

# Vedic Clocks

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Subject: It's a boy

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How did astrologers determine birth time during previous ages when there were no clocks, what to speak of watches synchronized to radio stations? Just curious.

Hare Krishna.

your servant, Brian

Text 362759: 18-Mar-94 Shyamasundara.AC BSP@com-link.org

Subject: Vedic clocks

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In Surya-siddhanta and similar texts there are chapters devoted to making devices for astronomical use. For keeping time there were sundials which were synchronized with the Sun (-: In Jaipur, India they have a famous observatory called Yantar-mantar. The sundial there is so accurate that it gives time within 15 seconds! This sundial is HUGE.

At night they would take the stars as clock and use their period of Right Ascension (living in big cities obscures the utility of using stars for clocks but they are quite accurate, all of our modern concepts of time are based on astronomical phenomena. To mensurate, i.e. to measure, is derived from a common root for moon, month, menses {female period-menstruation}. Celestial phenomena are essentially a big clock, it is called Kala-cakra wheel of time-days-nights.)

On cloudy days/nights there was the clepsydra or water clock (can't remember the Sanskrit name now). A copper vessel of specified dimensions and volume is created. Then a sharp instrument of specified size and diameter is used to puncture a hole into it. This vessel is then filled with water. The length of time taken to empty it was used as a standard. They had determined vessel sizes to get certain time spans. They are remarkably accurate. Like an hour glass.

YS Shyamasundara Dasa