

∞ 16. Astrology ∞

Astrology is the study of man's response to planetary stimuli. The stars and constellations have no conscious benevolence or animosity; they merely send forth positive and negative radiations (energies) of themselves. These do not help or harm humanity, but offer a lawful channel for the outward operation of cause/effect equilibriums that each man has set into motion in the past.

-Yogananda

From astrological references in ancient Hindu and Taoist literature, scholars have been able to ascertain the dates of the authors. The scientific knowledge of the Rishis was very great; in the "Kaushitaki Brahmana" we find precise astrological passages indicating that in 3100 B.C. the Hindus were far advanced in astronomy, which had a practical value in determining the auspicious times for astrological ceremonies. An article by Tara Matain in East-West (magazine) dated February 1934 says of the "jyotish" or body of Vedic astronomical expositions: It contains the scientific lore that kept India at the forefront of all ancient nations and made her the "Mecca" of seekers after knowledge. "Brahma Gupta," one of the "jyotish" words is an astronomical treatise dealing with such matters as the Heliocentric motion of the planetary bodies in our solar system, the obliquity of the ecliptic, the earth's spherical form, the light of the moon, the earth's daily axial revolution, the presence of "fixed stars" in the "Milky Way"; the law of gravitation, and other scientific facts that did not dawn in the western world until the time of Copernicus and Newton.

The so called "Arabic numerals" so invaluable in the development of western mathematics came to Europe in the ninth century via the Arabs from India where that system of notation had been anciently formulated.

For further reading see: Sir P. O. Roy's "History of Hindu Chemistry," B.N. Seal's "Positive Sciences of the Ancient Hindu's," B.K. Sarkar's "Hindu Achievements in Exact Medica of the Hindus."

Special relations were believed to exist between particular celestial bodies and their varied motions, configurations with each other, and the processes of generation and decay apparent in the world of *fire*, air, water and earth. These relations were sometimes regarded as so complex that no human mind could completely grasp them; thus, the astrologer might be readily excused for any errors.\* A similar set of special relations was also assumed by those whose physics was more akin to that of the Greek philosopher PLATO. For the PLATONIC astrologer, the element of fire was believed to extend throughout the celestial spheres, and they were more likely than the Aristotelians to believe in the possibility of divine intervention in the natural processes through celestial influences upon the earth, since they believed in the deity's creation of the celestial bodies themselves.

## Application of the Twenty-Eight Constellation Cycle

Constellations are the visible energy points of nature; similarly, there are many energy points in the human body. The twenty-eight constellation cycle can be arranged on the human body and used as the Celestial Stems and Terrestrial Branches. The main zone is the central line of the back and front of the body, which corresponds to the ecliptic path of the sun. There are many important energy points along one's "Yellow Route" which connect with spiritual health and development. If these points are successfully opened, a person's spiritual growth and capability will greatly increase.

Of the twenty-eight constellations, or spiritual energy points, only seven are familiar to some spiritual traditions where they are known as chakras. The opening of the entire ecliptic path is related to high spiritual growth, but this cannot be achieved by means of modern physical conditioning programs. Tai Chi Chuan, Chi Gong and Dou-In are ancient heritages which can aid in opening these points.

### The Twenty-Eight Constellations

In the integral practice of individual spiritual cultivation, the Big Dipper, twenty-eight constellations, sun, moon and first five planets are highly valued and utilized because of their responsive natural energy and supernatural connection with life on earth. These heavenly bodies are actually the background for earthly energy. Each of them is in a different cyclic pattern, and they all have a direct and indirect influence on human life.

The general area of the North Star is the center of the circle and it is from this center that the four directions are identified and located. There are seven constellations in each direction, making a total of twenty-eight in all four directions combined. The eastern seven are symbolized by a green dragon, the western seven by a white tiger, the southern seven by a red bird, and the northern seven by a black turtle. The four colors distinguish the different subtle energy rays.

The number of stars in each constellation is not equal. For example, there are thirty-two stars in the eastern seven constellations, fifty-one in the western seven, sixty-four in the southern seven, and thirty-five in the northern seven. All one hundred and eighty-two stars are set around the ecliptic of the sun.

Why did the ancient developed ones divide the fixed stars along the Yellow Route (the apparent annual path of the sun in the celestial sphere) into twenty-eight constellations? There are two reasons. First, the constellations are connected to the path of moon, which takes twenty-eight days to move from East to West among the fixed stars. This is called a sidereal month. The twenty-eight days are divided into twenty-eight regions which are courier stations or travelling houses for the moon. Secondly, the ancient ones recognized that it takes twenty-eight years for Saturn to make a revolution around the sun. Just as the constellations are "on duty" for the earth, they are also "on duty" for Saturn. The earth enters a new constellation every day, whereas Saturn enters another constellation each year. This is called "holding authority over one constellation."

The shapes of the different constellations were originally drawn by using naked-eye observations, and a few constellations have changed since then.