**The Eastern Window**

*by Penny Farrow*

**Editor’s Note:** Cross ventilation produces a breath of fresh air. It is desirable in a house and even in a magazine! In this spirit, we are featuring a series of short articles designed to make some of the basic building blocks and ideas of Vedic astrology more accessible to all. We anticipate that opening the Eastern Window can clarify the complementarity between great astrological traditions.

**Here’s Looking at You, Kid**

What is the most compelling form of communication? Many would immediately say it is the use of our voice. But there is an argument to be made for the power of a glance, e.g., Tony and Maria, in *West Side Story*, locking eyes across the crowded gym on that fateful night; the terrifying moment when you are eye to eye with a mama bear on a hiking trail; and even the creepy feeling of knowing that you’re being watched without seeing who it is.

We can profoundly influence each other with a mere glance. This is the modus operandi of many families. We all know in a flash if we are in deep trouble with our spouses or parents. And when our little ones give us a certain sideways look, we immediately grok that what they just said was a lie. They know it and we know it, without speaking a word.

Grah [planets] also have that ability to communicate by looking at each other or looking at a bhava (house) or a rash [sign]. How could that be? They are just lumps of rocks, gases, liquids, etc. Astrological traditions hold that the grahas are cosmic markers of an underlying intelligence that organizes our universe. That organization includes particular roles for the component parts, such as the grahas.

Although we might use language such as “Saturn is doing this or that” to us, it serves us better to see the grahas as indicators of a cosmic intelligence that is projected through various lenses called Jupiter, Venus, etc. This implies that the grahas on some level are sentient. Indeed, in the great root text of Jyotisha, *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra*, it is stated that the navagrahas (nine planets) are avatars or incarnations of divine intelligence manifesting expressly for the purpose of bestowing on living beings the results due to their karmas.

Therefore, metaphorically, the sentient energy field we call a graha has drishti — the ability to influence by “looking at” another chart factor. This, of course, is similar to aspects in Western astrology. However, as we will see, there is a difference in the ways that each graha can have drishti in Jyotisha versus the Western astrological aspects.

To begin with, Western astrology is more egalitarian about the rules of aspecting and has a greater number of aspects. There are various systems of Jyotisha that use their own distinct rules for aspecting, but the prevailing system, as detailed in *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra*, has four categories of drishti: association, full aspects, special aspects, and partial aspects. For all intents and purposes, most Jyotishis do not emphasize or even consider the partial aspects, so I will leave them out as well.

The most powerful drishti is known as yuti or samyukta. Both of these words share the root yuj, meaning “to unite” or “join.” This is also the root from which the word yoga arises. Though yuti might sound like the aspect known by Western astrologers as conjunction, they are not quite the same. Two grahas that are yuti must be within the same rashi, and no degree range is required; whereas in Western astrology, conjunctions are commonly based on an orb within 10° and can cross sign boundaries. To avoid confusion, we will use the term association as the English equivalent of yuti.

The full aspect in Jyotisha is extended to all the grahas that are seven rashis away from each other — counted inclusively — which Jyotisha refers to as a 7/7 aspect or drishti. It resembles the opposition aspect in Western astrology but is also defined by rashi boundaries, whereas the Western opposition can cross sign barriers. Therefore, a graha at 1° Cancer and a graha at 27° Capricorn are said to have a mutual drishti or mutual aspect. That would be too wide for the Western opposition. It is not that Jyotisha ignores orbs; it does acknowledge a “tight orb” but will still grant the drishti aspect if the two are seven rashis apart.

Special aspects are given only to the extraterrestrial grahas: Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. Jupiter has the special tri-nal aspect; therefore, in addition to aspecting seven rashis away, inclusively, from where it is located, it will also aspect five and nine rashis away. Mars, by contrast, is given two edgier special aspects: the fourth and eighth. Saturn is given the third and tenth aspects.

There is also the concept of mutual and one-sided aspects. Association or yuti is always mutual, as is the 7/7 drishti. All but one of the special aspects are one-sided. For example, Jupiter can aspect the Sun if the Sun is five or nine...
rashis away, but the Sun can’t return the favor by aspecting Jupiter, since the Sun does not have trinal aspects. However, if Saturn is four rashis away from Mars, Mars will aspect Saturn by its fourth aspect, and Saturn can return the favor by aspecting Mars by its tenth aspect.

The grahas also have drishti to bhavas and rashis and, in that way, influence the matters signified by those areas of a chart.

Since you might have indigestion by now, let’s check these aspects out in a chart, and hopefully that will act as an after-dinner mint.

**Angelina Jolie**

Angelina has Cancer rising, with Venus in the 1st bhava; Rahu in the 5th; Jupiter, the Moon, and Mars in the 9th; Ketu, the Sun, and Mercury in the 11th; and Saturn in the 12th. (See **Figure**, below.)

Let’s start with the grahas that are *samyukta* (joined together or associated). In the 9th bhava, we have Mars, the Moon, and Jupiter associated; and in the 11th, Ketu, the Sun, and Mercury. In addition, the 9th bhava itself and the rashis of Pisces are influenced by the three grahas that are located there. Likewise, Venus influences the 1st bhava and the rashi of Cancer, Rahu influences the 5th bhava and the rashi of Scorpio, and Saturn influences the 12th bhava and the rashi of Gemini.

How about the 7/7 full aspect between grahas? Not many in this chart. Rahu and Ketu (the lunar nodes) are represented in Jyotisha as the head and tail of a mythical serpent divided in half; the head and tail are 180° from each other and thus in a 7/7 relationship. Some Jyotishis will say they aspect each other, but because this is really just one creature, others don’t regard them as being in a mutual aspect. However, we can say that the Sun and Mercury are associated with Ketu and aspected by Rahu. My teacher preferred to express this as “the Sun and Mercury are in the Rahu–Ketu axis,” as both Rahu and Ketu will always be influencing grahas in this kind of configuration.

However, since all grahas have the seventh aspect (7/7), the bhavas and rashis that are seven away will feel their influence, even if there is no graha located there. Therefore, in Angelina’s chart, the 3rd bhava and the rashi of Virgo receive the influence of Jupiter, the Moon, and Mars. The 5th bhava and the rashi of Scorpio are influenced by the drishti of the Sun, Mercury, and the Rahu–Ketu axis. Venus aspects the 7th bhava and the rashi of Capricorn. And Saturn aspects the 6th bhava and the rashi of Sagittarius.

There are also several special aspects in Angelina’s chart.

- Jupiter has a special (trinal) aspect with Venus, the 1st bhava, and the rashi of Cancer. It also has a special ninth (trinal) aspect with Rahu, the 5th bhava, and the rashi of Scorpio.
- Mars has a special fourth aspect with Saturn, the 12th bhava, and the rashi of Gemini, as well as the 4th bhava and the rashi of Libra by its eighth aspect.
- Saturn’s special third aspect falls on the 2nd bhava and the rashi of Leo. And by its tenth special aspect it is influencing Mars, the Moon, Jupiter, the 9th bhava, and the rashi of Pisces.

**Note:** The Mars and Saturn special aspects fall into the unique situation of a mutual special aspect, as described above: Saturn receives the drishti of Mars, and Mars receives the drishti of Saturn.

Even with these bare-bones ABCs of relationships created by drishti, there is so much interpretive juice to be found. It feels almost criminal to leave you all hanging, but we will return to this topic and this chart in the next column, after you have had a chance to digest this information and practice for yourself.

**Chart Data and Source**

**Angelina Jolie,** June 4, 1975; 9:09 a.m. PDT; Los Angeles, CA, USA (34°N03’, 118°W15’); AA: BC/BR in hand.

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Angelina Jolie

South Indian chart, Lahiri ayanamsha, and the Mean Node