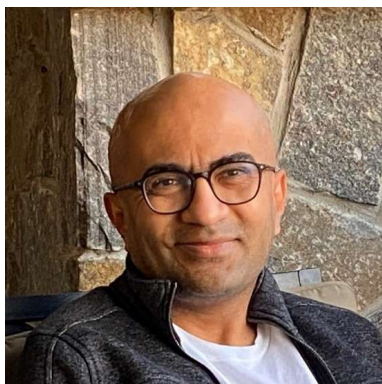


Practical Pañcāṅga – Introduction Part 4 (Yoga)



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Welcome back to this final nugget of the Intro to Pañcāṅga series. Unlike the other parts of the Pañcāṅga that we've discussed so far, Nakṣatras are an aspect of Jyotiṣha that probably need no introduction. Just like Daśās and Yogas, Nakṣatras are yet another fascinating facet of Jyotiṣha that add to its distinctiveness as a system of astrology. Nonetheless, in the spirit of completion to the introductory series, here are some of the Nakṣatra gems that will help enrich your Jyotiṣha toolset.

Definition and Meaning

The Saṃskṛta word Nakṣatraloka, which translates to the “world of Nakṣatras”, fully embodies the vastness and grandeur that the 27 asterisms bring to the realm of Jyotiṣha. It's said that a lifetime or even multiple lifetimes are not enough for us mortals to fully imbibe the timeless wisdom that these Nakṣatras have to offer by way of our contemplating and reflecting on their nature and symbolism.

Fortunately for us, the Vedic seers have left us with a multitude of qualities and attributes for each of the Nakṣatras that can aid us in our understanding and interpretation of these otherwise unfathomable mysteries. Providing qualitative details for all of the Nakṣatras is both beyond my abilities and humanly impossible to squeeze into one article. But for those inclined to dive deeper into the topic, there are several good books written by lifetime Jyotiṣha scholars that offer a treasure trove of Nakṣatra material.

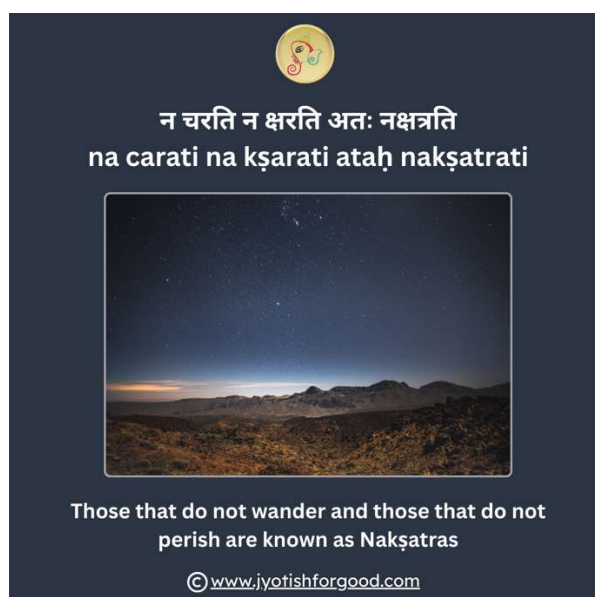
Notwithstanding, the table below provides the Nakṣatra names and their respective deities. I've found that memorizing these and nibbling away at the plethora of information available around these deities has significantly helped me in leveraging Nakṣatras for chart interpretation. I urge you to try doing the same.

Nakṣatra	नक्षत्र	Nakṣatra devatā	नक्षत्र देवता
aśvini	अश्विनि	aśvini kumāra	अश्विनि कुमार
bharāṇi	भरणि	yama	यम
kṛttikā	कृत्तिका	agni	अग्नि
rohiṇi	रोहिणि	brahmā	ब्रह्मा
mṛigasira	मृङ्गसिर	somā	सोमा
ārdra	आर्द्र	rudra	रुद्र
purnarvāsu	पुर्नर्वासु	aditi	अदिति
puśya	पुश्य	brihaspati	ब्रिहस्पति
aśleṣā	अश्लेषा	nāga	नाग

Nakṣatra	नक्षत्र	Nakṣatra devatā	नक्षत्र देवता
māgha	माघ	pitṛ	पितृ
purva phālguni	पुर्व फाल्गुनि	āryamana	आर्यमन
uttara phālguni	उत्तर फाल्गुनि	bhāga	भाग
hasta	हस्त	savittura	सवितुर
citra	चित्र	tvaṣṭṛ	त्वष्टृ
svāti	स्वाति	vāyu	वायु
viśākhā	विशाखा	indra agni	इन्द्र अग्नि
anurādhā	अनुराधा	mitra	मित्र
jyeṣṭha	ज्येष्ठ	indra	इन्द्र

Nakṣatra	नक्षत्र	Nakṣatra devatā	नक्षत्र देवता
mūla	मूल	nirṛti	निरृति
purva aṣāḍha	पूर्व अषाढ	āpasa	आपस
uttara aṣāḍha	उत्तर अषाढ	viśvadeva	विश्वदेव
śravaṇa	श्रवण	viṣṇu	विष्णु
dhaniṣṭha	धनिष्ठ	vāsu	वासु
śātabhiṣaj	शातभिषज्	varuṇa	वरुण
pūrva bhādrapada	पूर्व भाद्रपद	aja ekapada	अज एकपद
uttara bhādrapada	उत्तर भाद्रपद	ahirbudnya	अहिर्बुदन्य
revatī	रेवती	puṣana	पुषण्

Importance



The one-liner above elegantly captures the reason behind Nakṣatras being the foundation of the sidereal system of Jyotisha for millennia. The Nakṣatras are eternity personified. They therefore aid in capturing the snapshots of each lifetime as the soul journeys from the most

primal of life forms to its final human form, eventually attaining Kaivalya (eternal bliss) over said eternity.

Each of the 27 asterisms is a realm in and of its own. Grahas are divinities personified. Grahas in Nakṣatras are therefore akin to sovereigns presiding over their kingdoms. A regime resulting from a Graha's placement in a Nakṣatra is a unique blend of the Graha's distinctive personality traits with the innate and never-changing characteristics of the Nakṣatra. That's 243 (27 x 9) powerful energy vortexes right there.

But hold on, it's even more nuanced. It's common knowledge that the 27 Nakṣatras have four parts each, known as Nakṣatra Padas, or Padas for short. Each Pada is a distinguishable entity with its own attributes. Therefore, in reality there are 972 (108 x 9) energy vortices. The placement of a Graha in a Nakṣatra Pada is what forms the basis of the popular Navāṁśa or D9 divisional chart. Now you know why the D9 gets so much love and attention among the Jyotiṣi brethren.

Talking about Nakṣatra Padas, here's a fun fact: Padas translates to feet. So, collectively the 27 Nakṣatras have 108 feet. Hold that thought for a second.

Lord Shiva, the Hindu God of destruction (think transformation) has many incarnations. One such incarnation is known as Nataraja (the Lord of Dance). It's believed that Nataraja has 108 unique dance positions or transitions, each differentiated by the position of His hands and feet.

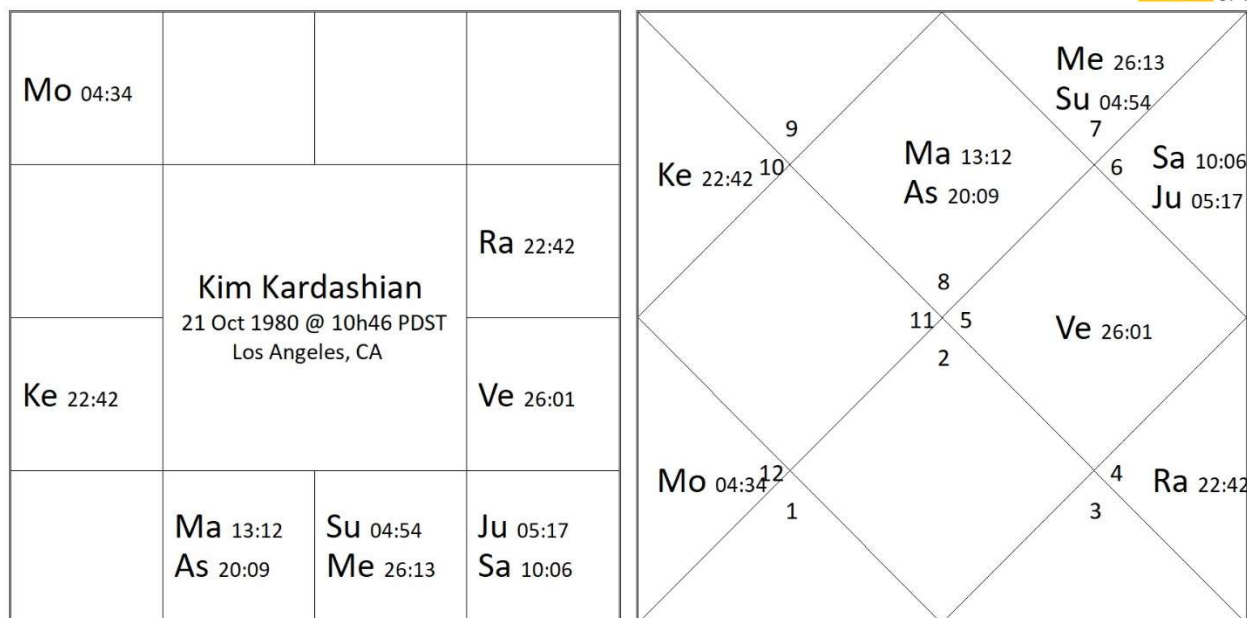
So, the 108 Nakṣatra padas (feet) can be thought of as these 108 unique dance positions (feet movements) of Lord Shiva. That's yet another dimension that goes to reinforcing the power and mystique that the Nakṣatras and their padas bring to Jataka analysis in Jyotiṣa. Simply fascinating, isn't it?

During the course of my Nakṣatra studies, I've come across many Nakṣatra-related concepts and systems. The Navatara system, the TriBhāgi Daśā and the Sarvatobhadra Chakra are some that come immediately to mind, but they are not the only ones. One day, I hope to share some of those details but in the meantime, try looking them up yourself, but only after you've given yourself enough time to digest the Nakṣatra basics.

You're probably thinking, this is all interesting, but how does one apply this to practical chart interpretation? To answer that, let's consider an example.

Interpretation

Although Musk has been very much in the news these days, let's deviate from the subject of our previous examples in this series and switch over to a more colorful and equally beloved celebrity of our times, Ms. Kim Kardashian. It's a juicy example albeit not as scintillating as some of the other Kardashian antics to which we've all become accustomed.



When it comes Nakṣatras and natal chart interpretation, the most popular usage is to whip up a personality portrait using the Moon’s Nakshatra as well as the Lagna Nakshatra. Similar in nature to the Moon Rāśi and Lagna Rāśi interpretations, the Moon Nakshatra provides hints as to the innate and often-hidden character traits of the native, whereas the Lagna Nakshatra on the other hand illustrates the native’s outward-facing personality.

For the fortunate ones, these two dimensions enjoy an uncanny alignment that makes their lives a joyride. The less fortunate, and vast majority of people, typically need to work on achieving a certain level of alignment between their inner and outer selves.

Arguably, Ms. Kardashian falls into the former category. Her Moon is in Uttara Bhadrapada ruled by Ahirbudnya, the celestial serpent that resides at the bottom of the ocean. Uttara Bhadrapada is strongly associated with its predecessor Nakshatra Purva Bhadrapada. The two form one of the three “paired” Nakshatras. These paired Nakshatras can best be thought of as a variety of tax return called “married filing jointly.” They are unique entities, yet tend to operate as one.

The Bhadrapadas are strongly connected with death/transformation as well as Kundalini Shakti and all the mystery and enigma that surrounds both topics. In their lower manifestation they represent an insatiable sexual energy, whereas in their higher manifestation they can bestow the ultimate spiritual liberation also known as Samadhi. As the myth goes, Ahirbundaya rises from the bottom of the ocean to overcast the skies with dark clouds, then in tandem with his buddy Aja Ekapada (ruler of the Purva Bhadrapada, symbolized by lightning), converts into life-sustaining rain.

It isn’t much of a surprise then, after her infamous sex-tape with Ray J was made public in 2007, that Ms. Kardashian has been able to transform that initial bout of humiliation and ridicule into a staggering success story rivaled only by a handful of other celebrities.

Let’s talk about her Lagna Nakshatra for a second. Her Lagna Nakshatra is in Jyestha, ruled by Indra, the ruler of the demi-Gods. Indra is probably the most talked about and most infamous of all of the demi-Gods, for he is oftentimes depicted as the epitome of power and lust as well

as eventual penance and enlightenment. Of course, he suffers severe retribution for his notoriety, including being cursed with a thousand vulvas on his body for deceiving a Rishi's wife into adultery. Eventually, Indra repents, and his penance earns him the Rishi's blessing of converting the vulvas into eyes that allow him to "see" the truth that no one else can.

Just like Indra and his weapon Vajra (the lightning bolt) Ms. Kardashian doesn't shy away from brandishing her Vajra (sex-appeal) to rule the hearts and minds of the masses. The fact that her Lagna is in Scorpio with its ruler Mars sitting right next to it, only acts a nitro booster for that oomph. At age 41, The reality star has a whopping 357 million Instagram followers and sits comfortably at #4 on the list of most followed Instagrammers.

Conclusion

With that I humbly conclude my attempt at introducing the Pañcāṅga to all of you, my dear friends. Hopefully, this journey has been an enjoyable and informative for you and I look forward to seeing all of you in our next sojourn. Until then, please do feel free to reach out if you'd like to discuss, deliberate or simply explore the fascinating world of Pañcāṅga with me.

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Pratik is an IT professional by day but a Jyotiṣi at heart. Drawn to Jyotiṣa since his teenage years, he has always relied on it for Divine guidance and grace. He never considered studying Jyotiṣa till he got immersed into learning it by sheer happenstance at age 41, when he had his Lagneśa (Jupiter) and Saturn transiting his ascendant, which he believes brought about this destined transformation. Since then, he has been ardently pursuing the magical science with the sole intent of using it to better his life, the lives of his loved ones and anyone else that the Universe sends his way. To him, Jyotiṣa is a sadhana that brings him mental peace and emotional bliss. He can be reached at [jyotishforgood2020@gmail.com](mailto: jyotishforgood2020@gmail.com).