



## Mastering the Technique of Lens-Based Refractive Surgery (Phakic IOLs)

EDITED BY ASHOK GARG, JORGE L. ALIO, DIMITRII DEMENTIEV AND ANTONIO MARINHO.  
JAYPEE BROTHERS, NEW DELHI, 2005.  
RICHLY ILLUSTRATED WITH COLOUR PHOTOGRAPHS AND DIAGRAMS.

Recently, after reviewing the massive *Advances in Ophthalmology 2* for this column – which is published by the same publishers and has one of the same editors – I wrote about how heartening it was to see high quality textbooks coming from the so-called “developing” world.

Of course, some of this reflects the great changes in what we tend to see as a monolithic “third world” of poverty and endless dependence. India, and in particular Calcutta, is home to one of the most literary cultures in the world. India is the third largest publisher of English-language books and also the publisher of a vast amount of books in the thousands of other languages of the subcontinent.

The English doctor and writer Theodore Dalrymple – whose pen-name is Anthony Daniels – recently noted the huge improvements in Indian publishing after a visit to the Calcutta book fair that: “The standard of book production in India has risen enormously since the last time I attended the fair, seven years ago,” Dr. Dalrymple wrote. “This is one small consequence of the end of the Permit Raj, or Rule by Permit, under which bureaucrats parceled out economic activity to privileged companies; with what results for the quality of goods produced, and the honesty of all concerned, one can imagine. Indian books, however interesting or important, would come printed on paper of the worst quality, and appeared even when new as if they had long dwelled among the cockroaches; but now Indian books are fast approaching international standards. If the government does not reinstitute the Permit Raj, India could soon become printer to the world.”

The handsome books published by Jaypee Brothers – such as *Advances in Ophthalmology 2* and the current volume – are a testament to that quality.

Unlike the vast scope of *Advances in Ophthalmology 2*, this book is very narrowly focused on a specific technical skill. And, in this case, not only is there a book, but also an attached CD-ROM. This features videos of certain procedures which are presented in a direct and sparse style. Some of the videos do not even have narration, which I found somewhat odd. The exception is Dimitrii Dementiev’s video on surgical techniques, which consists of a montage of various

surgical techniques with a soundtrack of what sounds bizarrely like the “Gypsy Kings.”

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This book shares an editor with *Advances in Ophthalmology 2*, Ashok Garg. Dr Garg is described in the biographical blurb on the back cover as “an excellent Anterior Segment Eye Surgeon and Research Ophthalmologist of International Repute doing pioneer work in the field of Ocular Therapeutics, SICS, Microphaco and Refractive Surgery.” The Jaypee Brothers’ books are rather lavish affairs with elaborate dedications and photographs of the contributors.

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Although the focus is much narrower, the book shares much in approach with the previously reviewed volume. It is colourful and clearly designed. The typeface is large enough for easy reading, and there are plenty of tables and charts to summarise the relevant information neatly and clearly. The team of authors is

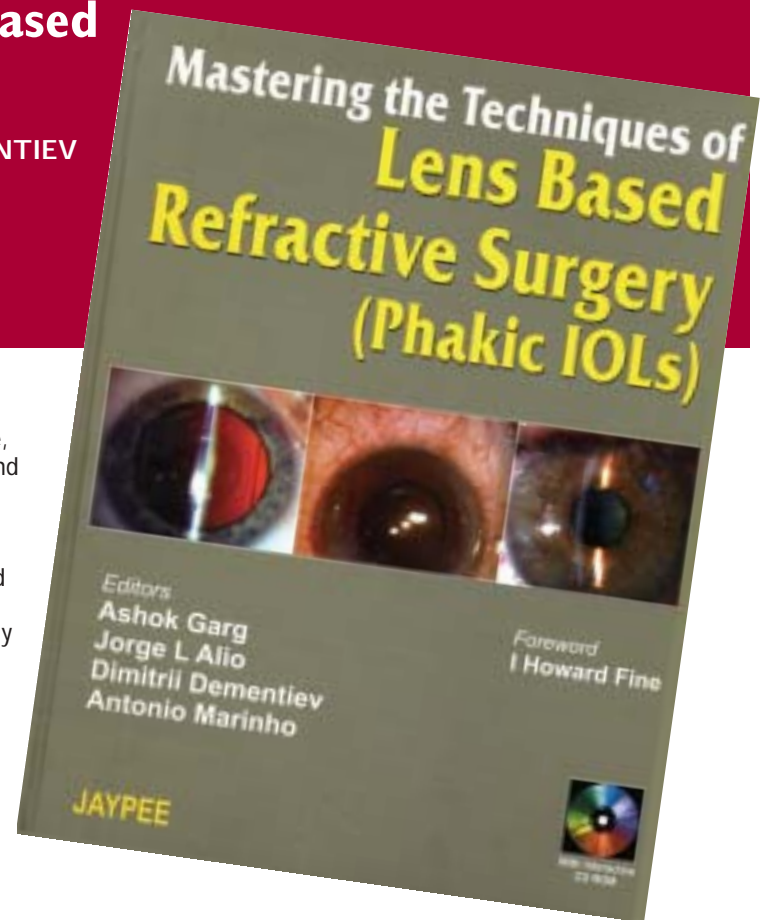
an impressively international one, with European and American ophthalmologists sharing the work with Indian-based colleagues. The Internet obviously makes these transnational collaborations easier. All four editors give their e-mail addresses in their biographical material on the back cover.

The importance of the topic under discussion is stressed by Howard Fine in his Foreword. Fine discusses the increasing recognition of the fact that any surgical alterations to the cornea – even the most sophisticated customised refractive surgery – will, over time, be degraded by changing spherical aberration in the human lens.

In 1958 the first phakic intraocular lens was implanted by Strampelli, followed by a lengthy case series by Barraquer. Gradual improvements were continually made to these lenses.

The book takes a very clinical, practical approach, beginning with the indication for lens-based refractive surgery and indeed the contraindications. It then proceeds not only to discuss the various types of available lenses and the practical approach to surgery, but potential treatment options for the future. The prose style is generally clear and lucid, at all times practical and business-like. The authors discuss not only technique but also specific instruments and indeed brands that they recommend for practice. It is obviously an extremely specialised book, the narrow focus of which means that it is unlikely to appeal to those without a keen interest in the topic.

Overall, this book is testament to the high standards of book production in India. It is a significant resource for ophthalmologic surgeons and will be essential for those practising in this particular field. It is heartening and instructive to see such a high quality



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volume, the result of a truly international effort, emanating from what is condescendingly thought of as the “Third” world.