

KARMA AND ASTROLOGY:  
AN UNRECOGNIZED ASPECT  
OF INDIAN ANTHROPOLOGY

Since time immemorial, the most varied divinatory practices have flourished in India. Their prognostications were supplied by the interpretation of quite diverse *omina* and *portenta*: Thus “meteors” (lightning, rain or comets) earthquakes, the flight and cries of crows and other birds, the degree of clarity of a subject’s image reflected in melted butter (*ghṛta*), lines and marks on a body, the direction taken by smoke rising from the altar once the rite had condensed a certain magic power from it (*prabhāva*), dreams, all were thought to furnish the diviner with presages. As the abundant lists of the *Garga saṃhitā* and the *Bṛhat Saṃhitā* testify, for a conscience attentive to the intersigns there is no reality, even the most insignificant, that does not lend itself directly or by contiguity to systematic interpretation.

However, down through the ages, and especially since the Gupta, astrology (*jyotiṣa*) has become the most wide-spread method of divination up until today, when it continues to play an important role in the life of all Hindus. Whether it be a matter of determining the most auspicious moment to begin some ritual activity, draw up the natal theme (*rāṣi-dakṛa*) of a new-born child so as to predict

Translated by Jeanne Ferguson

its destiny, choose the most propitious date for the celebration of a marriage (*vivāha*), predict the outcome of an enterprise by means of horometry (*hora-śāstra*) or to decide on the opportuneness of undertaking a pilgrimage or a military expedition, no one will fail to consult an astrologer. Whether he proceeds from simple divinatory formulas or, on the contrary, from complex computations, his answer will engage and influence individual destiny and may perhaps contribute to the appeasement of anxiety that is always latent in the future. The appearance and diffusion of the cult of *Sani* (Saturn) among the industrial workers in Bengal is evidence in our day of this vitality of astrological beliefs.

On the other hand, the belief in the transmigration of the soul through various conditions of existence, based on the karmic axiom of just although deferred retribution for any morally qualifiable action is for any Indian a no less fundamental fact, conditioning his organic insertion into the social structure of Brahmanic society, as we know.

Today, it suffices to interrogate the Indian on the street on the subject of astrology to have almost invariably the answer: “*Astrology is karma*”. As deep-rooted as its perception is in popular Indian consciousness, the relation between karma<sup>1</sup> and astrology nevertheless remains largely unrecognized in Indian studies, which have been devoted to restoring separately the history of Indian astrology on the one hand and that of karma on the other, as though it were actually a matter of two distinct domains. If it is true that their relationship does not appear in the classical age, nevertheless it is progressively outlined in proportion to their respective elaboration to receive finally its formulation in the technical treatises (*śāstra*). The relation between the postulates of the pan-Indian doctrine of karma and transmigration on the one hand and astrological practice on the other consequently deserves more attention from the conscientious Indianologist, careful not to neglect any fact of the patrimony of Indianity.<sup>2</sup>

What is then the relation between karma and astrology? How does the doctrine of karma come to be connected to the operatory processes of the elements and determinants that compose the system of astrology? In what way does it involve the more general question of determinism and free will? In other words, what specific light does Indian astrology throw on the problem of determin-

ism and free will?

First of all, it is profitable to measure the originality of Indian astrology by comparing it with the more familiar Occidental astrology, then to trace briefly the parallel histories of astrology and the doctrine of karma, before showing how their confluence, in fact, allows the relation between karma and astrology to be established. After having given the formulation of which it is the object in the technical treatises, we shall try to extract the meaning and evaluate the true import of this specifically Indian model of the astrological actualization of karma.

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The comparison of their constituent elements and the function of these latter shows the specificity of Indian astrology with regard to Occidental astrology of Semitic origin, even though a later recourse to a diachronic approach will lead us to limit the import of such a statement. The two systems are first of all differentiated by the choice of their zodiacs: sidereal in India, the sun making in one sidereal year a complete revolution in its apparent movement with regard to the stars; tropical in the West, the sun accomplishing in one tropical year a complete revolution in its apparent movement with regard to the equator. The second major difference lies in the Indian division of the zodiac in terms of points corresponding to the fixed determinant stars of the constellations classified under this name: while it designates, in the Vedic epoch, 27 (or 28 in the *Atharva veda*) fixed stars, the term *nakṣatra* came to indicate the 27 mathematical divisions, most often equal, of the zodiac into sectors of 13°20'. These latter play a fundamental role: the *nakṣatra* occupied by the moon at birth (*janmanakṣatra*) represents, so to speak, the pivot of the natal theme while the comparison of the *nakṣatra* serves as the choice of a conjugation. The two systems then differ as to the beginning of the passage of the sun through the zodiac: in Hindu astrology, the sun enters the first sign, not at the vernal equinox, but the first of the month of *Vaisakha* (around April 13) before entering (*saṃkrānti*) the following sign a month later.

On the other hand, the Indian system is a geocentric system that distributes the signs on the horoscope in a clockwise

direction, while Occidental astrology is a heliocentric system that distributes them counter-clockwise. Indian astrology assigns great importance to the phases of the moon (often identified with mental energy), called lunar days (*tithi*) and divided into two periods, the “bright half” of the crescent moon (*sukla pakṣa*, from *Amavasya* to *Pūrṇimā*) and the “dark half” of the moon “on the wane” (*kṛāṇa pakṣa*, from *Pūrṇimā* to *Amavasya*). The division of the zodiac into houses also differs in Indian astrology: aside from the fact that it rests on a division into equal houses differently from Western astrology, the cusp of the first house is constituted by the ascendant (*lagna*) located at the center of the house that extends over 15° from each side of its median point, while in Western astrology the first house begins simply at the ascendant. There is also a difference as to the subdivision of the signs in Indian astrology: 16 in theory, in practice they are limited to 7 (*saptavar-ga*). Finally, the calculation of the aspects (*dr̥ṣṭi*) presents many differences: first, the nine “planets” (*graha*) include in India the two nodes of the lunar orbit, Rahu and Ketu (the ancient demon of eclipse, Rahu, and the comet Ketu of the Vedic epoch being mentioned as nodes of the moon only after 500 A.D.);<sup>3</sup> on the other hand, the aspects are determined from sign to sign, certain signs being occasion for exaltation (*ucca*) or exile (*nica*) of a planet, and not degree by degree; Indian evaluation of the aspects recalls in this regard the relatively mechanistic determination of “enclosing” in Western astrology. In addition, the classification of the aspects is different: their intrinsic value always depends on the nature of the planet (beneficent or evil) whose aspects are under consideration, the conjunction never being treated as an aspect in India. The movements of the planets coming to “graze” in a precise sector, that is, the transits, (*gocāra* or *saṅkrama*) are evaluated in India from the sign occupied by the moon at birth. Finally, in relation with the *nakṣatra* occupied precisely by the moon at birth, Hindu predictive astrology determines the favorable or unfavorable stages of life (*daśa*), they themselves subdivided, that are integrated into a cycle of 120 years (*viṅṣottari daśā*, in Northern India) or 108 years (*aṣṭottari daśā*, in Southern India).

From this necessarily brief inventory of the differences between the two systems, it appears that Indian astrology has for material a cadre that is not only more comprehensive but also rich in a

certainly much larger number of determinants that are univocal but bound in a more mechanical way. Assumed to be based on observable correlations between planetary movements and human events, its essentially predictive aim has as its main point of application the determination of auspicious moments for actions in which are conjugated biological necessities and religious exigencies and to celebrate that chaplet of sacraments (*samṣkāra*) during which the existence of a member of Brahmanic society is perfected and totalized. Even if he desires to leave this world, the sage chooses the auspicious moment, like Bhīṣma in the Mahabharata, pierced with arrows, putting off the hour of his death until the course of the sun is inflected toward the North (*uttārayaṇa*; cf. BAU VI, 2; *Praśna Up.* I.9; *Bh. Gita* VIII 24-25). But without a doubt, astrology finds its best justification in the prediction of the destiny of the king, whose good fortune or, on the contrary, military reverses directly affect the happiness and prosperity of his people: an auxiliary instrument of power, it presides indirectly over the destinies of the kingdom in the secrecy of the privy council of the king. A striking example of this collective incidence of astrology is offered in contemporary times by the fixing of the date of the promulgation of Indian independence, initially set for August 15, 1947. Faced with the protest aroused among the astrologers against this inauspicious date, which jeopardized the destiny of the young Union, Nehru, as we know, had to find a compromise to seat the constituent Assembly August 14 from afternoon until midnight! Can we imagine such an obstruction when the constitutions of the successive French republics were taken to be ratified? Still in our day, in Ceylon, it is not rare that the Prime Minister sets the date for the important pauses in political life (elections, resigning of the government, and so on) depending on the advice of his personal astrologer, whose calculations are kept secret for fear that the opposition may draw some advantage from them!

In these conditions, it is not surprising that Indian astrology lacks that free play of interpretation by which Western astrology deploys all the symbolic range of values with the view of securing for a given individual, deemed to have his own existence before any insertion into society, the meaning of his experience of life allowing him to become himself by discovering his singularity, to affirm or restore his presence to himself not without perhaps some narcissis-

tic complacency.

As it appears today, Indian astrology nonetheless seems a luxuriant, incoherent system, at the heart of which a number of methods and rules of interpretation coexist, often leading, with regard to the same life, to alternative provisions, without of course mentioning the inevitable discrepancies in calculation in a lunar-solar system. Thus it is that the division into houses, the subdivision of signs, the systems of the stages of life (*daśa*), the rules of interpretation of the natal theme have been able to undergo various changes according to schools (for example, those of Parāśara and Jaimini), with no reason given for the rejection of the ancient rules. So many indices that attest to the deep-seated historicity of Indian astrology, the progressive product of a long history<sup>4</sup> marked with successive accretions, in the number of which foreign contributions are preponderant. There is no doubt that in the Vedic epoch astrology, in its strict acceptance as an individual horoscope (*jātaka*) did not exist as such. In the *Astronomical Appendix to the Veda (Jyotiṣavedāṅga)*, attributed to Lagadha but whose probable date is located between 400 and 200 B.C.), the observation of the heavens was intended to determine the temporal rhythms of the archetypal cycle of the year so as to fix the elements of the calendar (months, days, especially certain days of the lunar fortnight, *parva*, auspicious hours and minutes, *muhūrta*), in terms of the practice of ritual observances. The rite of the institution of fires (*agnyādhāna*), for example, had to coincide with the conjunction of the sun with the Pleiades. In addition, the numerous methods of divination given in the encyclopedic astrological compilations of the *Samhitā* and the final section of the *Ṣaḍviṃśa Brāhmaṇa* come more from the mantic than from astrology: auguries (*śakuna*) drawn from the flight of birds, to which three Vedic hymns are devoted (R.V. II. 42-43, X.165), predictions relative to weather and various calamities ("meteors", earthquakes). *The Long Paragraphs on Conduct (Mahaśila*, 5th century B.C.) included in the sutras of *Digha Nikāya* (I.1.21, 24) give us indirect testimony of the state of divination in the classical age. In the long list of deceitful and self-serving practices, imputed to the Brahmans but forbidden to the Buddhists, also figure charms, oniromancy, prediction of the length of life through lines on the forehead and marks on the body, prediction of the victory or defeat of the king, prevision of earth-

quakes, rains and thunder from the oppositions of planets, choice of jewels and swords, etc.<sup>5</sup> Now, the horoscopy of birth (*jātaka*) does not yet figure in this list whose elements agree essentially with those of the *Sāṃhitā*. In short, the *saṃvatsara* or the Vedic *nakṣatra-darśa* (*Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa*, III.4.4; *Vājasenkyā Saṃhitā* 30-10) is not yet an astrologist. While the Vedic epoch knows only the 27 *nakṣatra*, to which was consecrated a sacrifice (*nakṣatreṣṭi*, *Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa* III) and the positions of the planets are always referred to them in the Mahabharata even though the term astrologist appears (*gaṇaka*), the signs of the zodiac appear from the 3rd and 4th centuries A.D., perhaps borrowed by Indians visiting Babylonia,<sup>6</sup> unless Indian astrology, which arose fully established in the 2nd century A.D. with the prose translation by Yavaneśvara (in 150 A.D.) of a Greek treatise, was not borrowed from Alexandrian astrology.

However problematic the relative dating of Indian astrology remains, once the myth according to which India was the cradle of astrology is discarded, primitively revealed by the astrologist “seers” Bhṛgu, Parasara and Garga, it is nevertheless accepted that the *Yavana Jātaka* of the śaka king Sphujidhvaja (circa 269-70 A.D.) is the first Indian treatise. Along with the development of astronomy (the five *Siddhanta*), Indian astrology flourished with the *Brhājāataka* of the great astronomer and astrologer Varāha Mihira (507-87 A.D.) and the *Brhatparasara Horā* (between 600 and 700 A.D.). It later became diversified with the *Jaimini sūtra* (10th century) and the development of the tantric astrology of the *Yamala* (from the 8th to the 12th century) and the emergence in the 13th century of the astrology of the *Tājikā*, following Persian and Arab influences, which treats annual predictions (*Tājikā* of *Nilakaṇṭha*, 16th century).

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Now, parallel with the progressive substitution of astrology *strictu sensu* for the ancient *nakṣatra vidyā* (Ch U.VIII.1.2.) were elaborated the connected doctrine of karma and transmigration. Still unknown in the Vedic epoch but probably in gestation in the *Brāhmaṇas*, they were explicitly formulated by Yajnavalkya (BAU III.2.13). Now, a remarkable fact to which not enough attention is

usually given, the first occurrence in BAU VI.2 of the doctrine of transmigration is linked to the affirmation of the cyclic nature of its operation: in relation to the “five sacrificial fires” it operates according to a periodic cycle at the same time astronomical (marked by divisions of time and movements of the “luminaries” moon and sun), meteorological and vegetal. The later course of the complex history of these doctrines of karma and transmigration is so well known that we need not give more details on its complicated features. We know, in fact, that from the *Chāndogya Upanishad* (V.10) to the *Kauṣītaki Upanishad* (I.2) and the *Kaṭha Upanishad* (V.5) these doctrines develop up until the *Svetāśvatara Upanishad* (V.12) where they are associated with the constituent qualities (*guṇa*). Finally, Chapter 12 of the *Manu Smṛiti* (between 200 B.C. and 100 A.D.)<sup>7</sup> professes a complete doctrine of the nine categories of rebirth (*gati*) in terms of the *guṇa*. If certain particular crimes (for example, brahmanicide, XII.55) are naturally associated with particular rebirths at the end of infernal punishments (XII.21 *et seq.* and 75 *et seq.*) the *Manu Smṛiti* still contains a certain number of verses affirming that particular misdeeds bring isolatable consequences in the form of maladies or various infirmities (XI.48-52), which however befall only those who refuse to submit to the appropriate penances (*prāyaścitta*, XI. 53).

At the level of the principal Upanishads, it is clear that the accomplished acts have as synthetic or global result a rebirth in various conditions of existence: serpent, dog, king or brahman constitute in themselves so many unique and global results, totalizing all the acts accomplished, whose balance, by means of a hypothetical “clearing,” proves to be negative or positive. Upanishadic thinkers, no doubt inclining toward what would later become a globalizing logic of karma, did not impute, according to a term-by-term correspondence, the diversity of the particular events of an existence to the multiplicity of past actions. In other words, that such or such good luck befalls a dog on such or such a day or that a king suffers a certain defeat on a particular day have no connection with their isolated past actions. We may thus reasonably think that at the level of the Upanishads the doctrine of karma is only outlined, with no relation appearing between karma and astrology. No doubt we will not find more in the astrological discussion *Manu Smṛiti*.<sup>8</sup> However, from the moment in which the



various conditions of existence were considered as constituting as many fields in which to gather affective experiences, pleasant or painful, the result of past actions, it then became possible to attribute particular events to isolated previous actions, conforming to a linear, serial and distributive logic of karma according to which the fruit of the indefinite multiplicity of particular actions is realized separately, action by action. As for Buddhism, if it opted for this serial logic of realization action by action, the duality of the two globalizing and distributive logics became the source of tensions in the commentaries on *Yoga-sūtra*. The commentators of the *Yoga sūtra Bhāṣya* (II.13), Vacaspati on the one hand and Vijnana Bhikṣu on the other (with Nageśa) oppose each other on the questions of knowing if the karmic accumulation (*karmāśaya*) is produced or not in one life (*ekabhavika*), if its maturation is determined by time or not (*niyatavipāka*), if it must bear fruit and occasion affective experience in the present existence or not (*dr̥ṣṭājanmavedaniyakarma*), and so on.

The doctrine of fate (*daiva*) develops in close relation with these doctrines in post-Vedic literature. That the term *daiva* is derived from the term *deva* (the “shining divinity”) is attested to by the formula of Bhaṭṭotpala (967 A.D.), attributed by him to Garga, in his *Commentary to the Great Collection (Br̥hat Saṃhitā*, first half of the 6th century): “Thus the gods turn away from the evil actions of men and create marvels in the heavens and on earth or in the space in between” (45.3).<sup>9</sup> Now, the term *daiva*, if in the *Chāndogya Upanishad* (VII.1-2) it denotes that branch of knowledge having for object the interpretation of various kinds of signs, nevertheless takes on, in the *Appendix to the Atharva Veda (Atharvavedapariśiṣṭa*, which is dated between the end of the Vedic epoch and the beginning of the Hindu period) the meaning of universal foreordained power and is associated with astrology: “It is fate that has the power; human effort is only a pretext. As a result of a well-hidden destiny one can conquer the earth. Between destiny and human effort, destiny is superior. This is why the king should especially worship destiny. Consequently, he must keep at his side an astrologer (*sāṃvatsara*) and a chaplain—those two who know the rites and destiny—and he must always honor them through acknowledgments and gifts worthy of a king. But a king deprived of an astrologer is like a child without a father, a king

deprived of a priest (*atharva*) is like a child without a mother; a king deprived of a doctor is like an isolated man surrounded by enemies.” (II.1.2-5)<sup>10</sup> This text shows the evolution that affects the conception of the role of the astronomer-astrologer (*sāṃvatsara*) and takes on all the greater importance since at the same time the *Atharvaveda* is included in the corpus of Brahmanic texts. Its interest lies in showing how its task of determination of the elements of the Vedic calendar and the auspicious moments within the cycle of the year is transformed into the prediction of the part of fortune that fate is supposed to reserve for the king. Although no theory of fate is outlined here, the astrologer is credited with the ability to predict, beginning with the ascendant (*lagna*), future destiny; as this latter is assumed to be inalterable, the astrologer has a duty to help the king to cooperate with destiny.

The *Yājñavalkya Smṛiti* (between 100 and 200 A.D., according to P.V. Kane) is a turning-point in this struggle between the supporters of inexorable destiny, a veritable universal machinery that moulds individual destinies, and the partisans of human initiative (*puruṣakāra*) and free will. It is true that this *smṛiti* contains verses similar to those of the *Manu Smṛiti* on the subject of the kinds of birth, illnesses and malformations resulting from particular misdeeds committed during a former existence (for example, III.206 *et seq.*) No doubt the astrologer is still qualified as “one who knows destiny” (*daivajñā*, I.312b). In certain verses relative to karma, however, we see the dawn of the idea that fate is none other than the result of past actions so that man forges his own destiny. In this regard, the following verses are revealing: “Like an actor putting on different costumes, the Self forges diverse bodies resulting from past actions. The birth of mutilated or deformed fetuses, etc., occurs because of flaws inherent in time, in karma, in the seed of the father and that of the mother.” (III.162-3).<sup>11</sup> “The realization of karma depends on fate and human effort, ‘fate’ being the manifestation of human effort in a previous existence. Some assert that things are produced by the fact of destiny or as a result of intrinsic nature or time and human effort. The sages are inclined to think that they are the result of the combination of all these factors. Just as a chariot cannot move on one wheel, so ‘fate’ is ineffectual without human effort” (I. 348b-351a).<sup>12</sup> The *Yājñavalkya Smṛiti* thus maintains that events occur through a combina-

tion of factors including karma, inherent natural properties of things, time and effort. In this regard, it joins the *Bhagavad-Gita*, exposing the five causes of events: “These are: power, then the agent, the instrument—of various kinds—the distinct sections of execution of many species; finally comes another, the fifth, fate” (XVIII.14).<sup>13</sup> In line with Vedic tradition,<sup>14</sup> the *Yājñavalkya Smṛiti* persists in holding the “planets” (*graha*) as intelligent agents “residing in the *nakṣatra*”,<sup>15</sup> divinities whose actions cause events and to which a cult should be rendered so as to propitiate them: “After having worshipped Vinayaka (*Gaṇeśa*) and also the *graha* according to the prescribed rule, one obtains the results of his ritual acts and great prosperity” (I.292b-293a).<sup>16</sup> “He who desires wealth or tranquillity, rain, a long life or health, or to practice a sorcery, must render a cult to the *graha*” (I.294c-295a).<sup>17</sup>

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It was thus incumbent on the treatises of *Jātaka* (circa the second century A.D.)<sup>18</sup> to bind these scattered premises together and explicitly formulate the thesis according to which the *graha* indicate karma: astrology again became associated with the idea of destiny envisaged in terms of karma. We thus read in the *Brhājātaka* of Varāha Mihira: “[The astronomical cosmos, the Zodiac] completely reveals the portion arrived at maturity [able to produce their fruits] of good and bad actions acquired during a previous existence”.<sup>19</sup> The analogy of the lamp states the veritable originality of Indian astrology. “The results of previous actions that the Creator and Destiny have proclaimed by having registered them on [lines] of the forehead, this science elucidates them, just as a lamp reveals objects in the midst of thick shadows”, affirmed Minarāja (*Vṛddha Yavana Jātaka*, I.3).<sup>20</sup> The *Laghu Jātaka* of Varāha Mihira later takes up the image: “This science reveals the results obtained from good and bad actions accumulated in another life, just as a lamp reveals objects in the darkness” (I.3).<sup>21</sup> It is also on the model of karma that the possibility of determining through augurs (*śakuna*) the opportuneness for the king to leave on a military expedition (*yātrā*) is assumed to depend.

In the light of these formulas, the data of the natal theme appears as a “lamp” that illuminates the cryptic rapport of expression

between, on the one hand, the fortunes and misfortunes of an individual, in their entirety as in their detail, whether it is a question of misfortunes due to bad luck or instead the fortunes that come his way and, on the other hand, his karmic inheritance seen as a balance. The signature of finiteness, the natal theme would appear as the transparent image of the “visage of nativity”<sup>22</sup> received at birth. Its content would permit the encompassing grasp of the structure of the human being at its different levels and in short would reveal the portion of the karmic accumulation whose maturation is destined to be deployed in spatio-temporal existence under the triple form, to use Yoga terminology, of a “condition of existence” (*jāti*: biological species and hereditary caste), quasiprogrammed “duration of life” (*āyus*) and finally pleasant or painful affective experiences (*bhoga*). But given their *modus operandi* and their intricacy, how can the series of karmas with complex ramifications and their effects of diverse species intermingle and concur in forming the tissues of a whole life’s experience? In fact, if *jāti*, *āyus* and *bhoga* are the three headings under which are classed the nature and the content of experiences, how can we conceive the articulation, indeed, the complex interference between, on the one hand, the general conditions that preside over the unfolding of existence (*jāti* determines the type of biological organism and the social condition, the social extraction conditioning in its turn the possibility of access to the word of the Veda, the level of fortune (*artha*), meniality of vocation, etc., *āyus* determines the total number of experiences) and on the other, the infinite variety of affective experiences that man encounters in his life?

Now, Bhaṭṭotpala, quoting Yavaneśvara (that is, in reality, Sphujidhvaja: YJ 43.11-13) gives in his *Commentary on the Brhājāta* (circa 967-9 A.D.) the mechanism of adjustment respective to the various species of karmic effects: “We call destiny the fate whose appearance results from the combination of the planets and the *nakṣatra* and is determined for man at birth, and ‘epochs of life’ of man the changes in fortune befalling as his lot. Prudent men explain that this destiny appears in two forms called ‘permanent’ and ‘occurring by chance.’ The one called permanent consists of events occurring according to an order of appearance in time, determined by the horoscope. The one qualified as ‘chance’ consists, according to the wise men, in the effects resulting from the

movement of the seven planets progressing in the heavens with rapport to their respective positions and strengths at the moment of birth" (I.3).<sup>23</sup> A distinction is made here between the events arising from "permanent" destiny and those from "chance": the first, immediately determinable, correspond to the cyclic periods of fruition (*daśa*) established by the horoscope according to various methods (discussed by Varāha Mihira, BJ VII-VIII), while the second, that seem to arrive unexpectedly from the constantly varying subsequent positions of the planets, must be determined according to the method of *aṣṭakavarga* through a calculation of the planets (*grahavicara*).

Consequently, this text postulates that one can observe in the apparently unintelligible or erratic succession of certain experiences the manifestation, refracted in the temporality of a single history, of a preexisting structure, independent of time and belonging to a superior dimension of reality, just as the inherent predicates of the Leibnizian monad unroll through space and time according to the serial law that they express. A certain original orientation would gradually be discovered through the dust of affective experiences felt by an individual, like a theme is revealed through the variations that express it. While existence seems subjected through and through to the upheavals of affective experiences as to the fatality of a meeting, since every experience in its intrinsic materiality is only an accident isolated from what precedes it, this doctrine of the double mode of karmic realization thus revokes the basic opacity and contingency of its unfolding. The vicissitudes affecting a subject come to him in the manner of a "consequence without premise" or from an existence without an intelligible condition, referable only to causes following a rapport of exteriority. Here, on the contrary, reintegrated into the uninterrupted continuity of the entire karmic web that bears it, each affective experience makes sense and coherence so well that it becomes intelligible. In short, to the incoherence of unforeseen occurrences and to the existential deficit that disparate experiences bring with them, this doctrine substitutes a soothing logical continuity that can reduce the dismay provoked, for example, by the difference between the zeal employed in some enterprise and the check encountered or, on the contrary, although more rarely, between the surprise over a good fortune and the absence of any

particular merit which would justify it. It remains that the doctrine of karma limits itself to postulating the proportionality of the act, good or bad, and its fruit, without ever producing the coherent and uniform system of exact equivalences or equations between the action and the reaction, which alone would permit the establishment of its value of truth.

Only, the adoption of the model of karma led astrology to the following difficulty: how to reconcile the fatalistic thesis according to which the *daiva* is supposed to result *en bloc* from past actions with the existence of established practices aiming to choose auspicious times and to propitiate the planets (*graha*), which “seize” man in order to force him to meet the retribution for his acts? In other words, how to justify the existence of these practices while acknowledging the exigency, underlying the fatalist thesis, of an intelligible continuity between present destiny and past actions? The solution adopted by the astrologer was to distinguish two kinds of karma, one “firm” (*dr̥dha karma*), the other “not solid” (*adr̥dha karma*) whose incidence is changeable. Even though the distinction established by Sphujidhvaja between “permanent” destiny and that “arising by chance” does not concern the “firm” karma and the “labile” karma, it is significant that Bhaṭṭotpala uses it in support of the following thesis: the *daśā* would indicate the “firm” karma and the *aṣṭakavarga* would reveal the “labile” or weak karma. He can also affirm, in the line of the magical practices of the *Atharva Jyotiṣa*, that astral combinations could not undo those who faithfully respect the religious prescriptions: there is no need for the form of destiny which nothing could avert, because it is always possible to neutralize the effects of negative actions through penance and pious works (pilgrimages, fasts, the gift of cows to the sages, etc.) (*Comm. on BJ*, I.3).

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It is in the sense of a larger role given to free will that today the interpretation of this postulate of the astrological actualization of karma is inflected. Under the influence of the methods of Western astrology relative to transits, directions and progressions, contemporary Indian astrology holds that the karma “broached” in present existence (in other words, *prarābdha karma*) is revealed by the

position of the planets in the signs at birth and the localization, at diverse zodiac degrees, of the natal configurations (ascendant, houses, etc.). According to the majority of the authors, if the position of the planets in the signs is deemed to indicate the “firm” or unalterable karma, that the soul must meet in the present incarnation until it reaches a new stage in its evolution, the transits of conjunction (and not solar transits) are deemed to indicate the “labile” or changeable karma, which allows free will. The manual of innate orientations and major tendencies resulting from past karma would thus be expressed by the position of the planets in the signs, such as seeds incited to sprout when certain factors are united. The transit of the planets would bring about the germination and sprouting of the seeds, as though particular events came, not to be grafted on the innate orientations but to mint their intentionality and concretize their inherent potentialities. We see how this contemporary model continues to work for the resolution of the tension between the globalizing approach of karma (the global condition of existence being revealed by the ascendant, *lagna*) and the distributive, act by act, or serial approach of karma, whose compatibility was, we remember, the source of characteristic tensions in the doctrine of yoga. Each planetary transit affects individual behavior, that is, the response of the individual to his environment on the basis of a *habitus* inherited from karma, and it determines the specific coloration of his experience. Natal configurations would thus define a median axis around which would revolve the vicissitudes that are for every man the risks of his destiny. Rather than the exact prediction of events affecting man in heteronomy (to which traditional Indian astrology was devoted), in the eyes of contemporary Indian astrologers astrology allows a decyphering of the lines of force of an individual theme, which define as many biographical constants. Outlining the field of possibilities properly corresponding to it (*svadharma*) or to its vocation, it would help an individual to reduce the incompleteness of his personality to its “intelligible character.” But contemporary astrology rejoins traditional astrology on the question of the always possible neutralization of “broached” karma. Thoughts, words and just actions are so many acts that are “neither black nor white” (*aśuklākṛṣṇa*), to again use classic terminology, able to eradicate the respectively “white,” “black” and “mixed” karmas so that the

aspirant would see his ordeals cease, while his acquired evolution renders useless those experiences that bring nothing more to his interior development. Since the natal theme always offers the eventuality of an experience and simultaneously the necessary qualities to rise above it, contemporary Indian astrology gives man the choice of permitting the tendency to manifest itself or of working to neutralize it. In that, it corroborates the two well-known adages of Western astrology: “The stars incline but they do not compel” and “the wise man governs his star, the ignorant is governed by it”.

The evolution introduced by tantric astrology led precisely to de-fatalizing karma and to rising above a conception of astrology in terms of influences. Its axiom is the following: “*yathā piṇḍe tathā bhramāṇḍe*”, in virtue of which there is a unity of resonance between the microcosm and the macrocosm. For tantric astrology, the universal order is incorporated in man so well that the microcosm is a condensed macrocosm. Let us recall Leibniz on the subject of this rapport of between-expression, that is, mutual symbolization between microcosm and macrocosm: “Every person or substance is like a small world that expresses the large world; each simple substance has rapports that express all the others, and [...] it is consequently a perpetual living mirror of the universe.”<sup>24</sup> Thus it is that tantric astrology posits the existence of a zodiac that is interior to man, through which the astronomical cosmos inscribes its structure in him. It puts signs, planets and their corresponding elements into relation with channels of vital energy, sometimes with psychic centers, and associates them with the stages of yogic progression.<sup>25</sup> Once admitted that there may exist a privileged correspondence between the figures of the astronomic cosmos and human realities within universal interdependence, the planets may appear as energetic vectors within man, internal powers or creative functions. Even when we discard all casual models, astrology is not newly the study of direct influences exercised by the heavenly bodies on men, but it elucidates the “acausal synchronicity” (Jung) discovered between groups of phenomena deprived of all causal connection, as though it cut through the organically linked and integrated ensemble of the cosmos. Far from being instigators, the “planets” in movement and other givens would thus be the physical concomitants that indicate events without producing them any



more than clocks cause time: the constellation of the heavenly bodies only serves as a system of coordinates to identify and characterize a certain situation resulting from karma and extracting its qualitative meaning. Setting aside the question of knowing whether the “planets” have an influence on destiny, it is not without interest that we learn from contemporary Indian astrologists that the conjunction Jupiter-Saturn, for example, signaled, naturally among other astronomical phenomena, the appearance of Buddha, Lao-Tse and Christ, in their respective places and times.

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Contrary to what is usually thought, the relation between karma and astrology definitively prohibits the reduction of the latter to a simple auxiliary branch of astronomy. The ancient model according to which the “planets” were the agents responsible for good and bad material fortune has been replaced by that of the realization of karma in the *jātaka* treatises. However, at the end of this inquiry, we measure the difficulty of extracting from these sibylline texts a coherent and univocal document of the relation between karma and astrology, whose “lamp” illuminates, certainly, but does not dazzle! Even supposing that it conceals one ounce of truth and that it can prove operative and fruitful, this model of the astrological realization of karma encounters two limitations: first, by definition, it is distinctly unable to give an account of the realization of the effects of actions accomplished in this existence and destined to arrive at maturity in this same existence, in which case their maturation is temporally determined; secondly, this specifically Indian model is powerless to give an account of, in the case of great spiritual figures or even the liberated in whom Indian tradition recognizes its purest achievement, the sporadic discontinuity of their liberating experience. We know, in fact, that Indian astrology holds as universal and legitimate the enterprise aiming to draw up the theme of the greatest spiritual figures (Buddha, Sankara, etc.). Now, the case of the great spiritual figures and the liberated in whom is concentrated the enigma of free will constitutes an unpassable limit for this model powerless to restore the hinge connecting will to destiny: in that it disregards the exercise of the

power of continual creation in itself and through itself corresponding to the final consciousness of human liberty and measuring at each moment our responsibility. We cannot ignore that it even found for itself astrologers to declare impossible the totalization of the multiple factors whose number produces an event and to deny consequently the existence of any rule presiding at the realization of karma. Thus Ganeṣa Daivajñā (1554 A.D.), with regard to the determination of a propitious moment for a marriage, affirms: "There is no rule here below according to which the past actions of men have particular effects under the influence of time and place. What relation exists between separate things?"<sup>26</sup> After that, how to disentangle the skein of causes and effects and throw light on the way karma operates?

Whatever its value as truth, the interest of this model, which strives to tie the realization of karma to the effects of the planets in their concomitant movements, lies in showing the necessary insertion of the *modus operandi* of karma in the spatio-temporal structure of universal evolution, where the convergence and encounters that form the web of events occur. In fact, it had been contradictory that the actualization of karma had to operate outside the ensemble of universal forces and independently of the cycles of evolution which concur in its advent.

Now, the most constant monist intuition of India is that of a single and intrinsic power to exist, which because of an immanent causality is translated into universe. Consequently, it enfolds that of the existence of a continuity of essence between the law at work in one region of the universe and that which governs the manifestation in its totality. The grasp of universality resulted in the affirmation of the mutual solidarity and involvement of the real in its totality. Thus was affirmed the principle of an integral causality whose field of expansion coincides with the *omnitudo realitatis* as universal totality in which each part is subject to all: the universe to appear then as a web of interconnected events. Also, the actualization of karma could not be arbitrary nor accidental but must espouse the spatio-temporal structure of the universe. The observation of the regular movement of the planets through the techniques of dawning astronomy exactly furnished the the Hindu reflection with the prototype of an intelligible legality revealed through simple numerical relationships. Astrology, as a pseudo-science,

expressed one of the aspects of this radical intelligibility of the universe, human events being reduced to the same obedience as material evolution.

We understand then why we do not find in Hindu astrology a significant echo of the scholastic controversies previously mentioned that divided the commentators of the *Yoga sūtra* on the subject of the realization of karma. It is because these latter posed the question of *a priori* logical determination of the possible modes of actualization beyond any cosmological horizon. Their discussion, that turned around the notions of cause and effect leading to the idea of unilinear and segmental relations, poor in totalizing references, was deployed without any reference to the notion of a cosmic totality characterized by its own exigencies of interdependence and cohesion. In the *Sāṃkhya-Yoga* the manifestation is only a provisory horizon for the possible use of the consciousness before its ultimate detachment, experience proposing at the same time the field and the material for an awareness, so that the universe is only a limited notion, a simple manner of defining the undefined multiplicity of the individual destinies of *puruṣas*. In the presence of the dizzying confusion of individual karmic series, taken in the extensive infinite of the *concatenatio universalis*, the philosophy of Yoga holds that the finite and conditioned spirit is powerless to operate what we may call, to use Spinoza's term, the "integral deduction of finite modes."<sup>27</sup> Also it reserved the design of a synoptic and totalitarian comprehension of the universe for the intuitive vision of the yogi whose "divine eye" or "eye of wisdom" has been opened. Some seventeen centuries later, in the West, Laplace expressed hope for this design in a formula that became famous but in the radically different perspective of the universal mechanism and by attributing it to the analytical intelligence of an enlightened humanity: "An intelligence that, for a given moment, would know all the forces that animate nature and the respective situation of the beings that compose it would, if it were great enough to submit these facts to analysis, embrace in the same formula the movements of the largest bodies and those of the lightest atom: nothing would be uncertain for it and the future like the past would be present in its eyes."<sup>28</sup> In other words, according to the philosophy of Yoga, the knowledge of universal interdependence cannot be attained only by conceptual ways but

also requires access to a way of synthetic and intuitive seeing that is concluded by a practice of intensification of the conscience. Purification and ascetic mastery of the psychocorporal complex are necessary in order that the apperception of the yogi can enter into close contact with the invisible structure of the spiritual correspondence inherent in the universe.

Now, such a yogic vision allowing the embracing of the *concatenatio universalis* and elucidation of the “ways of karma reputed mysterious and difficult to discern” (Y.S. Bh. II.13) is quite an exceptional privilege, even in India! Lacking a permanent access to such a yogic vision, yogic philosophy had to refer the enigma of the realization of karma to the statement of the irreducible diversity of karmic accumulations. It remained for it to refer the constitutive ontological act of personal reality to the unfathomable darkness of an infinite temporality, at the risk of dissolving the enigma of the origin of karmic accumulations in an indefinite anteriority.

We discover now the reasons that may explain the singular fortune of the horoscope of birth from a certain epoch. It is not enough to reveal and date the borrowing by India of Hellenistic, notably, Alexandrian, astrology, or to hastily evoke the so-called “democratic” tendencies of Hellenistic civilization. Doing so produces no intelligibility. It thus remains to ask why the Western grafting took so well in this case. It is also important to replace this borrowing in its real context.

On the one hand, there is no doubt that the emergence and the diffusion of the doctrine of karma, which implied that of separative individualization through the ego, contributed to sharpening the sentiment of the personal uniqueness of the individual, thereafter recognized as carrying the weight and responsibility of his destiny. In constructing the natal theme of an individual, astrology permitted the concretization of the idea of the uniqueness of the individual karmic series thanks to its translation into the expression which, after the Upanishads, immediately spoke to the Indian mind of a correlation between the macrocosm (*adhidevātām*) and the microcosm (*adhyātman*). In this regard we are led to formulate the following hypothesis: the fortune of astrology at the popular level would be explained by a *reverse* use of the upanishadic *demarche*, so that the point of departure of the correlation would always be

found in the astronomical configurations of the macrocosm, and its point of application, at the level of microcosm, in the fluctuations of individual evolution. Because finally, what is the horoscope of birth if not a sort of *reverse upanishad* whose connecting operation would no longer result from a liberating gnosis but only from a worldly objective. No longer an instrument of salvation (thanks to an identifying homology opening on that commutation of essence of the *atman* and *brahman* that transforms the individual into the universal Being and reconstitutes the original unity of the Being) but a simple balm for soothing the burning and suffering of individual existence...

On the other hand, by integrating the singularity of individual destiny in the unfolding of the "cyclocosm" characterized by its recurring periodicity, it could lay claim to individual karma in the field of its comprehension and claim to reveal the mainsprings of its realization. Its explanatory mode, based on the restitution of the relation between individual destiny and the synthetic and true arrangement of universal order (*ṛta*) dissipated the uncertainty inherent in the doctrine of karma, since it claimed to make the mechanism of its "black box" intelligible. From this fact, it furnished an interpretative key for the decyphering of present existence. At the time when the figure of the yogi, whose vision brings to light the hidden concatenation of successive existences, was diffused in the epics and religious literature called "sectarian," the interpretation of a natal theme, in its limpidity without depth, where space is without distance and time without duration, procured a substitute for that yogic vision reserved for only consummate ascetics and to whom it occurs as a surplus.

Up to this point then, the reflection suggests a second hypothesis. In another age of Indian culture, the astrology of the *Jātaka* would have taken over on its own account the Vedic intuition of the cosmic-temporal solidarity of the "cyclocosm"<sup>29</sup> whose distant echo will later reach as far as the shivaite then Tibetan Buddhist "Wheel of Time" (*kālacakra*). Heir of the effort of going beyond the diverse and the intuition of the immanent unity of the world in its immutable order, that characterized the Vedic epoch, it also strove to fill the abyss separating man from the universe. Only, that the agent of Self (*ahaṃkāra*) should be thereafter recognized as the motor of karma and that the universe be correlatively

recognized as the milieu of its realization, implied that this effort was made following an inverse modality that brought with it the displacement of the point of insertion of the universal. In effect, the Vedic epoch, obsessed with the “passion for order” (J. Varenne) aspired to immortality not directly through a leap into the non-temporal but through the ritually-operated putting into progressive consonance of the individual rhythm of the sacrificer with cosmic Time: through the edification of the fire altar, the sacrificer ritually constructed cosmic Time, that pulsation of eternity, and reconstituted Prajapāti that *is* the Year. By a recurring mimetic fusion in the rhythmic pulsation of the universe, the sacrificer concluded by identifying himself with its non-temporal law, believing to thus triumph over the future thanks to the body of immortality that he had patiently acquired. In addition, the network of magic participations supposed a close involvement of existences within a restricted community in which each was in contact with all. Hindu astrology on the contrary was advanced on the principle of totalization constituted by the *facies totius universi*<sup>30</sup> only to discover its efficacy at work in the destiny of an organism. The astrological axiom according to which the rhythm of the “planets” is immanent and coextensive with the evolving existence constituted from that time the principle intelligibility allowing a subject to reabsorb the factitiousness of his destiny and to espouse its singularity, like a “lamp” that would reveal the cypher of its necessity and thus dissipate the opacity and precariousness of its meaning. In short, for each individual the horoscope of birth would testify less to an introspective complacency than an effort with the view of recuperating the obscurity of his birth. Is that to say that it would thus deliver him to the fascination of his double abstract shown by the geometric draft of its theme? Not at all, because by revealing to him that through the empirical foyer of individuality the law itself of the universe as an ultimate totality operates, astrology invited the individual to rejoin the universal: the astrological involution of the rhythm of the planets became, paradoxically, the instrument of a suspension of karma and, going beyond it, certainly a necessary condition but not sufficient for liberation.

If it is true that the mechanism of karma is set in motion by man at the very moment he consciously decides to draw apart from everything and lead a separate existence, Hindu astrology gives

definitive testimony of an attempt to restore, within a broadened cultural space and a different religious climate, that relation to the universe that incorporates, by articulating it, the great institution of Vedic sacrifice. It also preserves the same value of an advance toward unity. Through the severe ecstasy of its calculations it has, in effect, continued to have the prescience that conscious participation and permanent acquiescence to universal interdependence represent for man the completion of the mystery of incarnation.

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#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

<sup>1</sup> If in the Vedic epoch it designated the ritual act endowed with its own efficiency, the term karma, taking on an ethic significance, came later to designate the retributive causality of the act in the perspective of transmigration: "the law of the act is that according to which any morally qualifiable action creates, in a more or less deferred time and through the united efforts of universal forces, its just retribution." (O. Lacombe).

<sup>2</sup> It goes without saying that we do not at all intend to reopen here the controversy between upholders and adversaries of astrology. The first allege, for example, the recent discoveries of a field of cosmic forces, a complex of connected undulatory forces (whose periodicity extends from a few nanoseconds to millions of years, having an influence on the biosphere), so as to legitimize the astrological approach. In the eyes of the second, there is nothing in it but a superstition from the Middle Ages: “The zodiac, constructed on the immense tableau of cerulean night, is the Rorschach test of humanity,” according to the admirable formula of G. Bachelard (*L’Air et les songes*, Paris, 1942, p. 202). Faithful to the critical objectivity of the history of ideas, the author could not plead in favor of whatever side in a controversy as old as humanity. Furthermore, it could be that in spite of the many attempts at statistical “verification” that have been made, the solution of this controversy goes beyond the *a priori* limits of understanding and, consequently, scientific objectivation and investigation. Nevertheless, it will be permissible to affirm further on that the evolution itself of the Indian approach contributes to clarify the position of the problem.

<sup>3</sup> Indian astrology of course only knows seven planets. In our day, however, the practice has spread to call Uranus, Neptune and Pluto, respectively, Indra, Varuna and Rudra, because of their symbolism. However, if the negative values of Pluto are also attributed to Rahu, its positive values are instead attributed to Ketu (representing the *kundalini* and *mokṣa*).

<sup>4</sup> Within the framework of this study it is impossible for us to give an overall view of Hindu astrology and the numerous and contradictory developments to which it has given rise. Some indications and bibliographical references may be found in: J. Filliozat, *L’Inde classique*, Vol. I, (1259-1266), 1953, and Vol. II (1710-1746), 1957, as well as *Notes d’astronomie ancienne de l’Iran et de l’Inde*, I, II, III, reproduced in *Laghu Prabandhāḥ*, Brill, 1974; D. Pingree, *Jyotiḥśāstra, Astral and Mathematical Literature, History of Indian Literature*, Vol. VI, 4, Wiesbaden, 1981; R. Billard, *L’Astronomie indienne*, EFEO, No. 83, 1971. Finally, we mention the critical study by Dr. Ph. Stone, *Hindu Astrology: Myths, Symbols and Realities*, Delhi, 1981, from which we borrow certain suggestions.

<sup>5</sup> *Tevigga sutta*, Ch. II, in T.W. Rhys-Davids, *Buddhist suttas*, pp. 197-8, SBE, Vol. XI. The comparison of this list with that of Deuteronomy XVIII: 10-12, which gives information on Semitic divination of Chaldean origin, would certainly be instructive. In the Hindu epoch, the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāna* (III.33) and the *Bhāgavata Purāna* (III.17) also contain long lists of presāges.

<sup>6</sup> P.V. Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra*, Vol. V, Part. I, p. 600, Bhandarkar Oriental Institute, Poona, Second ed., 1974.

<sup>7</sup> *Manu Smṛti*, ed. by Jolly, London, 1887, and trans. by G. Bühler, Oxford, 1886 (SBE Vol. XXV, reprinted 1975).

<sup>8</sup> “He who lives in the observation of the *nakṣatra*”—*nakṣatrayaśca jivati*, III.162—cannot be regarded as an astrologist.

<sup>9</sup> *yatha cā Gargah-tato’ pacāro martyānāmaparajyanti devatāḥ/te sriyan tyad-bhutanbhāvan diyabhūmyantariksajān/* (45.3), *Brhat Saṃhitā* with *Bhāttotpalās vivṛti*, ed. A.V. Tripathi, Varanasi, 1968.

<sup>10</sup> *daivamprabhavate srestam hetumātramtu pauraṣam/  
daivena tu suguptena saktō jetum vasundharam//  
daivātpurusakaracca daivameva viśiṣyate/  
tasmāddaivam viśesena mahipatīḥ//  
daivakarmavidau tasmātsam vatsarapurohitau/  
grhniyātsatatam rājā dāna sammānaraññānaih//  
apitā tu yathā bālastathāsāmvarsaro nṛpah//  
amātrko yathā bālastathathārvavivarjītah/*



arimadhye yathaikāko tathā vaidyavivarjitah// (II.1.2.5) Atharvaveda Pariśiṣṭa, ed. by G. Merville Bolling and Julius Von Negelain, 1909.

<sup>11</sup> *yathā hi bhārato varṇairvarṇayatyātmanastanum/ nānārūpani kurvānastathāitma karmajāstanūh// kalākarmātmabijānam doṣair matustathaiva ca/ garbhāsya vaikṛtam dṛṣṭāmangahinādi janmlanah// (III.162-163), Yājñavalkyasmṛti, ed. by V.N. Mandlik, Bombay, 1980.*

<sup>12</sup> *Daive puruṣakare ca karmasiddhirvyavasthūā// tatra daivamabhivyaktam pauraṣam pauradehikam/ keccidaivatsvabhāvādya kālapuruṣākaratah// samyoge kecicichanti phalam kuṣalabuddhyah// yathā hyekena cakrena rathasyā na gatirbhavet// evaṃ puruṣakareṇa vinā daivam na siddhyati/ (I.348b-351a). Y.S.*

<sup>13</sup> *adhīṣṭhanam tathā kartā karanam ca pṛthag-vidam/ viridhāscā pṛthak cestā daivam caivātra pañcamam/ (XVIII, 14) Bh.G., Trans. O. Lacombe.*

<sup>14</sup> Atharva Jyotiṣa, 159-61, Atharvedija Jyautiṣam, Pitambara pith, Datia, 1965.

<sup>15</sup> devagrḥā nakṣatrāni, Taittiriya Br. I.5.2.6.

<sup>16</sup> *evaṃ vināyakam piyā grahāmścaiva vidhānatah//karmanām phālamāpnoti śriyam capnotyanuttaman/ (I.292b-293a), Y.S., ed. cit.*

<sup>17</sup> *srikamāḥ santikāmo vā grahayajñam samācaret/vṛāṣṭyayuh pustikāmo vā tathāivābhicarannapi/ (I. 294c-295a), ibid. The cult of grahadevatā flourished in the Purāna (Agni P., ch. 164 and 196; Matsya P., ch. 54 and 73). We also see the appearance of the recourse to gems-talismans associated with planets (Agni P. ch. 121 and 246; Kūrma P., ch. 42).*

<sup>18</sup> As D. Pingree has shown, (*Yavana Jātaka*, Vol. I, p. 5 *op. cit.*) it seems impossible to backdate the Jātaka to the 5th or 6th century B.C. according to the common opinion of Indian historians.

<sup>19</sup> *karmajitam pūrvabhāve sadādi yattasya paktim samabhivyanakti// (I.3), Brhājātakam, ed. trans. by H.P. Chatterjee, 1912, reprinted Delhi, 1979.*

<sup>20</sup> *yā pūrvakarmaprabhāvāsya dhātri dhātrā lalāṭe likhita prasastih/īam śāstrametāt prakatam vidhatte dīpo yathāvastu ghane ndhakare// (I.3), Vṛddha Yavana Jātaka, Part I, ed. R.S. Sarma, Indian Institute of Astronomical and Sanskrit Research, Delhi, 1976.*

<sup>21</sup> *yadupacitamanyajanmani śubhāśubham tasya karmaṇah prāptim/vyañjayati śāstrametattamasi dravyāṇi dīpa iva/ (I.3), Laghu Jātaka, Venkateśvara Press, Bombay, 1936.*

<sup>22</sup> Epistle of James, I:23.

<sup>23</sup> *yadyadvidhānam niyatam prajājanām graharkṣayogaprabhāvam prasūtau/bhāgyāni tanīhyabhisabdayati vartaniyogeti dasanaranam/ tadapyabhijñāirdvidham niruktam sthirākhyamaupātikasamñitām ca/ kālakramajitakaniścitam yatkrāmopasarpisthiramucyate tat// saptagrahaṇam prathitāni yani sthanāni janmaprabhāvāni sadbhīh/ tebyah phalam caragrahakramasthā dadyuryadaupātikasamñitām// (I.3) Brhājā-taka with Bhāttotpala's Jagaccandrikā, ed. Sitaram JHA, Thakūrprasād and Sons, Varanasi, 1974 and trans. V.S. Sastri, Mysore, 1929.*

<sup>24</sup> Leibniz, *Discours de Métaphysique*, XVI; *La Monadologie*, 56.

<sup>25</sup> See, for example, for Buddhism, A. Wayman, *Buddhist Tantras*, New York, 1973, Ch. 13.

<sup>26</sup> Quoted by Ph. Stone, *Op. cit.*, p. 121.

<sup>27</sup> The existence of modes can only be affirmed in experience and not deduced (Spinoza, Letter X to Simon de Vries, March, 1663).

<sup>28</sup> Laplace, *Oeuvres*, Vol. VII, Paris, 1886, p. 403.

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<sup>29</sup> The image of earth and heaven as two closed rotating spaces, analogous to two wheels moving at the same time separated and fixed or held by an axle-tree (*Rg Veda* X.89.4; cf. VI.24.3) is perhaps of astronomical origin.

<sup>30</sup> It should be noted that the Vedic *rta* is the equivalent of the *facies totius universi* of Spinoza, which represents the systematization of the eternal laws of nature *naturée* as extended. Naturally, the analogy stops there.