

A Concise Western Approach to the Forecasting Techniques in Hindu Astrology

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Abstract

Review Article

Based on religious and spiritual convictions, Western and Eastern astrology have different approaches to deal with the interpretation of birth chart and the application of forecasting techniques. This topic is dealt in this essay, with particular emphasis on Hindu astrological prediction techniques, designated by Vimshottari and Ashtottari Dashas.

Keywords: Eastern and Western astrology, Hindu forecasting techniques, Vimshottari and Ashtottari Dashas.

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INTRODUCTION

Martin Freeman says that [1] “Astrology is intimately associated with time. The birth chart is an encapsulation of a moment of time, animation suspended and yet bursting with unlimited potential, like a ripe seed pod or a new bud in spring. The unfolding and realizing of that potential is the movement of time within the birth chart as life develops...”. Western and Eastern astrology have different approaches to deal with the interpretation of birth chart, and the application of forecasting techniques [2]. Western astrology [3] defines Transits as the actual movements of the planets in the heavens; while Secondary and Solar Arc progressions represent the symbolic movement of the planets by assuming one day for one year from the birth date and one degree for one year from the birth date, respectively. Western forecasting techniques give future trends and behavior patterns so that the client could make their self-consciousness choices. For example, Jupiter takes 12 years to make one complete cycle describing the area of life in which the client might grow, expand, while Saturn takes 29_{1/2} years (average) to make one complete circuit in the zodiac, indicating the area of life in which the client might experience some restrictions, constraints.

There are three Greek words to define the different kinds of time [4] that are relevant to Western and Eastern astrology. Aión is defined as cyclic time related with several possibilities or patterns that exist in “potential” in our psyche. In Western astrology, the cyclic time is referred to by Joaquim de Fiore [5] as “Astrological Era” such Pisces, Aquarius, while in Eastern astrology the term Yugas describe this cyclic time; Kairós is a critical time. In Western astrology, this is a moment of self-decision when the client chooses “the unfolding and realizing of the potential of the birth chart as life develops” as referred to above, while in Eastern astrology based on belief in fate and reincarnation, the astrologer says what life has in store for his/her life; Chronos or linear time is measure by the clock and the calendar. In Western astrology, this leads to the manifestation of the pattern [6] of our previous choice, while in Eastern astrology, this is a time for recommendations on unalterable events.

In this regard, Carl Jung [7] mentioned that fate and free will are related with the self-conscious of the subject and that the psyche and the outer reality are interconnected through “relevant coincidences” or synchronicity allowing the simultaneous manifestation of Aion, Kairós and Chronos.

The Vimshottari and Ashtottary Dasha Systems in Hindu astrology: An overview

In Hindu astrology the term “dasha” means “planetary period” and provide a useful tool to study the movement of time within the birth chart or Rasi Chakra. The Hindu Dasha system is used to forecast planetary cycles the same way the Western astrology use Secondary and Solar Arc progressions. At the core of the Dasha system lie the 27 nakshatras [8] or lunar mansions [9]. The divisional longitude of each of the 27 nakshatras is 13 degrees and 20 minutes, beginning with Ashwini and ending with Revati. Each of the nine planets considered in Hindu astrology preside over three nakshatras, and the starting dasha or mahadasha will be the nakshatra in which the Moon is placed. If the Moon is in Taurus in Kritika then the first dasha will be of Sun, the second will be the Moon, and so on.

There are many kinds of Dasha systems, but only two of them are used in Hindu astrology, namely, Vimshottari Dasha and Ashtottari Dasha systems [10]. The differences between these two Dasha systems lie in the number of years considered in person’s life and the manner in which the individual planetary periods of each dasha is divided by the astrologer. For some authors, the main predicting cycles in Hindu astrology is the Vimshottari Dasha which assumes that the maximum duration of man’s life is 120 years which coincides with the total duration of all nine planets periods, namely 7 years for Ketu; Venus, 20 years; Sun, 6 years; Moon, 10 years; Mars, 7 years; Rahu, 18 years; Jupiter, 16 years; Saturn, 19 year; Mercury, 17 years.

For its side, Ashottattari Dasha assumes a value of 108 years for man’s life which corresponds to the total duration of all nine planets periods, namely 6 years for Sun; Moon, 15 years; Mars, 8 years; Rahu, 17 years; Jupiter, 10 years; Saturn, 19 years; Mercury, 12 years; Ketu is not considered in the Ashottattari Dasha system; Venus, 21 years [10]. In the history of Hindu astrology and Indian spirituality [11], it is not said when these systems were discovered and why the number of years assigned to each one varies, but the books in which these assumptions are described include Brihat Jataka [12], Saravali [13], Phaladeepika [14].

The method to evaluate each Mahadasha is concerned with the planetary strength according to the numerical ratings of Shadbala which refers to the six sources from which a planet draws its strength (position, aspect, natural strength, motion, direction, time) [15]. For example, during the Dasa of Ketu one may be interested in spiritual issues, but if Ketu is weak one may suffer some sadness, depression; during the Dasa of Venus one may co-operate with others in an harmonious way (love affairs, get married), but if Venus is weak one may have disharmony with others; during the Dasa of Sun one may rise in position and status, but if Sun is weak one may suffer health trouble;

during the Dasa of Moon one may have a good relationship with the mother and children, but if Moon is weak one may have quarrel with women in general; during the Dasa of Mars one may have a strong will to achieve any project undertaken, but if Mars is weak one may be involved in accidents; during the Dasa of Rahu one may gain money, but if Rahu is weak one may lose his/her work; during the Dasa of Jupiter one may be involved in subjects related with philosophy and travel, but if Jupiter is weak one may show some extravagance, laziness; during the Dasa of Saturn one may reap the results of any previously action performed, but if Saturn is weak one may experience some obstacles in personal and professional life; during the Dasa of Mercury one may be interested in some kind of studies, communication, but if Mercury is weak one may suffer some anxiety. In Hindu astrology, each Mahadasha is also subdivided into planetary periods called Bhukti that allow a deeper examination of the influence of each Mahadasha [16].

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5. Reeves, M. (1987). *Joachim of Fiore*. In: *Encyclopedia of Religion*. New York, NY: Macmillan Pub. The “Astrological Eras” result from the Earth’s precession movement and it is called *Yugas* in the Cosmogony of Ancient India. It aims to study the evolution of human consciousness through the “cosmic cycle” corresponding to the 12 constellations of the zodiac, and the constellation for which the “vernal point” is close to 21st March determines the “Astrological Era”.
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- Magha, Purva Phalguni, Uttara Phalguni, Hasta, Chitra, Svati, Vishakha, Anuradha, Jyeshtha, Mula, Purva Ashadha, Uttara Ashadha, Shrivana, Dhanishta, Satabhishak, Purva Bhadrpada, Uttara Bhadrpada, Revati; Hindu astrology also considers nine planets or Navagrahas that are called Surya (Sun), Chandra (Moon), Budha (Mercury), Shukra (Venus), Mangala (Mars), Guru (Jupiter), Shani (Saturn), Rahu (North node of the Moon) and Ketu (South node of the Moon).
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