

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.

The Peanut Butter Sandwich

Back in the days before lettuce roll-ups and gorgeous open-faced gourmet delicacies, lunch was an honest sandwich. The prevailing paradigm demanded that comfort food be found between two slices of bread, gluing everything together into one satisfying meal. To label the offering as a sandwich, all three components were non-negotiable. Probably, the king of them all was the peanut butter sandwich (with or without the jelly).

In case you're wondering, you are, in fact, reading a column on Vedic astrology. I have been introducing the building blocks of Jyotisha in the form of *grahas* (planets), *rashis* (signs), *bhavas* (houses), *yogas* (auspicious and inauspicious combinations of astrological factors), and, most recently, *dashas* and *bhuktis* (the exquisite timing mechanism exclusive to this astrological tradition). These are all components of the Vedic peanut butter sandwich.

The patterns of the natal chart (static analysis) are our bottom slice of bread, the basis on which we understand the blueprint of someone's life. This first slice of bread will serve as the foundation for the additional layers.

One aspect of dynamic analysis involves how life unfolds in an orderly way in accordance with natal patterns that get activated over time. This is the concept of *dashas* and *bhuktis* — the acts and scenes within the play of life. The *grahas* (actors) play a pivotal role in bringing forward specific parts of the story by being on center stage at the right moment.¹ *Grahas* are the peanut butter that holds together the sandwich of prediction.

So, what is the obligatory top slice of bread? That would be another aspect of dynamic analysis — the ever-shifting cosmic kaleidoscope, creating an endless display of patterns that interact with each native's unique natal configurations: *transits* in the West, *gochara* in Vedic astrology.

Like most Sanskrit words, *gochara* is highly evocative. *Go* refers to anything having to do with cows or cattle. This gets poetically extended to the “herds of the sky,” i.e., stars and *grahas*, and, from there, to the idea of rays of light. *Chara* means “moving, wandering, or having a retinue of some kind.” Therefore, *gochara* is the name given to the actual movement of the *grahas* in the heavens, based on observation of their light.

To illustrate the peanut butter sandwich, I am going to use a particular *gochara* methodology that is clear and accessible. This technique zeros in on the transits of key *grahas*, such as the *lagna* (Ascendant) lord and the current *dasha*–*bhukti* lords.

“You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear,” as my teacher used to say. In other words, it is not sound practice

to base a prediction solely on what the *gochara* patterns are indicating, without verifying that such an outcome is already potentiated in a particular natal chart — and that the current *gochara* patterns trigger those natal indications. So, a particular transit won't be significant for everyone on Earth, something that might otherwise be implied and commonly is these days.

Let's look at the chart of Taylor Swift to illustrate the power of the peanut butter sandwich, and see whether she has that ideal alignment of natal pattern, appropriate *dasha* and/or *bhukti* lords, and a transit that fructifies her natal potential in a big way.

The Chart of Taylor Swift

Taylor Swift is iconic — an over-used cliché perhaps, but in this case a perfect fit. Her remarkable life is foretold in her remarkable destiny pattern. Taylor signs with RCA records at the tender age of 13, but a year later opts out of the contract because she doesn't want to sing other people's songs. She then signs with Sony/ATV Music as the youngest songwriter (at age 14) for such a deal, but insists that no other singer perform her songs. Quite a developed personality for one so young! How might that show up in her chart?

At just under 14 years old, Taylor begins her Jupiter *dasha* period. (See **Table**, following page.) Note that Jupiter is the ruler of her 1st *bhava*, and it happens to be involved in a plethora of incredibly powerful *yogas* — too many to detail here.² (See **Chart**.) The *dasha* of the 1st lord is very much about self-development, and with such a

strong Jupiter involved in fame combinations, we are going to know all about her growing pains through her songs. She signs with a label that encourages her to write and sing from a very personal perspective, and her career takes off from there.

Jupiter, as both her lagna lord and the dasha lord, has come to the center of the stage at this pivotal time in her life. These two independent variables wind up creating a huge confluence for whatever Jupiter potentiates. If Jupiter's transit triggers exceptional natal combinations, the results are effectively doubled and could account for the magnitude of her rise.

Even without the second slice of bread, her particular peanut butter sandwich is already so compelling that great success during Jupiter's dasha is easily predictable. However, when she is just 21 years old, there is a singular event on January 31, 2010, in which she makes music history by receiving four of the top Grammy Awards: Album of the Year, Best Country Album, Best Country Song, and Best Female Country Artist. Notably, she is the youngest ever to win Album of the Year. Let's look at that day's peanut butter sandwich.

Bottom slice of bread: Taylor has incredible natal triggers in the form of powerful yogas promising huge fame. One of the significant yogas that her lagna lord, Jupiter, forms is a *raja yoga* — a king-making combination — with 10th lord Mercury through their mutual

Start Date	AGE	Dasha	Bhukti
4/16/2000	10.3	RA	SU
3/11/2001	11.2	RA	MO
9/10/2002	12.7	RA	MA
9/29/2003	13.8	JU	JU
11/16/2005	15.9	JU	SA
5/29/2008	18.5	JU	ME
9/4/2010	20.7	JU	KE
8/11/2011	21.7	JU	VE
4/11/2014	24.3	JU	SU
1/28/2015	25.1	JU	MO
5/29/2016	26.5	JU	MA
5/5/2017	27.4	JU	RA
9/29/2019	29.8	SA	JU

aspect and exchange. Since their *sambandha* (mutual relationship) occurs across the 1/7 axis, the *raja yoga's* results come via her individual talent and ability to project her fresh young image. She captures the attention of teens worldwide, and they prove to be a powerful demographic, growing up alongside her and following all the twists and turns in her coming of age.

Peanut butter: She is running the seminal dasha period of Jupiter, who is involved in those massive natal triggers, which begin at age 13. On award show day, she is also running

an exceptional bhukti lord, Mercury, who partners with Jupiter natively to make several of the most consequential yogas.

Top slice of bread: Lagna and dasha lord Jupiter is transiting her 3rd house of writing and performance skills, where it aspects its natal position — a key piece in triggering all those yogas. And let's add some rose petal jelly: Her bhukti lord,

Mercury, has returned to its natal position, transiting Sagittarius and recreating all those awesome yogas it makes, both on its own and in partnership with Jupiter.

Voila! Bon appétit!

Chart Data and Source

Taylor Swift, December 13, 1989; 8:36 a.m. EST; Reading, PA, USA (40°N20', 75°W56'); DD: Various birth times are given, none confirmed; however, Vedic astrologer Marc Boney has conducted a careful examination of events, transits, yogas, and major life trends, using the above birth time, and is satisfied that the Sagittarius lagna has been convincingly verified.

References

1. Penny Farrow, "The Eastern Window," in *The Mountain Astrologer*, June/July 2018, p. 18.
2. Penny Farrow, "The Eastern Window," in *TMA*, Feb./March 2018, p. 20.

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4 Pis	5 Ari	6 Tau	Mo ^{9°47'} Jp ^{13°57'} 7 Gem
3 Aqu			Ke ^{25°43'} 8 Can
Ra ^{25°43'} Ve ^{8°11'} 2 Cap			9 Leo
Sa ^{19°44'} Me ^{15°7'} As ^{14°30'} 1 Sag	Su ^{27°48'} Ma ^{3°3'} 12 Sco	mc ^{8°46'} 11 Libr	10 Virg

Taylor Swift

South Indian chart,
Lahiri ayanamsha,
and the Mean Node