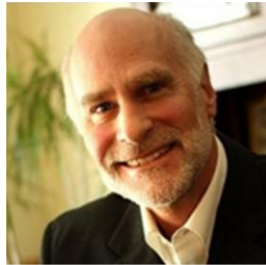


## Star Gazers: The Birth Charts of Astrologers, Part 1



**By Marc Boney, M.A.**

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### Star Gazers: The Birth Charts of Astrologers, Part 1

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Dedicated to Shri K.N. Rao, who ignited in me the light of *Jyotiṣa*.

*“Jyotiṣa is the art of seeing light, of guiding, of counseling based on the truth called the horoscope. Jyotiṣa is the pathway to God through the mazes of intuitions and the brilliance of an organized science, like any other science. Jyotiṣa is the fusion of the divine with the mundane, the metaphysical with the scientific methodology, a divine chorus of the music of the heavens and the dance of the stars. It is that divine ballet, Jyotiṣa, which is at once both a divinity and science that we are presenting.”*

#### Introduction

As a teacher of *Jyotiṣa*, I have been asked many, many times. “Does my birth chart indicate that I can be a good astrologer?” How to answer such a question?

When assessing anything about a person’s life *karma*, I suggest starting with the planetary *kāraka*. For example, when evaluating a person’s *karma* with respect to love and intimate relationships, Venus should be seen first; for children, Jupiter; for mother, the Moon; for father, the Sun and so forth.

Mercury is the primary planetary *kāraka* for astrology, while the secondary *kāraka* is Jupiter, who rules *Veda* and *vedāṅga*. When I evaluate a person’s capacity for learning astrology and being a good practitioner, these are the components of a birth chart that I evaluate first. Of course, Mercury and Jupiter are also the two educational planets and therefore, people are often first attracted to studying *Jyotiṣa* when they’re running the major period of one or the other. As I’ll illustrate in this article later on, this is often particularly true when they run Mercury-Jupiter or Jupiter-Mercury.

In his book *Yogis, Destiny and the Wheel of Time*, K.N. Rao shared the views of his teacher, a man he referred to as Yogi Bhaskarananda, about what in a birth chart indicated a good capacity for doing *Jyotiṣa*. The following is a summary of those desirable features:

- Both for spirituality and astrology, he liked Ketu in the esoteric houses, ie, 4th, 8th or 12th, with the additional influence of strong natural benefics, especially Jupiter or Mercury, or alternatively, the influence of the 5th and 9th lords.
- For astrology, a strong Mercury and Jupiter were desirable in general. He thought Mercury in the 4th house was the best, second best in the 8th, and third best in the 10th. In general, he liked Mercury in the angles.
- Jupiter in the 10th house without affliction was the best in his view since it would aspect onto the 4th as well as the 2nd house of speech. This last point means that a person would speak truly, which is to say their predictions would be accurate. He liked Jupiter also in any of the esoteric houses (4th, 8th, 12th) from whence it would aspect the other two houses.
- Saturn in the 3rd, 5th and 9th houses could give a detached, unbiased view of matters, but only when without a blemish.
- For *lagnas* he liked the Mercury-ruled *rāśis* as well as the intellectual air signs, Libra and Aquarius, but added that any *lagna* could be good as long as the four planets outlined above were well-placed.

In a classroom setting, I was once surprised to hear K.N. Rao mention that people will get attracted to studying *Jyotiṣa* in the period of the 4th lord or of planets in the 4th house. I can remember having the thought, “*Why should it be so?*” He went on to explain that the 4th, 8th and 12th houses were esoteric or occult houses. The point registered with me since at the time, I was studying *Jyotiṣa* with him in the period of my 4th lord, which in my case also happens to be Jupiter. After hearing that, I’ve seen the validity of it innumerable times.

For evidence of how these desirable elements come into play, let’s now look at the horoscopes of three notable astrologers from India.

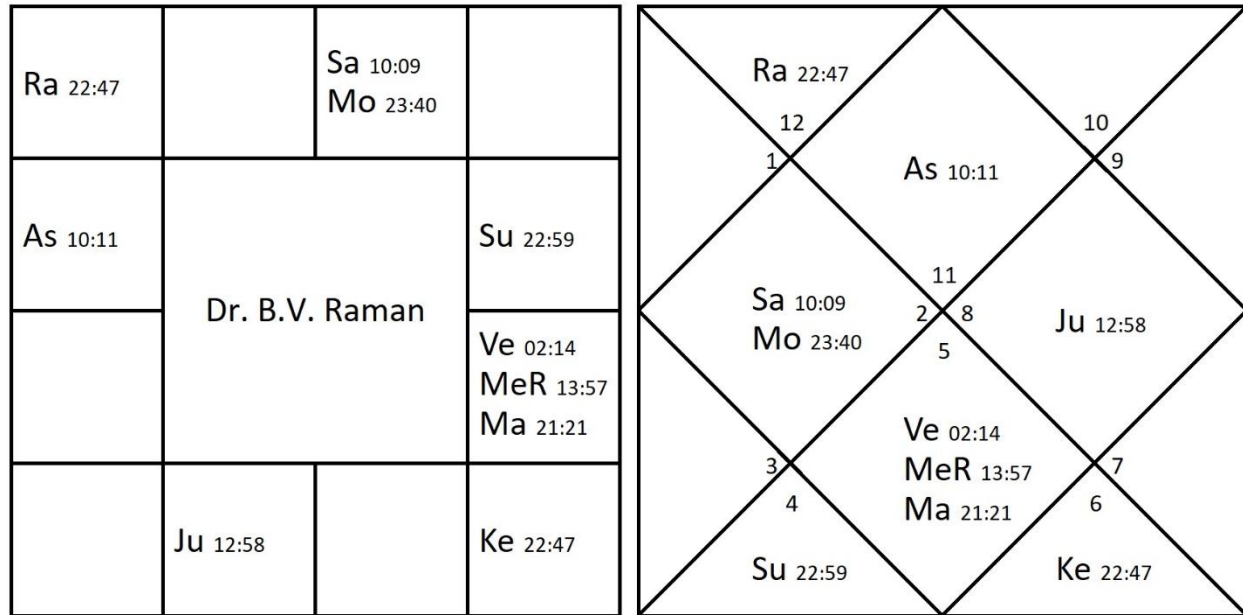
## Dr. B.V. Raman

Dr. B.V. Raman is arguably the best-known Vedic astrologer of the 20th century, and the one most responsible for making the Indian form of astrology known outside of India. He was a prolific author of books and articles in English, and translated some of the Sanskrit classics. He restarted *The Astrological Magazine* in 1936, which had earlier been run by his grandfather, and thereafter remained its editor for over 62 years.

From Wikipedia: “He represented India at the Astrological Congress held at Cambridge, England, and the International Astrology Conference at New York. Travelling around the world, he delivered innumerable lectures in Germany, England, France, Italy, Austria, Holland, Canada, Japan, and the United States of America, addressing universities, medical associations, and educational and cultural institutions on different aspects of astrology, Hindu astronomy, philosophy, and Indian culture.

“In 1968, the *Akhila Bharateeya Samskrita Sammelana* awarded him the Doctor of Literature degree, and in June 1976 the Kumaon University (U.P.) awarded him the honorary Doctor of Letters degree. Raman was the first to deliver a lecture, *Relevance of Astrology in Modern Times*, in 1970 at the United Nations, New York, which evoked much interest in diplomatic circles.”

I had the pleasure of meeting Dr. Raman and hearing him speak when he was invited to be the chief guest and keynote speaker at the first International Symposium on Vedic Astrology organized by David Frawley in October of 1992 in Northern California. I had just moved into my Jupiter major period, in which *Pārāsara Horā* states “there will be meetings with Brahmins.” He did not teach or consult, but his talk inspired me to attend the symposium the following year where I met K.N. Rao.



It can be seen that his birth chart exhibits many of the features said by Yogi Baskaranandaji to be good for doing *Jyotiṣa*. These include:

- Ketu is in the esoteric 8th house in the sign of a benefic and without affliction.
- Jupiter is in the 10th house in a Great Friend’s sign configured in a *Gaja Kesari Yoga* with an exalted Moon and involving the *lagna* lord, Saturn. Additionally, Jupiter participates in a *Sarasvatī Yoga* that repeats from the Moon. From the 10th house, Jupiter aspects its own 2nd house of speech, which is good for making accurate predictions.
- Mercury is *vargottama* in an angle.
- The ascendant is in the intellectual sign, Aquarius.

Raman began learning *Jyotiṣa* from his grandfather, B. Suryanarain Rao, himself a notable astrologer, at a very young age in his Rāhu major period, with his Rāhu giving the results of

Jupiter, its sign lord, and Mercury, its *nakṣatra* lord. Then came 16 years of Jupiter during which he came to prominence as a result of both *The Astrological Magazine* which he published and edited, but also for some very famous predictions about the fates of Hitler, Mussolini, Hirohito and other prominent figures of World War II. At the time, he was only in his early thirties.

It was in the following 19 years of Saturn, his 1st and 12th lord, that he traveled the world giving lectures on astrology including the address to the United Nations in 1970. This happened in Saturn-Jupiter.

He remained a world-renowned astrologer throughout his Mercury and Ketu periods and passed away at the age of 86 in Venus-Venus, with this *graha* playing the role of *māraka* as a benefic in the 7th house.

## B. Suryanarain Rao

Shown below is the birth chart of Dr. Raman's famous astrologer grandfather, B. Suryanarain Rao. Like many other practitioners of *Jaimini*, I am forever indebted to the man because his translation and commentary on the *Jaimini Sūtras*, the first ever in English, gave me my initial understanding of this invaluable Sanskrit classic.

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|-----------------------------------|----------------------|----------|-----------|--|
|                                   | Ra 06:05<br>Mo 20:38 | As 11:15 | SaR 01:21 |  |
| Ju 18:09<br>MeR 11:26<br>Su 00:56 | B. Suryanarain Rao   |          |           |  |
|                                   |                      |          |           |  |
| Ve 21:39                          |                      | Ke 06:05 | Ma 28:59  |  |

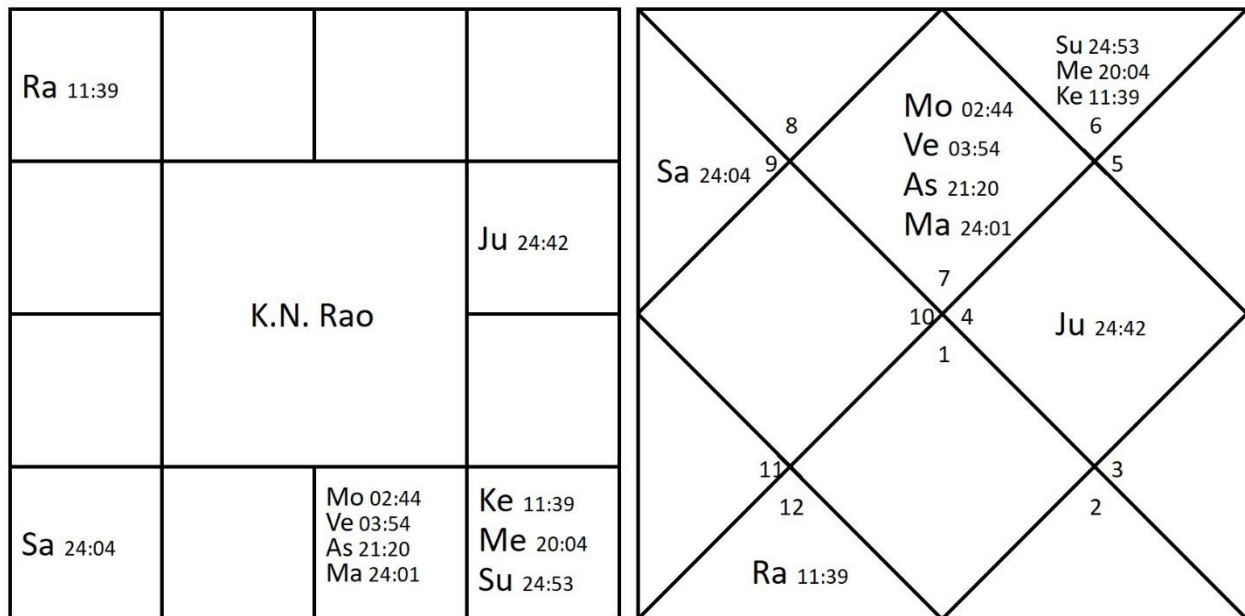
  

|                     |                                   |
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| SaR 01:21<br>3<br>4 | Mo 20:38<br>Ra 06:05<br>1<br>12   |
| As 11:15            |                                   |
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| Ma 28:59<br>6<br>7  | 10<br>9<br>Ve 21:39               |
| Ke 06:05            |                                   |

In his horoscope, what immediately catches the eye is the conjunction of Mercury and Jupiter in the 10th house with Jupiter exceptionally strong in Aquarius and *svakṣetra* in D-9. Mercury as the 5th lord is additionally configured in a good *Budhaditya Yoga*, making this combination in his 10th house excellent for authorship also. He was a prolific writer like his grandson, publishing his first book in 1882 in Mars-Jupiter, with Mars *vargottama* in the 5th house of authorship. He then began publishing the *Indian Astrology Magazine* in 1895 in Rāhu, giving the results of Mars, acting as editor until his death in March of 1937. He passed in Saturn-Rāhu, the period and sub-period of two unqualified *mārakas*, but here with Saturn in the 2nd *mārakasthāna* as well.

## K.N. Rao

While acknowledging that I have an innate bias, K.N. Rao must be ranked as among the greatest astrological predictors, teachers, and authors of the modern era. I've been a witness to many of his predictions which at times seemed otherworldly in both their accuracy and specificity. He established and built up the largest school of astrology in the world – the Delhi chapter of the *Bharātiya Vidyā Bhāvan*. It became the “gold standard” for *Jyotiṣa* education, and its graduates are now numbered in the many thousands over a period of 28 years. The original researches and publications that its students and faculty have produced over this time period, all under his guidance, may be unprecedented in the history of astrology. Of course, part of his enduring legacy are the numerous books and articles that he authored, many of which have become classics in the field.



Reviewing the factors noted earlier that favor success with *Jyotiṣa*, we find they all apply to his chart:

- Ketu is in an esoteric house with an exalted benefic.
- Mercury and Jupiter are both in their exaltation signs.
- Jupiter is in the 10th house aspecting the 2nd house.
- Saturn in the 3rd house without a blemish, giving him a detached, unbiased view of matters.
- His ascendant is the intellectual *rāśi* Libra.

K.N. Rao first started learning *Jyotiṣa* from his mother at age 10 when he was sick in bed with typhoid, and she used it to distract him. It was in his *Rāhu* period in the 6th house of illness, but giving the results of an exalted Jupiter in the 10th house which both disposes and aspects *Rāhu*. The sub-period was of his exalted Mercury who also aspects *Rāhu*. Note as well that *Rāhu* is in Saturn's *nakṣatra*, *Uttarā-Bhādrapadā*, the 4th lord of his chart. Then came the *daśā* of Jupiter itself for the next 16 years.

Later in life, as a government officer, he was introduced to Yogi Bhaskarananda whom he refers to as his *jyotiṣa-guru*. The year of their meeting is unknown but it would have been in his Saturn *mahādaśā*, the 4th lord of his birth chart.

His Saturn is also the 5th lord of authorship in the 3rd house of article writing, and it was during this period that he started to become well known for his articles which were published in B.V. Raman's *The Astrological Magazine*.

It was during the following 17 years of his Mercury *mahādaśā* that he retired from government service and was asked to found the Institute of Astrology within the Delhi chapter of *Bharātiya Vidyā Bhāvan*. Mercury as the 12th lord in the 12th house of foreign countries gave him many foreign teaching tours, first in the U.S. and then in Russia. This began when he was invited to be the chief guest and keynote speaker at the 2nd International Symposium on Vedic Astrology in November of 1993 in the U.S. It was here that I first met him and began learning from him. This was his Mercury-Sun period, both together in the 12th house. All of the many books that he wrote and published came in this period as well.

Now in his Venus-Jupiter period, he just recently turned 90 and has relocated from Delhi to Bangalore. Up until this time he has continued to teach and guide research, and my understanding is that he will continue to do so at a distance. His has been a truly remarkable astrological career. My gratitude towards him for what he taught me is eternal and unbounded.

#### Birth data of featured astrologers:

- B. Suryanarain Rao, 12 February 1856, 12h09m22 IST, Srikakulam, India.
- Dr. B.V. Raman. 08 August 1912, 19h41m44s IST, Bangalore, India.
- K.N. Rao, 12 October 1931, 07h53 IST, Machilpatnam, India.

**Next month:** *Star Gazers Part 2*, a look at the horoscopes of some contemporary astrologers.

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**Marc Boney** is an internationally renowned astrological teacher, writer and consultant. He received his training in *Jyotisha* primarily from K.N. Rao, one of the world's foremost practitioners. Marc has been a featured speaker at international conferences, and is the author of 32 e-books available on Amazon. He is an adjunct faculty member of the Institute of Astrology, *Bharatiya Vidyā Bhavan*, of New Delhi, India, and recipient of their Distinguished Service Award for his contributions to advancing Vedic astrology in the West. Marc holds an MA in Counseling Psychology from Northwestern University and, prior to becoming a full-time *jyotishi*, held positions in corporate human resources. <http://marcboney.com/>