

LIGHT ON ESOTERIC ASTROLOGY XVII

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THE ESOTERIC ASTROLOGICAL SYSTEM CONTINUED:
SPECIFIC STARS DISCUSSED BY THE TIBETAN

ANTARES

Shifting now to the opposite side of the celestial sphere, the searchlight of inquiry swings from Taurus and the Eye of the Bull over to the Heart of constellation Scorpius, which is the star Antares.¹ Mentioned only once by name in the Bailey writings, Antares according to the Tibetan is one of a number of “stupendous suns” the emanations of which do in fact affect Humanity and our planet, but only through the agency of certain zodiacal constellations.² In this case, that constellation is Scorpius, the Scorpion, and therefore Scorpio, its representative in the zodiac of signs.

Known as Alpha Scorpii to astronomers,³ Antares is the brightest star in the constellation of the Scorpion. Of signal importance to antiquity as one of the prime fiducials together with Aldebaran, Regulus, and

¹ J. D. Staal, *The New Patterns in the Sky*, p. 219.

² Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, p. 15.

³ Vivian Robson, *The Fixed Stars and Constellations in Astrology*, p. 112.

Fomalhaut,⁴ Antares is a luminous and noticeable binary star⁵ which casts a reddish light.⁶

That reddish hue seems to have played a significant role in securing a name for this star, for the word Antares is derived from a name connected with the red planet, Mars. As all good astrological students know, Mars is one and the same with Ares, god of war, strife, aggression, violence and death. The star Antares gets its name from the fact that it is found opposite to the side of the sky where the constellation and sign of Aries rule, and where is therefore found the domain of Mars, exoteric ruler of the sign Aries, and hence the zone of Mars-Ares. More or less opposite from the Ares or Aries side of the sky lies that part of the ecliptic connected with Scorpio. Anything opposed is anti-, and in this case, it's Anti-Ares. In other words, Anti-Ares or Antares is the opposite number or opponent of Ares. In fact, Anti-Ares can be translated as "The Rival of Ares."⁷

So the star Antares is named for the fact that its sky position suggests that in this star, the unruly reputation of the planet Mars meets its match. Things truly inimical being similar in nature and potency, the situation of opposition between Mars-Ares and Antares suggests that the nature of Antares is in fact like unto the influence of Mars,⁸ an interesting linkage given the exoteric and esoteric rulership of Mars in the sign Scorpio, which is named for the constellation in which is found Antares, the rival of Mars. It's all a bit circular to the everyday mind, but the lasting impression insures that all understand the connection between ruddy Antares and the red planet Mars, planet of unbridled passion, impulse, and aggression.

⁴ Vivian Robson, *The Fixed Stars and Constellations in Astrology*, p. 136; J.D. Staal, *The New Patterns in the Sky*, p. 54.

⁵ R.H. Allen, *Star Names, Their Lore and Meaning*, p. 364.

⁶ J.D. Staal, *The New Patterns in the Sky*, p. 219.

⁷ J.D. Staal, *The New Patterns in the Sky*, pp. 224 – 225.

⁸ R.H. Allen, *Star Names, Their Lore and Meaning*, pp. 364 – 365.

As a result, it is no surprise that the conventional astrological characterization of Antares is thoroughly malefic.⁹ Antares would have to be an intimidating character indeed to match wills with Mars, and so the nature of this star has been perceived in just that fashion. The esoteric view of the situation is, as might be expected, somewhat different. All the same, there is something to be learned in the world's view of Antares and Scorpius.

Home to the star Antares, the constellation Scorpius was called "Insidiata," or "The Lurking One" in an early Greek astronomical manuscript,¹⁰ a title certainly invocative of the stealth for which the insect in honor of which this constellation and its representative sign are named. Clearly the moniker "Insidiata" is related to the English word, insidious, which is an adjective used to describe anything acting perniciously in a covert way, hiding its malicious intent under cover of disguise, darkness, or invisibility. Nothing good was expected to emerge from such a lair, Antares included. Thus, throughout history, much suspicion has been directed at Antares and the constellation in which it is positioned.

In fact, since Antares is known as "Cor Scorpius"¹¹ (or sometimes Cor Scorpionis), which is Latin for the heart or "core" of the constellation Scorpio, Antares might properly be conceptualized as embodying the very essence of that which Scorpio signifies. Thus, just as a clear understanding of the nature of the constellation of Taurus was requisite for an adequate comprehension of Aldebaran's influence, so also is a good grasp of the influence of Scorpio essential in understanding the nature of the star Antares.

⁹ Vivian Robson, *The Fixed Stars and Constellations in Astrology*, pp. 136 - 139.

¹⁰ R.H. Allen, *Star Names, Their Lore and Meaning*, p. 365.

¹¹ Vivian Robson, *The Fixed Stars and Constellations in Astrology*, p. 136.

As all students of the astrological language are aware, Scorpio signifies complex issues that basically defy any simple categorization. However, it might be tendered that the themes and issues of Scorpio all more or less concern the convoluted and sometimes devious habits of the emotional body, and hence the need to clearly perceive the contents of the astral plane in general.

A quick look at the Labor of Hercules associated with Scorpio will demonstrate this point. In this labor, Hercules, who symbolizes the soul, was called upon to correct a serious case of water pollution. The problem was caused by a hydra, or swamp monster, the effluvia of which was rendering a community's water supply foul, and thereby threatening the life of the region. It was the task of Hercules to find the swamp monster and remove it from its lair, that the community members might resume their normal activities. As Hercules was told, if he could simply lift out of the murky swamp the nasty hydra, which fed upon accumulated decay in stagnant waters, the slimy monster would be deprived of its power. Of course, the resourceful Hercules managed to do just this, restoring all to order.

Given that "waters" are symbolic of the fluidic astral plane, the implications of the story are not too hard to detect. The story dramatizes the fact that whenever there is an accumulation of poisonous feelings and rotten attitudes, the resulting toxicity spreads out through the astral plane and affects everybody. The only way to cure this lamentable situation is to bring the issues out into the light of rational examination, because the only power such effluvia can exert over consciousness is that to be exerted from a position protected by secrecy and denial. Once the real content is made visible and evident, the reality of the situation is seen, and that which must be discarded can be recognized as debris and detritus.

As anyone acquainted with depth psychology will immediately recognize, this is basically the underlying hypothesis of the psychotherapeutic process, which is concerned with bringing the contents

of the unconscious out into the light of day where they can be examined, and in this way depriving them of their ability to act perniciously by stealth upon the psyche. That is why Scorpio is associated with psychoanalysis and all forms of psychotherapeutic intervention which heal through extraction of submerged or hidden psychological content. Scorpio thus symbolizes both the problem and the solution, the toxicity and its removal.

Obviously, then, the lessons of Scorpio have to do with cleansing the deep unconscious of its accumulated problematic contents. From the esoteric perspective, much of what psychology calls unconscious contents is to be found existing at the level of the astral or emotional body. It is in this level of the personality which lodge the unresolved conflicts, the seething angers, and bitter resentments. It is here that erupt desires for reprisal or revenge against those who have inflicted pain or injustice upon the individual. It is in the emotional or astral body which reside the habits fueling impatience and temper, the expressions of which lead only to the accumulation of more painful imprints later to sink into the unconscious.

It is in the emotional or astral body, then, that can fester the images of hurts past and present, of animosities, insults, indignities, and inequities, all of which gnaw incessantly if left to themselves. These are the toxicities of the astral body, and it is these very things, if left untended, which can swell into poisonous pockets of energy lodged in the aura of the individual, poised like so many angry jellyfish just waiting to thrust their barbed tentacles into passersby. Here is the equivalent of the swamp monster and its effluvia, contaminating the surrounding waters, thus threatening the peace and stability of the entire district.

It is the existence of all this that the process enjoined under Scorpio concerns. Thus, in its broadest and best sense, the influence of Scorpio is aimed at identifying the contents of the astral body, including past experiences and present habits, that these may be acknowledged and reshaped along less potentially troublesome lines. This subjective unburdening is a far cry from the simplistic characterization of Scorpio as

that which is threatening, devious, and even deadly (though in some cases this influence may manifest as such things). True, the influence of Scorpio over time does lead to the death of certain astral habits, and such transformations may well come through the experience of physical plane death and other dramatic metempsychoses or cathartic happenings, all of which are indeed correctly symbolized by Scorpio. However, from the esoteric perspective, such things happen for a purpose, and the purpose is the furtherance of the unit toward spiritual liberation.

The preparation for the Second Initiation is a case in point, as it inevitably contains dramatic detachments, which though painful, clearly lead the individual toward greater psychological wholeness and less vulnerability to passing astral currents. As might very well be expected, the influence of Scorpio is associated with the processes, recognitions, necessary detachments, tests, and attainments relevant to that initiation.¹² This it does slowly, acting across many incarnations, to unveil the path toward freedom and away from enslavement to repetitive karmic patterns. Called “The Baptism” and hence evocative of a symbolic immersion, the Second Initiation describes that stage in the path to mastery upon which the candidate goes deeply into and gains control of the emotional or astral body, the watery or fluidic correspondence in the personality vehicles.

Since the star Antares is the very heart (and perhaps soul) of the constellation Scorpius, it may very well be the real power behind the forces that lead to an astral purification sufficient to pass through the gates of the Second Initiation. What this means in practical terms is that streams of ray influence coming from Antares (and passing through Scorpio) eventually render the individual free of the need to think and behave deviously, to engage in retaliatory acts of thought or deed, to speak caustically, or hold grudges. Shaking an individual loose from such tendencies is a major ordeal, however, requiring energies sufficiently strong to convincingly demonstrate to the individual that action based on urges springing from

¹² Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, pp. 143, 224.

the wounded and/or otherwise agitated emotional body leads only to further strife.¹³ Antares is likely one of the main stellar factors promoting the awareness that primitive and emotionally based impulses must be refined.

Such a role for Antares may well be embodied in the star myths surrounding this star and two of its neighboring constellations, Orion and Sagittarius. Owing to the arrangement of these three in the celestial sphere and the eastward rotation of our planet on its axis, as Scorpius rises in the east, Orion appears to set in the west, thus making it seem that Scorpio chases off or “vanquishes” the great hunter Orion, driving him into the oblivion of invisibility below the western horizon. Then, as Earth continues to roll eastward, there emerges on the eastern horizon the constellation of another hunter, arrow-wielding Sagittarius, set to pursue Scorpius all the way to its sinking in the west and eventual disappearance. Thus, in keeping with all this sky imagery, it was said in Greek mythology that the Scorpion bit and killed the great hunter Orion, but that Sagittarius (a brother in the fellowship of hunters) subsequently came along, tracked down the Scorpion, shot an arrow at its heart (which is of course Antares), and thus avenged the death of Orion.¹⁴

Indeed, the constellation of Sagittarius can be viewed in such a way that its bow and arrow point right at Antares in Scorpio, clearly indicating that this particular myth is simply a restatement of stellar facts regarding Orion, Scorpius, and Sagittarius. In the arrangement of these three stellar entities, then, there may be perceived an important esoteric truth, for just as it is Sagittarius who is able to get the better of Antares, it is the one pointed mind (a trait cultivated under the influence of the constellation and sign of

¹³ Righteous indignation based in a clear mental realization that essential principles have been violated is another matter, sometimes justifying sharp speech to correct egregious behaviors of those intent only on serving self.

¹⁴ J.D. Staal, *The New Patterns in the Sky*, pp. 213, 220 – 221.

Sagittarius) which can master the wily emotional nature brought to light under the influence of Antares.

All the same, there is good and necessary spiritual work which proceeds under the influence of Antares via Scorpio, for it is through this agency that any existing astral impurities are brought to the surface from the murky depths where they have been hiding. If the justifying and rationalizing powers of the mind have fallen into the service of the shape-shifting, evasive astral body, this fact will be exposed. If autonomous complexes fed by old wounds in the astral body dominate the individual's character, this too will come mercilessly to light. If the astral body in general controls the choices and orientations of the individual, the work of Antares will bring this to evident expression as well.

Thus, to say that Antares can bring down, be the nemesis of, or "be the death of" the great hunter Orion can be understood as but a figurative way of saying that severe character weaknesses caused by an unruly astral body are sufficient to undermine even the greatest of heroes. To remedy this situation, it requires the steady aim of Sagittarius, whose arrow also points the way to higher aspirations, thus overriding the wayward impulses of the astral body and redirecting its interests. In this way, it can be said that Sagittarius overcomes Antares and thereby frees Orion (or the embodied soul) from the scourge of emotional toxicity.

Yet it must be borne in mind that the whole necessary process of purging submerged psychospiritual toxicities from the psyche is spurred on by the influence of the constellation Scorpius, fed by its heart and core, Antares. This process of astral purification is, according to the esoteric astrological doctrine, the essential territory of the Scorpio influence, whether considered as emanating from the constellation, the sign, or the star Antares. These celestial factors are all one and the same in overall impact.

The role played by Scorpio influence (and hence, Antares influence) in the spiritual evolution of the disciple striving toward initiation and eventual integration into Hierarchy as a fully adept Master is made very plain by the Tibetan. He enumerated three basic tests which come to the individual under the influence of Scorpio, one each for the three worlds or planes of human endeavor – the physical, emotional or astral, and the mental.

On the physical plane, Scorpio influence introduces the test of what the Tibetan called appetite.¹⁵ Specifically, this test concerns three things: right management of sexuality, right management of desire for physical comfort, and right management of money.¹⁶ Sexuality, comfort, and money are not in and of themselves portrayed in the Ageless Wisdom as inherently evil or corrupt. The key here is the right management of these factors of daily living.

The Tibetan has made it clear that neither celibacy nor total suppression of the sexual instinct are required for the spiritual seeker, nor are such practices advisable for today's humanity.¹⁷ Instead, a conscientious management of sexuality is encouraged. In what this consists, most persons instinctively know, but for sake of clarity, it might be said that sexuality expressed in mindful moderation and in the context of a responsible, heterosexual, and committed love relationship fits the parameters for the definition of conscientious management of sexuality. The same goes for reproduction, which should only be undertaken with utmost prior consideration as to the material and psychological capability

¹⁵ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, p. 205.

¹⁶ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, p. 206.

¹⁷ On this point, see *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, p. 699, at which point the Tibetan makes it clear that the model for relationships to be established by the Planetary Hierarchy upon its externalization will include conventional marriage, that is, monogamous marriage between members of the opposite sexes.

of the parents to provide all necessary care and benefit to the incoming soul. Profligate, excessive, wanton, covert, homosexual, incestual, bestial or casual sexuality of any type or kind constitute breaches of conduct appropriate to a disciple or candidate for initiation.¹⁸ The tests in this area arrive under Scorpio-Antares influence, stirring up those latent tendencies in the individual which might lead him or her to mentally justify improper indulgence in sexuality such as these. It is then up to the individual to subjectively weigh the matter out in mind and heart, to identify proper values, and to choose the higher path, even if that involves the sacrifice of what appear to be inviting and immediate gratifications.

The second of the physical plane tests under Scorpio-Antares is right management of desire for physical comfort.¹⁹ Similar to the tests concerning sexuality, this test concerns the basic question of whether the availability of physical ease shall be the standard against which all situations are judged, or whether other important values will be the deciding factors. Laziness, overeating, indulgence in drink and drug, and other conditions of sloth and torpor are the main culprits here. Instead of going lax and giving into these easy ways out, the individual must learn under the Scorpio-Antares influence that the exertion of individual will or discipline is an essential element if one is to move forward on the evolutionary path. Slacking off, letting others carry the burden even if one can do better, and a habit of seeking the most expeditious way to secure the greatest advantage for oneself – all these constitute traps into which the seeker must not tumble (or out of which the seeker must clamber) if he or she is to progress.

¹⁸ See Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology I*, pp. 277 – 279 and *Esoteric Healing*, pp. 62, 63 for the Tibetan's specific statements regarding his position on homosexuality, which he characterized as a regressive expression that should not be encouraged.

¹⁹ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, p. 206.

The third main section of physical plane test under the Scorpio-Antares influence concerns the right management of money. This important topic of money and its uses was discussed by the Tibetan in a number of passages.²⁰ There he made clear that the hunger to acquire and amass wealth over and above the meeting of legitimate human need springs from a glamour, and as such represents a distortion of true values. However, the Tibetan made equally clear the fact that availability of money for use by the Forces of Light is absolutely essential to the creation of a better world. Thus, it is apparent that money in and of itself is not a corrupting factor. It is the use to which it is put which is the determining factor. Thus, this test concerns what motives a person develops as an incentive to create wealth, and to what ends that wealth is placed, once attained.

Thus, these are the tests concerning the physical plane which flow from the Scorpio-Antares influence. They amount to three questions posed to the individual who wishes to advance on the path of evolution. Can you define and live by right management of sexuality? Can you be counted on to exert right effort? And can you identify and carry out right use of financial resources? If these tests are met successfully, the individual passes to the next major level of testing evoked by the Scorpio-Antares influence – that of the astral or emotional plane.

The tests of the astral level are again three, just as were those of the physical level. Called by the Tibetan the tests of the desire or astral level,²¹ these three grow out of the insecurities and animosities to be found in the astral body, which is ever influenced by the apparent dualities of manifestation. The Scorpio-Antares tests at this level are, according to the

²⁰ For example, see Alice A. Bailey, *Initiation, Human and Solar*, pp. 78, 79; *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*, p. 866; *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, pp. 59 – 61; *Esoteric Psychology II*, p. 192; *The Reappearance of the Christ*, pp. 175 – 180.

²¹ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, p. 205.

Tibetan: the tendency to give into fear, the tendency to foster hate, and the inclination to become ambitious in the sense of vainly seeking personal elevation above all others.²²

Fear is a complex psychospiritual state conditioned in some cases by nothing other than wild imaginings, and in other cases by very real and present peril. The Scorpio-Antares influence is unique in that it is under this energy activation that the individual must learn to sort out the various kinds of fear, thus to more rationally decide which ones have a legitimate basis, and which ones not.

The plane from which fear originates, the astral zone is shaped and formed from moment to moment by the various impulses passing through it. Some of these impulses are generated by mass humanity, some by individuals near at hand, and some by the individual her or himself. Not all of such impulses merit an engaged response. Some, because they are based on worst case imaginings and a lack of real information, should essentially be deflected and ignored. Some like the fear of death can be transformed through higher knowledge about the reincarnational cycle of the soul, and thus significantly diminished. Others may indicate the need for appropriate physical plane protective action.

The process of working through such issues is synonymous with Scorpio itself, a sign which deals with those hidden complexes and potentially unsettling factors that lurk in the depths, just like the swamp monster in the labor of Hercules associated with this sign. Under the Scorpio influence, the individual learns to dig down in the swamp, bring matters up to light, and then literally to dismantle those particular fear based attitudes which have no real merit or logical basis and which ought therefore to be eliminated.

²² Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, p. 206.

An extreme example of fear based psychology can be seen in the case of paranoia, true incidences of which occur when irrational fears of persecution or endangerment snowball and concatenate until the individual is not for one moment free of feeling threatened. Under Scorpio, such conditions are brought out and even worsened, that they may be faced up to and fought down into the nothingness out of which they came. In this way, bit by bit, all fears begin to lose their grip upon the inner psychology of the individual. This takes place gradually over the span of many incarnations, and is largely related to the taking of the Second Initiation, which initiation concerns the mastery of all astral impulses.

The Scorpio-Antares influence is connected with the Second Initiation because it highlights the nature of fear and gradually instructs the individual in the way to detach from that type of energy. In this it is easy to see why the portrayal of Scorpio by mainstream astrology frequently strikes such an ominous note. It is because the Scorpio-Antares influence does indeed demand that the individual face fear and make a decision about whether or not the astral pest will dominate. This is the first of the astral or desire level tests of which the Tibetan spoke.

The second of the astral tests under Scorpio-Antares influence concerns the mastery over yet another propensity of the astral body – the tendency to emphasize oppositional polarity, resulting in attitudes of extreme antipathy or hatred. This is in some ways a natural thing for the astral body to do, living as it does in the region of most intense duality. Hatred, the worst of such expressions, is nothing more than an extreme form of duality. The nature of hatred is an extreme polarization, an intensified version of the first moment of manifested creation, in which the self and the not-self realize they exist and have different perspectives. However, in the case of hatred, this oppositional arrangement takes over and obliterates all else, which is not a true representation of manifested creation, for manifested creation also contains elements which bring about harmony and union.

At the human level, however, units can create essentially false conditions through will and choice. When hatred arises, it is because a unit or some units have seized upon the appearance of separation to the exclusion of all else. They forget completely about the fact that all are contained within the great Oneness in their rush to thrust themselves away from each other with the most terrible force they can summon. Such a situation is but an extreme dramatization of the pairs of opposites which dominate the astral plane, and hence the individual astral body. However, it is this very tendency to enlarge upon duality inherent in the astral level which must be overcome in the tests of the second desire level associated with the Scorpio-Antares influence. And so the individual is tested to see if he or she will accept invitations to hate.

Hatred comes in many forms. There are group hatreds founded upon difference in race, religion, ethnicity, nationality, political persuasion, and even gender. Then there are the little personal enmities based on everything from real injustice to small-minded jealousies. All human beings are tempted to engage in hate-centered thoughts from time to time. It is in the nature of the unregenerated human psychology to resent those who appear to have the advantage, of whatever type. This is the very type of thinking and feeling which must be identified, faced squarely, and steadily refused by the striving seeker who wishes to pass the second of the desire level tests to be encountered under the Scorpio-Antares influence.

The third of the tests generated by Scorpio-Antares influence at the desire level concerns ambition, a characteristic generally thought admirable by mainstream society. With mainstream society's persistent clamor for material gain and social prestige, it urges its young to cultivate ambition for high placement, financial reward, and consequent power or status. As a result, small children, emerging teens and young adults are all groomed in such a way as to enhance the competitive drive within them. In later years, the average career path centers around an attempt to jockey for ever-increasing authority and recognition. Some few manage to escape or withstand the pressure to perform in this way, but such individuals are

decidedly in the minority and are often viewed as simply lacking in drive. Ambition for personal advancement is seen as a necessary norm by mainstream society.

However, unbridled ambition is viewed quite differently from the standpoint of training for initiation and eventual membership within the ranks of Hierarchy. While appropriate individual initiative is valued from within that perspective, excessive competitiveness is seen for what it is – a definite impediment to the development of group consciousness and to the encouragement of the spirit of cooperation, which factors are essential if one is to successfully and genuinely join with others in work for the evolutionary betterment of the planet. It goes without saying that on the path, it is the proper responsibility of each person to evidence sufficient aspiration toward betterment of conditions for self and others, but this proper orientation must not become prostituted and turned into a raging hunger for glory, excessive public attention, or even celebrity status. The ability to identify any impetus in self that would lead in this direction, and the will to turn away from such enticements, constitute the passing of this third test on the desire level of the Scorpio-Antares influence.

Just as the major tests on the physical and astral levels were triple, so also is the final level of testing connected with the Scorpio-Antares influence. Concerned with the ability to overcome the inherently critical and separative nature of the lower mind, the tests at this final major level are designed to ferret out, expose, and set the stage for the removal of any tendencies toward assumed intellectual superiority. Thus, pride, isolationism, and indulgence in deliberate acts of mental cruelty constitute the character failings to be overcome at this final level of testing under the Scorpio-Antares influence, according to the Tibetan.²³

Mental acuity is strong under the influence of Scorpio, to which fact mainstream astrology attests in its conventional description of Scorpio

²³ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, p. 205.

influenced persons as accurately analytical, shrewd and deeply perceptive. Should an awareness of their own potent mind natures “go to their heads,” such persons may fall into the trap of harboring excessive pride in their own intellectual capacities or demonstrated achievements. A certain and proper amount of pride in doing one’s best is not the issue here. The objectionable type of pride is a much farther development along the scale of personal pride, a more extreme and smug self-satisfaction, an attitude which holds that others are so far below in their innate grip on life and circumstance that they hardly merit a patient hearing. If allowed to go on unabated, this sort of presumed intellectual superiority invades the subsurface of the individual’s psychology, coloring her or his outlook so thoroughly that she or he fails to consciously recognize its presence.

Such a condition can only take root in those who have undergone some significant unfoldment of the mental principle, which body is tested severely under the Scorpio-Antares influence. Under this combination, the individual is prodded to gain a higher perspective and so to recognize her or his mental shortcomings. However, this only happens after the Scorpio-Antares influence has brought to light the existence of any pride in intellectual proficiency which may have developed over the course of numerous incarnations. The Scorpio-Antares influence both makes and breaks such patterns in the individual in the sense that it provokes any latent tendencies in this regard into stark, evident manifestation, from that point to be transformed all the more thoroughly.

The second test at the mental level ferrets out yet another undesirable characteristic – that of isolationism or separateness. When operating at the mental level, separateness leads the mind to emphasize factors that establish the different categories of things, rather than the principles that unify them. Both aspects of analysis are needed in the pursuit of truth, but the balance between them is critical. If the tendency of the mind to seize upon categorical differences far outweighs the other, then obviously the sight of truth will be lost. So even though there is always a place for the carefully analytical approach so consistent with the widely acknowledged

exoteric nature of the Scorpio influence, indulgence in this to the exclusion of holism makes for a skewed perspective.

Excessive criticism, whether vocal, written, or simply entertained in thought, is a manifestation of this particular failing emanating from the as yet imperfect mental body. It manifests in persons of many types, but perhaps easily noticed among them are those known as intellectuals, who pride themselves upon their banks of knowledge, but who use such resources mainly to point out the failings and inadequacies of things, persons, and ideas. Psychologies of this type are common on the planet at this time because of the Fifth Ray influence inherent in this the Aryan period of development. The Scorpio-Antares influence stages situations which position the individual to go beyond this collective vulnerability and to grasp the fact that there is more to truth than the ability to rip another's theory to shreds in a particularly impressive and authoritative manner. Getting past any such inclination is required of those who intend to pass the second of the mental plane tests evoked by the Scorpio-Antares influence.

The third and final mental plane test inspired by this same influence involves the overcoming of any tendency to practice mental cruelty toward others. The types of mental cruelty are many, but they all are characterized by a deliberate attempt to inflict pain upon others through a presentation of untruths, contradictions impossible of solution, or insurmountable worries.

Deliberate prevarication is a type of mental cruelty, for it introduces into the mind of another a contradiction seemingly impossible of resolution. It casts the other into a mental quagmire in which thoughts go round and round but can find no way out. Those who knowingly and habitually misrepresent (or lie) to others do this instinctively. In this way, they sidetrack the issue by making sure the other is tangled in a web of contradictory facts and appearances, thus evading any further scrutiny of

their own inconsistencies. Meanwhile, the other suffers the torment of not knowing what truth is, what can be trusted, and what is real.

Other types of mental cruelty are well known. Psychological abuse, in which one person undertakes the systematic degradation of another's psychological integrity, is certainly a type of mental cruelty. This usually involves a combination of outright lies and various dramatic distortions of the truth, mixed together with accusations that have some slight applicability, plastered liberally with threats of overwhelming reprisal if exception is taken. Such mental pressure can cause a type of mental breakdown in the one subjected, which is precisely the objective of those who practice this form of personal hegemony.

Less primitive forms of mental cruelty occur when the highly intelligent person uses his or her bright mind, quick wit, and linguistic skill to torment another, usually in a subtle and strategic fashion that makes the utmost of the mental impact upon its target. Sarcasm and irony play a role here, as the individual keen upon driving a verbal dagger into another selects word instruments that will score damage at numerous levels all at once. While it is true that these methods are used to some good purpose by political satirists and social critics, the wanton use of such methods by the individual person is forbidden to those who would pass through the gates of initiation. Certainly no inclination to needlessly inflict psychological pain on others will pass the second gate, just as any inclination to sting others out of spite through manipulation of ideas will not pass the third. Thus, once again is seen the active power of the Scorpio-Antares influence, potent to locate and rout out any tendencies or inclinations based upon animosities rooted in the personality sphere. In this last case, the transformative work is focused upon the mental body and the uses to which its capacities are put.

As this long examination of the three major tests of Scorpio demonstrates, the influence of this constellation and its representative zodiacal sign refers not only to the processes and issues of the Second

Initiation, as mentioned earlier, but also to the entire content of the first three initiations, with the tests of appetite correlating to the issues of the First Initiation, the tests of desire correlating to the issues of the Second Initiation, and the tests of the lower critical mind correlating to the issues of the Third Initiation. Indeed, the Tibetan did reveal that Scorpio is implicated in the processes associated with all three of these initiations.²⁴ As its heart and source, the star Antares must also be understood as an integral part of the process – in fact, a mainspring from which emanate the energies and forces which lead to the potent spiritual work brought about by the influence of the Scorpion. Thus, the star Antares can be seen as no other than a highly significant force on the path of discipleship and initiation, its effect devoted to the thorough purification of the personality vehicles so that the higher initiations may some day be faced.

QUESTIONS FOR LIGHT ON ESOTERIC ASTROLOGY XVII

1. From what astronomical facts does the name of Antares arise?
2. What is similar between the nearly opposed signs of Aries and Scorpio?
3. With what is the sign Scorpio fundamentally concerned?

²⁴ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, pp. 143, 199, 224.

4. What role might Antares play in the initiatory process?
5. What astronomical and esoteric facts are embodied in the relationship between the constellations Orion, Scorpio, and Sagittarius?
6. What are the tests applied via Scorpio? What are the three manifestations of each?
7. Select one test under each of the levels on which Scorpio-Antares works (i.e., the physical, astral, and mental) and comment upon your experiences with this in either self or others.
8. With what particular initiation is Scorpio and therefore Antares associated?
9. In the broader sense, with what initiations are Scorpio and Antares connected?
10. Antares conditions Scorpio, which constellation and sign in turn activate many issues in human evolution. How would you personally look for the evidence of Antarean influence in yourself and/or others?