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Correlation between eclipses and the outbreak of influenza pandemics: through the lens of Vedic astrology

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Abstract

A pandemic is a situation where the human society all over the world are forced to face multifaceted challenges in different spheres of life, e.g. physical, mental, social, financial, educational etc. The mundane astrology has been traditionally exploited to forecast such disasters, usually for a particular country. However, the situation of pandemic that is spread globally is not discussed exclusively in classical texts of Vedic astrology. The present work aims at developing a forecasting methodology by interpreting the correlation between influenza pandemic outbreak and the “Close Eclipse Pair” in last 130 years in the light of Vedic astrological principles that are applied to predict the ailments of an individual. On the basis of this prediction technique two probable future events are also anticipated.

Keywords: Pandemics, eclipse, vedic astrology, mundane astrology

Introduction

Astrology deals with forecasting the events in human life, based on the planetary positions at a particular point of time. The life events of individual have been treated in thorough depth in Vedic astrological texts. However, the forecasting methods for collective life is not mentioned in that much details. The mundane astrology talks about national events like natural calamities, wars, epidemics, revolutions etc. for a particular nation. However, there is no detailed discussion about global situations like pandemics, which itself is a recent experience of modern human society. As a result of fast transportations from one continent to another, it is much easier for a local communicable disease to spread beyond the boundaries of a particular continent and become a worldwide pandemic within a few months. This calls for the formulation of new forecasting strategies. Efforts have already been made to correlate sunspot activities and influenza infections earlier^[1]. However, such claims also have been questioned by others^[2]. In the present work the influenza pandemics in last 130 years are analysed through the principles of Vedic astrology that are applicable to an individual. The instances of pandemics that are recognised by Monto and Fukuda^[3] are chosen for the present analysis. The 1889 flu pandemic, Spanish flu (1918), Asian flu (1957), Hong Kong flu (1968), Swine flu (2009) and the current COVID-19 will be taken into account to determine the common astrological factors that can potentially cause the onset of a severe influenza pandemic.

The solar ingress, lunation and eclipses are the cardinal celestial events that are regarded as the reference time in mundane astrology for predicting the national and international affairs^[4]. Considering the national capital as the birthplace, charts are prepared for the times of ingress, lunation or eclipses and predictions are made according to the respective charts. Considering a particular place is important as it influences the position of ascendant in a particular chart. However, on the event of a pandemic that knows no political boundary, considering a particular place on earth in order to reckon the ascendant becomes difficult. Moreover, a pandemic does not occur very frequently. So, the celestial event to which it can be correlated should also not be a frequently occurring one. Hence, in the present work “Close Eclipse Pair (CEP)” is considered as the starting point to indicate the onset of pandemics. This paired event of eclipses is the one which occur consecutively (one solar and one lunar) within the same Paksha (fortnight), i.e. within the interval between a lunation to the full moon or vice-versa. In other words, the two eclipses should occur either within the duration between a

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Krishna Pratipat to the next *Amavasya tithi* or between a *Shukla Pratipat* to the next *Purnima tithi*. Sri B. V. Raman also mentioned about this kind of closely spaced eclipses for the prediction of world wars^[4]. The special feature of such paired eclipses is that the motion of Rahu becomes very slow during this time. Even the slowest moving planet Saturn move faster than Rahu-Ketu in this interval. It can be noted that the average time taken by Saturn to traverse one single sign is 2.5 years while Rahu takes 1.5 years to do the same. Moreover, Rahu becomes the most dominating factor as it eclipses the Sun and the Moon within a short interval of time. Hence, in the present work the sign occupied by Rahu is considered as the ascendant or first house to determine the collective fate of the world population regarding influenza pandemics.

Classical texts like Brihat Parasara Hora Sastra (BPHS), Sarvarthachintamani, Phaladeepika, Jataka Parijata enumerate different planetary combinations that are conducive for making an individual victim of diseases^[5, 6, 7 8]. Some general rules regarding health and diseases can be culled from these texts. The ascendant (Lagna) represents general health, while the 6th house denotes the diseases. The 8th house and the 12th house are considered for analysing longevity and loss/expenditure, respectively. All of 6th, 8th and 12th houses are considered important for determining diseases, according to Phaladeepika. According to Sarvarthachintamani the conjunction of the ascendant lord with a malefic planet leads to bodily ailments. Similar results can be expected if the same lord resides in the 8th house. According to BPHS the presence of the ascendant lord in the 6th, 8th or 12th house produces health troubles (BPHS 24.6, 24.8 and 24.12). The presence of the lords of 6th, 8th or 12th house are not conducive for good health of an individual (BPHS 24.61, 24.85 and 24.133). Especially the 12th lord residing in the ascendant causes phlegmatic complains. 6th lord placed in 8th house makes the native sickly (BPHS 24.68). When the lord of the 8th house resides in 6th house, the native gets afflicted by diseases (BPHS 24.90). Placement of the 11th lord in the 6th house

leads to diseases (BPHS 24.126). The physical felicity of the native is destroyed when the 12th lord is located in the 12th house. The influence of these planetary combinations during the eclipses corresponding to the onset of the concerned pandemics will be analysed in the present work. Primary death-inflicting (Maraka) nature of these disease-indicating planets will also be analysed according to the principles demonstrated by Sri B. V. Raman in his book "How to Judge a Horoscope"^[9].

According to the ayurvedic principles the diseases related to lungs, e.g. bronchitis, influenza, runny nose etc. are caused by the Vikriti (vitiation) of the Kapha Dosha. Jupiter is the main indicator of Kapha among all the planets, the other indicators being the Moon, Mercury and Venus^[9]. According to Phaladeepika the fear of consumption (i.e. tuberculosis or lung infections) is caused by the presence of Jupiter in the 6th or 8th house (Phaladeepika, 14.11). Hence, the influence of Jupiter on the concerned planetary combinations causing diseases will be thoroughly examined in this article. The applicability of the "*Bhāvāt Bhāvam*" principle also will be verified in relation to the influence of Jupiter on 6th and 8th house. The effects of the 3rd house (8th from the 8th house) and 11th house (6th from the 6th house) under the influence of Jupiter will be probed. The Maraka (death-inflicting) status of the planets concerned will also be checked. Generally, a planet is considered as Maraka if it is

- i) The lord of 2nd/7th house
- ii) Located in 2nd/7th house
- iii) Associated with the lord of 2nd/7th house^[9]

Methods

In this work all the earlier instances of the influenza pandemics are culled from the work of Monto and Fukuda. All the CEPs that can be considered as indicators the outbreak of influenza pandemics are listed along with the corresponding Tithi (lunar day) in Table 1.

Table 1: List of Influenza Pandemics and their corresponding Close Eclipse Pairs

Time of Onset of Influenza Pandemic	Close Eclipse Pair	
	Date/Type/Tithi (Lunar Day)	Date/Type/Tithi (Lunar Day)
October, 1889	June 28, 1889/Annular Solar/ Ashadha Shukla Pratipat	July 13, 1889/Partial Lunar/ Ashadha Purnima
February, 1918	June 19, 1917/Partial Solar/ Ashadha Shukla Pratipat	July 5, 1917/Total Lunar/ Ashadha Purnima
Early 1957	May 24, 1956/Partial Lunar/ Vaishakha Krishna Pratipat	June 9, 1956/ Total Solar/ Vaishakha Amavasya
July, 1968	March 29, 1968/ Partial Solar/ Chaitra Shukla Pratipat	April 13, 1968/Total Lunar/ Chaitra Purnima
January, 2009	January 26, 2009/Annular Solar/ Magha Shukla Pratipat	February 9, 2009/penumbral Lunar/ Magha Purnima
December, 2019	December 26, 2019/Annular Solar Pausha Shukla Pratipat	January 11, 2020/penumbral Lunar/ Pausha Purnima

For analysing each instance of pandemic outbreak, a pair of charts are prepared for the solar and the lunar eclipses at the time of their maximum coverages. The place considered in this work for casting the horoscopes is Varanasi (83° E 00', 25° N 20'). All the dates and times of the events of eclipses used in the present work are according to the Indian Standard Time (IST). Jagannatha Hora 8.0 software has been used for casting the charts. All the calculations for casting the charts are based on "Sri Surya Siddhanta" of Varahamihira (option available in Jagannatha Hora software). The Sun chart style (East Indian) is adopted for its ease of visualisation in the present context. In is work either full Graha Drishti or Rashi

Drishti is taken into consideration wherever there is a mention of Drishti (aspect).

Results

A. Analyses of charts corresponding to past pandemics

The paired eclipses (that occur in the same Paksha) associated with each pandemic and their corresponding chart analyses are chronologically discussed in the following paragraphs.

1) October, 1889

In the year 1889, we find the eclipse pairs (solar and lunar) occurring in the same Paksha in the months of June-July. The charts are shown in Figure 1.

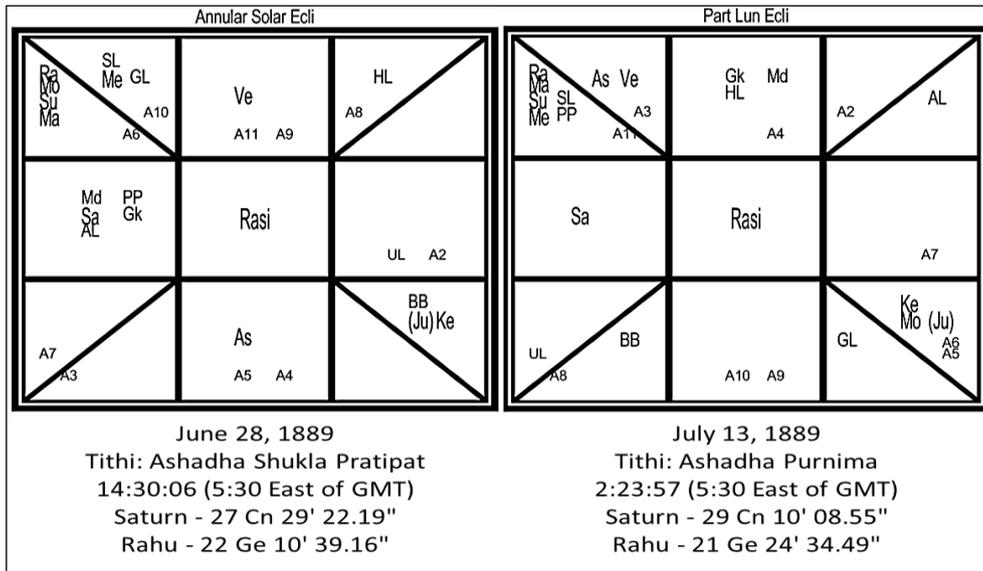


Fig 1: Eclipse chart pair of June-July, 1889

The planets that are occupying the same signs during both the eclipses are Saturn, Jupiter and Mars. During the interval between the two eclipses Saturn has moved by 1 degree 41' while Rahu has moved 46'. If the sign occupied by Rahu is considered as the ascendant (here Gemini), it can be observed that the planetary combination leading to health hazards is constituted by the placement of the 6th lord (also 11th lord here), Mars in the ascendant. The same planet is exchanging aspect with Jupiter, the lord of 7th house, thus becoming a death-inflicting one.

2) February, 1918

This pandemic is commonly known as “Spanish Flu”. As the outbreak took place during World War I when the newspapers all over the world were partially or completely restricted from reporting of any pandemic situation the exact date and place of its outbreak is disputed. The nearest date of the CEP before the reported date of the pandemic is June-July, 1917. The corresponding charts are shown in Figure 2.

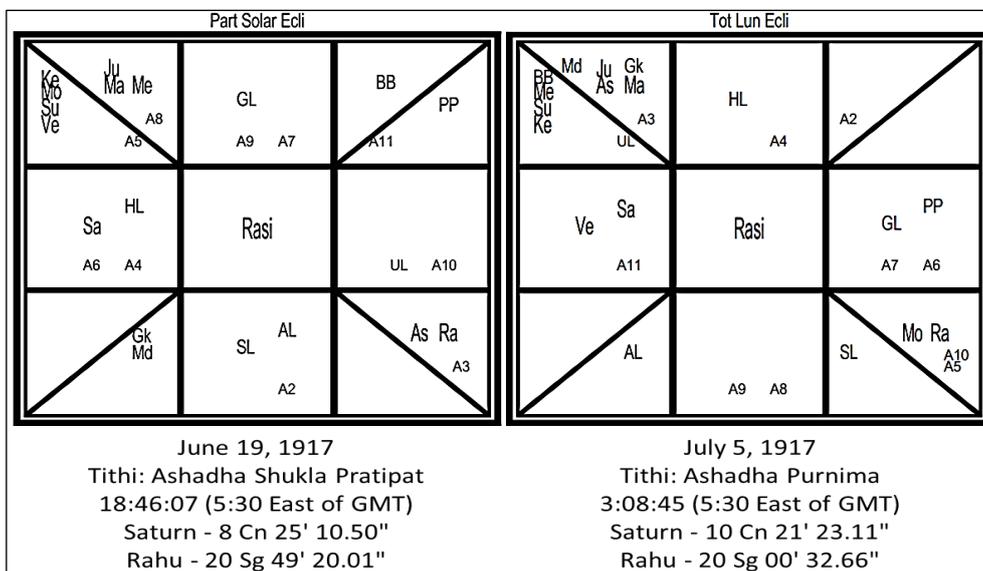


Fig 2: Eclipse chart pair of June-July, 1917

Here also the signs occupied respectively by Saturn, Jupiter and Mars are the same during both the eclipses. During the interval of the two eclipses the change in longitude of Saturn is 1 degree 56' while that of Rahu is around 49'. Rahu being posited in Sagittarius it is considered as the ascendant. The ascendant lord, Jupiter is in the 6th house (Taurus), thus constituting the planetary combination conducive for the onset of disease. The same lord is in conjunction with the 12th lord, Mars. The ascendant lord, along with the 12th lord is

exchanging aspect with Saturn, the lord of 2nd house and thus becoming a primary death-inflicting planet.

3) Early 1957

This pandemic is commonly known as “Asian Flu”. The charts corresponding to the Close Eclipse Pair of May-June of 1956, corresponding to the outbreak of this pandemic is shown in Figure 3.

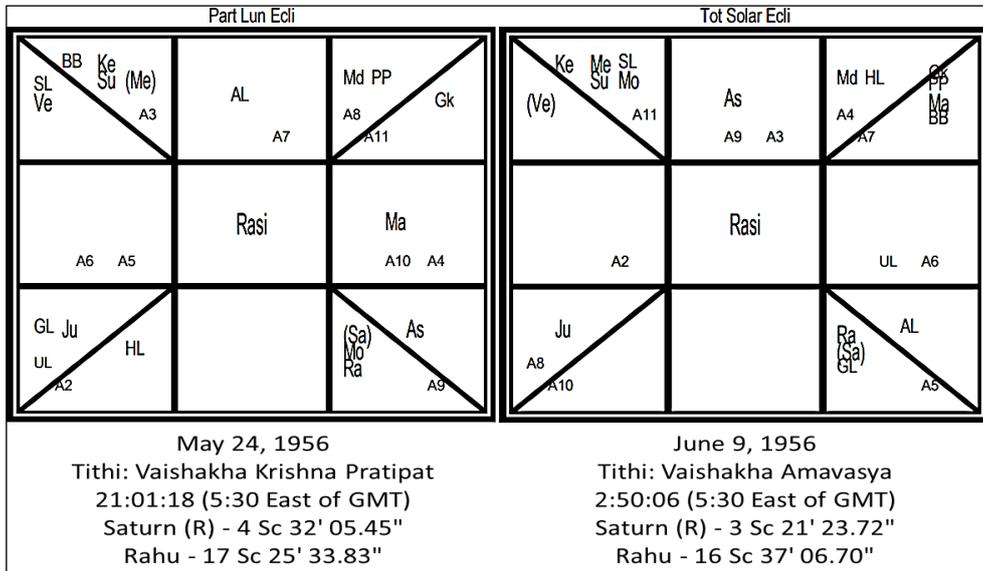


Fig 3: Eclipse chart pair of May-June, 1956

Saturn, Jupiter, Venus and Mercury are situated in Scorpion, Leo, Gemini and Taurus, respectively during both the eclipses. The positions of Saturn and Rahu have altered by 1 degree 11' and 48', respectively during the interval between the two eclipses. As Rahu is occupying Scorpion, it is considered the ascendant in this case. The ascendant lord, Mars is also the lord of 6th house (Aries). Though this lord is in Capricorn and Aquarius during the two consecutive eclipses it is exchanging Drishti with Jupiter, the lord of 2nd

house (Sagittarius), thus making itself a primary death-inflicting planet.

4) July, 1968

This pandemic is commonly known as the “Hong Kong Flu”. The Close Eclipse Pair of March-April, 1968 can be associated with this pandemic that is said to have started in the month of July of the same year. The charts shown in Figure 4 demonstrates the planetary positions during the respective eclipses.

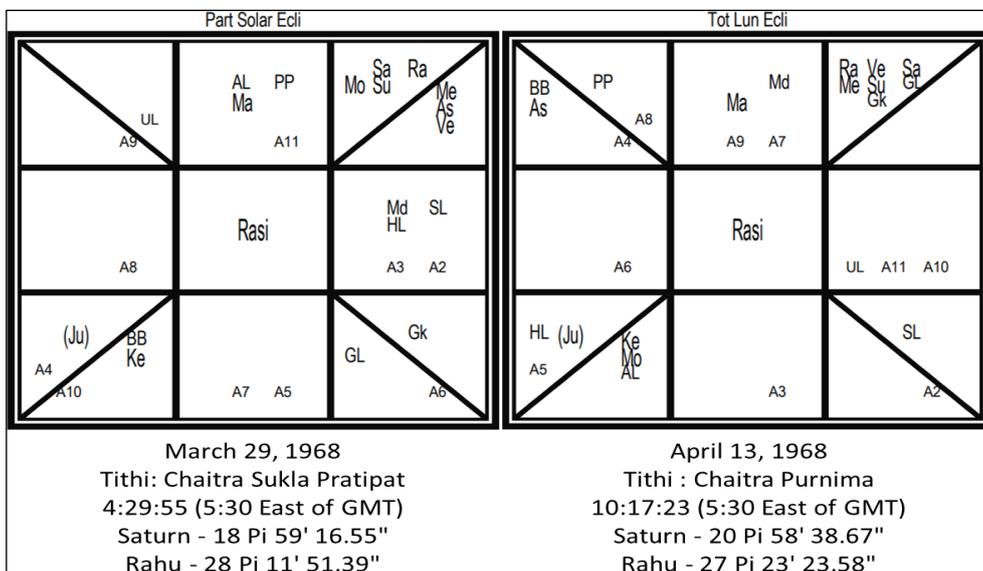


Fig 4: Eclipse chart pair of March-April, 1968

Saturn, Jupiter and Mars are located in Pisces, Leo and Aries; respectively during both of the solar and lunar eclipses shown in the Figure 4. 1 degree 59' has been traversed by Saturn during the interval between the two eclipses while Rahu has moved only 48'. Pisces is considered as the first house for being occupied by Rahu. The lord of this sign, Jupiter is located in the 6th house (Leo), causing afflictions for health. The lord of the 12th house, i.e. Saturn, by occupying the ascendant also constituting hazardous combination regarding health. As the ascendant lord, Jupiter is exchanging aspect

with the 2nd lord (Mars) it can be considered a death-inflicting planet.

5) January, 2009

This pandemic is commonly known as “Swine Flu”. The first record is said to be found in the month of January in the year 2009. The outbreak can be associated with the eclipses of January-February in the same year. The charts corresponding to the annular solar eclipse of 26th January and the penumbral lunar eclipse of 9th February are given in Figure 5.

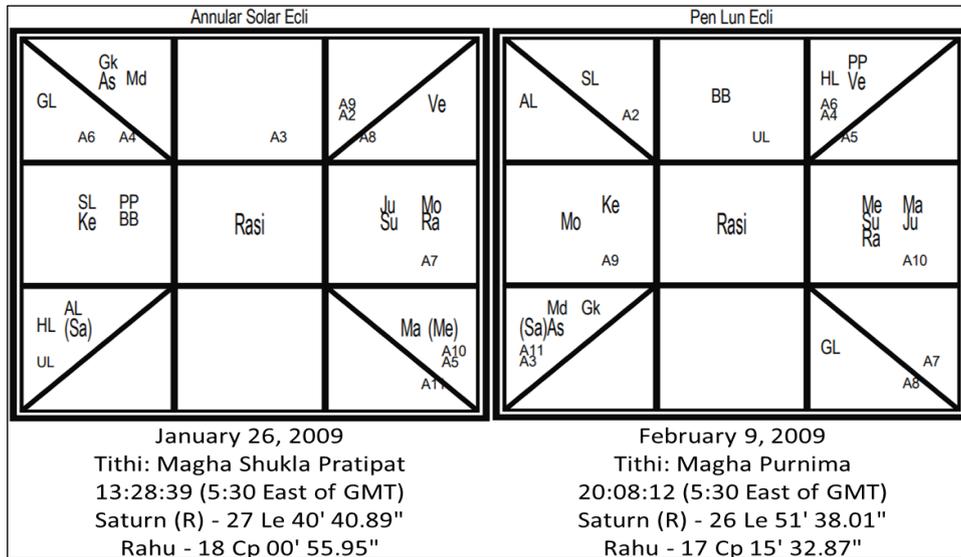


Fig 5: Eclipse chart pair of January-February, 2009

Saturn and Jupiter are the planets that are occupying the same signs viz. Leo and Capricorn; respectively during both the eclipses. Saturn and Rahu changed their positions by 49' and 45', respectively during the interval between the two eclipses. Rahu's presence in Capricorn makes this sign the reference ascendant for the current analysis. Three planetary combinations are common in both the charts that indicate the health-related troubles. Firstly, the ascendant lord (Saturn) is located in the 8th house (Leo). The second one is constituted by the position of the 8th lord (Sun) in ascendant (Capricorn). Thirdly, the 12th lord (Jupiter) occupying the ascendant house

also makes the body prone to diseases. Hence, the placement of three planet, viz. Saturn, Sun and Jupiter strongly suggest the onset of diseases. The 2nd lord, Saturn and the 7th lord, the Moon are closely associated with these three planets, making all of the three planets death-inflicting.

6) December, 2019 (COVID-19)

The present pandemic starting from December of 2019 is due to the virus named "SARS-CoV-2". The charts corresponding to the associated Closed Eclipse Pair are shown in Figure 6.

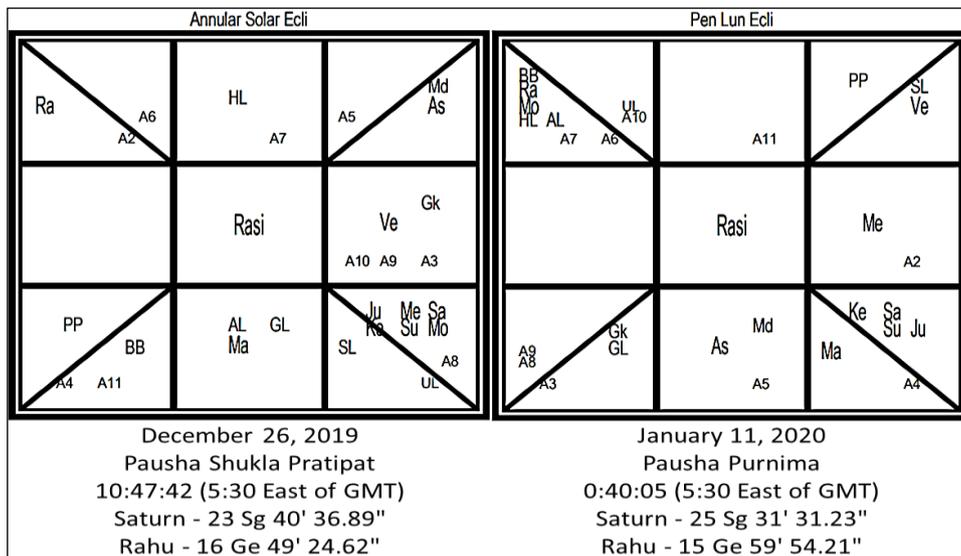


Fig 6: Eclipse chart pair of December, 2019-January, 2020

The location of Saturn and Jupiter in Sagittarius is the common feature of the charts corresponding to both the solar and lunar eclipses. Saturn and Rahu moved by 1 degree 51' and 49', respectively during the interval between the two eclipses. Gemini is the first house as it is occupied by Rahu. It can be seen that the no planetary combination mentioned in the "Introduction" of this article from the texts like BPHS, Sarvarthachintamani or Phaladeepika are commonly present in this pair of charts that can be considered as a health-hazardous. However, according to B. V. Raman the presence of the 8th lord (here Saturn) in the 7th house (Sagittarius), along with the 7th lord (here Jupiter) is detrimental for the health of an individual [9]. One having this combination in the

birth chart has the potential danger of meeting with ill-health while going abroad. It can be noted that the present COVID-19 pandemic was spread mostly by the travelling of people from one country to another. The eighth lord occupying the 7th house (Sagittarius) makes that lord death-inflicting. Moreover, its conjunction with the 7th lord (Jupiter) intensifies its death-inflicting nature even further.

B. Formulation of Method to Identify the Concerned Eclipses

In all the six cases of outbreak of the influenza pandemics there are CEPs associated with each of them. The presence of a planetary combinations that is detrimental for health is the

common feature of all the chart pairs corresponding to both types of eclipses. Jupiter has been instrumental in making the planetary combination either disease-inflicting or death-inflicting or both. Based on these common features it is possible to forecast the onset of influenza pandemics. The steps that are to be followed to do so are the following:

- 1) Spot a CEP
- 2) Identify the common placement of planets during both types of eclipses
- 3) Identify the disease-inflicting planetary combinations present in the chart pair
- 4) Identify the Maraka status of the planets associated with the combinations mentioned in Step 3.
- 5) Identify the relationship of such combinations with Jupiter.

C. Limitation of the above Method and Formulation of the Second Method

The steps mentioned above can be considered as identifying the necessary condition for the onset of influenza pandemic. However, there is no scope to claim these as the sufficient condition to initiate a global crisis like influenza pandemic. For example, the charts of the eclipse pair of March-April, 1922 (shown in Figure 7) fulfils all the requisite criteria mentioned above.

- Saturn, Jupiter, Venus, Mercury and Mars are static in their respective sign locations during both eclipses.
- The location of the 6th lord, Saturn in the ascendant (Virgo) is the disease-inflicting combination. Moreover, the ascendant lord, Mercury, by its placement in the 6th house became another disease-causing factor.
- The disease-inflicting planet, Saturn is conjoined with 7th lord (Jupiter) and exchanging Drishti with the 2nd lord (Venus). Hence, Saturn is a definitely a severe Maraka.
- Jupiter is in conjunction with Saturn.

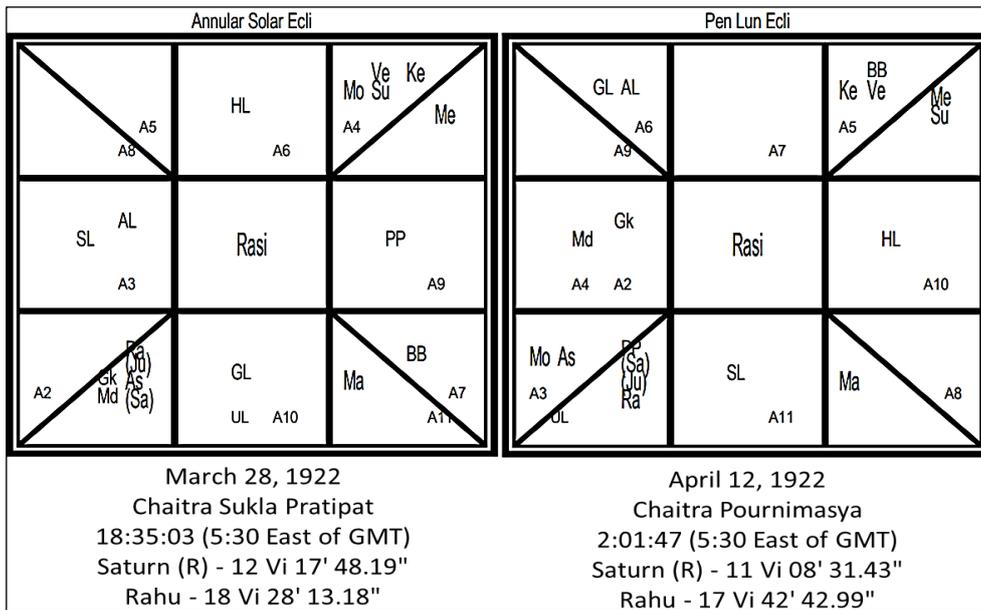


Fig 7: Eclipse chart pair of March-April, 1922

However, no influenza pandemic is reported in that year 1922 or the subsequent year. The reason could be the good placement of Mars, which is simultaneously the lord of 3rd and 8th house. According to Sri B. V. Raman the 3rd and 8th houses correspond to life, whereas 2nd and 7th to death. In this case Mars is located in 3rd house (own house of Mars) and aspecting the 8th (own house of Mars) but not associated with either the 2nd lord (Venus) or 7th lord (Jupiter). So, Mars which is the lord of 8th and 3rd house is by no means a primary Maraka planet. Hence, it can be concluded that the placement of the 8th and 3rd lord is a dominant deciding factor for the

outbreak of a pandemic. The ascendant lord, Mercury also cannot be termed as a primary Maraka as it is not associated with either of the 2nd lord or the 7th lord. Nor the ascendant lord is placed in 2nd or 7th house, thus making it a primary Maraka. Table 2 summarises the Maraka status of the ascendant lords, 3rd lords and 8th lords corresponding to the charts of eclipse pairs listed in Table 1. The influence of Jupiter and other planets, either by its location or by its Drishti on the houses like 6th, 8th, 11th (6th from 6th house) and 3rd (8th from 8th house) is also depicted in Table 3 and examined as a probable cause of influenza.

Table 2: Maraka status of the lords of the ascendant, the 8th house and the 3rd house

Close Eclipse Pair	Rahu's Position	Ascendant Lord/ Maraka (Y/N)		8th Lord/Maraka (Y/N)		3rd Lord/Maraka (Y/N)		Remark
		Planet	Y/N	Planet	Y/N	Planet	Y/N	
June-July, 1889	Gemini	Mercury	Y	Saturn	Y	Sun	Y	Mercury, though not fixed in a single sign it is Maraka during both the eclipses. (Due to association with Sa and Ju; respectively).
June-July, 1917	Sagittarius	Jupiter	Y	Moon	Y	Saturn	Y	-
May-June, 1956	Scorpion	Mars	Y	Mercury	Y	Saturn	Y	-
March-April, 1968	Pisces	Jupiter	Y	Venus	Y	Venus	Y	-
January-February, 2009	Capricorn	Saturn	Y	Sun	Y	Jupiter	Y	Saturn is Maraka for being the associated with Jupiter and itself being the 2 nd lord.
Dec,2019-Jan,2020	Gemini	Mercury	Y	Saturn	Y	Sun	Y	-

Table 3: Influence of Jupiter and other planets on 6th, 8th, 11th and 3rd houses

Close Eclipse Pair	Planets influencing 6 th house	Planets influencing 8 th house	Planets influencing 11 th house	Planets influencing 3 rd house	Primary Maraka
June-July, 1889	Saturn, Venus	Mars, Saturn	Jupiter, Saturn	Jupiter	Jupiter, Saturn, Mars
June-July, 1917	Jupiter, Mars	Saturn, Jupiter, Mars	Jupiter, Mars	Saturn	Jupiter, Saturn, Mars
May-June, 1956	Jupiter, Saturn	Venus	Venus	Jupiter, Saturn, Mercury	Jupiter, Venus
March-April, 1968	Jupiter, Mars	Jupiter, Mars	Jupiter	Saturn	Jupiter, Mars
January-February, 2009	-	Jupiter	Jupiter	-	Jupiter, Saturn
Dec, 2019-Jan, 2020	-	-	Jupiter	Jupiter	Jupiter, Saturn

In Table 2 it can be observed that there are certain common features regarding the lords of the ascendant, the 8th house and the 3rd house. The conditions of becoming a primary Maraka planet, as explained by Sri B. V. Raman in his work “How to Judge a Horoscope” has been applied to these house lords. Except the case of Saturn during the close eclipse pair of May-June of 1956 all the concerned house lords mentioned in Table 2 satisfy the conditions of being the primary Marakas. However, since the Saturn in this particular case is associated with two primary Marakas, viz. Mars and Mercury it is becoming a secondary Maraka twice and hence can be conferred the status of a primary Maraka. During all the events of the close eclipse pairs mentioned in Table 2 all the three lords concerned have been primary Marakas. Jupiter’s influence on the 6th, 8th, 11th and 3rd houses are also very clear from Table 3. In all the cases of close eclipse pairs Jupiter is affecting at least two houses among the four, either by its position or by its Drishti. Moreover, Jupiter has got the Maraka status in all these cases. In cases of the eclipse pairs of 1889, 1917 and 1956 mentioned in Table 3 it is clearly seen that along with Jupiter the four houses are being equally influenced by Saturn, Mars and Venus; respectively. But still the effect of Jupiter has been prevalent. The possible reasons may vary from case to case. In case of 1889 the retrograde motion of Jupiter might have given it extra edge over Saturn, while in the cases of 1917 and 1956, the slower speed of Jupiter than Mars or Venus may be the cause of its dominance. The eclipse pair of June-July, 1917 that is associated with “Spanish Flu” has a special feature that makes it stand apart from the rest of the pandemics described in this work. It is known as the “Mother of Pandemics” as it killed the maximum number of people. This special feature can be attributed to the maximum number (three) of Maraka planets influencing the 8th house (house of longevity), as shown in Table 3. The influence of Mars in three out of four houses may also signify a large number of deaths due to World War I, as Mars indicates wars and bloodshed.

Hence, apart from the steps mentioned earlier to identify a close eclipse pair as the initiating factor of a pandemic a new set of steps can be formulated based on the analyses of Table 2 and Table 3.

- 1) Identify a close eclipse pair.
- 2) Verify the Maraka status of the three lords (of ascendant, 8th and 3rd house).
- 3) Check the influence of Jupiter in at least two out of the four houses, viz. 6th, 8th, 11th and 3rd.
- 4) Examine the death-inflicting nature of Jupiter.

D. Forecasting Influenza Pandemics

Based on the second method it is possible to search for the eclipse pairs having planetary combinations similar to the ones listed in Tables 1 and 2 in future that can potentially indicate the onset of influenza pandemics. Two such future CEPs are discussed below.

1) March-April, 2024

Figure 8 shows the charts corresponding to the CEP of March-April, 2024. Rahu’s position in Pisces will make it the ascendant for analysis. Saturn, Jupiter, Mars and Mercury will be maintaining their sign positions during both the eclipses. Position of ascendant lord (Jupiter) in the second house (Aries) will make it a primary Maraka. Venus (simultaneously 3rd and 8th lord) will be in conjunction with the 2nd lord (Mars) and the 7th lord (Mercury) during the lunar and solar eclipses, respectively, thus making it a primary Maraka. The 6th and the 8th houses from Rahu will be aspected by Jupiter, thus creating a suitable condition for influenza. Moreover, the position of the 6th lord (the Sun) in the ascendant and that of 12th lord (Saturn) in 12th house (Aquarius) will lead to health-deteriorating condition. It can be noted that Mars (Maraka due to lordship of 2nd house) will be aspecting 3rd, 6th and 8th house, thus creating a probability of mass death due to its influence.

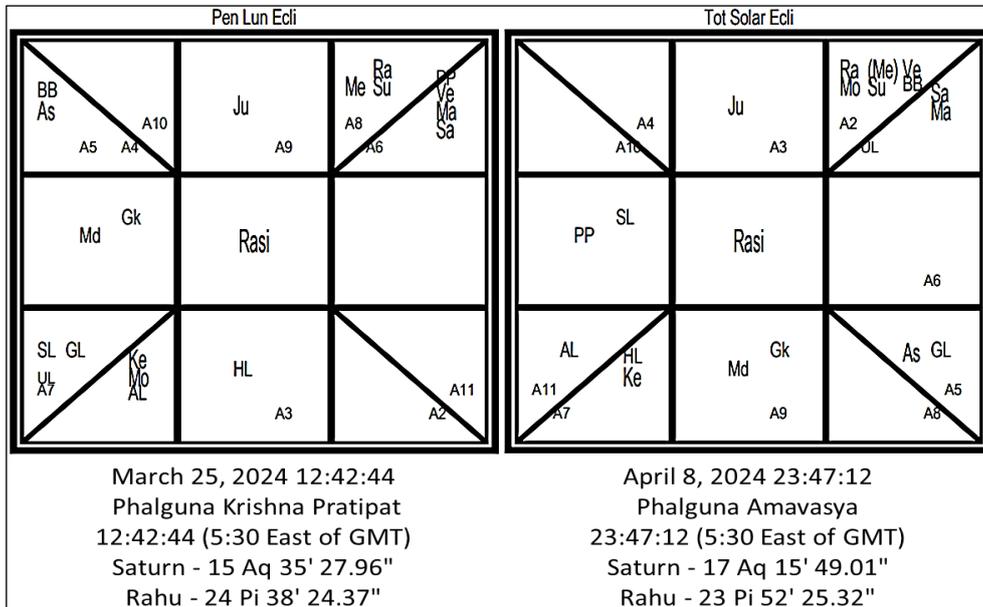


Fig 8: Eclipse chart pair of March-April, 2024

2) June, 2030

The charts of the CEP that will take place in June, 2030 are shown in Figure 9. Due to the placement of Rahu in Scorpio it is the ascendant house considered for analysis. The planets that will retain their sign positions during both of the eclipses are Saturn, Jupiter, Mars and Venus. The lords of the ascendant, 8th house and 3rd house will be Mars, Mercury and Saturn, respectively. Jupiter and Venus will be the owners of the 2nd and the 7th house. Both of ascendant lord (Mars) and 3rd lord (Saturn) will be greatly death-inflicting for being

located in the 7th house as well as being associated with the 2nd lord (Jupiter) through the exchange of Drishti. The 8th lord (Mercury) will be a Maraka through its conjunction with the 7th lord (Venus) during the solar eclipse while during the lunar eclipse its death-inflicting status will be retained by its position in the 7th house and association with the 2nd lord (Jupiter). The 6th house (Aries) and the 8th house (Gemini) will be aspected by Jupiter. Jupiter will be a death-inflicting planet due to the lordship of the 2nd house.

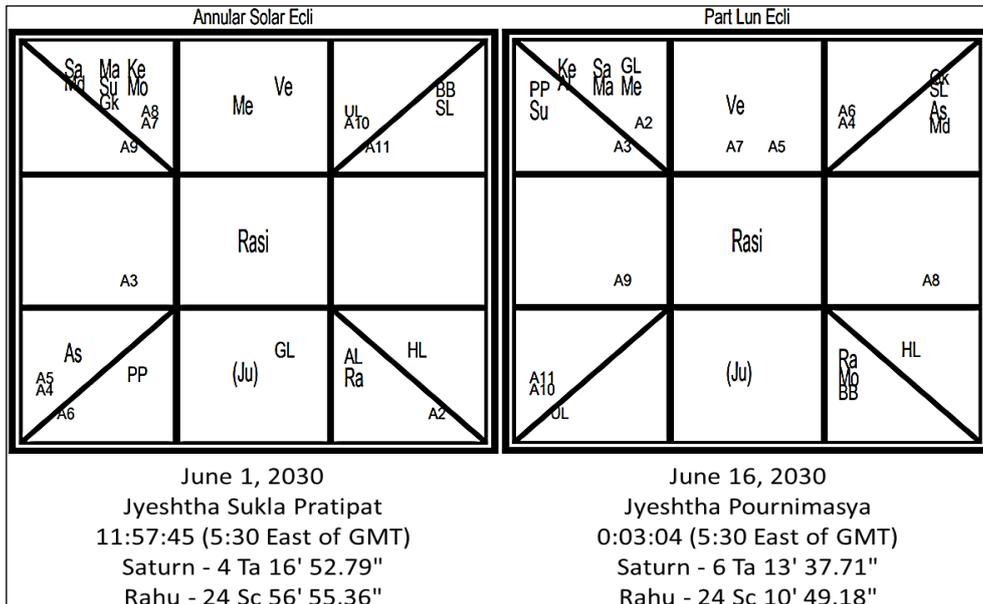


Fig 9: Eclipse chart pair of June, 2030

Conclusion

In conclusion it can be said that in this work effort has been made to utilize the CEPs as the indicators of the onset of influenza pandemics. Six instances of such pandemics are taken into consideration to formulate the method of predicting future pandemics. On the basis of such method predictions of two probable future events are made. However, this analysis method should not be considered infallible as the number of events analysed here on the basis of the available historical records are quite small in number to reach a reliable

conclusion. Only the future events can verify and justify the efficacy of this technique. The author believes that this work will prompt further research to find better techniques to predict events that have global impacts.

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