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Concept paper

The planet problem and its 'energetic' solution

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Abstract

People who do not believe in astrology commonly blame the astrologers that they do not have common sense by saying, "you people say that sun is a planet, nonsense; sun is a star". Similarly, they also argue about Rahu and Kethu, and say that they have merely exist. Further they also argue that Earth, Uranus and Neptune which are planets do not find place in the birth charts. In such a context the astrologers are normally taken aback.

This paper addresses the conceptual confusion arising from the translation of the Sanskrit term Graha as "planet." While modern astronomy defines planets based on physical matter and orbital dynamics, the Vedic system of Navagraha is rooted in an energetic framework centred on the Earth as a receiver of influence. By comparing spiritualistic (energy-based) Indian thought with materialistic Western models, this study argues that Grahas are "energy-based entities" rather than mere physical masses. We provide textual and scientific evidence for the microcosm-macrocosm relationship and the biological influence of planetary resonances.

Thus, the paper not only cautions astrologers, but any individual from any field for that matter to be careful while using Englishized traditional words in their day to day part of their profession. In this background, the paper also emphasizes change in the astrologers to relook into the approach towards astrology, and calls for more research in this area.

Keywords: Graha, planet, energy, matter, Navagraha, spirituality

Introduction

In modern primary schools, the children are taught in the Geography classes that there are eight planets in the solar system. However, about 3 decades back, in the same Geography classes, the children were taught that there are nine planets in the solar system. The 'Pluto' is no longer in the list of planets. What

happened in just 30 years? Did Pluto vanish? A little thought into this issue gives an eye-opening thought.

That apart, on the other side, in almost all homes, the children are taught about the navagrahas, through a *shloka* (poetic form of representation of knowledge),

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नमः सूर्याय चन्द्राय मङ्गलाय बुधाय च ।
गुरुशुक्रशनिभ्यश्च राहवे केतवे नमः ॥

namaḥ sūryāya candrāya maṅgalāya budhāya ca |
guruśukraśanibhyaśca rāhave ketave namaḥ ||

which mentions about the nine *Grahās*. Thus, there are two systems, the planetary system having 9 planets, and the *navagraha* system containing 9 *grahās*. While the two systems are not one and the same; having taken casually, or not giving a thought on, they are considered to be the same. All astrology texts say there are 9 planets.

This has led to the blame on astrologers that they do not have scientific thought; nor they have common sense because astrologers because, they

- consider sun as a planet,
- Rahu and Kethu merely exist, and they are a part of the planets in the birth chart
- Uranus, Neptune and Pluto are not at all considered in the birth chart.

When the non-believers argue on these aspects, the astrologers are taken aback. This paper supports the astrologers and explains what is the actual problem.

The concept

In the above, background we have to relook as to what planets are; and what are *grahās*. To explain this, first let us compare the two systems, viz., the planetary system and the *navagraha* system. Table 1 gives a comparative list of the components of the two systems.

Table 1: Components of the Planetary system and the navagraha system

Planetary system	Navagraha system
Mercury	<i>Budha</i>
Venus	<i>Shukra</i>
Earth	??
Mars	<i>Mangala</i>
Jupiter	<i>Guru</i>
Saturn	<i>Shani</i>
Uranus	??
Neptune	??
Pluto	??

Planetary system	Navagraha system
??	Sun
??	Moon
??	<i>Rahu</i>
??	<i>Kethu</i>

From the table we can make the following observations can be made:

- Sun, Rahu and Kethu are missing in the list of the planetary system.
- Earth, Uranus, Neptune and Pluto are missing in the *navagraha* system.
- Earth is a planet according to the planetary system
- Sun and moon are *grahās* according to the *navagraha* system, and also, added to the list are the Rahu and Kethu.

The difference between, and the basic concepts in the two systems are discussed herewith.

Planets vs. *Grahās*

Planets:

Through simple observation it can be understood that a planet is:

- a physical body (huge matter)
- they revolve around the sun in a plane
- they are under the control of the sun

From the above we can observe and come to an understanding that those bodies which revolve in a plane, and in the control of the sun are called planets. Thus, the concept of planet is from the point of view of matter, and the space in which it revolves. The understanding, about 30 years back was that pluto was a planet. Now pluto is not considered as a planet because it is now understood that pluto is not under the control of the sun. Or, possibly, now it has gone out of the control of the sun.

Further, it is also worth noting that in modern geography, the solar system is recognized as having eight planets. The reclassification of Pluto by the International Astronomical Union (IAU) in 2006 serves as a vital case study for the distinction between physical bodies and *Grahās*. According to IAU Resolution B5, a celestial body is a planet only if it (a) orbits the Sun, (b) assumes a nearly round shape, and

(c) "has cleared the neighbourhood around its orbit". Pluto is classified as a "dwarf planet" because it has not satisfied this third criterion, as its orbit is dictated by the gravity of Neptune. In contrast, the *Navagraha* system remains consistent because its criteria are based on influencing power rather than orbital clearance.

Grahās:

On contrary to the planets which are matter based, the *grahās* are energy based. *Grahās* are those celestial bodies, and their positions which has key influence on the energy of the earth. This influence consequently has effect on the matter and the living organisms on the earth.

Hence, Uranus, Neptune and Pluto, which do not have considerable influence on the energy of the earth are not considered as *grahās*. Also, the very earth itself is not considered as a *graha*. As such, the concept of *graha* is centred around earth, which is the receiver of energy.

Rahu and kethu are considered as *chāyagrahās*. The *chāya* in vedic terminology means shadow. These are basically the alterations in the energy received by the earth due to the shadows caused due to the periods of eclipses.

When the moon intervenes between the earth and the sun, the shadow of the moon falls on the earth. Consequently, the earth loses the energy of the sun. This position is called *surya grabana* (solar eclipse). *Grabana* means the energy eaten on account of shadow. Similarly, when earth comes between the sun and the moon, the shadow of the earth falls on the moon. Consequently, the moon loses energy. Loss of energy to the moon leads to loss of energy to the earth, since the moon cannot give energy to the earth. In these two circumstances the earth loses energy due to shadow. When the earth loses the energy of the sun, the shadow is called *Rāhu*. Similarly, when the earth loses the energy of the moon, it is called *kethu*. Hence *Rāhu* and *kethu* are *chāyā* (shadow) *grahas*.

Etimological definition: Planets and grahas

Further, etymologically, the English word "planet" comes from the Greek *planētēs*, meaning "wanderer". Conversely, the Sanskrit root *graha* means "to seize, to grasp, or to hold". Thus, a *Graha* is defined as an astronomical body that "holds or captures" or plays a significant role in influencing energy, and thus life on Earth.

Planet – n – graha relationship

It can thus be understood that the planetary system and the *navagraha* systems are altogether based on

totally different concepts. However, there is a relationship between the two systems. This relationship is summarized in the table 2.

Table 2: Relationship between the elements of planetary and navagraha systems

Navagraha system	Planetary system
Surya	Energy of the sun
Chandra	Energy of the moon
Mangala	Energy of the mars
Budha	Energy of mercury
Guru	Energy of Jupiter
Shukra	Energy of Venus
Shani	Energy of Saturn
Rahu	Energy as a result of solar eclipse
Ketu	Energy as a result of lunar eclipse

Here, the term energy in simplest language, refers to the influence of the emissions of the celestial body, or the change in state of the energy received by the earth due to relative positions of the celestial bodies; for which Rahu and Ketu are the examples.

Considering Rahu and Ketu, the *chāyagrahās*, Astronomically, they are the mathematical points of intersection of the Ecliptic (the Sun's apparent path) and the Lunar orbital plane. Rahu is the North Lunar node and Ketu is the South Lunar node. They are included as *grahās* because their positions cause eclipses, creating significant alterations in the electromagnetic energy received by the Earth.

Microcosm macrocosm synonym

The relationship between the individual (*Pinda*) and the cosmos (*Brahmānda*) is a cornerstone of classical Indian philosophy. The popular aphorism "*Yathā piṇḍe tathā brahmāṇḍe, yathā brahmāṇḍe tathā piṇḍe*" ("As is the microcosm, so is the macrocosm") is a traditional maxim summarizing ancient Indian philosophy.

Charaka Sambhita (Sharirasthāna, 5.3), states, "*Yāvantah hi loke bhāvaṁ viśeṣaḥ tāvantah puruṣe, yāvantah puruṣe tāvantah loke*" which means, whatever entities exist in the universe, the same exist in the human being; and whatever exists in the human being, exists in the universe.

The theological seed originates in the Purusha Sukta (*Rigveda* 10.90 / *Shukla Yajurveda* 31), which views creation as the manifestation of a single Cosmic Giant (*Purusha*).

The aspect is also available in Goraksha Shatakam composed by Sage Gorakshanath, which maps cosmic geographies (mountains, rivers, stars) to structural parts of the human physical body (*pinda*).

This concept is also about the total interconnectedness between the individual and the universe. It states that the human body (the microcosm) is a miniature replica of the entire cosmos (the macrocosm) Yajurveda states: "*Yathā pinde tathā brāhmande, yathā brahmānde tathā pinde*" (As is the individual, so is the universe). Similarly, the Charaka Samhita affirms: "*Purushyoyam loka sannidab*" (Man is a miniature universe). These texts suggest that the governing eternal laws of the macrocosm are the cause of internal codes and motions in the microcosm.

Thus, *navagrahas* are not just limited to the solar system, but also applicable to the human body. As such human body is the microcosm, and the solar system is the macrocosm. Microcosm, the later part of existence, being the product of the macrocosm. Table 3 gives a continued analogy of the macrocosm and the microcosm with reference to the *navagrahas*, many of which are also well understood and applied by the astrologers.

Table 3: Components and equivalents macrocosm and microcosm

Macrocosm	Microcosm
Sun (Surya)	Ātma
Moon (Chandra)	Manas
Mangala	Agni (heat)
Budha	<i>Buddhi</i>
Guru	Understanding
Shukra	Vision
Shani	Inertia
Rahu	two different states during meditation.
Ketu	

This is yet another important aspect the astrologers should consider during their day to day professional activities. That means, the astrological interpretations should also consider the microcosm equivalents of the *grahas* to understand the effects and has influence on humans.

Scope for research

The planetary interactions influence genetic compositions. The aspect is supported by modern

research into Bioelectromagnetics. Organisms are continuously exposed to natural electromagnetic frequencies, such as the Schumann Resonance (7.83 Hz), which mimics human brainwave patterns. Research shows that "Electromagnetic Energy and Sound Vibration Modulates Gene Expression" and can "affect the flow of ions across cell membranes, potentially altering cellular function and signalling pathways". These natural frequencies regulate biological rhythms, suggesting a mechanism for how celestial "energies" (*Grahās*) interact with human biological systems.

There is quite a lot of scope for research in the area of astrology. The energies of each of the *grahās* have their qualities. The interaction between or combination of these energies gives rise to a resultant energy. The interaction effect of the *grahās* (the energies) in the macrocosm, and the *grahās* (equivalent energies) in the microcosm is worth understanding which requires correlation studies. Also, it is worth researching the effect of the interactions of the *grahās* at the time of birth on the quality of the person. While this is exactly what the astrologers are currently doing, from the net effect point of view. However, this should be approached from mechanism point of view considering things at a subtler level, may be the genetic compositions and vibrations level.

Conclusion:

Planets and *grahās* are altogether two different concepts. Planets are matter based. *Grahās* are energy based. The confusion between the two systems is basically because of the blunder committed in trying to "Englishize" the Indian word *graha*, into planets. Hence planets to be referred to as planets only. Similarly, *grahās* to be referred to as *grahās* only, and never as planets. In astrology we are basically concerned with *grahas* and not the planets. Astrologers should take special care henceforth in replacing the word planet with *graha*. *Grahās* should be considered especially at the microcosm energy-based levels. Also, there is quite a scope for research on the effect of interactions between the energies of the macrocosm and microcosm at subtler levels.

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