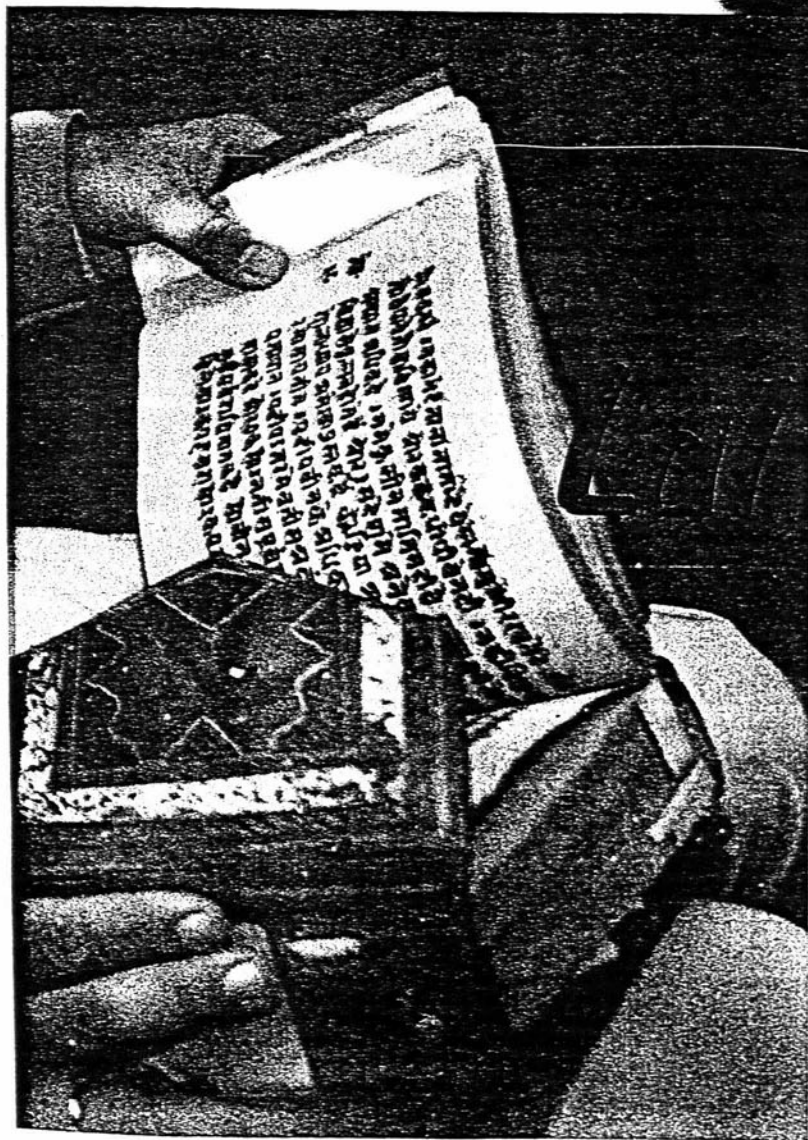


Text and Photographs:
Dr. Gautam Chatterjee

Facing page: An illustrated page of the Lal Kitaab depicting
Lord Brahma the creator as the inside power of Lord
Brahspat (Jupiter)

Below: A two hundred year old Sanskrit edition of the Lal
Kitaab with the important passages written in red



*The Lal Kitaab
is a unique heritage of
Indian astrology. This rare book
was written in old Urdu and punctuated
with verses. Metaphors and similes are its
essence. Today our world has some five-six
copies which are written by hand. Saurabh
Kwatra, USA based Engineer and Astrologer
of the Lal Kitaab School, is trying to revive
this tradition which is replete with hidden
meanings. Dr. Gautam Chatterjee talks to
Saurabh Kwatra to fathom the depth of
this Lal Kitaab and tries to find
its relevance in the
future.*

The Kitaab

Saurabh Kwatra's mystic endeavour to delve deep into astrology started at the age of 17. He learnt the art and understood the philosophy of *Bhṛigu Samhita* — the bible of Hindu astrology. Before long, he mastered the ancient Parashar School of Astrology. Thereafter he was initiated into the Lal Kitaab School of Astrology by his guru Goswami Kundan Lal. He termed this three hundred year old anonymous sacred book Lal Kitaab (Red Book), 'Celestial Window' of Indian astrology. This book can be read only through *gurushishya parampara* (student-teacher tradition) and Saurabh is one of the few scholars who grasped the subject fully. Though there are several near original copies available in the market Saurabh says "90% of the text is original yet a vital 10% is

fake so results are erroneous."

Saurabh possesses an original copy of the Lal Kitaab from his Guru who got it from his great grandfather. Saurabh could successfully predict that Clinton would come out of the 'impeachment' safely and also correctly predicted the fall of the Vajpayee Government in April. He made these predictions one year back and they were reported in the *Times of India*. To test it I became a case study and his astrological analysis was correct to the tune of 98%.

This mystic academic endeavour of Saurabh is free of cost as he was told that if one charges for prediction through the Lal Kitaab then predictions would go wrong. Thus for him it is an academic mission to place this art and science in global perspective.

In Hindu astrology the science of prediction dates back to the post-vedic period. Since then sages tried to understand the position and motion of 9 planets from the perspective of earth. However, Saurabh lamented that "Motion aspects have not been explored and exploited fully. Position remains the main factor in Hindu astrology. Many treatises have been written on Indian astrology and one such powerful exposition was the Lal Kitaab which has become a lost heritage of our astro-science culture".

In the original Lal Kitaab one can find 2500 *farmans* or stanzas in the 500 page manuscript. Like the xylograph one can find pictures of gods and goddesses and unorthodox overlapped writing in red ink. There is one two hundred year old Sanskrit edition which is available with Saurabh Kwatra. In the Sanskrit manuscript one can find important passages written in red.

However, the Lal Kitaab was written in archaic Urdu script without the element of punctuation and often sounds Greek to a layman. Verses are interpolated with philosophy and hidden nuances of destiny. And without a guru's initiation none can correctly understand the subject. The metaphors can be deciphered if one has a thorough knowledge of the Parashar School of Astrology. To understand the hidden nuances of those deceptively simple words Saurabh elaborates for the readers of Discover India.

He cited that when the Sun is in the 8th House Lal Kitaab says *haath se brahmand ko banane wala* (one who builds the universe with his own hands). Now the simple meaning sounds strange as nobody can create the universe. However, the interpretation given by Saurabh goes "This man in whose horoscope the Sun is in the eighth house will be a technical man who will create with his own hands".

For the people who have Jupiter in the 7th house the Lal Kitaab refers *tu kya sakoon mangege jab tere dattak putra ko bhi sakoon nahi milega* (what solace can you desire when even your adopted son cannot get solace). At the interpretative level it can mean the man or woman cannot have a son and there is a chance of miscarriage as well. However, Saurabh explained, interpretations and remedies vary from person to person, horoscope to horoscope.

When asked whether the Lal Kitaab suggests remedies, Saurabh answered in the affirmative. He explained the context of remedies. "Suppose you are sitting in a room which has eight lights placed at varying distance and, for comfort, you need a yellow light which is a little further away and there is a dark light which is disturbing you, you would place a filter before the dark light and then the distant yellow light would be brighter and the focus will be clear. Thus remedies are pure photographic techniques", explained Saurabh Kwatra.

It is interesting to note that Indian astrological science is replete with solutions which start from prayer to chanting *mantra* (verses). In the olden school of Parashar the stress is on *japa*, *tapa* and *mantra* chanting. However, if the prayer is not studded with purity of body or mind and *mantras* are not pronounced properly with proper pause there can be adverse effects as well. Saurabh Kwatra explained that in the Lal Kitaab one can find simpler solutions which takes into account time, colour, materials and gems. However, the solutions revolve around temples and its deities. Temples



being closer to the mind of a devotee, the attainment of results are quicker. And temple here means place of worship of any religion. Thus solutions are purely secular and one can offer prayer in churches or mosques to get requisite results.

Interestingly enough the Lal Kitaab for the first time equates a planet with celestial gods which was not seen earlier in this explicit sense. For example the Sun is Vishnu, the Moon is Shankar or Shiva, Mars is Hanuman, Rahu is Saraswati, Brahaspati is Jupiter, Venus is Lakshmi, Ketu is Ganesh, Mercury is Durga and Saturn is Bhairav.

Thus we see every planet is related to a particular deity and the character and nature of the planet is explained. And solution lies in the appeasement as well. Another important factor is offering a certain material like pulses at a particular time and day. Similarly, gemology is an important factor in the context of solutions. However, the Lal Kitaab remains indecipherable for many. Towards this Saurabh Kwatra is trying to revive this lost heritage. He has traveled and lectured widely and now he wishes to create an institute to pave the path for information dissemination in a wider perspective.