more of the luminous principle in nature than elsewhere in the body and it is called  *jyotis*  - the light in the head. . . . This point - the end of Brahmarandhra-nadi - is also the place where the connection is made between man and the solar forces." (WQJ, "Patanjali's Yoga Aphorisms," explanatory comment on Aphorism 3:33, p. 50)

"Why do **the seven nervous plexuses of the body radiate seven rays**? Why are there these seven plexuses . . . ?" (H. P. Blavatsky, "The Secret Doctrine" Vol. 2, p. 92)

"I advise you to discontinue concentration on the vital centres, which again may prove dangerous unless under the guidance of a teacher. You have learnt, to a certain degree, the power of concentration, and the greatest help will now come to you from concentration upon the Higher Self, and aspiration toward the Higher Self. Also, if you will take some subject or sentence from the *Bhagavad Gita*, and concentrate your mind upon that and meditate upon it, you will find much good result from it, and there is no danger in such concentration." (WQJ, "Letters That Have Helped Me" p. 115)

"Such sounds [i.e. as the hearing of "astral bells"] are heard, as well as numerous others, by persons who indulge in training, and they always mean changes or alterations of certain unperceived conditions and **centres in the body**, and the warnings made against it are in order to prevent people from being led away from their true progress by giving undue attention to such phenomena." (WQJ, Letter to Miss Julia Yates, 1890)

"The question is often asked, "Why should celibacy and chastity be a sine qua non rule and condition of regular *chelaship*, or the development of psychic and occult powers? . . . When we learn that the "third eye" was once a physiological organ, and that later on, owing to the gradual disappearance of spirituality and increase of materiality (Spiritual nature being extinguished by the physical), it became an atrophied organ . . . the connection will become clear. During human life **the greatest impediment in the way of spiritual development, and especially to the acquirement of Yoga powers, is the activity of our physiological senses**. Sexual action being closely connected, by interaction, with the spinal cord and the grey matter of the brain, it is useless to give any longer explanation. Of course, the normal and abnormal state of the brain, and the degree of active work in the *medulla oblongata*, reacts powerfully on the pineal gland, for, owing to **the number of "centres" in that region**, which controls by far the greater majority of the physiological actions of the animal economy, and also owing to the close and intimate neighbourhood of the two, there must be exerted a very powerful "inductive" action by the *medulla* on the pineal gland. All this is quite plain to the Occultist, but is very vague in the sight of the general reader." (HPB, "The Secret Doctrine" Vol. 2, p. 295-296)