

lasts 120 years. It is divided into nine *mahādaśā* (great planetary periods). These *mahādaśā* last from six to 20 years, and are further divided into nine *antardaśā* (planetary sub-periods). Depending on the kind of the planet that governs a certain period and sub-period of a person's life as well as the position of the planet(s) in the person's horoscope, the *daśās* are classified into three kinds of periods: "abundant" (*sampūrṇa*), "empty" (*riktā*), and "malefic" (*aniṣṭaphalā*). The fluctuation of a person's fortune (that is given to a person at the moment of birth) also fluctuates depending on the period his life enters (Guenzi 2012, 50). *Brihatsamhita* covers a range of topics concerning the interests of ordinary humans, astrology, and the movements of planets.

Varāhamihira's teachings also offer a glimpse into the everyday life in the Gupta Empire. Although his books were about mathematics, astronomy, and astrology, they also included information about religion, clothing, jewelry, business, food, and literature that were integral parts of the life and practice of the scientists of the time.

Thomas Gosart and Madhumita Kaushik

See also: Indian Astrology; Theosophy

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VILLENA, ENRIQUE DE (1384–1438)

The Spanish humanist scholar Enrique de Villena translated classical works into Castilian and wrote treatises on topics such as the plague (1422), consolation (1424), and the evil eye (ca. 1425). His interest in astrology started at a very young age during his education in the Catalan courts of Pedro IV *el Ceremonioso* (1336–1387) and Juan I *el cazador* (1387–1396) where astrologers, including Jews and Muslims, flourished under royal protection. Notorious as an astrologer during his life, his books were burnt at the stake after his death by the bishop of Cuenca, Lope de Barrientos. Villena became legendary as a *magus* seduced by the devil, which, fostered by Spanish theater and literature, led several works of astrology to be attributed to him during the modern period.

The Castilian *Tratado de Astrología* was found, severely burnt, at the end of the 19th century by Manuel Serrano y Sanz, friend of the great scholar Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo, and is now located in the National Library of Spain (Res/2, I, 49 h). The fire damage led to doubt whether if it was a true manuscript that survived Barrientos' stake or another apocryphal work. Although authorship has been strongly debated by modern scholars, the manuscript was produced right after Villena's death by a certain Andrés Segovia, who claimed to be copying Villena's original.

The *Tratado* is divided into two parts following Aristotle's *Physics*. The first analyzes the four elements and the second the influence of the celestial spheres over the terrestrial realm. As in his *Exposition of the Psalm Quoniam videbo*, Villena questions the alchemists' attempt to achieve the *quintaesentia* out of wine, defending astrology over alchemy in line with many other medieval astrologers. In his chapter "On the debate that the wise hold about astrology" [*De la disputaçión que fazen los sabios açerca de la astrología*] he builds his Christian apology for judicial astrology and its compatibility with free will.

Villena appropriated biblical discourse citing several passages of Peter Comestor's paraphrased bible *Historia Scholastica* which acquiesce in astrology and magic. He defends magical and astrological representations of Jewish cult objects like the Tabernacle and the Temple, represents Moses as an astrologer and practitioner of talismanic magic, and builds an original *Prisca Theologia* which identifies Zoroaster as the founder of magic.

Villena, as can be seen in his *Tratado de la Fascinación*, was in contact with Juan I's Jewish astrologer, Hasdai Crescas, and his disciple Zaraya Halevi, both of whom thought that the Temple's utensils and the Tabernacle received celestial influences which the magician could operate. These elements, among others, clearly allow attribution of the *Tratado de Astrología* to Villena.

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See also: Astral Magic; Christianity; Legal Regulation of Astrology; Medieval European Astrology; Renaissance and Reformation Astrology

Further Reading

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