

THE PHILOSOPHICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY

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CONTRIBUTORS' BULLETIN

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THE YEAR OF THE FIRE-FLAME TIGER

Dear Friends:

In Chinese astrology the tiger corresponds to the Western sign of Gemini. The tiger, however, in mundane reckoning is impulsive, dramatic, dynamic, and slightly combative.

It protects the domain which it has established for itself, defends its young, and is sufficient for any emergency which may arise. In the Orient the tiger year, especially where fire and flame are involved promotes major changes, the righting of wrongs, the correction of mistakes, and is deeply concerned about the future. The tiger, when weary of oppression or goaded by circumstances, is a formidable adversary.

One snarl is usually sufficient to intimidate even the most courageous opponent.



The tiger has only one enemy and that is the dragon. In Oriental art the tiger is often shown snarling ferociously at a fire-belching dragon. In the mythology, the tiger is the ruler of the earth and the dragon has dominion over the air. The portents for 1986 would indicate that the tiger is protecting the earth from the attacks by a sky monster. If allowed a reasonable opportunity to live at peace with its environment, the tiger is satisfied to protect its mate and their offspring. In nature pictures, he is often shown playing with his kits which are crawling all over him.

The fire-flame factor usually stands for an upsurge of pressures and a revolt against the prevailing evils of the hour. Like the cat, the tiger can see in the dark and can find the secret causes which are injurious to the public good. As the ruler of a year, he promotes change leading to solutions for immediate problems. The tiger senses conspiracies, treacheries, ulterior motives, and hidden crimes. When this animal rules, good laws are enacted, corrupt statutes are repealed, and virtue is permitted to flourish. This is a long-seeing animal with its eyes forever on the future. The fire and flame can well represent popular indignation and a revolt against corruption in high places and the exploitation of private citizens.

Because the tiger is naturally an honorable animal, its motives are honest, even though its methods may reveal a hint of violence. It looks sternly and bares its fangs only in the presence of evil. Even then, it is the conscience of the evil doer which reacts to the tiger's yawning jaws.

According to the Chinese, therefore, 1986 should usher in plans and patterns to assist humanity in building for a better future. The power of the people to resist abuse of power can also be represented by the hostility between the tiger and the dragon. The power of the dragon is sustained by prestige, tradition, and wealth, but the time always comes when humanity rises above the prevailing customs and patterns. Times of decision must be faced with courage and integrity. There are legends in India about holy men dwelling in jungle areas who go to sleep at night with a tiger for a pillow, the implication being that you can trust the strength of the tiger as long as you have contentment and peace in your own heart.

In these days, there are many rumors arising in different parts of the world predicting a major change in the patterns of human society. Even the comparatively unreformed person senses prevailing corruption and knows that a broad reformation is necessary. The fire and flame do not necessarily imply war or violent rebellion against the social structure. It is perfectly possible that if the tiger will emit one large growl the evil doers will panic and see the errors of their ways. Actually, the temporary benefits of dishonesty are losing their attraction. On every level, there is nothing but insecurity and fear. Armament may suggest the sky dragon belching flames whereas the earth-tiger is just a private citizen growing weary of the troubles that have been thrust upon him and now threaten his survival.

We hear of many new books announcing a millennial change in the course of human destiny. This is the first time in human history when the entire population of the earth is threatened with disaster. Until now, wars afflicted areas, but not the complete surface of the planet. Weapons were dangerous, but there always seemed to be some way to escape a head-on collision with ambitious militarists. Numerous promises about the glorious future of science, industrialism, and the economic theory have proven to be little better than delusions of ignorance and cupidity. Trust in leadership is failing rapidly; materialism is a dead end, and the sweet flavor of success has turned bitter in our mouths. This is why half the world is looking hopefully to the year of the tiger. What man cannot accomplish, the great cycles of cosmic laws can bring to pass. Before it is possible, however to bring about a happier and more secure future, each person must accept his individual responsibility for the achievement of the collective good.

It is time to learn that both the great and the small have equal right for survival. Large nations are not formed for the purpose of conquering those not strong enough to defend themselves. The same is true of social customs, art, sciences, and religions. It is by no means essential that we all eat similar food, wear identical clothing, or accept one religion. In the great commune as described in Buddhism

every sincere person has an equal right to peace and security. In the great circle of the animals, it is not intended by eternal providence that the tiger shall enslave the other zodiacal signs. In the larger pattern, the year of the rat is just as important as the year of the tiger. The meadows are beautiful because flowers of many colors combine harmoniously according to natural law. Growth is a many splendored thing. Every creature is fulfilling a destiny thus adding to the perfection of nature's plan. This year, the tiger will make a special contribution to the improvement of all that lives. From all parts of the world, dedicated individuals will gather to unite to protect each other. Every country has its own particular gift to the enrichment of society. It is obvious that we have exhausted the theory of competition. The new adventure is the experience of honorable friendship and the only way to save ourselves is to rescue the friend, the stranger, and the enemy from an illusion that anyone can be happy until all human beings dwell together in peace and contentment.

Although this is not the year of the dragon, it is so often combined with the tiger that it suggests some interesting symbolism. The dragon corresponds to the Western sign of Leo. It therefore stands for spiritual authority and temporal power. The five-clawed dragon was reserved to ornament the robes and utensils of the Imperial family. The emperor was regarded as a son of heaven and the supreme physical ruler of China. The tiger and the dragon making unpleasant faces at each other in 1986 suggests that there is growing antagonism against those vested powers that believe themselves to be the leaders of humanity, but have never become sufficiently enlightened to fulfill the responsibilities of high office. As the flame-fire tiger must be associated with discord and irritation, the world in the year of the tiger is restless, resentful, disillusioned, and profoundly annoyed. We are apt to see the public in general reminding governments and administrators that the voice of the people should be recognized as the voice of God. The German mystic, Jakob Boehme, noted that humanity seldom hears the voice of God except when a scolding is necessary.

While the world changes, I remain

Most sincerely yours,

Marilyn R. Hall



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