

**Year 3, Semester 2: The Vargas (2964 words)**

The vargas (divisional charts) are virtually unknown to some modern practitioners of Vedic Astrology, and they are even less known in the west; yet they are highly regarded in the originating tradition of authentic Jyotish, being featured in the 6<sup>th</sup> chapter of *Brihat Parahsara Horashastra*. In fact, they are mentioned prior to the Graha aspects and the all-important 144 Bhava Yogas. Sanskrit enthusiasts may note that since all scripture at that time was passed down by word of mouth before being written, ancient texts are typically organized so that the matters of highest priority and importance were featured first in the text, and everything proceeded from that essential center like a mandala. Referencing the divisions of the rashis in the 6<sup>th</sup> of 97 available chapters really set the precedent for their importance to the craft. While the vargas can be a challenging abstraction to relate astronomically (being sometimes considered an “advanced technique,”) Parashara’s insistence on their importance cannot be ignored. Just as the bhavas represent refracting dimensions spired from the position of the lagna, so too is the rashi chart (the D1) itself likened to a “lagna,” whose planetary positions resonate like a guitar string to artificially produce the fractal-harmonic spheres which we call the divisional charts. Through the use of illustrations, as well as through examples of the Hora (D2)’s effects on a planet in the context of the entire chart, we can gain a clearer picture of what the vargas are, and how the positions of planets in certain amshas (portions) of a rashi are influenced by the harmonic resonances they subliminally emit.

So what do these divisional charts represent? In order to understand the vargas, you must first understand what they represent in context with the Rashi chart. The rashi chart represents the body of our situational karma given for this incarnation, which fate is calling us to interact with in this life; whereas the vargas represent subtler psychic tones, reflecting the soul’s evolutionary journey through time. Nature and the behavior of plants is often used as a metaphor to convey the abstract vargas. The most commonly used aphorism says the navamsha is like a plant’s fruit, whereas the rashi chart is like the stalk that holds the fruit. The symbolism suggests that the Rashi chart essentially acts as a vessel which bears the hidden soul desires of the varga charts. This shows that, like the Taoist yin-yang symbol, the vargas contain a little something of the D1 and the D1 (our tangible cosmos) contains a little something of the varga charts; they create each other by their very existence, just as a bee needs a flower’s pollen to survive, while flowers need pollinators. They happen at the same time – neither one prompts the other, it just simply is. The vargas and the rashi are two sides of the same cosmic coin of the self in time. Furthermore, the image of the vargas as the precious dharmic fruit of the soul reveals a certain juxtaposition of mind, body and soul in reference to the eternal self: It is true that the *fruit* of any plant *leans on its stalk* for its nutriment and survival – just as every soul depends on its physical body and the life path (defined in the rashi chart) to maneuver its energetic limbs; but, spiritually speaking, the stalk also depends on the flower for the plant’s entire generative (read: creative) purpose, and without the fruit of the vargas, the empty shell of the rashi chart is rather meaningless, although it is necessary of course to give body to our karma.

Vedic philosophy contends that the soul’s inner karma and intentions (ie, the vargas) are the mystical heart that predetermines the circumstances we meet in reality. It is the vargas

which holds our secret intentions behind the display of human behaviors that the world inevitably witnesses as fact. For example, when a pair of twins are born several minutes apart to the same parents, they may be born into similar circumstances (same Rashi chart); but while their lagnas may only be off by a degree and a half, the differences of the inner-life suggested by their bhava cusps changing signs in the subtlest higher-octave divisional charts causes the two children to have very different impulses, attitudes, and karmas towards those shared opportunities. Those twins are bound to make very different decisions within that given shared reality, even though the early childhood experiences may appear to be generally the same. A pyramid (or any structure) cannot be built without some kind of inherent design in mind; and no good plumber tries to fix a sewage system without first getting a grasp on the waterways of the land. In the same way, the psyche and the materials of a given Rashi chart will not take their physical shape and form without first being seeded by their transcendental, multi-dimensional end-goal, that being the indications of the varga charts. Indeed, it is upon this physical strata of matter defined in the rashi chart that the vargas must seek their tangible foundation, it is true; and when we apply the vargas in astrology, we do concede to the rashi chart as the foundation that the vargas must stand on and act through. But astrologers these days would do well to remember that the meaning and purpose of the final blossom is inherent in the total structure of one's karma, just as the unfoldment of the Navamsha in a person's thirties *was already building upon itself in that person's teens and 20's*. Therefore (at least, mystically speaking), the Rashi chart is essentially a conveyance for the potentials of the varga charts – not the other way around.

There is a Zen Buddhist story which may help to illustrate this idea. There once was a Taoist sage living on the outskirts of a forest who was also a wood carver. This sagacious woman was famous in her town for walking around the local forest for days, drinking wine without eating, before she would finally find a suitable tree or piece of deadwood with which to carve a sculpture she had envisioned in her mind. She claimed that creating a perfect sculpture is as simple as seeing the finished piece in the material before a single stroke of the knife touched the wood. She envisioned the face, the curvature of the sculpture's body, the posture of the sculpted character's hips, smoothly carved into the raw lumber before even touching it. With the patience of a true wood carver, the sage waded through the river of time until she found the right space-time-energy situation necessary to manifest her vision. Indeed in the end, we could say that the sculpture she created was bound to be limited in its form by the shape of the piece of wood she found. But, *the material she attracted was her unconscious mind at work all along*.

In Jyotish prediction, it is important to always remember that the indications of the *rashi chart* represent physical reality; and therefore, it can never be over-ridden by any data given in the varga charts, since the vargas only represent potentials, in the same way that the lady sage's vision (vargas) *emerged out of* the block of wood that her situational karma (D1) provided for her. Thus when we consider the dignity of a planet in a varga for example, we must measure their temporary friendships not by their "proximity" to their dispositor in the divisional charts (since planets in the divisional charts are not actually in close tangible, physical proximity to each other), but by their proximity in the D1 chart instead. A planet 5 houses away from another planet in the D1 chart will always be a temporary enemy to that planet, even if they appear to be in the 2<sup>nd</sup> sign from each other in a certain varga chart, because the varga charts do not represent physical reality; they represent harmonic fractals of it. As a matter of fact, graha aspects also do not exist in the vargas per se, since Graha aspects have everything to do

with planets being in each other's line of sight in the physical realm. Planets only affect each other in the vargas through dignity and through Rashi aspect, serving to refine and "fine-tune" the aspects indicated in the D1. Whenever we see a planet affected by a lajitaadi avasta in the Rashi chart, its conditions in reality can be more readily predicted when there is confluence on that same theme indicated in the varga charts. Planets in the vargas do not alter or affect each other directly; rather, their rashi aspects, house occupations, and yogas between each other are amplified *when they also share similar confluent effects in the rashi chart.*

We shall now illustrate this with some examples of planets interacting with each other through the vargas. For accuracy's sake we will use the navamsha for this first example. Imagine the D1 of a chart where the moon in Scorpio is positioned in a trine with Jupiter, which is placed in its own sign of Pisces. If this Jupiter was at 3 degrees of Pisces in the Rashi chart while the moon was at 15 degrees of Scorpio, this Jupiter would receive a graha aspect trine from the moon (at around 36 points of aspect), a factor which would ripple with confluence through every varga chart where Jupiter and the moon are somehow mutually disposed. Jupiter positioned at 3 degrees of Pisces happens to fall into the Navamsha of Cancer. Therefore the tones and themes of Jupiter's delighted avasta from the Moon's trine aspect in the rashi chart would effectively find a pathway for further channeling in this situation, due to the confluence of the Moon also delighting Jupiter in the Navamsha chart, since Jupiter is in the navamsha of Cancer. Such a person may have had past lives in which their upbringing (Moon theme) encouraged the search for a well-defined and respectable role in life (Jupiter theme), causing them to healthily manifest circumstances which would inevitably bear the delicious fruit of morally satisfying action (Moon trine Jupiter in the D1 theme). Any Jupiter exalted in the navamsha already finds what Jupiter seeks in the way of soul satisfaction, *at least by its subjective experience*; but, by also receiving a trine from its navamasha dispositor and friend the Moon in the rashi chart, the amount of subjective bliss that could be taken advantage of from Jupiter's exalted navamsha would be increased by the confluence of the moon's opening doorways for it in the physical world (ie, the rashi). Again, let us keep in mind that the vargas cannot over ride the Rashi chart. If the moon was NOT trine to Jupiter in the rashi chart, yet in the varga chart the moon was in the same element as that Jupiter (say if the moon was in the navamsha of Pisces while Jupiter was in the Navamsha of Cancer), this would NOT indicate a lajitaadi avasta effect, and therefore the confluence of the Moon in physical reality opening the doorway for Jupiter's indications in the navamsha would not occur. This person would not experience the same support to their inner Jupiterian vision early in life, because their Jupiter would not have received that trine aspect from the moon in reality. Jupiter exalted in the navamsha in that case would still *gain subjective bliss* from whatever life path the Rashi chart offered the person in this situation; but, that Jupiter could not exponentially increase its power through support from its friend the moon in one's earthly experience.

Getting down to the finer aspects of the vargas in astrology, let us consider the influences of the D2 (Hora) chart upon a few individual planets as an example of how the vargas affect every planet's motivation and power in a chart. The D2 reflects the thematic tones of the 2<sup>nd</sup> house. [Keep in mind that we will not be considering the method of dividing the hora into masculine (solar) vs feminine (lunar) placements. This has its own purposes and uses as a method of interpretation in astrology; but instead, we will use the method of considering any planet in the 1<sup>st</sup> half of its rashi in the D1 to remain the same in the Hora chart, while a planet placed in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of a rashi will be in the sign opposite that position in the Hora chart.]

Every varga has implicated in it certain planets which resonate with the numerology of that

varga's divisions. In the Hora's case these are first and foremost the Moon, with secondary karakas being Jupiter and lastly, Mars. Consider a rashi chart where the moon is again positioned close to its debilitation in Scorpio. This could be an ill moon, possibly causing the chart owner to aggressively seek nurturing for themselves in a way that does not reciprocate the love of those who actively nurture the person. This Scorpio moon could be positioned either in the hora of its natal position of Scorpio, or else it could be positioned in the hora of its opposite sign of Taurus. In the Hora of its debilitation in Scorpio, such a person would not only have to endure the difficulty of finding stable centers of love and comfort in their every day lives (debilitated moon in rashi), but they likely would not identify with those things and people which keep them emotionally anchored either (debilitated Moon in D2 theme). The D2 primary karaka the Moon being debilitated in both the Rashi and the D2 chart brings double trouble to the psychology of one's personal security foundations, even if the Rising lord of the D2 chart was well-placed in both the Rashi chart and the D2 itself – although that would provide opportunities in life which would certainly lesson the blow. Even if a friend like Mercury was trine to the Moon in the rashi chart, whereby through proper communication the person might manage to attract comforting and balancing foundations in their life, the debilitated moon in the hora chart would still block the person from deeply enjoying or maintaining them with authentic care.

Jupiter gains significance in the Hora chart over Mars because Jupiter is also the karaka of the 2<sup>nd</sup> house. The reason why Jupiter is traditionally the karaka for the 2<sup>nd</sup> house is because by faithfully opening to the joys of the self and one's personal inspirations, a person can feel fulfilled and worthy of *receiving resources* by virtue of their inner nature; and thus, they are capable of receiving abundance and wealth (numerology of 2 themes) by attracting what they radiate. A strong Jupiterian faith and optimism naturally strengthens the 2<sup>nd</sup> house. It is therefore only natural that the position of Jupiter in the birth chart would be considered important in lending strength to the fiscal, emotional and interpersonal foundations which the numerology of number 2 implies because again, Jupiter is the sole karaka of the 2<sup>nd</sup> house. This goes to show how all-inclusive the symbols related to numerology truly are in every chart: indeed, *it is the confluence of numerological themes shared by all of the pieces in a chart that make up the true spine of the spiritual blueprint.*

Mars is the final karaka of Hora chart, by virtue of the amount of logical effort and work it takes to hold our personal lives together. The strength of Mars' placement in the rashi chart shows whether we can put constructive effort towards the things in life we are responsible for. On top of what is indicated in the D1, the dignity of any planet (like Mars) in a varga really says the most about its inner-potentials, regarding the things in life related to that varga. The rashi aspects in the vargas are the second most impactful factor, because benefic and malefic aspects to any bhava in a varga bring noticeable changes to the person's inner landscape of attitudes regarding that house and lord. So our capacity to work out issues related to our personal energy network (D2 theme) through the use of logic and assertion (Mars), aside from what is indicated in the D1, is defined through the following factors:

- A – The dignity of Mars in the D2 chart;
- B – The planets that occupy Aries and Scorpio in the D2 chart;
- C – Planets Rashi aspecting the houses that Mars rules in the D2 (Aries and Scorpio);
- D – Planets Rashi aspecting that house which Mars occupies in the D2. Aspects between these planets and Mars in the D1 are especially sure indicators of highly impactful confluence.

It should be noted that some of Astrology's greatest depths are to be found by correlating

all the vargas to the things found in the higher octave charts like the shastiamsha (D60), according to Ernst Wilhelm's interpretation of the words of the ancient Rishis. The structure of an ancient scripture called the "Sarvarta Chintamani" reveals a hidden framework inherent in all astrology, showing that the Vargas together represent an interplay of many elements, houses, signs and number themes, which interact between each other with varying degrees of influence and power in and through the vargas. The divisional charts also contain yogas between one another which interact based on certain combinations considered by the rishis to be significant. While the divisional charts may appear to be abstractly removed from our tangible experience on earth, we must not allow the understanding of the rashi chart's *physical primacy* to block our understanding of the vargas' *mystical primacy*. No astrology reading is complete without observing how the energy field of the natal D1 chart interacts with past-life psychic conditions that are revealed through the varga charts.