

Origin and Development of Jyotisha Sastra



Astrology

KEYWORDS : Indian Astrology, Surya, Pitamaha, Vyasa, Vasishta, Atri, Parasara, Kasyapa, Narada, Garga, Mareechi, Manu, Angeerasa

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ABSTRACT

There are in the heavens several bodies which appear to shed their light directly on this Earth; and also some others which, having no light of themselves, serve to reflect that of the Soorya, and thereby become visible to our organs of sight. The former are termed Stihira Nakshatra (Fixed Stars), because they appear to retain the same situation or to be fixed in the same place; but the later, being observed to wander, are termed Planets. The number and distance of the stars are so extensive. In this article the origin and development of Indian astrology and the names of famous astronomers, sages and insighters of our great Indian astrologers as well as their work for the development of astrology is given.

Introduction

मूर्तित्वे परिकल्पितः शश भूतो वर्त्मानुर्जन्मनामात्मेत्यात्म
विदां क्रतुश्च यज्ञतां भर्तामर ज्योतिषाम् ।
लोकानां प्रलयोद्भवस्थिति विभुश्चानेकधायः श्रुतो वाचं नः
सददात्बनेक किरणस्त्रैलोक्यदीपो रविः ॥ १ ॥

Astrology sees mankind as being not only influenced by hereditary factors and the environment, but also by the state of our solar system at the moment of birth. The planets are regarded as basic life-forces, the tools we live by as well as the basis of our very substance. These planetary forces take on different forms, depending on their zodiacal position and on the way they relate to one another. The aspects formed between the planets describe these relationships, the positions of the planets in relation to the place of birth tell us of their expression in the spheres of life depicted by the astrological houses. By interpreting the roles of these planets and their qualities (the elements, signs and houses) and creating a synthesis, astrology is able to present a complete and comprehensive picture of the person and his potential, based on the natal horoscope.

There are in the heavens several bodies which appear to shed their light directly on this Earth; and also some others which, having no light of themselves, serve to reflect that of the Soorya, and thereby become visible to our organs of sight. The former are termed Stihira Nakshatra (Fixed Stars), because they appear to retain the same situation or to be fixed in the same place; but the later, being observed to wander, are termed Planets. The number and distance of the stars are so extensive. In this chapter we study the origin and development of Indian and world astrology. This chapter also dealt with the famous astronomers of world and sages and insighters of our great Indian astrologers as well as their work for the development of astrology.

1. Indian Astrology

स्कन्धत्रयात्मक ज्योतिषशास्त्रमेतत् षडङ्गवत् ।
गणितं संहिता होरा चेति स्कन्धत्रयं मतम् ॥ ५ ॥
जातकगोळनिमित्तप्रश्नमुद्दृष्ट्यगणितनामानि ।
अभिदधतीह षडङ्गान्याचार्या ज्योतिषे महाशास्त्रे ॥ ६ ॥

Jyotisha from India is the most time-tested and oldest system of Astrology in the world. The Sanskrit word "Jyotisha" (ja-yo-teesh) means "science of light." In Western countries, it is called Vedic Astrology, which refers to Indian or Hindu Astrology. The origin of Jyotisha is from the Vedas, the scriptures of Hindus. Jyotisha is the science of understanding the subtle influences that come to us from the greater universe.

Vedas are the oldest literature and compendium of multitude of Knowledge. The history of Astrology traces back to Vedic times, lakhs of years ago from now. Astrology can be divided broadly as Siddhanta Bhaga (Calculation part) and Phalita Bhaga (Predictive part). In Rigveda, the year is divided into 12 months, the special 13th month called extra month correlates the Solar and

Lunar months. In Taittiriya Brahmana, the 6 seasons are described. The details of planets as gods, solar and lunar eclipses are available in Rigveda.

Vedic Astrology reflects the understanding and experience of ancient spiritual teachers regarding the facts of life. Hindu philosophers, sages, went into great intricacies to explain God. They explain that world is evolving under the benevolent influence of a Divine Being. The Supreme Intelligence takes care of every individual and puts him under those circumstances which are best suited for his growth. This gives faith and confidence to the individual. Vedic Astrology believes in the spiritual nature of man, and guides him in realizing his true self.

It helps him realize that each soul is learning his lessons, which he can only learn under those circumstances. Thus, he comes to know that astrological prediction comes true because the soul is guided by Higher Beings, planets and the belief that, never go wrong.

The oldest available book on Astrology is 'Rigiyothisha', written by Lagadha. In this book, there are 5 types of years described, along with the ruling deities. The two Ayanas (parts) of the year are also mentioned, along with their starting stars. Precision of equinoxes are explained. And the 27 stars are also given in this book.

There are 18 pioneers in Astrology, who contributed to its development. They are: 1. Surya, 2. Pitamaha, 3. Vyasa, Vasishta, 5. Atri, 6. Parasara, 7. Kasyapa, 8. Narada, 9. Garga, 10. Mareechi, 11.Manu, 12.Angeerasa, 13.Lomasa, 1 Poulisa, 15.Chyavana, 16.Yavana, 17. Bhrgu, and 18. Saunaka. Each of the above sages has one Siddhanta to each name to their credit.

Zodiac is the outer wheel from where the radiation from different celestial bodies is received, filtered and sent to Earth. Indian Astrology links the planets and stars with gods. Gods are representatives of certain types of energies. The entire Zodiac chart is divided into 12 signs, starting from Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, Sagittarius, Capricorn, Aquarius, and Pisces. There are 4 things to be done in a human life: Dharma (righteous path), Artha (wealth), Kaama (Desire), and Moksha (Unification of soul with God). These are one by one represented by the 12 houses of the Zodiac. The hidden meaning is: A man should follow righteous path to achieve wealth and fulfill his desires. At the same time he must be desirous of reaching God, and find ways to finally become one with the super soul. The potentiality to achieve this is represented step wise by the Zodiac.

2.Indian Astrologers

In India, Astrology was taught in Guru kula system where the master spoke directly to the students. While this system had many advantages, one main drawback was that information was rarely recorded. The Master taught the secrets of Astrology only to the best students. Some of the important knowledge was lost

forever as it came down from Master to the student.

Sage Garga, Viddha Garga, Asite, Aryabhata the mathematical genius, Sage Brighu the author of Brighu Sutram, Brihaspati(Guru), Badarayana, Kapila, Kashyappa, Manu, Manitha, Maharshi Parasara, Satyacharya, Varahamihira, Batotpal, the commentator on Brihat Jataka, Prithuyasa son of Varahamihira, Vaidyanatha Dikshitar the author of Jataka Parijata, Kalidasa the author of Uttarakalamrita, Mahadeva the author of Jataka Tatwa, and many others contributed to this vast body of knowledge.

Maharshi Jaimini, Sage Patañjali, Sage Paanini, Rishi Katyayana, Aryabatta, Varahamihira, Bhaskara, Lalla, Shridhara, Virase-na, Jayadeva, Halayudha, Mahavira, Aryabhata II, Brahmadeva, Bhaskara (1114-1185), Sripati, Mahadeva and Kalidasa were given many authentic treatise for the development of Indian astrology.

3. Origin and description of Indian Astrology

अथैकदा मुनिश्रेष्ठे त्रिकलजं पराशरम् ।
पप्रच्छोपेत्य मैत्रेयः प्रणिपत्य कृताञ्जलिः ॥ १ ॥
भगवन् परमं पुण्यं गुह्यं वेदाङ्गमुत्तमम् ।
त्रिस्कन्धं ज्योतिषं होरा गणितं संहितेति च ॥ २ ॥
एतेष्वपि त्रिषु श्रेष्ठा होरेति श्रूयते मुने ।
त्वत्तस्तां श्रोतुमिच्छामि कृपया वद मे प्रभो ॥ ३ ॥
कथं सृष्टिरियं जाता जगत्तच्च लयः कथम् ।
स्वस्थानां भूस्थानां च सम्बन्धं वद विस्तरात् ॥

bphs 1.3

“Once upon a time, offering his obeisance’s to all knowing sage Parasara and with folded hands, Maitreya asked him: O venerable, Astrology, the supreme limb of the Vedas, has three divisions, viz. Hora, Ganita and Samhita. Even amongst the said three divisions, Hora is still far excellent. I desire to know of its glorious aspects from you. Kindly relate them to me.”

These are the introductory slokas of the Brihat Parasara Hora Sastra, the great classic of Vedic Astrology authored by Maharishi Parasara. The Shisya (student) of the Maharishi, Mitreya rishi describes Jyotisha or Vedic Astrology as eye as the supreme limb of the Vedas. Originally there is one Veda, which is said to have emanated from the breath of Lord Mahavishnu, and was later divided into four branches by Maharshi Vedavyasa for easier comprehension. The four branches are the Rik, Sama, Yajush and Atharva Vedas, which contain the hymns or mantras recited by the four priests performing a Yajña (vedic sacrifice). The auxiliary knowledge necessary for the proper performance of the Vedic rituals is given in the six corollaries of the Vedas called Vedangas. They are mentioned by Parijata Harihara in his Prasna Marga as follows:

“The Vedas have six limbs, viz. Jyotisha, Kalpa, Nirukta, Siksha, Vyakarana and Chanda. For the Vedas, the six important limbs, viz. the feet, the face, the hands, the eyes, the nose, and the ears are represented by Chanda, Vyakarana, Kalpa, Jyotisha, Siksha and Nirukta respectively. As Astrology is the eye of the Vedas, it is given the pride of place. No person possessing all the organs intact but without eyesight can have individuality.” (Prasnamarga.10-12.)

Therefore, although Astrology is a subordinate part of Vedic knowledge, it still occupies a very preeminent position, because with its help one can foresee the results of his actions. Maitreya also mentions the three branches of Astrology, namely Hora, Ganita and Samhita, which are also elaborated upon by Harihara as follows:

“Ancient astrological science is divided into three Skandhas or six Vedangas. The three Skandhas are Ganita, Samhita and Hora. Sages have classified the great science of Astrology into six Vedangas, viz. Jataka, Gola, Nimitta, Prasna, Muhurta and Ganita.

Ganita Skandha deals with Gola and Ganita. Hora Skandha deals with horoscopy, Prasna, Muhurta and a part of Nimitta. Samhita Skandha deals elaborately with Nimitta. Samhita also deals with the varying fortunes of the people, changes in weather and progress of the animal kingdom. It sketches also the nature and shape of meteors, shooting stars and all the wonderful natural phenomena.” (Prasnamarga 1.5-8.)

4 The six Angas of Vedic Astrology

गोळो गणितं चेति द्वितयं खलु गणितसंज्ञिते स्कन्धे ।
होरासंहितयोरपि निमिचमन्यत्रयं च होराख्ये ॥ ७

The six Angas of Vedic Astrology are the following:

1. Ganita: Mathematical calculations connected with the movement and positions of the planets within the Zodiac.
2. Gola: Spherical astronomy, resulting from the spherical shape of the planets and their movements around their axes and orbits.
3. Jataka: Radical Astrology, or analysis of the birth chart, which includes all the general rules of horoscope reading.
Praśna: Query Astrology or analysis of charts erected for the time and place of putting a question before the astrologer.
5. Muhurta: Analysis of favourable and unfavourable moments to begin any activity.
6. Nimitta: Reading of omens, bodily signs, behavior or humans, animals and natural phenomena.

Harihara also mentions that Vedic Astrology can be divided into Paramamsa and Phala. Astronomical calculations come under Paramanas (proof) as they deal basically with asrophysical characteristics of the planets. This is still important for a Jyotisha, because these calculations will lie in the foundation of the astrological interpretations. The astronomical interpretations themselves come under Phala (fruits) as they actually delineate the fruits of the native's karma, or activities performed in his previous lifetime.

5. Difference between Indian Vedic Astrology and Western Astrology:-

Vedic and Western Astrology share a common heritage of 12 Zodiac signs (Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, Sagittarius, Capricorn, Aquarius, and Pisces), and seven planets (Surya, Chandra, Budha, Sukra, Kuja, Guru and Sani), which they describe in a similar manner. Vedic Astrology also considers Chandra's North and South nodes prominently. They are called Rahu and Kethu. The outer planets Uranus, Neptune and Pluto are not part of classical Vedic Astrology. But Vedic and Western Astrology differ in several ways. The Vedic system is more complicated, with many different types of charts and calculations to consider but very easy to understand.

In Jyotisha, the positions of the planets and other significant points are calculated with reference to a person's, or events, birth data. Based on this information the Vedic astrologer calculates about 100 charts and tables. It is the job of the Vedic astrologer to study them simultaneously and derive useful information based on the rules of interpretation created by ancient sages. Both systems use the same twelve houses and interpret them similarly (though with variations). The Vedic system makes the cusp the same beginning of the house, while Western Astrology makes the cusp the middle of the house. This causes half the planetary positions in the Vedic chart to move forward to the next house relative to the Western chart.

Vedic Astrology uses an additional 27-fold division of the Zodiac called Nakshatra (constellations). Personality traits are read more through the birth star (Nakshatra of Chandra) than by Surya's sign. Nakshatra positions of planets are examined in the birth chart as well. The use of Nakshatra is very important in Vedic Astrology, much more than with Zodiac signs. Vedic Astrology uses a system of planetary periods called Dasa, The

Major Period of various planets. Most important is Vimshottari Dasa, a 120-year-long cycle of planetary positions based on the birth Nakshatra, stars. With the help of this Dasa, The major Period system a Vedic astrologer can predict future events accurately. However, Western Astrology does not have the Dasa system, with predictive capabilities as Vedic Astrology does. There are five main uses of Vedic Astrology: 1. Kama - family and relationship issues like marriage compatibility, timing of children and domestic happiness; 2. Artha - help with finances, business and investments; 3. Dharma - determination of career and vocation; Moksha - guidance in the spiritual life and cosmic and self-knowledge; and 5. Arogya - physical and mental health. But these moral values do not have any importance in Western Astrology.

6. List of Indian Astrological classics/ Treatises on Nativity

Skanda Hora or Jyotishmati	(God Brahma)
Brihat Prajapatya	(Daksha Prajapati)
Vasishta Hora	(Sage Vasishta)
Garga Hora	(Sage Garga)
Kousika Hora	(Sage Viswamitra)
Sounaka Hora	(Sage Sounaka)
Brihat Parasara Hora Sastram	(Sage Parasara)
Jaimini Sutram	(Sage Jaimini)
Brigu Sutram	(Sage Brigu)
Vedanga Jyotish	(Lagadha)
Yavaneswara Hora or Yavanajataka	(Sage Yavaneswara)
Sphujudwaja Hora	(King Sphujidwaja)
Meenaraja Hora or Vridha Yavana Hora	(King Meenaraja)
Saravali	(Kalyana Verma)
Brihat Jatakam	(Varahamihira)
Phala deepika	(Mantreswara)
Hora Saram	(Prithu Yasa)
Sarvartha Chintamani	(Venkatesa Daivajna)
Hora Ratna	(Acharya Balabhadra)
Jataka Parijatam	(Vaidyanatha Deekshita)
Chamatkara Chintamani	(Bhatta Narayana)
Kashyapa Hora	(Sage Kasyapa)
Poorva Kalamritam	(Ganaka Kalidasa)
Uttara Kalamritam	(Ganaka Kalidasa)
Suka Nadi	(Sage Suka)
Deva Keralam or Chandra Kala Nadi	(Achyuta)
Tajaka Neelakanthi	(Neelakantha)
Prasna Margam	(Panakkattu Sankaran Nambootiri)
Daivajna Vallabha	(Varahamihira)

7. Treatises on Indian Electional/ Muhurtha Astrology

Adbhuta Sagaara
Brihannarada
Brihatdaivygyaranjan
Brihatjyotisaara
Daivygyamanoranjana
Daivygyamanohar Grantha
Ganaka Mandana
Giana Manjari
Hindu Electional Astrology
Jaganmohana Grantha
Jyotiprakash
Jyotiribandha
Jyotisha Ratana
Jyotishaara
Jyotisha Chintamani
Jyotirvidabharnama
Kaala Khanda
Kaal Nirnaya Deepika
Kaal Prakashika
Madhaveeyam

Muhurtarnava
Muhurta Bhaskara
MuhurtaChintamani
MuhurtaChudamani
Muhurta Darpaanam
Muhurta Deepakam
Muhurta Deepika
Muhurta Ganpati
Muhurta Kalpadrum
Muhurta Maala
Muhurta Manjari
Muhurta Martanda
Muhurta Muktaavali
Muhurta Prakash
Muhurta Padavi
Muhurta Saagar
Muhurta Sangraha
Muhurta Tattva
Muhurta Tattvapradeep
Muhurtaarnava
Muktaavali
Narpatijacharyaaswarodaya
Naaradeeya
Nibandha Chudamani
Poorva Kaalamrit
Rajmartanda
Ratana Koosham
Ratanmaala
Sakujaaram
Shiva Swarodayam
Vaivaha Pradeepam
Vivaha Kautuhalam
Vivaha Patalam
Vivaha Pradeepam
Vivaha Saaram
Vivaha Vrindavanam
Vyahaarochchyaam
Yoga Yatra
Vyavaharsaaram

8. List of Indian Astrologic Samhitas: treatises on mundane, portents, omens, meteorology etc.

BrahKuja hi Samhita
Brihaspati Samhita
Brihat Samhita
Parasara Samhita
Garga Samhita
Rishiputra Samhita
Guru Samhita
Kashyapa Samhita
Lomasha Samhita
Maanava Samhita
Naagarjuna Samhita
Narada Samhita
Shakalya Samhita
Samaasa Samhita
Samhita Pradeepa
Samhita Sidhhanta
Satya Samhita
Surya Samhita
Vaikhaanasa Samhita
Vasista Samhita

9.List of Indian Astrologic Siddhanthas : treatises on mundane, portents, omens, meteorology etc.

Name of the Siddhantha	Author
Ancient Surya Sidhata	(Maya)
Brahma Sidhanta	(God Brahma)
Lomasa Sidhanta	(Sage Lomasa)
Poulisa Sidhanta	(Sage Poulisa)
Pitamaha Sidhanta	(God Brahma)
Vasishta Sidhata	(Sage Vasishta)
Vridha Vasishta Sidhanta	(Sage Vridha Vasishta)
Garga Sidhanta	(Sage Garga)
Parasara Sidhanta	(Sage Parasara)
Pancha Sidhantika	(Varaha Mihira)
Modern Surya Sidhanta	(Aryabhata II)

Conclusion: The knowledge of history and origin is essential for understanding of any subject. Here we saw the Indian astrology and its development in this short article.

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