

The Spiritual Dimensions of Vedic Astrology, by Robert A. Koch

(Review by Linda Johnsen)

Do you have a guardian angel who is quietly guiding you to deeper levels of self-understanding? In India these divine companions are called Ishtha-devatas. Astrologers there consciously cultivate their relationship with these inner guides to help them give more accurate, insightful readings. They believe these subtle beings are the deities they worshipped in their previous incarnations.

Vedic astrology offers techniques that help us understand who our special guide is. It also provides timing tools like the Drig Dasha system that allow us to identify when outer events and inner breakthroughs of special spiritual significance are most likely to occur. Robert Koch, one of the most knowledgeable Vedic astrologers presently practicing in the West, has done an extraordinary service introducing these esoteric astrological tools to the English-speaking world.

The Spiritual Dimensions of Vedic Astrology goes way beyond the usual introductory material readers generally find in books on Vedic techniques, introducing advanced and—in the West—little known astrological methods of evaluating a person's spiritual orientation and specific types of practices most likely to promote his or her inner growth. Koch uses the horoscopes of real life saints, as well as secular figures like Bill Clinton and Ronald Reagan, to illustrate how these techniques are applied.

Be forewarned: this book is not for the novice! You'll need to have a basic command of Vedic principles as well as knowledge of Sanskrit astrological terminology to follow Koch's analysis. For Vedic students who are ready for more advanced levels of chart analysis, this book is an incredibly fascinating and intellectually challenging introduction to a branch of Hindu astrology that those of us drawn to spiritual life will find invaluable.

Koch was a Hindu monk for 20 years; his devotion to Krishna, the beloved deity of his tradition, is powerfully evident in this book. In 1987 he returned to

America and began practicing Indian astrology; his superb articles have often appeared in the American Council of Vedic Astrology journal. He currently serves on the faculty of the Sri Jagannatha Center and teaches astrology in the tradition of Pandit Sanjay Rath.

— Linda Johnsen