

Key Features of Vedic Astrology

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What is Vedic astrology ?

Vedic astrology, called Jyotish in Sanskrit, is a methodical and precise forecasting and event analysis system developed in the Vedic culture of ancient India. For literally thousands of years, Vedic astrology has distinguished itself as an effective method for projecting events and for analyzing behavior, especially in terms of understanding one's personality over time. Simply put Vedic astrology, as does it Western counterparts, aims to predict the past, present and future. The most widely acclaimed form of Vedic astrology, the Parashari system, was developed in writing over 50 centuries ago by a Vedic sage named Maharishi Parasara. Some scholars believe that the oral tradition goes back thousands of years further. Parashara's procedures, and those of astrologers following him, have been handed down over the years from teacher to student and family to family as a tradition in India. It is only recently that Vedic astrology has come to the attention of westerners as an effective predictive tool and as a method to increase understanding of one's own behavior, that of others and the nature of how events tend to unfold over time.

How does Vedic astrology work?

Vedic astrology works on the theory that life moves forth in observable and definable rhythms or cycles. Parasara, one of the founding Fathers of Vedic astrology, developed calculations to measure the moment and sequence of these natural cycles, along with the procedures of how to link and interpret them in relation to individual behavior and events. The sequence of natural activities are mapped and measured through naked eye observations of celestial activity such as orbital and rotational movement of planets, the amount of degrees separating each planet and so forth. Science knows that the laws of nature are the same everywhere, whether they be observed in the motions of stars and planets or within the internal universe of our cells and DNA. Cycles repeat on and on within the life times of individuals and outward to events on earth. Vedic astrology merges the techniques of astronomy, psychology and forecasting. The system analyzes these patterns over time and synthesizes them in terms of a specific individual or event. The starting point of an analysis of an individual's life cycle is measured from birth, the point at which life starts. The framework from which these calculations are derived is a specific snapshot of the placements of the planets, Sun and Moon at birth and is called a natal chart, or rasi kundali.

What is the value of Vedic astrology ?

Vedic astrology is useful because it allows us to anticipate which cycles, both natural and personal, might be occurring or have occurred, at any time. Vedic astrology is not fatalistic or adamant that events will occur with certainty. It is a science of probabilities. Through Vedic astrology, we are made aware of the possibility or tendency of certain cycles to influence us in a certain way, either favorably or unfavorably over time. Competent astrologers follows the rules of astology, calculating a chart and referencing a vast "database" of behavioral indicators, many of which are recorded in ancient shastras or scriptures, as well as the astrologers own experience from reading thousands of charts over time. As the astrologers' experience and awareness grows, so does their intuition. Their personal insight and developed consciousness will also play a role in chart judgment over time. Another benefit of Vedic astrology comes from the increased understanding it gives us in light of our own behavior as well as those around us. Vedic astrology predictive techniques aid us in anticipating the approach of some danger, in order to fortify ourselves against it, or if it is a positive event, how to prepare so we can take maximum benefit from it. Farmers tell us that it is good to "pull weeds early." Vedic astrology gives us the tools to do so.

How is Vedic Astrology Different from Western Astrology Vedic astrology has the following major differences: 1) Vedic astrology is sidereal or starbased. It fixes the relationship of the signs of the zodiac near the star positions of constellations of similar name. Vedic astrology, compensates for an effect called precession of the equinoxes (see below) which causes the earth to rotate back on its axis, thus misaligning the relationship of signs to constellations. Western astrology is tropical or based on marking the start of the zodiac (zero degrees Aries) on the seasonal point of the spring equinox and not on a fixed star position (see Ayanamsa below). The two systems are about 24 days or degrees different from where the mark the start of Aries or the new zodiac cycle or "year" (Western starts Aries about March 23 and Vedic says about April 14 is when the Sun enters the zodiac sign (AND constellation)of Aries for the start of a new astrological year 2) Vedic astrology is integrated into the philosophical and religious systems of India and often follows a Guru-Disciple teaching relationship (see Veda, Vedic philosophy, Jyotishi, Vastu, Ayurveda, etc., below) This integration of companion systems is less obvious in the Western systems. In fact, priests use astrology in India, but in the West most traditional priests and ministers would publicly disassociate themselves from it. 3) the Chart formats are different (see Chakras below). 4) Vedic astrology has a multitude of predictive techniques (e.g. see Nakshatras, Shodasavargas, Ashtakavarga, Dasas etc.) 4) Vedic astrology generally employes one house system (see equal houses), or two at the most (see Bhava Chaitia). Western astrologers argue for several different house systems. 5) Vedic astrology has several opinions (see ayanamsas) as to what marker star represents the start of the sidereal astrological year. Lahiri's opinion, endorsed by the Indian government, is in wide use today. The Western system just uses the Sun's (at the global tropic points) position at the time of the equinox as a marker. 6) Vedic astrology not only examines a person's life and makes forecasts, but recommends certain remedial measures to help counteract unfavorable planetary situations as seen in their birth charts. 7) Some observers argue that Western astrology focuses more on analysis of personality while Vedic astrology puts more weight on prediction. Many modern Vedic astrologers also incorporate psychological analysis in their readings and feel the inattention to psychology is more an artifact of the current Hindu culture in India (which defers counsel to Gurus), than any set approach to Vedic chart interpretation.

The Veda The core knowledge of India is called the Veda (pure knowledge). The Vedas are timeless. They were not composed by any person ("apaurusheya"), but are direct cognitions of the principles of life and mechanics of nature by highly advanced rishis or

seers. Tradition holds that the Vedas came as a quietly whispered sound (shabda) from the mouth of Hiranyagarbha (Brahma, the creator) and were heard (shruti) by the rishis or enlightened sages. Vyasa, took the original oral work, and transcribed it into 4 major collections or "samhitas", The Rig, Sama, Atharva and Yajur Veda. Jyotish or Vedic astrology is first mentioned in about 162 verses in the Atharva Veda, 4000 or more years ago (some even say 10,000 years or more—oral tradition puts it back even further). There are supplemental texts called "Vedangas" or branches of the Veda which expand on the philosophical and instructional content of the Veda. Jyotish or Jyotisha, the eye of the Veda, is also called Vedic, Indian or Hindu astrology by various practitioners.

Vedic Philosophy Vedic astrology is closely linked to the philosophical systems of India. It includes connections to such concepts as **karma**, or one's life is the result of past actions, such as sanchita karma or the energy of one's latent accumulative actions, prarabधा karma or the consequences of past actions that have been triggered towards potential fulfillment and Agama karma which is the karma of actions we will have a tendency to perform in the future. Vedic astrology also incorporates the concepts of the **atman**, or soul, reincarnating or returning to life on earth life until it reaches liberation or **moksha**. While there is a belief in destiny, most modern Vedic astrologers believe that a person also has the free will to make choices in life, often aided through the tutelage of a **guru** and through the application of spiritual work or **sadhana** (meditation, chanting, proper diet, studies of the scriptures, charity, worship etc.)

Vedic Authors of Astrology Some scholars hold that Brahma, the creator, passed the knowledge of Vedic astrology, down through a succession of rishis or enlightened masters. A key figure in Vedic scholarship, is Parashara, whose book "**Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra**", estimated to have been written over 4000 years ago, is regarded by many as the foundation for the major astrological systems used in India today. Other famous authors are **Jaimini's** "Jaimini Sutras", **Varahamihira's** "Brihat Jataka", and "Brihat Samhita", **Satyacharya's** "Satya Jatakam", **Mantreswara's** "Phaladeepika", **Venkatesha's** "Deva Keralam", **Kalyana Verma's** " Saravali", **Prithyusha's** "Hora Sara", **Rama Bhatt's** "Muhurtha Chintamani", to name a few.

Jyotishi One who interprets charts according to the Vedic systems. Also called a Vedic astrologer.

Chakras, Kundalis or Vedic Chart Styles

North India Charts Many Northern Indian astrologers use a square chart where each sign is a triangle. You read the chart from right to left. It is similar to the chart style used by astrologers of the middle ages in Europe. All the angular houses (1,4,7 &10) are in the center of the chart and are readily visible and easy to track. Some say there is a spiritual benefit gained by gazing upon this mandala-like chart. In the North India style the houses remain fixed in position, and the signs, numbered 1-12 are rotated according to the rising sign. The names of the signs are not listed on the charts, just their numbers. Astrologers using this style will often construct a separate chart, marking the Moon as the ascendant point.

South India Chart South Indian astrologers, e.g. Bangalore, Madras, Kerala, Bombay, etc., use this style. It is a square chart where each sign is a box. With this style the signs stay fixed on the chart, while the house positions move. You read the chart from left to right or clockwise.

Geocentric System: The distance from the earth to the planets is calculated in angular degrees. The starting point is calculated from the earth ("geo") center ("centric") outward. Some experimenters calculate planetary positions from the surface of the earth, adjusting for the slight variations a surface calculation will create. (parallax is why a lot of heads get cut off in pictures. What you see in the viewfinder is not the same angle to the subject as from the focal point of the camera lens). Vedic astrology is also called a geocentric or earth-observer based system. The ancient rishis knew that the Sun did not actually rise and that, in fact, the earth rotated, but set up a system of observation that was easy to understand in terms of what an observer saw while standing on the earth looking skyward.

Grahas or Planets Graha means that which grasps. Grahas represents more than just the physical, celestial bodies hanging in space. They represents a point of cosmic energy and influence and are the Vedic counterpart of what we call a "planet" in the west.. The planets are said to indicate or represent the delivery of the lessons of our karmas or past action and are not necessarily believed by all Vedic astrologers to actually cause events to happen. Each planet represents a certain energy or tendency. **Surya, Ravi or Sun** = Authority, vitality outer behavior, father, heart, ego ; **Chandra, Soma or Moon** =Inner behavior, mind, emotions, Mother, breasts, fluids ; **Budha or Mercury** = Mental ability, intellect, communication, relatives, skin, respiration; **Shukra or Venus** = Love, affection, sensuality, beauty, luxury, mate, relating ability, genitals, reproduction; **Kuja, Mangala or Mars** = Energy, passion, courage, fierceness, siblings, muscles, blood, movement; **Guru, Brihaspati or Jupiter** = Expansion, knowledge, wisdom, counseling, indulgence, children, fats, liver, growth; **Shani or Saturn** = Focus, discipline, structure, restriction/blockage, lessons to be learned, knees, joints, elimination, longevity; **Rahu** = Detoxing, poisons, continuity, foreigners, oddity, shadow or secret behavior, material gain; **Ketu** = Change, reorganization, spirituality, enlightenment, hypersensitivity, discontinuity

Planetary Strength/Favorableness Indicators: **Planets are strong** (quantity of influence) when Exalted, Moolatrikona, Own sign, in Friend's sign, Vargotama, Varga Bala, in bright half of Moon, conjunct or aspected by benefics, between benefics, neecha banga. Rising sign ruler also should be well placed. **Planest are favorable** when in angles and trines and generally when located in the 2 and 11th houses. The 3rd house is mildly "malefic" or unpleasant in its functioning, but can be good in its outcome.

Planetary Weakness Indicators: **Planets are weak** (lack of quantity influence) if Debilitated, in Dusthana houses (6, 8, 12), in Enemy sign, conjunct or aspected by malefics, between malefics, sandhi (at the juncture between signs), retrograde (in my opinion). The rising sign ruler is unfavorably placed. **Planets are unfavorable** generally when placed in dusthana houses (6,8, and 12) The 6th is an "upachaya" house and can grow out of its unfavorableness over time. The 3rd house is mildly "malefic" or unpleasant in its functioning, but can be good in its outcome.

Drishtis or Planetary Aspects Each planet aspects or transmits it influence to other planets in conjunction (1 house) and in opposition (7 houses). The start of the count, or one, is always from the house the planet occupies, not the next house. Other aspects are: Panaparas- 2, 5, 8; Apoklimas- 3,6,9; Shashtashtaka- planets 6th & 8th from each other; Thrithiya-ekadasa- 3rd

and 11th from each other; Dwirdwadasa-2nd & 12th from each other Special Aspects . There are special aspects, as follows (includes 1 and 7 as well) Count the starting position as one: Mars aspects planets 4 and 8 houses from it. Jupiter aspects planets 5 and 9 houses from it; Saturn aspect planets 3 and 10 houses from it. Jaimini calculates aspects of planets from one rasi to another rasi. Some rules in Nadi calculations indicate a retrograde planet aspects the previous house & planets aspect the trines from them.

Angles, Kendra: An angle or quadrant—signs 1, 4, 7, and 10. 10th is strongest, next 7th, then 4th and 1st; **Trikona:** Means "three angled". Called a trine in the western system. Indicates 5 or 9 places from the rising sign or any planet that is being judged for certain significations (some also call the 1st house a trine). Always count the starting sign as one, then proceed forward in the counting. Some authors state that aspects should be used in the rasi chart only, not in navamsa and other divisional charts, since aspects are derived by longitudinal distances along the ecliptic (apparent path of Sun).

Shad Bala The six-fold planetary strength system. Shadbala gives a point value to each planet. Most Vedic astrology computer programs perform this calculation. The more points or bindus a planet gets the stronger the power of the planet. Every planet needs a minimum amount of points (generally about 6) to be strong. Points are tallied as **shastiamsas** then divided by 60 to get **rupas**. Minimum requirement: Saturn, Sun and Mars = 5 Rupas, the Moon = 6 Rupas, Mercury = 7 Rupas, Jupiter = 6 ½ Rupas, . Venus = 5 ½ Rupas. The components of Shad Bala are as follows:

1)**Stana Bala** or Positional Strength; comprised of **Uccha Bala** or points according to its position from the point of exaltation or debilitation; **Saptavargaja Bala** or the points derived from a planet's friends and enemies as seen from seven Vargas (Rasi, Hora, Drekkana, Saptamsa, Navamsa, Dwadasamsa and Trimsamsa); **Ojayyugma Bala** or strength gained from being in an even or uneven sign or navamsa; **Kendra Bala** A planet in a kendra house (1,4,7 and 10) gets increased value; **Drekkana Bala** or the first drekkana of each sign is good for male planets, the middle drekkana for neutral planets and the last drekkana for female planets.

2) **Dig Bala:** Directional strength according to house position, The Sun and Mars in the South or tenth house. Saturn in the West, or seventh house. Moon and Venus in the North or fourth house. Mercury and Jupiter in the East or first house.

3) **Kalabala:** the strength of a planet according to divisions of time. Comprised of: **Divaratri Bala**- strength by time of day; **Paksha Bala**- strength by phase of the Moon; **Thribhaga Bala**- Strength according to one of three divisions of the day and night.; **Abda Bala** -Strength according to which planet is the ruler of the year. (The ruler of the year is the planet which belongs to the first day of the year); **Masa Bala** Strength from the planet which is the ruler of the first day of the month of birth; **Vara Bala**-Strength for the planet which rules the day of birth **Hora Bala**- Strength from the planet which rules the hour or hora of birth.; **Ayana Bala;** a planet gets strength according to its declination or distance from the equator. **Yuddha Bala** deals with planets which are "at war" or in close proximity. The planet winning the war gains points on their Kala Bala total, the loser's points get lessened.

4) **Chesta Bala:** Motional strength; Relative to the average speed of a planet, a planet gets more strength when it is moving slower (as in retrograde) and less when moving faster. Chesta Bala does not apply to the Sun and Moon.

5) **Naisargika Bala:** Natural strength; A planet gets strength according to its brightness. The Sun is the brightest. This calculation is the same for all charts

6) **Drik Bala:** Aspectual strength A planet gets positive points if aspected by benefics **ishtabala** and negative if aspected by malefics **Kashtabala**.

Upagrahas Each Vedic graha or planet has an auxiliary "planet" which represents tendencies towards unfavorable results. These are mathematically derived points that indicate a sensitivity or possibility for adverse events to arise in one's life. **Gulika** is the one upagraha most frequently tracked by astrologers. Other Upagrahas are Kala (Sun), Paridri or Parivasha (Moon), Dhuma or Mrityu (Mars), Adhnaprahara (Mercury), Yamaganantaka (Jupiter), Indrachapa or Kodanda (Venus); Mandi and/or Gulika (Saturn—note some authors think Mandi and Gulika are the same, others argue they are two separate Upagrahas, Pata or Vayitpata (Rahu), Upaketu or Sikhi (Ketu).

Kala or Time: There are three primary methods of time keeping—the year (one orbit of the Sun), the month (one orbit of the Moon), and the day (one axial rotation of the earth)

Solar Day On some days orbit of the earth will be faster or slower, making the day plus or minus 24 hours, but averaged out over the course of a year, the span of a day is standardized at 24 hours. This generally done to make timekeeping consistent around the world.

Lunar Day also called a **Tithi**, represents a moving average separation of about 12 degrees between the Sun and Moon's motion each "day". There are 30 tithis in a lunar month, numbering 1-14 and the full moon being 15 or the **shukla paksha** or bright half of the Moon's passage (New to Full Moon), and numbers 1-14 ending with 15 again under the **krishna paksha** or dark half of the Moon's cycle (Full to New Moon). Tithis traditionally are marked from one sunrise to the next and have an average duration of about 23 hours, 37 minutes and 28.096 seconds.

Sidereal Day A full rotation of the earth as marked against the start and return to a fixed star. It averages 23 hours, 56 minutes and 4.091 seconds, about 4 minutes short of an average solar day.

Solar Month In Vedic astrology this represents the entrance (ingress, sankranti) of the Sun into a new sign of the zodiac. The solar months are started, according to the standard Vikram Samvat (solar year) from January 14 when the Sun enters Capricorn. (This date is called **Makara Sankranti**). The solar months are **Magha** (Jan 14), **Phalgun**, **Chaitra**, **Vaishakh**, **Jyeshtha**, **Ashadha**, **Shravana**, **Bhadrapad**, **Ashwina**, **Kartika**, **Margasis**, and **Pausha**. The spellings vary by region in India.

Lunar Month One lunar month consists of the number of days taken by the moon to travel once around the earth. This is approximately 29 days, 44 minutes and 2.9 seconds. Generally, the lunar month begins with the new moon called **amavasya**. It has two

Sarvashatakavarga is the combined value of the ashtakavarga of the seven planets. A numerical value of bindus (points) is assigned to each sign in the chart. Basically a sign total of under 20 is not good, 20 –25 is good, 25-30 is very good, and over 30 brings the most favorable results when planets are positioned in that sign, either by birth or transit.

Gochara or Planetary transits The actual position of the planets in the heavens at a designated time. Used in prediction. Traditionally viewed in reference to the birth chart and most often counted from the basepoint of the moon's house position (called the "Chandra lagna").

Muhurtha another name for Electional Astrology, whereby you can choose the auspicious time to commence or end any important activity. This auspicious time is derived from a favorable combination of "tithis", "nakshatras" and "yogas". Dates for marriage can be determined by the the nakshatra or star ruling that day. Muhurtha astrology guides us to select an auspicious day suitable to us; it points to the days of prosperity, gains, losses, fear and happiness relevant to us. Muhurtha tell us to "set sail when the sailing is good".

Varshaphal A chart calculated from the progression based on Sun position every year same as at natal chart. In Dinavarsha Paddhati of one degree is one year with subtle aspects just as western system applied on Sayana chart, Tajaka system etc.

Panchanga 1. Vara (solar day) 2. Tithi (lunar day) 3. Nakshatra (lunar asterism) 4. Yoga (conjunction of planets) 5. Karana. (half of a lunar day). A panchanga is a planetary almanac (sidereal ephemeris) used by Vedic astrologers to measure time via placements of the above five celestial components (pancha = 5, anga = branch). A primary use of a panchanga is to find auspicious moments to begin or end an activity. An example of panchanga usage is that all the 13th and 14th tithis in krishna paksha - the waning phase of the moon, all the New Moon days and all the 1st tithis of shukla paksha, the waxing phase of the moon are considered inappropriate for doing most favorable deeds. Of all the nakshatras or constellations, Pushya is considered inauspicious for weddings while Bharani, Kritika, Ashlesha and Vishakha are considered unfavorable for performing most activities.

Tithi Tithi (lunar day) is defined as the time taken by the moon to gain 12 degrees on the sun. The moon takes about 30 days (one lunar month) to go around the earth's ecliptic. In each tithi, the moon travels 12 degrees ahead of the sun (i.e. if the sun and the moon are present in a specific position relating to the earth, after one tithi, the moon would be ahead of the sun by 12 degrees) hence completing 360 (12 degrees x 30 days) degrees in a terrestrial month. In one month, there are 28 tithis, one poorimma or full moon and one amavasya or new moon. The first tithi begins after the amavasya. There are 14 tithis in the shukla paksha (light half) and 14 in the Krishna paksha (dark half) of a month. The names of the 14 tithis are Prathma (first), Dvitiya (second), Tritiya (third), Chaturthi (fourth), Panchami (fifth), Shashti (sixth), Saptami (seventh), Ashtami (eighth), Navami (ninth), Dashmi (tenth), Ekadashi (eleventh), Dvadashi (twelfth), Tridashi (thirteenth), and Chaturdashi (fourteenth).

Vara Vedic astrologers follow a seven-day week system with each day of the week called a vara. The seven varas of a week are Ravivara (Sunday), Somvara (Monday), Mangalavara (Tuesday), Budhvara (Wednesday), Brihaspativara (Thursday), Shukravara (Friday), and Shanivara (Saturday). Each vara is special to a particular presiding deity. The order of the seven varas is linked with the seven planets (grahas) in Vedic astrology. For example Ravivara is keyed to Surya or the Sun and to those items and activities related to the Sun, according to various Vedic scriptures (shastras).

Nakshatra Just as the ecliptic is divided into 12 solar mansions (zodiacs), so it is divided into 27 'lunar mansions or asterisms', called nakshatras. The moon travels through all of these star groups in about a month. It takes a little more than a lunar day to travel into each nakshatra and so it becomes full in a different nakshatra every month. The sun travels in about two and a quarter nakshatras every month. The nakshatras have been named according to which nakshatra the moon was full in, in the month and year the present luni-solar calendar was instituted.

Yoga Yoga is defined as the time taken by the sun and moon together to progress 13 degrees 20 minutes of arc (space along the ecliptic). It is calculated from the sum of the longitudes of the sun and the moon and has no astronomical backing. The first yoga occurs at 13 degrees 20 minutes, the second at 26 degrees 40 minutes and so on. There are 27 yogas in all, in a month (making a total of 360 degrees). These are called the nityayoga (ever occurring) and yield good or bad results according to their names. They too have deities presiding over them. The panchanga yoga is not the same as the Yoga where people do stretching exercises (asanas) and breathing (pranayama)

Karana Karana is half of a lunar day or tithi. Therefore there are two karanas in one tithi and 60 in a lunar month. There are 11 names for karanas, of which seven are termed as moving or chara and four are stationary or sthira. The seven moving karanas occur eight times a month here as the four stationary ones occur only once a month.

Precession The Vedic system of Jyotish is called Nirayana or "year with no parts (seasons)". The Sun starts its journey through the circle of stars called the zodiac each year from a **fixed point** in the sky. So even though the earth is wobbling backwards on its axis, the zodiac will begin at 0 degrees of Aries again each year from the same **fixed point** in the sky. This is why the Vedic system is called a **fixed** zodiac.

The Western or Tropical system (Sayana) is a symbolic zodiac in that the starting point of the yearly revolution of the Sun through the signs is always **moving back** to zero degrees of Aries. The tropical system is called a **moveable** zodiac. The tradition of the tropical system has identified the first point of the Zodiac (0 degrees of Aries) commencing with the Vernal Equinox, about the third week of March each year. The point of the vernal equinox will not be the same each year in that the spinning earth wobbles backwards like a top on its axis and will be a little under 1 degree short of returning to the same place after that year is up (about 51 second of arc--60 seconds equals one degree out of the 360 circle of the zodiac). So even though at March 21 or so the Sun is actually about 6 degrees in the constellations of Pisces at the time of the equinox, Aries is **symbolically** indicated as the starting point of the 360 degree zodiac.

Ayanamsa The Nirayana (Jyotish) positions of planets are usually calibrated from the **fixed point** of Chitrapaksha (the star "Spica" in Alpha Virginis in 0 degrees and 0 minutes

of the sign of Libra) as used in the ephemeris system called "Rashtriya Panchanga" endorsed by the government of India, based on calculations by N.C Lahiri. Since you cannot see the stars during the day, the sign opposite Aries, Libra is used, to spot the marker star, then it is calculated back 180 degrees to fix the first point of the sign of Aries. The panchanga times are generally listed from the Central Station of India rather than Greenwich Mean Time. There are other ayanamsa systems developed by BV Raman, Krishnamurti, Fagan-Bradley and a few others. All Indian systems mark the difference or ayanamsa between the yearly tropical start of zero degrees of Aries (about March 21) and the yearly Vedic start (about April 15) to be around 23 days or degrees of apparent solar motion in the zodiac. In 1952, the Indian Government decided to establish a uniform civil and religious calendar. A committee was set up and from its recommendations emerged a civil calendar in 1957

Purusharthas According to Vedic scriptures, **Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha** constitute the four main goals in life. 'Dharma' is performing correct action and duty. 'Artha' is the attainment of wealth and prosperity 'Kama' is the ability to enjoy life, often associated with sexual pleasure. 'Moksha', or enlightenment is the final goal

Omens (Shakuna, Nimitta) Originally oriented to forecasting or prognosticating based on the cries of birds or siting of animals at the time a question or event is initiated (believed to have originated when there were more forests and jungles in India). The theory is that nature, with its elemental representatives of birds and forest creatures, is calling out signals to guide a person in their question or activity that is active at the time the omen is experienced.

Remedial Measures

Gemstones. There is not a lot of ancient references in the astrology shastras regarding gemstone use. There is mention in the Garuda purana, however. Many astrologer will say to wear stones on the left hand to improve action and on the right hand to improve emotions. This might have origins in Rekha shastra or palmistry. Many astrologers agree that overall the ring finger is a generally appropriate location for any stone. It is a tradition to generally recommend a stone for the ruler of one's rising sign and also for the ruler of one's current dasa or planetary period. If one want's to propitiate all the planets in one's chart, then a **navratna** or nine stone ring is recommended.

Yagyas Yagyas are Vedic rituals, best performed by bonafide priests in a dedicated Hindu temple. Their purpose is to balance a person's life in relationship to a specific aspect or rhythm of nature. These fundamental influences of nature are represented by dieties, such as Lakshmi to balance Venus energy, Mars or Subramaniya to increase strength etc.. It is important to get yagya recommendations from an experienced astrologer. The astrologer will assess what is out of balance in your chart and make a professional judgement about the remediating yagya to have performed. These rituals are powerful and ancient in origin and must be approached carefully and respectfully. The ritual is made specific for an individual by identifying the person's Moon sign, nakshatra and gotra before the ritual begins.

Gotra In Vedic philosophy, each person is descended, as identified by Moon position in the birth chart, from a specific one of seven primal rishis or sages. While modern Hindus equate Gotra to bloodlines, Vedic astrologers can use gotras to identify heritage of consciousness. Gotras are identified in many sources, such as Prasna Marga and are used as personal identifiers in Yagyas.

Mantras Sacred sounds whose resonating quality can effect changes in the physiology. Each planet has a mantra or set of mantras used by the reciter to induce a favorable harmony with that planet. Mantras should be personally taught, orally by an experienced guru. Learning mantras from books, without hearing the sound, leads to misunderstandings in pronunciation and can have negative or useless effects. **Japa** – Silent repetition of a sacred mantra or phrase; a mala or rosary like string of beads is used to keep count of the number of repetitions; **Shantis** Small acts aimed to create a favorable influence for a planet; such as releasing a green parrot back to the wild to propitiate Mercury. **Yantras** Geometric paintings or embossed, geometric images related to planets. Also used in creating a Kavach, or protective talisman

Kavach Protective talisman, often inscribed with letters or numbers significant to a planet; often contain Yantra diagrams. **Bhajan** - Individual or group singing of devotional songs; astrologically sung to a deity associated with a specific planet. **Vratas** Vows

Sapta-Dhatu (The seven physical elements of the body or the vital components)

Tridoshas The Ayurvedic bodily constituents of Wind (Vata), Fire (Pitta), Kapha (Earth and some Water)

Varnas or Castes The Rig-Veda divides society into four distinct but interdependent castes. The **Brahmins** were the priest class. The **Kshatriyas** were the warriors and executives who protected society. The **Vaishyas** were the commercial and agricultural management class. The **Shudras** were born to serve the other three castes.. In addition to the four recognized castes, there was another category of people called **Chandalas**. These were the outcastes or untouchables and did the jobs no one else wanted. The first three castes were called dvija or "twice-born", in reference to the sacred thread ceremony of spiritual passage called **Upanayanam**. Some researchers believe the British occupiers of India, wanting to make their rule easier, used the caste system to weaken, fragment, and disintegrate Hindu society. Modern Hindus are reacting against this caste distortion.

Birth Time Rectification For every minute of clock time, in the recording of birth time, the Vimshottari dasa system can change by about 4 days or so. A minute of more of difference in birth time can affect the position of the navamsa and other vargas as well. Every minute counts so getting accurate birth time is a must. Astrologers often use significant life events and match them to dasas and transits to estimate the correct time of birth.

Longevity There are many astrological systems to estimate length of life, such as Pindayu, Amshayu, Jeevasamayu, Ashtakavargayu etc. Traditional Hindu astrologers are often asked first off by clients as to their life span. Most Westerners show a distaste for such questions. Longevity systems do not always concur with each other and most astrologers do not predict death with precision. The time of life can be modified somewhat by the intervention a person's free will or intent. **Balarishta** is infant death, **alpayu** is short life, **madhyayu** is moderate life span about and **Purnayu** is long life (some say over age 72)

Jaimini Astrology Jaimini was believed to be a disciple of Parashara and carried out in greater detail many elements originally expounded by Parashara. The distinctions of the Jaimini system are 1) It uses a different set of karakas than the Parashari system. In Parashari astrology the karakas of each house are fixed. Certain planets always represent certain factors in the chart. Jaimini astrology determines the karakas of each factor or house based on the degrees of longitude for

each planet in a chart. For example, the planet with the highest degrees of longitude – regardless of the sign it is in – becomes be atmakaraka for that chart. The atmakaraka, or "soul-indicator," is a very important planet, akin to the Sun in Parashara astrology. But whereas the Sun always indicates the soul in Parashari astrology, in Jaimini astrology it can be any planet. Most authors say that the various Jaimini techniques can be used on their own or in combination with the Parashari techniques.

Jaimini Karakas Planet of highest degree = **Atmakaraka** which acts like the ascendant lord or the Sun, indicating the native, 1st house matters; Planet of next highest degree = **Amatyakaraka** which indicates ups and downs in career, 10th house factors; Planet of the next highest degree = **Bhratrukaraka** which acts like the 3rd house lord or Mars, indicating siblings and other 3rd house affairs; Planet of next highest degree = **Matrukaraka** which acts like the 4th house lord or Moon, indicating the mother or other 4th house affairs; Planet of next highest degree = **Putrakaraka** which acts like the 5th house lord or Jupiter, indicating children or other 5th house affairs; Planet of next highest degree = **Gnatikaraka** which acts like the 6th house lord, indicating diseases or other 6th house affairs; Planet of next highest degree = **Darakaraka** this acts like the 7th house lord or Venus, indicating relationships. The atmakaraka can be used (like the Sun) as an indicator of the essence of the person. The relative strength or weakness of the atmakaraka can indicate the overall strength of the horoscope. It is considered very favorable if the atmakaraka is in a kendra (conjoint, square, or opposed) to the amatyakaraka. This is a very flexible system, compared to the Parashari karakas. It is this variable karaka system that constitutes the first major difference between Jaimini astrology and Parashari astrology.

Jaimini Karakas The second big difference in Jaimini astrology concerns the way aspects are determined. In Parashari astrology, aspects are determined by the planets. Every planet casts an aspect on the seventh house from it, and three planets – Jupiter, Mars, and Saturn – cast special aspects. However, in Jaimini astrology, it is the signs that cast aspects. It is a fairly simple system: 1) each Movable sign aspects all Fixed signs except for the sign adjacent to it; 2) each Fixed sign aspects all Movable signs except for the sign adjacent to it; 3) and each Dual sign aspects all other Dual signs. In the language of Western astrology, we would describe it this way: the Movable (Cardinal) and Fixed signs each cast sextile, an inconjunct, and a trine; the Dual (Mutable) signs all cast squares and oppositions. For easy reference, the following list gives the aspect cast by each sign of the zodiac:

Aries: Leo, Scorpio, Aquarius; **Taurus:** Cancer, Libra, Capricorn; **Gemini:** Virgo, Sagittarius, Pisces; **Cancer:** Scorpio, Aquarius, Taurus; **Leo:** Libra, Capricorn, Aries; **Virgo:** Sagittarius, Pisces, Gemini; **Libra:** Aquarius, Taurus, Leo; **Scorpio:** Capricorn, Aries, Cancer; **Sagittarius:** Pisces, Gemini, Virgo; **Capricorn:** Taurus, Leo, Scorpio; **Aquarius:** Aries, Cancer, Libra; **Pisces:** Gemini, Virgo, Sagittarius

The aspect of any sign carries the aspects of the planets located within that sign. All aspects between signs are mutual – which is a major departure from Parashara. Also, you can combine the Jaimini karakas with the Jaimini aspects to create Jaimini raja yogas is in the same way that Parashara planets and aspects can be combined to form raja yogas. This is a highly-innovative and flexible system that can be used as a complement to Parashari astrology or in – some say – completely on its own as a separate system.

Jaimini Chara Dasa Chara dasa is a sign-based dasa system. Instead of the planets determining the dasa sequence, as in Parashara's system, the signs that are the defining factor in Jaimini.

Palmistry or Hasta Samudrika Shastra The planets, signs and houses are all allocated special reference points on the hands which can be used by experienced practitioners to interpret behavior and life events. Palmistry is helpful for analysis or birth rectification when a natal chart can't be accurately calculated due missing or uncertain chart information.