

# 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.

## Timing Is Everything

Have you ever noticed how many sayings there are concerning time? “To everything there is a season and a time for every purpose under heaven.” “A stitch in time saves nine.” “Time and tide wait for no man,” etc., etc. Our whole life is organized around time, and it is time that inevitably puts a “period” to that life.

Obviously, astrology is completely dependent on time, starting with the calculations of that special moment in time that structures a unique birth chart for a person or an event. Therefore, it is not surprising that an important aspect of astrological analysis is the chart’s unfolding through time.

What exactly does that mean? When we examine a natal chart, we are most likely applying static analysis techniques. We determine the Ascendant, where all the *grahas* (planets) are located, their degrees, their relationship to each other through *yuti* and *drishti* (associations and aspects), and so on. Static analysis produces a lot of useful information about the native, so it often forms the basis for astrological consultations. However, if you say to someone, “You will make a lot of money,” what will they likely say to you? “When?!”

From one perspective, a chart is simply a collection of natal triggers, each of which could become active at its appointed moment and bring its promise or challenge to the owner of the chart. We are now in the land of dynamic analysis, and different astrological traditions have various tools for dealing with dynamic analysis.

Most people think of transits when they think of a horoscope unfolding through time. Transits are a time-honored tradition in Jyotisha as well, but in addition, Jyotisha offers a rather stunning timing mechanism to the toolbox of dynamic analysis, known as the *dasha* system. One of the several meanings of *dasha* is “a state or condition of life or period of life” (Sir M. Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*). I have alluded in passing to this system in previous articles and columns, but now I will dive a little deeper.

Vedic astrology is not a “one size fits all” discipline and offers great diversity in its techniques. Dasha analysis reflects that. There are at least 25 different *dasha* systems mentioned in the root text *Brihat Parashara Hora Shastra* alone —

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By Anirudh Koul [CC BY-SA 2.0]

enough to boggle the mind of even an intrepid student. However, the great sage himself advises that, for the age in which we live (Kali Yuga), there is one granddaddy *dasha* system that is the most appropriate and universal, known as the *Vimshottari* *dasha* system. *Vimshottari* simply translates as “120” — as in 120 years; this *dasha* system is calculated in every chart as if the total span of life could be 120 years.

My favorite analogy for the *Vimshottari* *dasha* system is thinking about our life as a play we have authored. Picture the audience assembled to watch your play. The curtain goes up. All of the actors (*grahas*) are crowded together on center stage, and they start yelling out their lines all at the same time. How long do you think it would take before there is an exodus into the great coffee house next door, where scathing reviews



of this “theater of the absurd” travesty would be written?

The cognition of the *rishis* (sages) regarding the actors in this drama is much more subtle and realistic. Yes, when the curtain goes up on your play, all the grahas are on stage, but only one of them is at center stage with the microphone in the spotlight — the others are in the backup band. The audience will be riveted by that graha’s role, which draws its themes largely from the nature of the graha, where it is located in the horoscope, and what other *bhavas* (houses) it owns. The audience is seeing your life through the prism of that graha.

As the play progresses, the focus shifts as different members of the band get a turn at the microphone. They each capture the audience’s attention, until 120 years later (a long play, indeed!), everyone has had his allotted time. However, it is not an equal opportunity

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system, since some actors get much more prime time than others. For example, the Venus dasha last 20 years and the Sun only six years. Such is life.

Let’s look into the natal chart of Celine Dion, to see how much this dasha system contributes to understanding the timing of key events in her life. (See **Chart**, below.) Celine’s chart shows combinations that point to an exceptional voice.<sup>1</sup> Her 2nd bhava of voice holds the natural benefic Jupiter, and it is utterly free from the aspects of any malefic. It is, in fact, aspected by two other natural benefics — Venus and Mercury. These three benefics are like LEGO® pieces, which, when fitted together, construct auspicious combinations called *yogas*.<sup>2</sup> These yogas can shift a particular theme in a chart above the baseline of average human experience. Note that all three grahas in these combinations are free from any malefic influence — a rare and potent pattern.

Celine thus has natal triggers for a beautiful and compelling voice and the possibility of great success through her singing. But *when* will that happen? Her yogas are so powerful that any excuse will do — a favorable dasha, transit, etc. At the tender age of almost four years old, Venus, the graha of the arts, gracefully walks to the center of Celine’s stage as that dasha begins. Taking the microphone from the previous dasha’s graha, Venus pulls natal triggers for success, firing on all barrels. Eyes and ears riveted to center stage, the mesmerized audience sits bolt upright in their seats.

Forming beautiful yogas for voice and fame with Jupiter and Mercury, Venus nails the role and catapults a child from an impoverished family into a worldwide superstar. Celine had her first public performance before age seven and, by the time she was twelve years old, had recorded a song written by her mother and brother that made her an instant star in Quebec. The rest is history.

It is not always that easy, but it is truly remarkable how the various grahas taking their turn on center stage become central to unfolding the dynamic promise of the chart.

But wait, there’s more ... next time!

### Chart Data and Source

**Celine Dion**, March 30, 1968; 12:15 p.m. EST; Charlemagne, Quebec, Canada (45°N43', 73°W29'); A: from memory; she is quoted for “born at noon” on Europe 1 radio station, but James Elliot says, “She gave 12:30 PM over the radio.” (**Editor’s Note:** The 12:15 time apparently splits the difference.)

### References

1. Penny Farrow, “Magical Voice: A Vedic Perspective,” in *The Mountain Astrologer*, Oct./Nov. 2015, p. 40.
2. Penny Farrow, “The Eastern Window,” in *The Mountain Astrologer*, Dec. 2017/Jan. 2018, p. 20.

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|--|--|--|----------------------|
| Su <sub>16°39'</sub><br>Sa <sub>21°16'</sub><br>Ra <sub>25°49'</sub> | Mo <sub>6°15'</sub><br>Ma <sub>8°36'</sub> |  |                      |
| Ve <sub>25°16'</sub><br>Me <sub>24°36'</sub>                         |  |  | As <sub>9°8'</sub>   |
|  |  |  | Jp <sub>3°10'</sub>  |
|  |  |  | Ke <sub>25°49'</sub> |

**Celine Dion**  
South Indian chart,  
Lahiri ayanamsha,  
and the Mean Node

