Astrology in Mother-Tantric Literature

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1. Introduction In spite of the fact that not a little information on astrology or fortunetelling is given in the works of Mother-Tantric literature, few studies have been conducted. This paper is intended as a comparative study of the system of astrology in accordance with the time of birth in *Vajradākatantra* (=VD) chap. 10¹⁾ and *Catuspīṭhatantra* (=CP) chap. 1-1²⁾. Since descriptions of VD as well as CP are sometimes ambiguous, our understanding of their system is mainly based on Bhavabaṭṭa's commentaries on VD and CP³⁾.

2. Outline of the system Table 1 represents twelve divisions of a day mentioned in VD. Twelve divisions of time i.e. *rohitā*, *mohitā*, *bhadra* and so on function as a base unit for astrology. These twelve divisions have the dawn as their starting point and are arranged in the order of east, south, west and north. They are related to vowels, sixty *ghaṭis* which constitute one day and night, the signs of the zodiac (*rāśi*) and stars (*nakṣatra*).

In comparing it with the system of CP, there are three points which interests us : (i) In CP, the eleventh division is called *svapna* and the twelfth one is named *kāma*. Bhavabaṭṭa explains, for the sake of coherence between VD and CP, that *svapnikā* of VD means *svapna* and *bhuvaneśvara* of VD is equivalent to *kāma*. *Svapnikā* is thought to be a distorted word of *svapnakāma* (= *svapna* and *kāma*). The distortion could be explained as follows : At some time the 'ma' of 'svapnakāma' was omitted by accident, and then the 'svapnakā' was changed to 'svapnikā'. As a result, 'bhuvaneśvara' which was originally a general term for twelve divisions in CP became the name of the twelfth division in VD. (ii) Sixty *ghaṭis* are unevenly distributed, which means that the span of each division is not uniform. This is also the case with CP. (iii) In CP, twelve divisions of time together with their corresponding elements such as vowels, *ghaṭis* and so on are arranged in anticlockwise

direction⁴⁾. On the other hand, in Vḍ they are arranged in clockwise direction as shown in Table 1. When we focus on the signs of the zodiac and stars, CP's manner is considered to be popular as the system of astrology. (iv) No role of the planets is concretely explained. If the planets took an indispensable part of the system of Vḍ and CP, more descriptions of their roles would have been given. As the system of Varāhamihira shows, planets generally play an important role in horoscope. Hence, systems of Vḍ and CP may not be regarded as that of horoscope.

TABLE 1

dawn	east	rohitā	A	3ghaṭi	meṣa	aśvinī, bharāṇi, kṛttikā 1/4
		mohitā	Ā	4ghaṭi	vṛṣa	kṛttikā 3/4, rohiṇi, mṛgaśīrṣa 2/4
		bhadra	I	5ghaṭi	mithuna	mṛgaśīrṣa 2/4, ārdrā, punarvasu 3/4
	south	vṛṣabha	Ī	5ghaṭi	karkaṭa	punarvasu 1/4, puṣya, āśleṣā
		kūrma	U	4ghaṭi	siṃha	maghā, pūrvaphālgunī, uttaraphālgunī 1/4
		makara	Ū	3ghaṭi	kanyā	uttaraphālgunī, hasta, citrā 2/4
	west	raṇḍā	E	5ghaṭi	tulā	citrā 2/4, svātī, viśākhā 3/4
		mikira	AI	7ghaṭi	vṛścika	viśākhā 1/4, anurādhā, jyeṣṭhā
		bhidrika	O	6ghaṭi	dhanus	mūla, pūrvāṣādhā, uttarāṣādhā 2/4
	north	vyākuli	AU	6ghaṭi	mṛga	uttarāṣādhā 3/4, śravaṇa, dhaniṣṭhā 2/4
		svapnikā ⁱ⁾	AṢ	7ghaṭi	kumbha	dhaniṣṭhā 2/4, śatabhiṣaj, pūrvabhādrapadā 3/4
		bhuvaneśvara ⁱⁱ⁾	AḢ	5ghaṭi	mīna	pūrvabhādrapadā 1/4, uttarabhādrapadā, revatī

i) = svapna

ii) = kāma

3. Application of twelve divisions to months and days Vḍ and CP explain twelve divisions of a year and a month on the basis of the system of twelve divisions of time. Table 2 summerizes the ideas in Vḍ. As the month goes by, each of twelve divisions by which the days (1st day to 12th day) are demarcated shifts one by one. For the purpose of computing, the *Pausa* is regarded as the starting month. This idea seems peculiar to this system since it is usual to start from the *Caitra*.

TABLE 2

	1st month = rohitā	2nd month = bhuvaneśvara	3rd month = svapnikā	...	12th month = mohitā
1st day	rohitā	bhuvaneśvara	svapnikā	...	mohitā

2nd day	mohitā	rohitā	bhuvaneśvara	...	bhadra
3rd day	bhadra	mohitā	rohitā	...	vṛṣabha
4th day	vṛṣabha	bhadra	mohitā	...	kūrma
5th day	kūrma	vṛṣabha	bhadra	...	makara
6th day	makara	kūrma	vṛṣabha	...	raṇḍā
7th day	raṇḍā	makara	kūrma	...	mikira
8th day	mikira	raṇḍā	makara	...	bhidrika
9th day	bhidrika	mikira	raṇḍā	...	vyākuli
10th day	vyākuli	bhidrika	mikira	...	svapnikā
11th day	svapnikā	vyākuli	bhidrika	...	bhuvaneśvara
12th day	bhuvaneśvara	svapnikā	vyākuli	...	rohitā

In comparing the system of Vḍ with that of CP, two differences are found : (i) In Vḍ, twelve divisions are attributed to days in ordinary order, while to months they are attributed in reverse order. On the other hand, the ordinary order is accepted to the months as well as the days in CP. (ii) Vḍ insists that when the thirteenth day, fourteenth day and fifteenth day are requested, divisions distributed to the third day, fourth day and fifth day are again attributed to them. This explanation is not given in CP.

4. Fortunetelling — time of birth and time of death Vḍ and CP narrates the personality and fortune (future occupation and the time of death) of a person according to the divisions corresponding to the time of birth of the person. The instructions are the same in both their systems except certain points. One of the points is the relation between the time of birth and that of death. Table 3 shows the relations in the system of Vḍ. The table should be read in this way : A person born at the time of *rohitā* is to die at the time of *bhuvaneśvara*.

TABLE 3

Birth : Death	Birth : Death	Birth : Death
rohitā : bhuvaneśvara	bhuvaneśvara : svapnikā	svapnikā : vyākuli
vyākuli : bhidrika	bhidrika : mikira	mikira : raṇḍā
raṇḍā : makara	makara : kūrma	kūrma : vṛṣabha
vṛṣabha : bhadra	bhadra : mohitā	mohitā : rohitā

What should be noted here is that the division of birth and that of death adjoin each other in reverse order. This is said to be due to the theoretical manipulation by Vḍ. However, this attempt is not observed in CP. In other words, CP does not designate a particular division for death-time.

5. Conclusion From the above investigation, we may draw the following conclusions : (i) The system of Vḍ and that of CP can be regarded as being in close relation with each other in that both assert twelve divisions of time as a base unit for astrology. (ii) Since the planets do not play an important role in the system of Vḍ and CP, their system should be distinguished from that of horoscope as is seen in the system of Varāhamihira in which the planets are indispensable elements. (iii) From the matter of a distortion of *svapnakāma*, it is obvious that CP's system was composed earlier than Vḍ's. (iv) The order of arrangement of twelve divisions of time in CP is inverted in some phases in the case of Vḍ. From the fact that Vḍ belongs to the *Yoginītantra*-movement which prefers the inverted order, it can be inferred that Vḍ changed the order of arrangement prescribed in CP, in accordance with the general tendency of the *Yoginītantra* literature.

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1) Sanskrit Ms. Culcatta Śāstri 72/ Tokyo Matsunami 343.

2) Sanskrit Ms. Cambridge Add. 1704/ Kathumandu Reel. 138/10.

3) *Śrīvajradākanāmamahātantrarājasya vivṛti*, Tib. Ota 2131. *Śrīcatuṣpīṭhatantrarājasya tī-kāsmṛtinibandhanāma*, Tib. Ota 2478.

4) Connection of twelve divisions of time with the vowels, signs of the zodiac and stars is not clear in CP itself.

〈Key Words〉 astrology, fortunetelling, *Vajradākatantra*, *Catuṣpīṭhatantra*, Bhavabhaṭṭa

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