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## PLANET WORSHIP:

### SOME EVIDENCE, MAINLY TEXTUAL, IN CHINESE ESOTERIC BUDDHISM\*

ANGELA HOWARD

The following investigation focuses on the study of an astrological chart, called «Horā Diagram» 火羅圖 owned by the Kyōōgokokuji, (Tōji), Kyōto.<sup>1</sup> (Photo) Its format is that of an hanging scroll (height 88,7 cm, width 45 cm); it consists of iconographic drawings of the astral bodies accompanied by an explanatory text. In the following pages, I will supply the translation of such text and try to clarify the issues it raises.

The diagram bears the inscription: «Horā diagram, copied the sixth month of the second year of Eiman (1166 AD) from an original [Chinese] work in the Jison-in.»<sup>2</sup> Although this diagram was executed in Japan, it is a copy of a Chinese original. In Japan, the flourishing of astrological iconography within the framework of Esoteric Buddhism reached its peak in the late Heian period, reflecting the trend initiated in T'ang China. Thus, the work under study was not an isolated occurrence; others of similar content, but not format, are extant in Japanese temple collections.<sup>3</sup>


1 In Japanese, the Horā Diagram is called 'Kuwarakuyō'. See Ryūken Sawa, *Mikkyō Daijiten*, 6 vols., (Kyōto, 1969–1970), V, 2071.

2 The Jison-in 慈尊院 was connected with the Kanshu-ji 觀修寺, Kyōto, and the Shingon monk Kōnen 興然 who resided there may have drawn the diagram. See R. Sawa, *Tōji*, (Tōkyō, 1969), 322. Kōnen died at the age of eighty four, the third year of Kennin, (AD 1201), in the Jison-in. See Junkei Washio, *Nihon Bukke Jimmei Jishō*, (Tōkyō, 1903), 473.

3 梵天火羅供養圖箒 or Iconography of the Ritual of the Indian Art of Horoscopy, ink drawings on paper, Tōji, dated AD 1113; 梵天火羅九曜 or The Nine Luminaries and the Indian Art of Horoscopy, one roll, Kōzanji Treasury, dated AD 1189; 九曜尊像 or Images of the Nine Luminaries, one roll, Kōyasan, Kongōsammai-in; 曜箒圖像 or Iconographic Drawings of the Luminaries, 1 roll, Tōji, Kanchi-in; 九曜星圖像 or Iconographic Drawings of the Nine Lu-

\* I am grateful to Prof. Wu Pei-yi of Columbia University for the guidance and encouragement given in the translation of the text. Needless to say, I bear full responsibility for all errors.

In China, under the T'ang dynasty, foreigners of all occupations – laymen and monks alike, scholars, merchants and entertainers –, converged on the capital, Ch'ang An, attracted by its internationalism and wealth. Such cosmopolitanism and the receptivity of China to other countries' cultural achievements favored during the eighth and ninth centuries the growth of sciences such as mathematics and astronomy, especially under the impulse of Indian scholars newly arrived from their land.<sup>4</sup> This productive environment affected also the growth of astrology, the art of foretelling the influence of the celestial bodies on human activities. Soon astrology became combined with Esoteric Buddhism which – through ritual and sacrificial offerings – attempted to forestall or at least weaken any astral malign influence.

The Buddhist astrological literature which consequently developed is very copious and well represented by the works attributed to the monk I-hsing—<sup>5</sup> In view of I-hsing's connection with the Horā Diagram, which will be shortly explored, it is opportune to offer a glimpse of the monk's life. Furthermore, his biography reveals the atmosphere of cultural fermentation and inquisitiveness which particularly distinguished the T'ang court.

The monk I-hsing ranks among the best known exponents of Esoteric Buddhist astrology. According to his biography in the *Sung Kao Seng Chuan*, he was a native of Chü Lu, Hopei and was distinguished since his early years by superior intelligence and astonishing mnemonic faculty. His first master was the monk P'u Chi, a Ch'an monk on the Sung mountain of Honan. In addition to his religious vocation, he was also drawn to the learning of mathematics, and in order to find a competent teacher he moved to the T'ien T'ai mountain, staying at the Kuo Ch'ing monastery. The inquisitiveness and versatile nature of his mind led him to explore the teaching of various different Buddhist schools. He started as a Ch'an pupil, went on to study the Vinaya, T'ien T'ai and profited from the teaching of the great Esoteric Indian masters Śubhakarasiṃha, Vajrabodhi and

minary Stars, Daigōji, it is a copy of the preceding one. They are published in J. Takakusu and K. Watanabe edits., *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō*, 97 vols., (Tōkyō 1914–1932), Zuzō, VII. Hereafter this source will be referred to as T.

4 J. Needham, *Science and Civilization in China*, (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1959), III, chapter 20 «Astronomy», espec. 202 ff.; Edward Schafer, *Pacing the Void, T'ang Approaches to the Stars*, (California Univ. Press, 1977), espec. introductory chapter.

5 W. Eberhard, «Untersuchungen an Astronomischen Texten des Chinesischen Tripitaka», *Monumenta Serica*, 5 (1940), 208 ff.; W. Eberhard et alii, «Index zu den Arbeiten über Astronomie, Astrologie und Elementenlehre», *Ibid.*, 7 (1942), 242 ff.

Amoghavajra who had arrived in Ch'ang An at the start of the eight century.<sup>6</sup> I-hsing assisted Śubhakarasiṃha in the translation of the *Vairocana Sutra* and wrote a commentary to it. He was greatly esteemed by the Emperors Jui Tsung and Hsüan Tsung, who invited him to court, considering him not merely a monk, but also a powerful magician. As well as making several scientific inventions, such as the armillary spheres and a mechanical clock, he also made a compilation of the Ta Yen calendar, in response to Hsüan Tsung's demand. He died in Ch'ang An, in 727 AD, while staying at the Hua Yen temple.<sup>7</sup>

Before discussing the textual content of the Horā Diagram, I will briefly describe its arrangement. The images are centered around the figure of the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī riding a lion, surrounded by fields 院 of celestial bodies. The fields extend from the center in the following order: the field of the twenty eight Lunar Mansions 宿, the field of the twelve signs of the Zodiac 宮, the field of the nine Luminaries 曜. Outside these fields, in the uppermost part of the diagram, is a row of seven seated figures, representing the seven stars of the Dipper 北斗; their position in the sky is also provided in a map of concentric circles. Because of this geometric and symmetrically balanced arrangement, one may suggest that the Horā Diagram could have been the basis for a maṇḍala of celestial bodies.<sup>8</sup> The celestial bodies are executed in water color with the basic colors red, blue and yellow contained within a black line. The luminaries, in

6 Chou Yi-liang, «Tantrism in China», *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 8 (1945), 241 ff.

7 *Sung kao seng chuan*, compiled by Tsan Ning et alii, 30 rolls, T. L., # 2061, 732, a, 14 ff.; the most known astrological works translated or compiled by I-hsing are: 宿曜儀軌 or Tracks of the Mansions and Luminaries, T. XXI, # 1304, 七曜星辰別行法 or Different Influences of the Seven Luminary Stars, T. XXI, # 1309, 北斗七星護摩法 or Goma Rites of the Seven Stars of the Great Bear, T. XXI, # 1310, 梵天火羅九曜 or The Nine Luminaries and the Indian Art of Horoscopy, T. XXI, # 1311. All of them are short texts in one roll.

8 According to a legend in the 宣物集 or Collection of Portents, the Emperor Hsüan Tsung being suspicious of Yang Kuei-fei's friendship with I-hsing had the monk sequestered for seven days in a dark place. The Luminaries took pity on him, revealed themselves to him and enabled him to record their appearance. This is the legendary source of the Horā Diagram; however, no specific mention is made of its being a maṇḍala. As to the question of whether it is a maṇḍala, it should be noted that it differs from the Stars Maṇḍalas extant in Japan. Round maṇḍalas were especially used in rites performed in Tendai Esoteric temples, square maṇḍalas in Shingon temples. One of the oldest circular Stars Maṇḍala is owned by the Hōryūji, see Mosaku Ishida, *Hōryūji*, (Tōkyō, 1970), I, pl. 247.



contrast with the other bodies, are singled out by their larger size, and are contained in circles, a common device in Esoteric Buddhist art to indicate their function as images for contemplation.

Since most of the textual explanation in the Horā Diagram refers to the luminaries, the investigation chiefly focuses on them. They are nine and recognizable as the Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, Saturn, with the addition of Rāhu and Ketu, two imaginary stars responsible for the eclipses of the sun and moon.<sup>9</sup> Each of them is identified by name and star position; some are further characterized by an alternate name, by being connected with a given direction and one of the five elements.<sup>10</sup> This information is placed at the four corners of the space allotted to each figure, outside the circle. The extensive textual passages are placed either below or alongside the image of the luminaries; the passage referring to the seven stars of the Dipper occupies the second register from the top. Often the reading of these passages is obscure, the characters being corrupted or miswritten, and the calligraphy is quite poor. Therefore, only by identifying the sūtra from which the text is derived is one able to read and comprehend the writing appended to the Horā Diagram. The sūtra is 梵天火羅九曜 or The Nine Luminaries and the Indian Art of Horoscopy, attributed to I-hsing.<sup>11</sup> The characters *Huo lo* 火羅 are

9 S. Mochizuki, *Bukkyō Daijiten*, 10 vols. (Tōkyō, 1960), third ed., I, 731–733.

10 The theory of the Five Elements is indigenous to Chinese thinking. It became widely diffused and accepted by the Confucian scholars in Han time, but rose much earlier, probably in the fourth century B.C. with Tsou Yen of the Naturalist School. He systematized ideas which had been spread in the eastern coastal regions of China. There is reason to think that already at the time of Tsou Yen the theory had been linked to astronomy and calendrical science. On the origins of this theory the scholars' opinions are still divided. The Horā Diagram reflects, to an extent, the symbolic correlation by which the five elements were associated with all possible category of things in the universe, as seasons, colors, directions etc. Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilization in China*, (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1956), II, 232–268.

11 Although such authorship is attested by the sūtra, T. XXI, # 1311, 459, b, 5, E. Chavannes and P. Pelliot, *Un traité manichéen retrouvé en Chine*, (Paris, 1912), 191, place the compilation of this text about AD 874, almost fifty years after I-hsing's death. The popularity of the sūtra in Japan is confirmed by the fact that it was copied by several Japanese monks, whose names are recorded at the end of the sūtra. Among them is Genjō 玄詮 who copied it in the fifth year, eighth month of Bunji (AD 1185). The monk Genjō resided on Kōyasan, in the Getsujō-in; he was active between AD 1146–1205 and connected with the circle of monks participating in the compilation of collections of iconographic drawings, such as the *Besson Zasshi* and the *Kakuzenshō*. See H. Kamakura, «Genjō Ajari Hitsu To Hokutō Mandara», *Hōun*, 3 (1934), 44–45.

transliterating the Sanskrit 'Horā' or art of horoscopy.<sup>12</sup> From the sūtra's title derives the abbreviated appellation «Horā Diagram». The sūtra has illustrations, which are not the same as those of the diagram.

The tie between sūtra and diagram seems confirmed by the following passage in the sūtra:

One hanging scroll [representing] the diagram of Indian horoscopy. [According to it], one pays respect to the great white Brahmā king, to Indra king of the Devas, to Yama the great God of the five Gatis, to the Governor of T'ai Shan, God of life span and good fortune, to the twelve stars of the Zodiac, to the seven stars [of the Dipper], to the nine Luminaries, to the twenty eight Lunar Mansions, to Yakṣas and Yakṣīs, to Piśācas and Piśācīs, and Pu To Na 步多那 (Bhūtas?) Devas.

(T. XXI, # 1311, 462, b, 24–28)

However, with the exception of the celestial bodies, none of the other deities are portrayed in the Horā Diagram.

A summary of what the Horā Diagram represents is supplied by the text written in the diagram itself (third tier from the top, square at the right):

The Indian art of horoscopy and the iconographic drawings of the nine luminaries and of the two dark stars are presented here. In front of all the celestial bodies lie all [human] considerations and decisions. Not even one of the myriads of lucky and unlucky events during one's entire life are missing. This is extremely divine and wondrous. [It was] written and revised by the Dhyāna Master I-hsing.

The twenty eight Lunar Mansions revolve at the left in the sky. If one calculates [their position in relation to the luminaries], one knows the succession of men's transgressions. From the first year of T'ang Wu Te (618 AD), cyclical characters Wu Yin, all the way through to the fifteenth year of Huo T'ung (875 AD), cyclical characters Chia Wu, it totals two hundred fifty seven years. . .

(T. XXI, # 1311, 459, b, 5–10)

The last line of the text written on the diagram is undecipherable. This excerpt constitutes the beginning of the sūtra; however, the order of the two paragraphs here translated is inverted in relation to that of the sūtra's text.

Next I will submit the translation of the Horā Diagram text, an analysis of its images and a comparison of the drawings and their explanatory text to reveal their affinity and discrepancies. The textual passage of each luminary maintains a fixed pattern. It begins with a series of year numbers, during which the given luminary enters a particular star; some of the years are auspicious, others inauspicious. The names and physical traits

12 Gösta Liebert, *Iconographic Dictionary of the Indian Religions: Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism*, (Leiden, 1976), 105. The Sanskrit 'Horā' transliterates the Greek 'ὥρη'.

of the luminaries are submitted; the benign and malevolent influences on human beings, whose birthday star the luminary crosses, are listed. The ritual and sacrificial offerings to placate and ingratiate them are presented. The diagram makes partial use of the sūtra's text for each of the luminaries. In presenting the text attached to each luminary, I follow the sūtra's sequence. The sūtra's order of description starts with Rāhu who is placed in the lower left corner of the diagram. The text referring to this image can be read in the bottom register at the extreme left, immediately below the image of Rāhu. The characters outside the circle, in the four corners, indicate three of his names, Rāhu, Eclipsing Star and Yellow Banner, and the direction Sun 巽 with which Rāhu is associated.<sup>13</sup> The text is as follows:

The years 11, 19, 28, 37, 46, 55 are unlucky. The years 64, 73, 82, 90, 100, 109 [are lucky?]. When during the year this mansion approaches it is unlucky. This star is hidden and invisible. It is variously called Rāhu 羅睺, Master Ra 羅師, Yellow Banner 黃幡, and Fiery Yang 火陽. When it approaches a person's birthday-star, one is likely to have trouble in office and lose his rank. One may be plagued with sickness and one's wealth may be destroyed and scattered. There will be mourning in the family and serious disputes. Monarchs of realms do not sacrifice to this spirit. Upon this mansion's arrival, one should attend service in order to seek blessing. One should present [paper] money to the god of one's own birthday and one should have an image made of the god against whom one has transgressed (Rāhu) and worship it, then there will be great luck. (T. XXI, # 1311, 459, b, 15-c, 1)

This text does not characterize the luminary. Rāhu is represented with three heads, four arms and a human body; he is seated on a dragon. The upper pair of arms hold the sun and moon, the lower seize a naked human being by the hair and an animal by the neck.<sup>14</sup>

13 While Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus and Saturn are connected with the cardinal points and the center, in the case of Rāhu and Ketu, the Sun and Moon the directions chosen derive from the *Book of Changes*, from the Kua 卦 (trigrams or hexagrams symbols representing a large number of events of the phenomenal world). Rāhu is associated with Kua No. six Sun 巽, the Sun with Kua No. one Ch'ien 乾 (mis-written in the Diagram 乾), the Moon with Kua No. fifty-two Ken 艮, Ketu with Kua No. two K'un 坤. See J. Needham, *Science and Civilization in China*, II, 304ff.

14 The representation of Rāhu and especially that of its pendent Ketu have many traits in common with that of Mahākāla (Daikokuten), one of Śiva's manifestations. See Ryūken Sawa, *Butsuzō Zūten*, (Tōkyō, 1976), 155. In some of the iconographic works mentioned in note 3 and in the sūtra *The Nine Luminaries and the Indian Art of Horoscopy*, these two luminaries are represented differently as three-headed human busts rising above stylized clouds.

Next is Saturn placed below the Bodhisattva on the lion, thus he occupies a central position in the diagram. He is an old man riding a black water buffalo, holding a crozier, escorted by two young helpers dressed in red, one in front leading the animal, the other demurely following. Blue, yellow and red are the colors used for Saturn. His text is written next to Rāhu's:

The years 2, 11, 20, 29, 38, 47, 56 are unlucky. The years 65, 74, 83, 92, 104, 113, 122 [are lucky?]. When during the year this mansion arrives, it is the star [called with the alternate name of] Chung Kung 中宮, [associated with the element] earth. . . (text illegible for one column, then it follows the sūtra). All the people whose birthday is near this luminary or coincides with it should be cautious of illnesses and imprisonment. When a year is particularly unlucky for a gentleman, one calls it 'Saturn'. One does not wish to offend him. In appearance, he looks like a Brahmin, he is crowned with a cowherd cap and holds a crozier in one hand. Monarchs of the realm at the end of summer offer trays of fruits to him. One should present [paper] money to the god of one's birthday, one should have an image painted of the god against whom one has transgressed (Saturn) and worship it. One wears yellow garments to sacrifice to Saturn. (T. XXI, # 1311, 459, c, 14-460, a, 4)

The textual description corresponds to the diagram's image. One should note that Saturn is connected with earth among the five elements and yellow is his color.

Third is Mercury, placed above the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī, immediately below the star-map. He is an official scribe in blue and red garments. In the right and left corners outside the circle are Mercury's alternate names, Northern Morning Star and Dripping Morning Star. The text is placed at Mercury's right:

The years 3, 12, 21, 30, 39, 48, 57 [bring] small calamities. The years 66, 75, 84, 93, 102, 110 (?). When during the year this mansion arrives, it is variously called Northern Morning Star 北辰星, Cunning 彗, and Dripping 滴. It has a circumference of hundred li and it verges on [the States of] Yen 燕, and Chao 趙. If it nears a man's birthday, one has chiefly secret sorrows, quarrels and suffers burglaries. . . (characters unreadable). This divine being looks like a lady. Her head is crowned with a monkey, she holds a scroll and brush. In the mid summer months, monarchs of realms use ointment to sacrifice. It is fitting to bring offerings to the Polar Star and sacrifice to it. (T. XXI, # 1311, 460, a, 15-27)

In this instance the representation follows the textual description.

Fourth is Venus, a court lady in red and yellow garments, wearing a bird headdress, and playing a *p'i-p'a* or lute. This luminary occupies the circle at the Bodhisattva's left. The characters in the four corners outside the circle identify Venus with the West, the metal element and present two of Venus' names, Grand White and Na Hsieh(?). The text is written



below the image and it is arranged in sections, the top one with the years' succession:

The years 4, 13, 22, 31, 40, 49, 58, 67, 76, 85, 94, 103, 111 are greatly auspicious. During the course of the year, when this [mansion] arrives, it is Na Hsieh 那頤 and Grand White 太白, connected with the western direction and the metal element. This luminary's circumference is hundred li and verges on the state of Chin 秦. This star is variously called Grand White and Na Hsieh. If it comes near people's birthday, chiefly there will be tears and wars. It has the likeness of a lady wearing a bird-crown and a white silk dress, playing an instrument. . . (next two characters unreadable). During the year, at the arrival of this luminary, it is fitting to wear a white garment; [Venus] brings sorrow. At mid-autumn, monarchs of realms always use [paper] money to sacrifice to their birthday god, to cultivate the fields of blessings [since] it will mean great fortune. (T. XXI, # 1311, 460, b, 8-22)

Fifth is the Sun portrayed directly above Venus. Its appearance is of a Bodhisattva, dressed in red and blue, holding a red sun, however he keeps the hands hidden underneath the sleeves. The Sun sits on a round red platform, supported by five crouched horses forming a semi-circle.<sup>15</sup> The characters placed in the four corners outside the circle are the alternate names *Mi jih* 密日 or Secret Sun and Great *Yang* 大陽 and one indicates the Sun's connection with the direction *Ch'ien* 乾 (mis-written 乾). The characters in the left bottom corner are effaced; those at the right indicate the Sun to be one of the seven luminaries. The text is written below the image:

The years 5, 14, 23, 33, 41, 50, 59, 68, 77, 86, 95, 104, 113 are greatly lucky. During the year, when this luminary approaches, it is the Sun or Great Yang. This luminary is 1500 li in circumference; it takes one day to complete a revolution in the sky. If it nears people's birthday, one is promoted and receives an increase in emoluments; there is rejoicing, one obtains much support and assistance from men of noble rank. Monarchs of realms, on the day of the winter solstice, sacrifice many jewels and great fortune follows. (T. XXI, # 1311, 460, b, 28-c, 5)

This text contains no reference to the representation of the Sun.

Sixth is Mars, below Saturn on the central axis. He stands menacingly in an aggressive stance. He is a creature with four arms each holding weapons: bow and arrow, sword, and a three-pronged spear. His hair stands up straight and a small animal is placed on his head. His complexion is red, his scanty clothes red, blue and yellow. The characters in the four corners, outside the circle, associate Mars with the South, with the

15 For a comparative analysis of the iconographic evolution of the imagery of the Sun and Moon in Esoteric Buddhist ritual see Isatōyo Ishida, *Mandara no Kenkyū*, (Tōkyō, 1975), 163-165.

fire element, inform us that his nature is calamitous and that one of his names is Sparkling Deceiver 熒惑. The text referring to Mars is written in the Diagram's bottom register, below the image, to the reader's right:

The years 6, 15, 24, 33, 42, 51, 60 are unlucky. The years 69, 78, 97, 106, 115 [are lucky?]. During the year when this star arrives, it is variously called Sparkling Deceiver of the South, Four Benefits 四利, Cloudy Ford 雲漢. This luminary's circumference is seventy li. It verges on the state of Wei 魏. If it nears people's birthday, definitely quarrels arise, sicknesses plague them. The likeness of this supernatural being is non-Buddhist. On his head he wears a crown in the shape of a donkey. In his four hands, he holds weapons: knife and sword, bow and arrow. Monarchs of the realm, in the mid-summer months, sacrifice fire to him. During the year when Mars approaches, the lords will come upon fortune, calamities will not arise. If one pays respect to this luminary, there will be no misfortune.

(T. XXI, # 1311, 460, c, 18–29)

In this instance, text and representation coincide.

Seventh is Ketu placed to counterbalance Rāhu on the same line, with the image of Mars in between them. The characters in the four corners indicate, in addition to the name Ketu, the ones of Leopard's Tail and Eclipsing Star and his association with the direction K'un 坤. As a pendent of Rāhu, Ketu is depicted with three heads adorned with five standing serpents, four arms holding the sun and moon, a severed human head and a small animal (a hare?). A serpent is coiled around Ketu's neck. He sits on a bull and is dressed in yellow, blue and red; his complexion is also red. The text is written below the image:

The years 7, 16, 25, 34, 43, 52 are unlucky. The years 61, 70, 79, 88, 97, 106, 115 [are lucky?]. During the course of the year when it arrives, it is Ketu 計都, the hidden star. It is variously called Leopard's Tail 豹尾 and Great Secret 大隱. He is invisible, his appearance has no fixed shape. If a man's birthday falls within this luminary's [course], should one be an official there will be setbacks and impediments; [if one is not an official], the search for office will not be fulfilled, one will be compelled to transfer, one will be troubled at the hands of other officials. There will be many worries and illnesses. This luminary is not auspicious; monarchs of realms [do not sacrifice to him]. During the year, when Ketu approaches, one gives a farewell party to the *Wu tao szu ling* 五道司令. One paints the image of this supernatural being and sacrifices to him in a deep hall; [consequently], he will turn calamities around and transform them into fortune.

(T. XXI, # 1311, 461, a, 12–29)

The text is silent about Ketu's appearance, in fact it states that it has no appearance.

Eighth is the Moon in the upper left corner of the Diagram. It has the appearance of a Bodhisattva holding the moon, but with hands hidden under the sleeves. The robe is blue, yellow and red. The Moon sits on three



geese. The characters in the four corners mention two of the Moon's names, *Mo yüeh* 莫月 and Great Yin 大陰, and its connection with the direction *K'en* 艮. Furthermore, in the right and left bottom corners, there are the characters 'Twenty Eight Mansions' 廿八宿 may be an allusion to the fact that the Moon during its course rests in each one of them, and the characters 月天屬, whose meaning is unclear to me. The text is as follows:

The years 8, 17, 26, 35, 44, 53, 62, 71, 80, 89, 98, 107(?). During the year when this mansion arrives, it is Great Yin, the Moon. Its circumference is 1500 li. If it comes near people's birthday, it brings great luck: one is promoted and receives an increase in salary, all one's enterprises are successful, one receives support and assistance from men of noble rank. There always will be many occasions for rejoicing. By summer solstice, kings of realms sacrifice with jewels and water. During the year, at the arrival of this luminary, all affairs succeed; if one seeks a position, one obtains it and all one's endeavors are greatly lucky. (T. XXI, # 1311, 461, b, 7-23)

Ninth is Jupiter, placed below the Moon. This luminary is portrayed as a grave, bearded official with a tall hat in blue, yellow voluminous robes. He holds a bowl of fruits. The characters in the four corners represent two of his names, Year Star 歲星 and *Wen mo szu* 溫沒斯 (?), his connection with the wood element and with the eastern direction. The text is written below the image:

The years 9, 18, 27, 36, 45, 54, 63, 72, 81, 90, 99, 108, 117 are indeed greatly lucky. During the year when it arrives, it is Wen Mo Szu [connected with] the eastern direction and with the wood element. [It is also known by] the name Catcher 攝提. This luminary's circumference is hundred li. It verges on the states of Lu 魯 and Wei 衛. When it nears people's birthday, one is promoted, one's emoluments increase, all affairs are lucky. The likeness of this supernatural being is of a high official, wearing a green dress. He wears a boar crown and holds fruits. By mid spring months, monarchs of the realms always sacrifice with jewels. In the year, when this luminary arrives, it is fitting to associate with people of noble rank and matches will be harmonious. This is a year of greatly lucky events.

(T. XXI, # 1311, 461, c, 1-15)

In this instance, the text and image are closely related, only the boar crown is missing. In general, the affinity of the text and image exists for the five traditional luminaries, but lacks for the Sun and Moon, Rāhu and Ketu. As for the central Bodhisattva whose name is not written in the diagram, by appearance, attributes and vehicle he can be identified with Mañjuśrī. Considering the stress on the directions for the five traditional luminaries and their relationship to the central Bodhisattva, one is reminded of the famous pilgrimage center of Wu T'ai Shan, visited by the pilgrim Ennin in mid ninth century. The Wu T'ai Shan complex was laid

out on five hills and Mañjuśrī used to manifest himself to the faithful on their summit under the disguise of a holy lamp.<sup>16</sup>

The duplication of names given to the luminaries in the Horā Diagram is better understood in the light of another important text,

文殊師利菩薩及諸仙所說吉凶晴日善惡宿曜經

or *Sūtra of the Discourses of the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī and the Immortals on Auspicious and Inauspicious Times and Days on the Good and Evil Mansions and Luminaries*, translated in Chinese by Amoghavajra in 759 AD, to which Yang Ching-feng 楊景風 wrote a commentary in 764 AD.<sup>17</sup> Some of the puzzling alternate names found in the Horā Diagram and its related sūtra can be explained as Chinese transliterations of Sogdian names.<sup>18</sup> In this sūtra only seven luminaries are mentioned (Rāhu and Ketu are excluded) and are presented in the sequence of the western seven days week:

As for the seven luminaries, they are the Sun, Moon and the five stars which come down to rule over men. Each day one should not ask the details, but ought to handle the luminaries with great care.<sup>19</sup> If suddenly one does not remember [the names of the days of the week], one ought to inquire from a Sogdian or a Persian or a native of India who knows them well. The Nirgranthaputra (non-Buddhist in general, not only Jain) and the Manicheans always keep a fast on Mi 密 day. They also consider this day to be a holy day 大日 or Sunday.<sup>20</sup>

In the following paragraph, this sūtra supplies a list of the luminaries as they are called in Sogdian, Persian and Sanskrit respectively. The Sogdian name for the Sun was Mihr, for the Moon Mâh, for Mars Bahram, for Mercury Tîr, for Jupiter Ormuzd, for Venus Nâhid, for Saturn Kewan. These Sogdian names became transliterated in Chinese with the following characters: Mi 密, Mo po szu 莫波斯, Yun han 雲漢, Hsi 呬, Hu szu 鵠斯, Na hsieh 那歇, Saturn Chih kung 枳宮. Thus, in the Horā Diagram, we find Sogdian alternate names

16 I have not translated the two columns of characters at each side of the Bodhisattva; they do not derive from the sūtra. Mañjuśrī seems to be holding a lotus stem and a sūtra roll; for Mañjuśrī's iconography see R. Sawa, *Butsuzō Zūten*, 79–82. E.O. Reischauer transl., *Ennin's Diary*, (New York, 1955), 256 ff.

17 T. XXI, # 1299, 387.

18 Edouard Huber, «Termes persans dans l'astrologie bouddhique chinoise», *Bulletin de l'Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient*, VI (1906), 39–43.

19 The meaning of this sentence becomes clear with Yang Chin-feng's commentary, translated by E. Huber, *op.cit.*, 41: «Chaque jour une planète différente domine et après sept jours le cycle recommence. On en tient compte à cause de l'influence heureuse ou malheureuse qu'elles exercent sur les affaires humaines. . .»

20 T. XXI, # 1299, 398, a, 29–b, 3.

used for the Sun, the Moon, Mars, Venus (the character 歌 is substituted with the character 頤, both having the same reading), and Saturn ( 枳 substituted with 中 ).

In the Horā Diagram, one noticed the association of some of the luminaries with kingdoms and dynasties of early Chinese history. Mars was linked to Wei, Mercury to Yen and Chao, Jupiter to Lu and Wei, Venus to Ch'in. Such device reflects an interesting conception. According to it, the sky is delimited into zones of influence, presided over by different celestial bodies. Likewise, the territory of China is divided into sections which correspond to those of the heavenly realms. Whenever a celestial body transpasses its fixed boundaries in heaven, the consequences will be felt on earth in the corresponding spheres of terrestrial power. Thus, the improper movements of the celestial bodies cause natural calamities on earth.

Such thinking is also present in the sūtra 熾盛光大威德  
消災吉祥陀羅尼經 or *The Auspicious Dhāraṇī Sūtra of Te-  
jahprabha, Great Majestic Virtue and Dispeller of Calamities*, translated  
by Amoghavajra:

Take for instance localities and various realms which are inhabited by princes of states together with various great ministers. In some cases they are invaded by the five Planets. [For example], the star Rāhu, a magical star, shines and verges on the constellations and lunar mansions which are its original charge and occupies its position over all [other] various stars. [However], in some cases it verges on the Emperor's throne in the realm, households and border regions. At the time when it invades, it may withdraw or it may come forward and create all kinds of trouble and difficulties.<sup>21</sup>

The correspondence between temporal and heavenly powers may have originated a cartographic system of celestial-geographical coordinates.<sup>22</sup>

One noticed that in the text of the Horā Diagram, the sacrificial offerings vary according to the luminaries they are offered to. Jewels should be offered to Jupiter, the Sun and Moon (to the last also water), ointment to Mercury and paper money to Venus. In the case of Saturn, Rāhu and Ketu, one should have an image painted.

21 T. XIX, # 963, 337, c, 16–20.

22 This correspondence of earthly and heavenly regions was already present in pre-Han and Han texts as in the *Lü shih ch'un ch'iu* (chapter 62) and the *Huai nan tzu* (chapter 3). Thus, in this instance too, Buddhism adopted a traditional Chinese belief. For the possible existence of a cartographic system in T'ang time see J. Needham, *Science and Civilization in China*, III, 545.

The ritual of image-making explains why the text meticulously describes the luminaries' appearance. Since image-making is an essential part of Esoteric Buddhist ceremonies, it is not surprising to find this aspect particularly stressed in the sūtra 七曜攘災決 or *Formula for Avoiding Calamities According to the Seven Luminaries*, compiled by the Brahmin Chin Ch'u Ch'a.<sup>23</sup> In this text Rāhu and Ketu are not included. The text presents first the unlucky events which will befall people whose birth-day-star comes in contact with one of the seven luminaries, then offers the remedy against such calamities.

One should paint the heavenly form of the Sun. Its likeness is of a man, but with the head of a lion. Its human body wears a heavenly dress, in the hands he carries a precious bowl and it is black. (T. XXI, # 1308, 426, c, 10–12)

When the Moon does not follow its course there will be calamities and eclipses, then one must offer sacrifices. One ought to paint its sacred shape. Its likeness is of a heavenly woman, wearing a greenblue heavenly garment and holding a jewelled sword. (*Ibid.*, 426, c, 19–21)

One should paint the heavenly shape of Jupiter. He looks like a man with a human body and a dragon's head. He wears heavenly robes following the color of the particular season. (*Ibid.*, 426, c, 29–427, a, 1)

If there are calamities, one should paint Mars' heavenly form. Its likeness is of an elephant of black color, looking at the sky and roaring loudly. (*Ibid.*, 427, a, 11–12)

[According to] this method of sacrificing, one should paint the sacred image of Saturn. It looks like a Brahmin riding on a black water buffalo. (*Ibid.*, 427, a, 21–22)

[According to] this method of sacrificing, one should paint Venus' sacred image. It looks like a heavenly lady making a mudrā with the hands, riding a white cock. (*Ibid.*, 427, b, 4–5)

[According to] this method of sacrificing, one paints Mercury's sacred image. Its likeness is of a black serpent with four feet and eating a crab. (*Ibid.*, 427, b, 13–14)

In this text, one notices a strong tendency to represent some of the planets with animal forms. Saturn keeps the conventional appearance of a Brahmin, Venus and the Moon are human, but different from the Horā Diagram. One may infer the existence of variations in the Luminaries' iconography.<sup>24</sup>

23 T. XXI, # 1308, 426, b, 23 ff. This sūtra was compiled at the start of the ninth century, since notes appended to it refer to events which occurred in the years AD 794 and 806, thus, it post-dates I-hsing's writings.

24 This inference is supported by the textual and visual evidence found in the handscroll «The Five Planets and Twenty-eight Lunar Mansions», Abe Collection Osaka Municipal Museum. We miss sixteen of the Lunar Mansions which were in a separate



To complete the translation of the text written in the Horā Diagram, I submit the excerpts placed below the row of images representing the seven stars of the Dipper:

According to the 韋斯經 *Yü szu ching*<sup>25</sup>: «Everyone is aware of the existence of only seven luminaries, [since] one can not see the empty luminaries called Rāhu and Ketu. These luminaries are in a secret position and are not visible; whenever they meet with the sun [and the moon], an eclipse results, thus they are known as eclipsing deities. Ketu is the tail of the eclipsing deity and is called Leopard's Tail. When during the year Ketu arrives, one must paint the image of the god one has offended and one offers burnt [paper] money in a deep hall, then definitely dangers will be transformed and not arise. Dangers will be transformed into great luck. [However], if one does not believe, the transformation will not be a lucky one. (Slight variation from the sūtra's text). If one meets with an evil luminary, one must offer sacrifice to it. For all those who do not sin, the chance will be propitious. . . (missing characters), it becomes inauspicious. If one encounters an auspicious [luminary], joy again and again will flourish, virtue will naturally arrive. If one encounters an [evil] luminary, dangers definitely will compete in arising. If kings and nobility offend the luminary, then they will be degraded from their office. However, at the time between eleven p.m., facing the northern Dipper, with utmost sincerity one sacrifices to the luminary of one's own birthday. Absolutely do not urinate facing the North, it would reduce one's life span. It is fitting to consider truth and think of virtue, then one can obtain blessings and wealth. If one does not sacrifice, calamity and injury will rival each other in arising. (T. XXI, # 1311, 461, c, 28–462, a, 9) To these five luminaries recite the true words, one cannot consider. . . (not decipherable). If with sincere heart and wearing a hatchet

scroll. Two colophons appended at the end of the scroll by Tung Ch'i-ch'ang and Ch'en Chi-ju identified the author as Wu Tao-tzu and Yen Li-pen respectively, while a third attribution, at the start of the scroll, ascribed it to Ling Tsan who wrote the seal characters accompanying each image. All three attributions indicate a T'ang master, but most likely it is a Sung copy of an earlier work. It has also been suggested that the painting was originally by Chang Seng-yu (ca. AD 470–550), thus a pre-T'ang work. The luminaries in their order of representation are: Jupiter as a cat-headed figure on a boar, Mars as a mule-headed figure on a mule, Saturn as an old Brahmin on an ox, Venus as a court lady soaring in the sky on a phoenix, Mercury as a scribe wearing a monkey headdress. The inscriptions of the Abe scroll are quite informative regarding the ceremonies to be performed for each celestial body, specifying the type of offering and sacrificial implements and the location of each of the luminaries' shrines. The ritual differs from that of Esoteric Buddhism. The likeness of the luminaries is also different: they are partly human, partly beast, close to a tradition of stone-epitaph decoration very popular during T'ang. One could infer that the luminaries here represented may have been worshipped as independent deities, not incorporated in a Buddhist cult. See Yukyo Yashiro, «Scroll Painting of the Five Planets and Twenty-eight Stellar Mansions», *The Bijutsu Kenkyū*, CXXXIX (1944), 241–280.

- 25 E. Chavannes and P. Pelliot, *Un traité manichéen retrouvé en Chine*, 193, consider it a Sogdian work transmitted to China about AD 800.

at the waist, one offers sacrifice for the whole year, there will not be calamities, but great fortune.» (The last sentence does not belong to the sūtra's text.)

Method of Sacrificing to the Northern Dipper by the Immortal Worthy Ko Hsien Kung 葛仙公 :

The Northern Dipper controls the upper mystery and the nine northern poles. From kings and princes to scholars and commoners, all belong to the star of the Dipper. One should always pay respect not to befall with unexpected calamities and inauspicious evil events. [This constellation] universally helps to remove the calamities and dangers of the human world. One obtains to extend one's life longer and longer; there will not be calamities and difficulties. Furthermore, if with utmost sincerity, one offers sacrifice to the god of one's own birthday, everyone will obtain the happiness which is man's wish. Calamities, injuries and misfortunes are all caused by the lack of respect for the planet's image and are also caused by not knowing that one has offended the Northern Dipper Star. Proceeding in darkness, calamities and dangers arrive on their own accord, [but] if one offers sacrifices there will be great luck as result.

One sacrifices to the god of one's own birthday each year, six times; with utmost sincerity, on the day of one's own birthday, one makes use of handsome [paper] money, as much as are the years. Making use of three deckers of tea and also with purified bedding, one burns incense with sincere heart facing in the direction of the Northern Dipper. One bows twice and chants as follows: «I, the petty petitioner, kneeling on this side of the bedding, love the Way and seek spiritual guidance and hope to be able to see your august form. . . (From here on some characters are missing). On my birthday, I respectfully offer silver money and immortal fruits. I sacrifice to the Northern Dipper Star and pay respect to the image of the god of my birthday. I ask the luminaries for longer life and to be spared from calamities, and for my immortal soul to be peaceful.» The god of one's own birthday will automatically drive away evils. One bows twice, burns [paper] money and with joined palms offers sacrifice. Then great luck will follow. (T. XXI, # 1311, 461, c, 28–462, a, 24)

From the reading of the translation, one may submit the following inferences. The text of the Horā Diagram presents many themes such as the anthropomorphic appearance assigned to the heavenly bodies for purpose of worship, their association with specific directions, colors and seasons, their control over fixed heavenly territories corresponding to earthly ones, their benign or malign influence on human destinies and the possibility of their appeasement by mortal beings through particular sacrificial offerings.

As one noticed, each of these themes are focused upon and expounded at greater length in other sūtras whose information, at times, is different. The variation in the subject matter offered by texts translated during the eighth century could be ascribed to the fact that such texts originated in different countries. Not all sūtras were originally Indian, but some Central Asian, reflecting Turkish influences. Once transplanted in China, indigenous, traditional beliefs were added to such teachings, giving rise to an eclectic synthesis.



In summation, the text of the Horā Diagram truly reflects the merging of traditional Chinese ideas with the newly imported foreign astrological notions. Furthermore, they were encompassed within the unifying background of Esoteric Buddhism, which rose to its height during the T'ang dynasty.