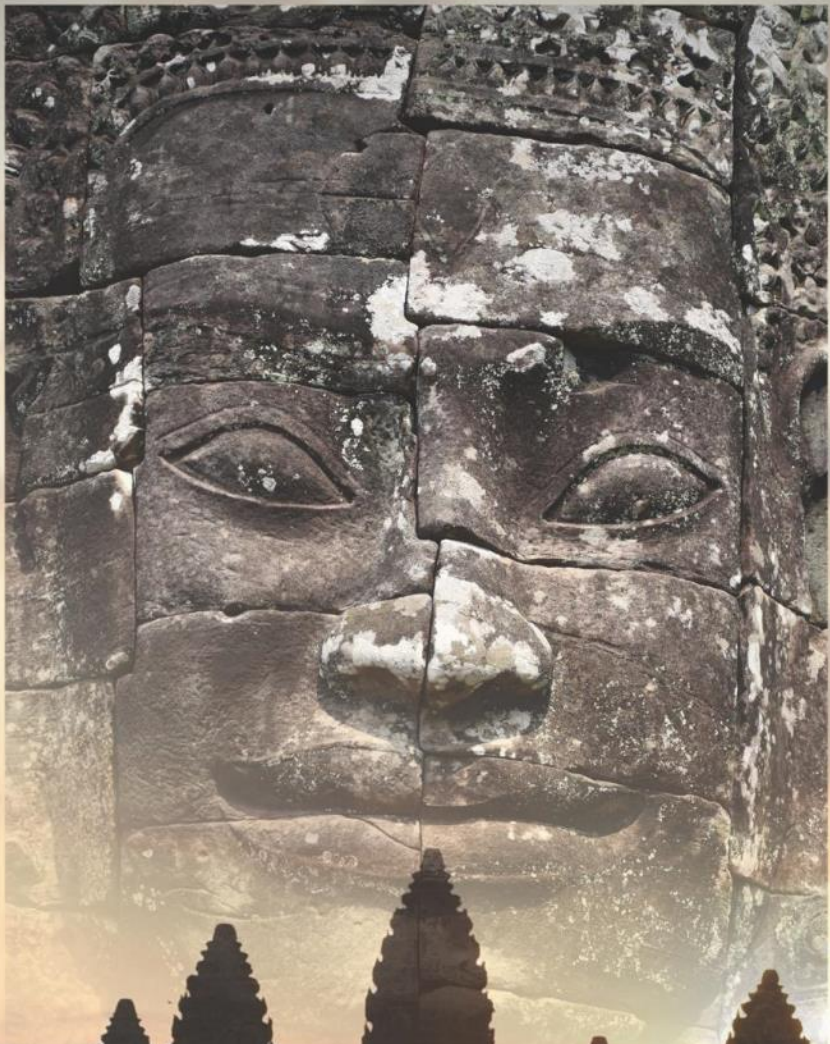


8th Wonder of the World



# NICHAMON: ANGKOR PARABLES

SK SHARMA

F R E E D O M F R O M C A N C E R



'NICOMACHEAN BLISS' AND 'CALMING SENSES'





**Thinking is the talking of the soul  
with itself. - Plato**





**The Elephant Gate**



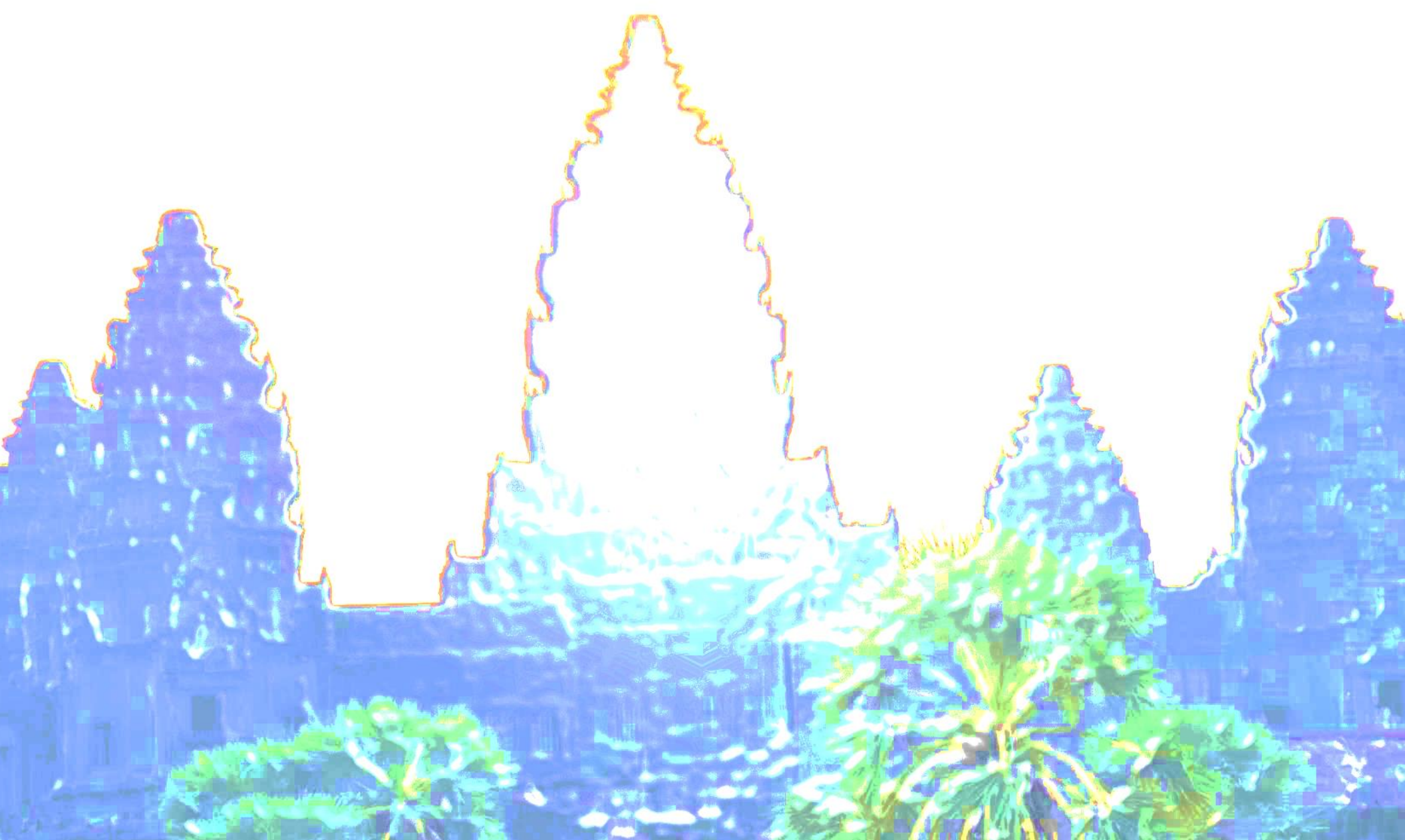


*To my Lord, Nichamon and my erudite wife  
Archana: my inspirations*

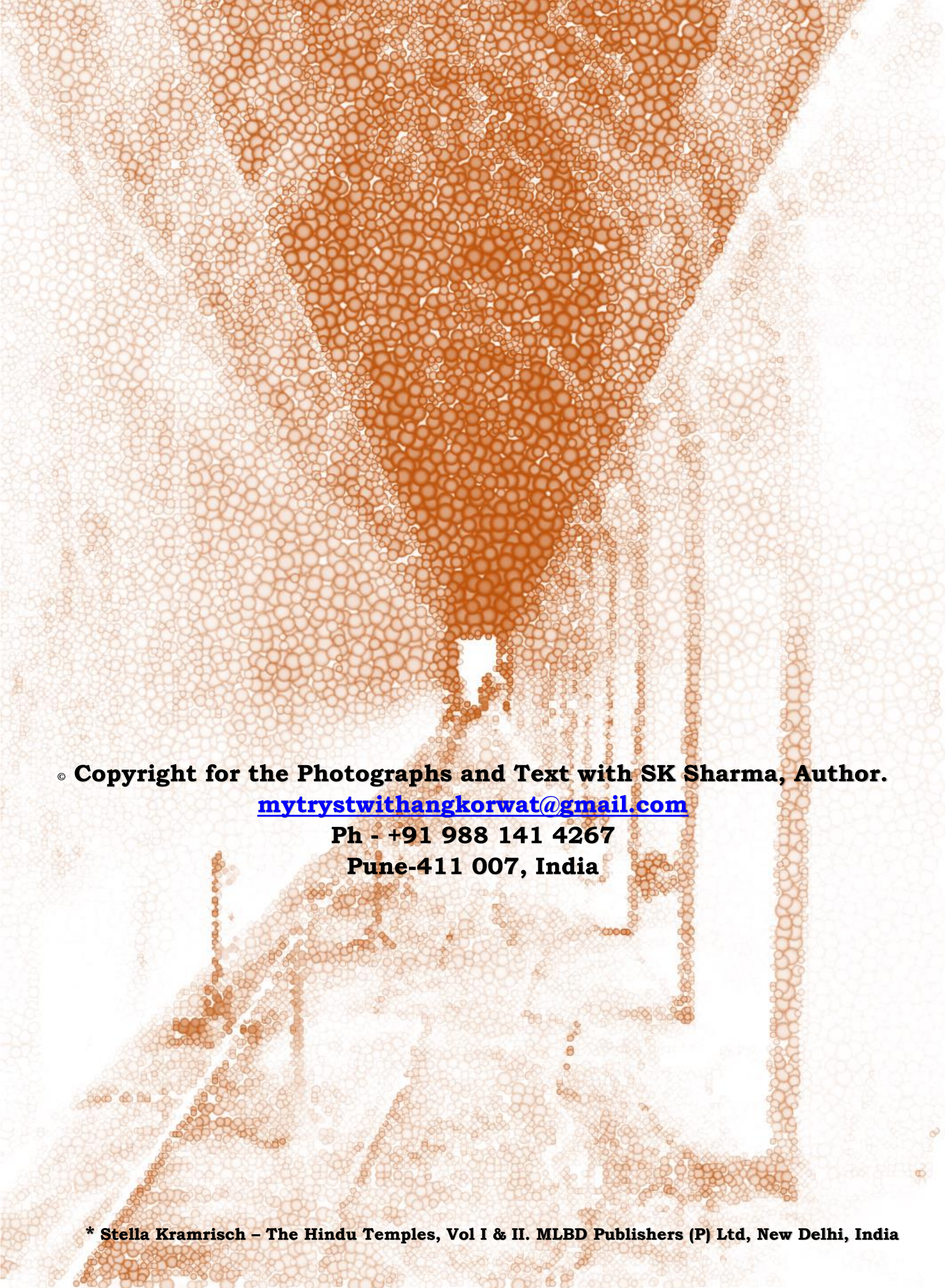


*I Love you the more, in that I  
believe you had liked me for my  
own sake and for nothing else.*

*- John Keats*







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**\* Stella Kramrisch – The Hindu Temples, Vol I & II. MLBD Publishers (P) Ltd, New Delhi, India**





**Lord Vishnu at Angkor Wat**





**Lord Buddha at Angkor Wat**





**Nichamon**





**Truth can be stated in a thousand different ways,  
yet each one can be true. - Swami Vivekanand**



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## Author's Note

*The wait for an event is more precious than its actual occurrence. There is expectation of the unknown. There is intrigue. There is a certain amount of anxiety. But if the wait is unduly long, it could lend complacency and even disbelief. In my case, however, negative gradations were never allowed to permeate the beauty of my 33 years long wait. I had been busy with my responsibilities as well and at times even forgot about Angkor but never allowed that fire to get extinguished from the crevasses within my heart.*

*One could ascribe that to Gods; yes! The Lord, Who helped me keep that fire remain kindled all the while I waited in my quest to know what & who God is. My search became more, much more relevant in the context of turbulence within our societies in recent times, which required calming of senses.*

*And the day it happened, there was no stopping, thereafter. There have been four Pilgrimages to Angkor already; and of them eight visits to The Wat itself. But every time I go there, the appetite only gets whetted more. Every time I come back, I begin to yearn to go back. For my work has just begun, if at all. My work of understanding the very entity called God.*

*Please remember - in a Temple, what appears... in fact... isn't. And the day one gets to understand this Truth, one need never visit a Temple. And it has nothing to do with any specific Religion, for all religions have their forms of Temples; places to find solace. It has something to do with - me and you.*





**Different mornings, different strokes**



# Vaastu Prayer\*

Oim Namō Bahgwate VastuPurushaya  
 Mahabalprakramay SarvadhivasashritaShariray,  
 BrahmaPutray SakalBrahmandadharine  
 BhubharasamarpitMastakay  
 PurupattanPrasadgrihVapisarakupade:  
 Sannivesh Saannidhyakaray  
 sarvasiddhiPradayPrasannavadanay  
 Vishwambharay  
 ParamPurushay ShakravarDay  
 VashtoshpateNamaste..

Om, I Bow to The Holy VastuPurush  
 of great strength & Valour,  
 Whose Body rests under all dwellings,  
 Son of Brahma,  
 Upholder of the Entire Universe,  
 Whose Head is placed to carry  
 the Burden of the Earth,  
 Who Makes all Sites Receptacles  
 of His Presence,  
 The Towns, Cities, Temples, Palaces,  
 Houses, tanks and Wells,  
 Who assures all kinds of Fulfilment,  
 Supreme Purush (Entity), Granter  
 of Boons to Indra,  
 Of gracious appearance, Support of the Cosmos,  
 Lord of the Dwellings, I Bow my Head before You..





**Life at Angkor as varied as people from all over.**



## Preface: Understanding Angkor

*From Lord Buddha to The Christ and Confucius to Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, man's quest has always been to find Happiness and to know the Truth. Who we are? What is God? Where to find Him? Many such questions keep our minds occupied. Behavioural scientists, experimental psychologists and neurotheologists have propounded theories such as 'Eudaimonia' and 'Nicomachean Ethics'. But clarity and certainty have eluded them, hither to.*

*Millions have treaded this path before; many shall after we leave this fragile world. Truth, nevertheless will only come their way who follow the path of knowledge with purity of thought. It is something innate to all of us; has little to do with religion.*

*In order to help us lead a more complete life, there shall always be space for such an ethereal feeling as love. Who would know that better than the Creator Himself? One finds solace in the Churches, Mosques and Temples; Abodes of the Lord. He asks us nothing in return, ever. For he just gives; even if you hurt him.*

*Angkor, as Abode of The Lord, having been crafted with consummate perfection by the Sculptor-Yogis of unparalleled virtuosity, is an exceptional effort undertaken by human being,*





**Gently ushering in a new dawn.**



ever and for a reason (*In order to accord justice and understand Angkor better, we may, at places, digress a little from the main subject*). The most sacred confluence of physical & metaphysical worlds, there is nothing superfluous at Angkor; it may well be akin to the best creation of Gods. Be it the sculptures inside & on outer walls of the Temples, their towering finials leading Devotees' mind & heart from this world to the one above or the rhythmic interplay of light & shadows which Devotees witness while ambulating, everything is in correct proportions & at most suitable place. Besides receiving unadulterated love of The Lord, many lessons are latent within Angkor; lessons of bliss & harmony. Events of the recent past haven't been able to impair that bliss, one bit.

Angkor is a peerless example of Temple Architecture ordained in Holy Scriptures such as the Vedas, Vaastu-Shastra & Shilp-Shastra (conveyed through an unbroken series of Seers) which guide us as to why, where & how to build temples. Not only temples but our homes and our places of work; for these are temples as well. Wisdom of Angkor has been condensed in her two books on *Indian Temples* by Stella Kramrisch which help us understand the rationale. We also need to take a closer





**It does feel tiresome; worthy of a refreshing drink.**



look at architecture & engineering as practiced by people of that era. It shall further help understand psyche of those people & why they undertook this onerous task.

Water, energy embodied within, is a life giver & holds especial place in our lives; cleansing everything. Proximity to Kulen River and moats around Temples make Angkor a *Tirtha*, a place of pilgrimage where one can gently shed *Clouds of Ignorance* with the *sword of knowledge*; tread the path of truth. Kings of yore trusted this and created such stellar example of Supreme Principles as Angkor to help humanity arrive at the *Ultimate Objective* of life - *release*.

We might not be able to see Him, though, but apparitions do occur as had happened in *Fatima* a hundred years ago with those Shepherd kids. That happens to the most fortunate ones and they are beatified into Sainthood. For others, through evocation, ecstasy of being directly under his *benign Gaze* gets accentuated at such Holy places as Angkor: I waited for 33 long years to be there.

Be it a Devotee visiting Angkor, a young Bride seeking His Blessings or a mother comforting her dehydrated daughter, an ever



x



x

Trees flowing down the  
Temples like icicles.



smiling sugarcane juice maid, a Tuk Tuk driver or those tiny girls selling souvenirs, everyone is enjoying the bliss of being around Angkor; mostly oblivious of the divine benevolence. Natural Environs and energy in the air at Angkor touch a chord within the Devotees who, once there in such a strong communion with Him, unsurprisingly, begin to learn & internalise more about Angkor.

To that end, with some knowledge of spirituality acquired since childhood over bedtime stories & study of the Sacred Books, my views developed after deep analysis & understanding of the rationale, feelings for Humanity at large and innate passion for matters Divine are being shared with my fellow humans, through these passages so that they could benefit more from their visits to Angkor. These passages, composed in simple prose (for easy comprehension), shall open one's mind & afford an opportunity for self-cleansing and acquire pure Heart - become a 'Nīchamon'. A Nicomachean Pure Heart leading to final release from the shackles of life; leading to Moksha - liberation from Conditions of Space and Time.

A visit to Angkor initiating a process of knowing  
- *The Truth*





**Over 1000 Sq M of Bas-Reliefs depicting legends from Ancient Holy Scriptures.**







# Devotees approaching Angkor Wat











**A young couple seeking  
His Blessings**



# A Mother attending to her dehydrated daughter

xvii





# Ever smiling Sugarcane Juice Maid



xvii



# Phiya, a Tuk Tuk Companion





## Angkor – Breathing Tenderness

In these passages, term *Angkor* has been used to describe all of nearly four dozen Temples spread across a thousand square kilometres; foremost of them being *Angkor Wat*. Bantaey Srei, Ta Prom, Pre Rup, Bayon, Preah Ko and Roulus Group are other more notable ones; each being a piece of excellence, both in terms of workmanship as also Divine energy.

Sacred Architecture, in its highest ritual, forms the basis of these Temples. What began in eighth Century, construction of the temples continued until middle of twelfth Century when King Suryavarman II completed Angkor Wat. Carved out of grey sandstone (Bantaey Srei is in pink) drawn from Kulen Ranges, these Temples are a marvel of Engineering. A sophisticated hydraulic system was employed by the creators with use of Laterite in the under layers so that these large structures remained stable under high water table conditions.

It is congruent to introduce the reader regards a significant fact with respect to sculptures in the realm of Temple or Sacred Architecture. That of *interplay of light & shadows* which lends breathing tenderness to the sculptures in human form and warmth to the visible texture of stone. *Unnerving that what we get to see today, are all ruins.*







**Angkor Wat - First Ray** 3

**5:50 am 25 Feb' 17**



*'I saw a sunrise, And I felt a smile inside.  
I saw that particular one, And I cried'.*





**‘But I know every rock and tree and creature,  
*every being has a life, a spirit, and a name.*’**



6:08 am 25 Feb' 17 5



**‘Nature is an infinite sphere whose center is everywhere and circumference nowhere.’ — Blaise Pascal**





**‘The sky takes on shades of orange during sunrise and sunset, the colour that gives you hope that the sun will set only to rise again.’  
- Ram Charan**



**Softly silhouetted against morning light reflected from the clouds;  
defining Life Stations on The Meru.**







The mind is everything.  
What you think you become.



**Lord Shiva's abode, in Peerless Pink. Wish had witnessed this Pristine beauty in full Bloom!**

**Banteay Srei 9**







**Colours of the Wind, deeply permeated into Grey sandstone. Sheer sophistication.**





One of a few Temples in brick & Stone.  
Home to my favourite Nandi. He Listens.



12

**In our eyes, the  
Beauty lies! It surely  
does in an evening  
Sun caressing and  
burnishing algae  
& efflorescence  
of centuries.**

**Ba Kong**

