Several other calendrical cycles were used in ancient China, including a 12-year cycle based on Jupiter’s movement through the stars. Its progress provided each year with an emblematic animal corresponding to the station, or zone, of Jupiter in the year. This tradition persists, and today we still have the year of the rat, ox, tiger, hare, dragon, snake, horse, sheep, monkey, cock, dog, and pig.

Several of the rings of symbols on the back of this T’ang Dynasty mirror refer to cycle the Chinese calendar. The innermost circle with the four cosmological animals sign the four cardinal directions and the four seasons. The next ring of 12 animals represent the 12-year Jupiter cycle, and the outer ring is a set of 28 creatures: one for each hsit stellar station. (C. A. S. Williams, Outlines of Chinese Symbolism & Art Motives)