

C.210

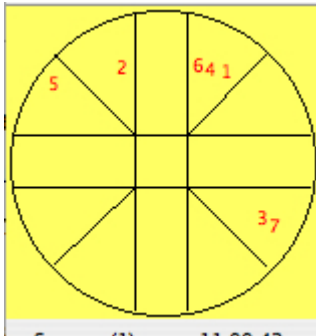
yatra śrīśākarāje mvarakucatanubhiḥ prāptakā(14)le vṛṣasthe  
candrā - - ca - Cau (prathama)bhavagate ketuke mīnaśukre  
cāpārkkau taula(15)rāhau mṛgapatisamite - ~ - - ~ naire

We find on investigation of the text that enough appears to have gone wrong with it to suggest that the calculations were made by one expert and the poetic expression of them executed by another.

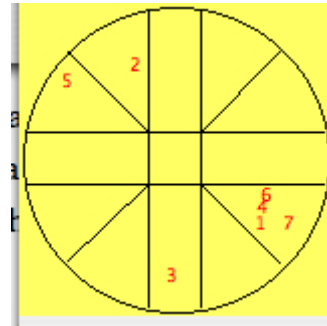
We have the year as a given and the problem of finding a time in the year that either satisfies the data or gives us an indication of what correction is required.

The first difficulty encountered is the astronomical impossibility of having Venus in Pisces (*mīnaśukre*) at the same time as the sun is in Sagittarius (*cāpārkkau*). Such a misplacement is not attested anywhere else in the Cam and Khmer record.<sup>1</sup>

We can test for configurations that favour the seeming position of Venus (left) or the seeming position of the sun (right). The time of the month is then anchored by the moon's position:



phālguna 7



mārgaśīrṣa 13

One further matter revealed by this comparison is that in neither case is there anything *samhita* in Leo (*mṛgapati*), as the conclusion of the horoscope appears to require.<sup>2</sup> The configuration in phālguna, however, brings two outer planets, here Mars and Saturn, together in a sign *for the only feasible time in the year*.<sup>3</sup> On this basis it can be concluded that the phālguna date is the one that matches the text's information with the least disruption.

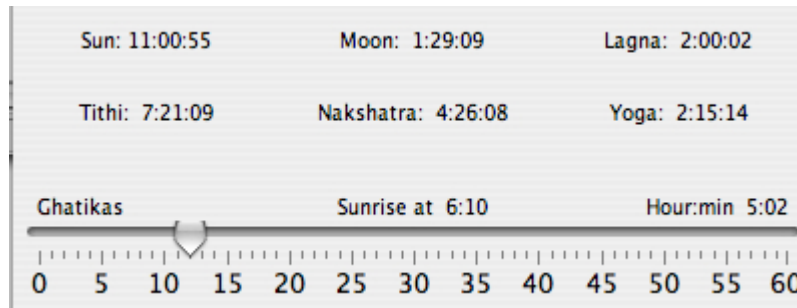
Why a conjunction (*samhita*) was supposed to have occurred in Leo cannot be recovered, but we have grounds for positing that it is unlikely to have been a calculation error since Mars and Saturn (the only candidates) would have had to be *independently* misaligned by not less than 90 degrees. It is far more likely that at some subsequent stage the sign in which the conjunction took place was mistaken, at a time when the reckoning

had already located it correctly.

Adopting the configuration that comes closest to the text, we also conclude that for some reason the word for Mercury, now joined with the sun and Venus in *mīna*, has been transmuted into *cāpa*, thereby divorcing the sun from its position and at the same time disintegrating the conjunction required by the conclusion of the horoscope.

Assigning this conjunction to a time of year (its end not its start) that allows Venus and a relocated sun to be in place requires by elimination that the body which has entered the 1st house (*bhavagate*) be Jupiter in Gemini. And from the wording it is likely that Ketu belongs with what precedes rather than what follows.<sup>4</sup>

If the first house aligns with Gemini, as this suggests, then the answering time was approaching 11:15 a.m. (5hrs02 past 6:10):



This moment places the moon only narrowly still within its stated sign (1:29:09) and the sun (11:00:55) less than a day within its sign. The working behind the text appears, on this interpretation, to be more adept than the poet's execution of it.

In emended form the text may be rendered as follows:

in śaka 820, in Taurus the moon; [in Gemini, Jupiter gone to the] 1st house with Ketu; in Pisces, Venus, [Mercury], the sun; in Libra Rahu; [in Sagittarius, (not Leo) Mars] joined [with Saturn].

With no month or day given there is very little that is secure here. Venus in Pisces is a strong pointer to the time of year and more is achieved by leaving it in place than by supposing that the sun's supposed location is correct. The above version, however, is not so much a rendition of the text as what the planetary configurations of the year indicate that it should have said.

- 1 The motion of Venus around the sun is such that it never appears to be more than 47 degrees ahead of the sun (Lucifer, the morning star to us) or 47 degrees in arrears of it (Hesperus, the evening star to us). It is common enough to find it and Mercury not in their expected position but never in an impossible one. With two signs intervening between Sagittarius and Pisces the implied distance of Venus from the sun in an uncorrected text could not be less than 60 degrees. The gross error that this would represent cannot be allowed to stand if there is any reasonable way of circumventing it.
- 2 A single planet might perhaps have been "joined" to Leo, but in K.115, 121, and 707 *samhita* is used of more than one planet joined to another in a given sign. In any case, in śaka 820 the only outer planet capable of being joined to Leo would have been Mars with the sun then in Virgo.
- 3 Mars had been joined to Jupiter in the month of vaiśākha, but the sun was then in Aries.
- 4 There are too few references to Ketu for it to be deduced how it was calculated.