

**Dennis Flaherty – The Eastern Moon Through Western Eyes
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In India, astrology is called Jyotisha, “the science of light,” and Ayurveda is “the science of life.” Astrology is considered a contemplative art form.

Next to the Ascendant, which changes every 4 minutes, the Moon is the fastest body. Each month she goes through 27 nakshatras, or lunar mansions, each of which has its own planetary lord.

In Western astrology, we use the synodic cycle of the Moon, the period from new moon to full moon and back again. This takes 29 days, 12 hours, and 44 minutes. The lunar calendar used in India is based on the sidereal cycle of the Moon, which is 27 days, 7 hours, and 43 minutes. The sidereal cycle is based on how long it takes to pass from a certain point among the fixed stars and back again.

The lunar calendar was used in the West until 45 BC, when Julius Caesar replaced it with a simpler and more predictable solar calendar.

In the Vedic system, Saturn is the Moon’s brother-in-law, and the synodic cycle of the Moon roughly correlates to the Saturn return, 29.5 years. Both are indicative of giving form. *Synodus* means “to copulate”; the Sun and Moon come together.

Jyotisha, or Vedic astrology, is based on the 12 sidereal signs plus the 27 lunar mansions, called nakshatras. (*Nakshatra*: “that which does not decay.”) Each nakshatra is 13°20’, the mean motion of the Moon in a day. Every day the Moon changes nakshatras, and the nakshatra you are born under is a determining factor in your character.

The Moon’s nature and activity

As the Moon moves around the earth, it moves up and down a great deal from perigee (closest to earth) to apogee (furthest from earth). The Moon is likened to a rabbit, hopping from sign to sign and from nakshatra to nakshatra. He – for the Moon is male – is known as Chandra, which comes from *Chandra-ma* (shining moon). *Ma* means “to measure.” The Moon is a powerful aspect of measurement. Everything in astrology has to do with measurement.

The Moon is a very busy rabbit. He’s married to the 27 daughters of Dasha, and he spends each night with one daughter. His favorite is Rohini, a nakshatra in Taurus, where he spends the most time. The other 26 daughters complained about this to their father, who laid a death-curse on Chandra. Once Chandra was dead, however, the daughters realized how much they missed him and complained to Dasha again. Dasha couldn’t remove the curse completely but he ameliorated it. For part of his monthly journey, Chandra’s health is good, but for the second half, his health deteriorates. He is expunged and reborn.

Although Chandra is male, the Moon is treated as female.

The Moon is also known as soma. In Vedic culture, soma is an intoxicating drink that opens one to God-consciousness. Soma fell in love with Jupiter's wife, Tara, and they ran off together, upsetting the divine balance. Tensions escalated, and war was threatened. Jupiter petitioned Brahma to get his wife back. Tara agreed to go back but by then she was pregnant with Soma's child. Jupiter took Tara back and agreed to treat the child as his own. The child was Mercury (Buddhi), whose quality is discriminating intellect.

The Moon is a planet of consciousness. Its placement and aspects determine how you see the world. It's your soma, your intoxication. What you see is what you get. The light the Moon takes from the Sun is the light of divine consciousness. The Moon is the parcel of consciousness you've been given from divine consciousness. It is your vehicle of perception, given to you according to your karma. Your goal, whether you know it or not, is to achieve enlightenment.

If your Moon is impaired, your senses are impaired. The more you can see of this world, the happier you are. Remember – your ultimate goal is to achieve enlightenment. Therefore, strive to see clearly.

Find your purpose. Then acquire that which is necessary to fulfill it. Once you fulfill it, you will become satiated and move on to achieve enlightenment. The consciousness you've been given as your parcel of divine consciousness will become luminous and embrace divine consciousness to transcend this world.

Mercury is the evaluating process. It's what you do with your consciousness. Mercury is the planet of commerce, merchandise, markets. People who have a good Mercury can make value of everything they see, even if their Moon isn't so good.

Mercury values, discriminates, gives names, partitions. The Moon is your awareness. It carries the karma of the soul from lifetime to lifetime. At death, all falls away but the subtle impressions of the mind.

The Moon and karma

The lunar mansions are owned by nine planets, the seven traditional planets – Sun through Saturn – and the nodes, Rahu and Ketu. (Rahu and Ketu are considered invisible planets.) Each one owns three mansions. The planet that rules the nakshatra your Moon was placed in at birth is the planet that starts your life. These are the karmas that imprint themselves on the mind. For instance, even if you have a Jupiter-Moon conjunction, if the Moon's nakshatra is ruled by an afflicted Saturn, that will impress itself on the mind.

The first karmas you get are the most important. Your family measures your karma – only thus do you become liberated.

Karma is the effects of your actions over time. The Moon is karma that plays itself out unconsciously through constant, habitual repetition. Our habits have a life of their own; they condition us. The Moon's location and aspects aren't accidental; they are the predilection of the soul. The momentum of the soul builds up over a period of time.

As in Western astrology, the slower a planet is the more powerful it is considered to be. A slow Moon is not considered less intelligent. The senses will be deeply contemplative and well-developed. A faster Moon processes things more quickly.

Your Moon is your karmic perception, the way you look at the world. We change karma by changing consciousness – that's where Mercury comes in. How we look at things determines how they reveal themselves to us. Mercury always wants the best, and it determines what the best is. It always puts a value on something. This doesn't necessarily bring happiness.

Chandra yogas

Yogas are planetary combinations. The Moon has 8 classical yogas, or ways it combines with other planets. The principles behind these yogas are important.

Because the Moon represents consciousness, we don't want it isolated and alone. We want it connected, even to bad planets, because "any ground is good ground." The worst thing that can happen is the perception of being alone in the universe. Fortunately, such an unsupported Moon is rare. Its karma is that consciousness is weak, like a sieve. The person has no memory and can neither take nor give. The childhood was bereft of support; there was no humanity. The person's eyes will be very disturbed.

(1) Sunapha yoga: Second from the Moon. Count the house the Moon is in as 1, then planets in the following house are in 2. The second house shows how you take nurturing, how you acquire things you need – everything from food to information. People with second house yogas are a little more attached to their stuff. Planets that are second from the Moon give you the ability to get what you need for the growth of your consciousness. The planet and its nature determines how you acquire.

You can use the outer planets in this system, but don't use the nodes.

(2) Anapha yoga: Twelfth from the Moon. These are planets falling in the house just preceding the Moon's house. The twelfth is the house of spirituality and sexuality, and a place where you give yourself away. All of your debts and karmas must be paid in full before you leave here, and liberation is attained by payment of your debts. With planets 12th from the Moon, you have an ability to give. You might get taken often, or you may continually lose. Either way, you have a contract to give, more than others. It also gives an ability to impart information.

(3) Durudhara yoga: Planets on either side of the Moon. We all need the ability to give and receive. Each is good for something. When you have planets on either side of the Moon, you can take or give according to the nature of the planet.

(4) Adhi yoga: Mercury, Venus and Jupiter (the three benefics) in houses 6, 7, 8 from the Moon (opposite the Moon). You get that benefic energy from other people because they like you. You can have these in any combination, but all three have to be present in those houses. If you have one or two, you have a partial yoga.

(5) Gaja kesari yoga (the elephant-lion yoga): You have the dignity and presence of an elephant and the power of a lion. This is a special yoga that occurs when Jupiter is in an angle with the Moon; in the same sign, opposite, or square. Angles = support. Jupiter represents the grace of God and here it supports the Moon. The person has a wonderful sense of being connected to spiritual power.

(6) Vasumati yoga: Mercury, Venus and Jupiter are in houses 3, 6, 10 or 11 from the Moon. These are called the growing houses because they get better with time. The person is very industrious and works well with other people.

(7) Shakata yoga: Jupiter is in the 6th, 8th or 12th house from the Moon. These are difficult houses. The 12th is a night house; it occurs right after the Sun rises, when the day is still cloudy and dark. The light of the self hasn't come out. The Sun is weak. The 8th is difficult because the Sun is getting ready to die. The 6th is difficult because the Sun has just set and it will be a long time before it rises.

(8) Kemadruma yoga: Moon has no connections to other planets and it is in 6, 8, or 12 by itself. The mind is disconnected from the divine and from other people. O.J. Simpson has this yoga. He has not a friend in the world. His powerful Mars enabled him to achieve fame. This person feels no support from his family.

Planets conjunct or opposed to the Moon

These are the two most powerful aspects in Vedic astrology. The opposition is called "the full aspect." Planets in aspect are "looking at one another."

If Jupiter is with or opposed the Moon, you will have expanded consciousness – usually a good thing.

If Saturn is with or opposed the Moon, your consciousness will be contracted and focused. If Saturn is a benefic in your chart, your mind is highly focused. If it's a malefic, you're subject to depression.

Mars – Moon: Mars will fuel consciousness. Expressive Mars gives ambition, energy, enthusiasm and passion.

Venus – Moon: “I aim to please.” It gives charm, sophistication, and a loving nature. If Venus is second from the Moon, there will be acquisitiveness.

Mercury – Moon: These two are not friendly toward one another. The subjective quality of perception should not be too close to objective, evaluative consciousness. Mercury will lend a natural curiosity and fascination. It loves to collect information.

Uranus – Moon: the mind processes things so quickly that you must be careful not to burn out your nervous system. The problem is that Uranus can be destabilized. This is an aspect of genius that can be manic. The bulb that burns twice as bright can only burn half as long. The mind never turns off.

Neptune – Moon: the person’s consciousness is linked with divine consciousness. They can be a spiritually intoxicated sage or an alcoholically intoxicated twit. Neptune is unbounded; it can be all things. If you have a good Saturn, you’ll use Neptune in a grounded way. If your Saturn is ungrounded, you will fly to pieces.

Pluto – Moon: the Moon will intensify perception. Outer planets linked with personal planets bring the energy down from the abstract to the familiar. Anyone with a Leo Moon has a Pluto-Moon conjunction in Vedic astrology; therefore, Dennis uses a tighter orb with outer planets. We all have the collective overlay of Plutonium and world destruction. If you have a Pluto-Moon conjunction, this whole concept is more relevant to you. Pluto is life and death. It creates a natural psychological nature and control issues.

Dennis did not mention Sun-Moon aspects.

Nodes – Rahu and Ketu

The nodes are both powerful and potentially malefic. When the Moon is conjunct to a node, we can see how close that was to an eclipse.

Rahu, the north node, is incredibly acquisitive. It is naturally psychological and brilliant. Rahu will intensify the Moon and give it a psychological character. Rahu is the planet of worldliness. It intensifies desire. Moon conjunct Rahu gives a brilliant mind. Karl Marx and Charles Manson both had this. These people are information junkies.

Ketu is otherworldly. When it is with the Moon, the person goes toward spirituality, fantasy, and sometimes drug addiction. Both Ted Bundy and Tolkien had this. The consciousness is drawn toward spiritual phenomena.

The Nakshatras

The lunar month is divided into 27 nakshatras, each characterized by the fixed stars within it and corresponding roughly to one day. Each nakshatra is also owned by a particular deity, and you have an affinity for the deity who owns the nakshatra of your

birth. You can find a list of the nakshatras and a description of their qualities on many Vedic websites, including Joni Patry's website, www.galacticcenter.org.

The nakshatra that matters is the one the Moon was in when you were born. To calculate your nakshatra, first determine the sidereal position of your Moon. Either subtract 23°40' from its tropical position or add 7° and move it back one sign. Then look it up on the chart below.

The lord of the nakshatra is the planetary cycle, or dasha, you were born into. It describes this kind of family you were born into. In Vedic terminology, you are imprinted with the karmas of that lord. For instance, if you were born into a Ketu dasha, your family may have been poor but it also had a spiritual, mystical quality. If you were born into a Rahu dasha, the family may have been poor but the parents were very ambitious.

Each dasha lasts only a certain number of years, and your consciousness changes when the dasha changes. If you were born part way through a cycle, you can calculate how many years you were there before you moved on the next. The change from one dasha to another is a major predictive technique in Vedic astrology.

How a particular dasha will work out for you depends on how the planet that rules it is placed in your chart. Eleanor Roosevelt, who had Saturn conjunct the Moon, was born into a Jupiter dasha. She had a poor relationship with her mother, who made her feel inferior, and when Eleanor moved into her Saturn dasha, her mother died. Later, she became an activist for the rights of the oppressed.

Although Indian astrology places a great deal of emphasis on karma, it also offers specific remedies to ameliorate badly placed or weak planets. Although Dennis did not go into these he did say that there is nothing that cannot be changed by the grace of God and your own hard work. Unless there are strong fixed karmas in the chart, through mindfulness and right study karmic tragedies can be propitiated and changed. And even though there are karmas in the chart, you don't have to be attached to them. Spiritual disciplines will burn away the effects of our karma. Every chart has some positive karmas, and we can affirm and build upon them.

Recommended reading: Bepin Bohari's *Myths and Symbols of Vedic Astrology*. This is the best book on lunar mansions.

The Nakshatras

Nakshatra	Degrees (Sidereal)	Ruler	Dasha (Yrs.)
1. Ashwini	00°00' to 13°20' Aries	Ketu	7
2. Bharani	13°20' to 26°40' Aries	Venus	20
3. Krittika	26°40' Aries to 10°00' Taurus	Sun	6
4. Rohini	10°00' Taurus to 23°20' Taurus	Moon	10
5. Mrigahsira	23°20' Taurus to 6°40' Gemini	Mars	7
6. Ardra	6°40' to 10°00' Gemini	Rahu	18
7. Punarvasu	20°00' Gemini to 3°20' Cancer	Jupiter	16
8. Pushya	3°20' to 16°40' Cancer	Saturn	19
9. Ashlesha	16°40' to 29°59' Cancer	Mercury	17
10. Magha	00°00' to 13°20' Leo	Ketu	7
11. Purva Phalguni	13°20' to 26°40' Leo	Venus	20
12. Uttara Phalungi	26°40' Leo to 10°00' Virgo	Sun	6
13. Hasta	10°00' to 23°20' Virgo	Moon	10
14. Chitra	23°20' Virgo to 6°40' Libra	Mars	7
15. Swati	6°40' to 20°00' Libra	Rahu	18
16. Vishakha	20°00' Libra to 3°20' Scorpio	Jupiter	16
17. Amuradha	3°20' to 16°40' Scorpio	Saturn	19
18. Jyeshtha	16°40' to 29°59' Scorpio	Mercury	17
19. Mula	00°00' to 13°20' Sagittarius	Ketu	7
20. Purvashadha	13°20' to 26°40' Sagittarius	Venus	20
21. Uttarashadha	26°40' Sag. to 10°00' Capricorn	Sun	6
22. Shrivana	10°00' to 23°20' Capricorn	Moon	10
23. Dhanishta	23°20' Cap. to 6°40' Aquarius	Mars	7
24. Shatabhishak	6°40' to 20°00' Aquarius	Rahu	18
25. Purva Bhadra	20°00' Aquarius to 3°20' Pisces	Jupiter	16
26. Uttara Bhadra	3°20' to 16°40' Pisces	Saturn	19
27. Revati	16°40' to 29°59' Pisces	Mercury	17