

SCORPIO DISCUSSION
Francis Donald



Ascension, by Francis Donald

In this month's image, *Ascension*, the full moon reveals a pivotal moment in the long series of incarnations of our Scorpio native: He has risen from the ancient mayavic waters to mount the Fixed Cross (the cross of the Disciple). The Tibetan Master summarizes this event: "*The Ancient One [the personality] dies by drowning. Such is the test. The waters envelop him and there is no escape. He drowns. The fires of passion are then quenched. The life of desire ceases its appeal and to the bottom of the lake he now descends. Later, he re-ascends to where the white horse waits his coming...*" Esoteric Astrology, p. 214*

* The Tibetan is Djwahl Khul, a Tibetan master who worked with the English author Alice Bailey to produce twenty-four books on esoteric philosophy. In these notes He is referred to as 'DK'.

Mars, appearing just above the horizon, glows within our aspirant's solar plexus. It rules his trials and tests and will continue to do so until there is nothing left in his nature to react to its purifying influence. Then will the symbolic death (for Scorpio is the sign of death) be complete. Through a Herculean effort (the nine tests and trials of Scorpio) his passage on the outer clockwise wheel of life has steadily lost its momentum and the inner reversed wheel increases its counterclockwise velocity. (Humankind revolves clockwise through the zodiac until he steps onto the Path of Return whereon he reverses his direction on the wheel of life.)

Following his momentous victory (Scorpio's keywords are "*Warrior I Am, and from the Battle I Emerge Triumphant*") our "tested one" focusses on a source higher even than that of the Fixed Cross; he lifts his gaze to Sirius, which draws him further along the Path of Initiation (meanwhile the scorpion scampers off after performing his dastardly deed.

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For the occultist/enthusiast, here are a few more tidbits and quotes:

The Fixed Cross: "*Upon the Fixed Cross, stands the correctly poised man right at the center where the four arms meet and, therefore, at the point where the energy of all the four signs and of their ruling planets can pour through him and evoke the needed reactions, produce the conditions wherein test is possible and so bring about the necessary reversal of the life currents in the man's nature and thus place him upon the reversed wheel.*" Esoteric Astrology, p. 221

"The vertical life of the man upon that Cross (no matter in what sign his sun may temporarily find position), is ever Aquarius-Leo. This indicates that the self-centered individual in Leo learns the lesson of the Cross and becomes decentralized, group conscious, and given to service." Esoteric Astrology, p. 223

The Nine Tests: If you just can't wait to get started on the transformation that Scorpio offers, here are the keywords (which describe that which must be transformed) for each test: On the physical plane expressing appetite: sex, physical comfort, and money. On the astral plane expressing desire: fear, hate, and ambition. And on the mental plane expressing the critical lower mind: pride, separativeness, and cruelty. Esoteric Astrology, p. 206.

The Solar Winged Disc at the center of the Fixed Cross:

- 1) “[In Scorpio] *The Sun— as a symbol of Deity— must wax in influence and finally take the place of Venus [Venus is the exoteric ruler of Taurus, and thus represents personality desire].*” Esoteric Astrology, p. 225
- 2) The central disc with the cross spanning its diameter is also a symbol of the earth, and here, superimposed on the solar disc, it is Earth (and thus humanity) redeemed. This represents the higher purpose of Scorpio: the redemption of humanity.
- 3) The eagle (really a phoenix) represents triumph in Scorpio: He leaves the ashes of personality beneath him as he rises *"from darkness to light, from the unreal to the real, from death to immortality."*

Mercury: The hierarchical ruler of Scorpio is here represented by the double helix as it merges into the winged disc to form a solar caduceus. Here we see Mercury fused with the sun and thus in its full glory, for through Mercury Scorpio rules and conditions the 4th Creative Hierarchy of human monads.

The Two Towers have a dual meaning.

- 1) They represent the horizontal arm of the Fixed Cross: *“Desire in Taurus becomes spiritual aspiration in Scorpio. The darkness of the experience in Scorpio becomes illumination in Taurus [hence, the lighted window in the tower on the left]. Thus the pairs of opposites gain from each other for there is a direct line of force and of contact between the two.”* Esoteric Astrology, p. 209
- 2) In the tarot, Mars is associated with the Tower Arcana, #16. It’s interesting to note that 1 and 6 are the expressed rays of Vulcan and Mars, the esoteric rulers of Taurus and Scorpio, which form the horizontal arm of the Fixed Cross). This Tower Arcana (usually misinterpreted as portraying disaster) depicts what *must* come in a sign which is ruled both exoterically *and* esoterically [hence the two towers in the image] by Mars. It is as a result of this dual rulership that the trials in Scorpio manifest not only physically, but also emotionally and through the lower mind.

The drowned man and the reflected moon: *“The Moon here functions in its true nature: as expressing symbolically that which is dead. It stands for the personality and, in the final victory in Scorpio, that personality is entirely vanquished and defeated. Desire is killed, for it is through expressed desire that personality demonstrates life, quality, appearance. In Scorpio the Moon falls and its influence fades out.”* Esoteric Astrology, p. 225

An Old Commentary passage describes the experience we see unfolding in ‘Ascension’ thusly, *“The Ancient One [the personality] dies by drowning. Such is the test. The waters envelop him and there is no escape [notice the figure beneath the waters]. He drowns. The fires of passion are then quenched. The life of desire ceases its appeal and to the bottom of the lake he now descends. Later, he re-ascends to where the white horse waits his coming...”* Esoteric Astrology, p. 214

This passage represents the shift from personality to soul identification, which the Tibetan tells us is the consummating experience of Scorpio. Re-identification is the theme in both images, but

if we mentally place 'The Phoenix' on top of 'Ascension' we see that it has an archetypal correspondence to that which it overlays. The red-clad drowned figure, which represents the personality, becomes Mars itself, which in Scorpio, rules the threefold personality; the Moon, or outer form, gives way to the Sun, here shown as the illuminating solar vitality of the phoenix; the up-turned hands and gaze of the disciple become an embodied chalice, for now the disciple is one with that which he/she receives from the inner well-spring; the Fixed Cross becomes the trefoil (described below), the human form gives way to the geometry of the soul, and the transformative influence of Sirius becomes increasingly dominant. The disciple's winged heart has ignited the 'clear cold fire' of mind, and thus through all these changes, the disciple becomes the phoenix/initiate.

'The Phoenix' is best described by another Old Commentary passage, here quoted in part. The full text can be found in the appendix of Rays and Initiations:

THE CHALICE

The lower chalice rises like a flower of colour dark or somber. Dull it appears to the outer vision, but within a light will sometimes shine and shatter the illusion.

Chalice the second rises from out the lower sheath as does the flower from out the calix green. Of colour rose it is, and many shades thereof; and to the onlooker it seems as if the colour might transcend the inner shining light. But this is but illusion which time itself dispels.

Chalice the third surmounts all and opens wide in time its outspread petals. Blue does it appear and blends with the rose, forming at first a deep impenetrable shade which shuts out the light.

Within the three, deep hidden in the heart, tiny at first yet ever waxing greater, shines the light divine. This light, through radiating heat and innate divine vibration, constructs for itself a sheath of iridescence...

Within this iridescent sheath burns the inner Flame, and in its turn it burns out the lower gross material. E'en as the Path is neared, clearer the light shines out. Forth through the chalice gross and dark that forms the foundation shines the light supernal, till all who see the radiation cry out within themselves: "Behold, a God is here."

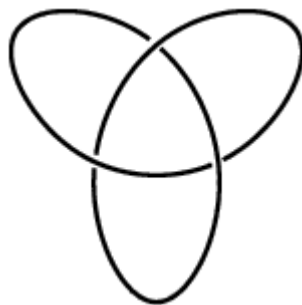
Forth from the chalice rosy red shines the inner glow, till soon the red of earth desire becomes the glow of heaven's fire, and all is lost save aspiration that shades not the cup with karmic colour... Forth from the chalice blue shines and glows the inner light divine till all the forms are burnt and gone, and naught is left save one divine abstraction...

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The Phoenix, by Francis Donald

Geometry and sacred number: Whereas the earlier image 'Ascension' is based on the Fixed Cross, the underlying construction of 'The Phoenix' is an elongated trefoil knot (shown below): a symbol of eternity (because of its unbroken motion) and of the inherent unity of the three aspects of divinity (suggested by the central triangle it forms).



Trefoil Knot, by Francis Donald

Structuring ‘The Phoenix’ in accordance with this geometrical figure allows it to ‘partake’ of the energy the trefoil represents, which might be described as the ever-unfolding process of assimilating *That* towards which we all aspire.

The chalice is insinuated by the gesture of the disciple in ‘Ascension’ and openly incorporated into the design of ‘The Phoenix’. Whereas the first piece suggests the will to align, the second depicts the successful repolarization towards that influence which ultimately originates on Sirius (shown at the top center in both pieces).

The Phoenix: Ancient Egyptian papyri tell us that the Bennu bird (the Egyptian phoenix) burst forth from the heart of Osiris— thus giving form to Ra (the Egyptian sun-god). Through the Book of the Dead the phoenix says, “I am the Bennu bird, the Heart-Soul of Ra.” Some of the titles of the Bennu bird were “He Who Came Into Being by Himself,” and “The Ascending One.” Its name was also a verb, spelled *wbn* in Egyptian texts, meaning “to rise brilliantly.”

Color: The transformative theme in both pieces can be traced through the colors used. Earthy reds (the garment of the drowned man, and the planet Mars) give way to tones of rose and electric blue— the colors of the sixth ray of devotion (Mars, Scorpio’s exo- and esoteric ruler is a 6th ray planet). The core of each piece radiates yellow-white, representing both solar consciousness and 4th ray Mercury, Scorpio’s hierarchical ruler.

Scorpio: *“In Scorpio, the result of all the struggles carried forward during the seemingly endless pilgrimage around the zodiac or wheel of life is brought to a point of climax...”* Esoteric Astrology, p. 210

“It is in this sign that the prodigal son comes to himself, and having eaten of the husks of life and having exhausted the resources of worldly desire and ambition—he says: ‘I will arise and go to my Father.’” Esoteric Astrology, p. 208

“The keywords of this sign are significant and illuminating. Deception and triumph—control by Maya and control by the soul—conflict and peace—such are the hidden secrets of this sign and these are summed up for all disciples in the two keywords. Upon the ordinary wheel, whereon the soul is found, blind and apparently helpless, the Word goes forth in the following terms: ‘And the Word said, Let Maya flourish and let deception rule’; upon the reversed wheel, the soul chants or sings the words: ‘Warrior I am and from the battle I emerge triumphant.’” Esoteric Astrology, p. 226

Thanks for your time!
Highest Regards,
Francis