

*IMAGES OF THE
COSMIC MOUNTAIN*

A Selection of Temples in Australia,
Indonesia, Cambodia and Myanmar

Mark Smith

“He, the Creator (Visvakarman), lays out the plan of the universe according to measure and number. He is the prototype and model of the temple builder, who also unites in his single person, the architect, the priest, and the sculptor. This small universe (the temple) has to be situated with respect to the vaster universe, of which it forms a part. It has to fall into line with the position of the earth in relation to the course of the sun, and also the movement of the planets..... Far from being a simple arithmetical operation to be achieved by applying the measuring rod, the layout of a temple is based on fundamental cosmic and metaphysical conceptions that govern the whole structure..... The situation of the temple must, in its space directions, be established in relation to the motion of the heavenly bodies. But inasmuch as it incorporates in a single synthesis the unequal courses of the sun, the moon, and the planets, it also symbolises all recurrent time sequences: the day, the month, the year.”

Racamandra Kaulacara

Cited by Alice Boner in

New Light on the Sun Temple of Konorara,
Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanscrit Series Office
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Preface

This is a record of nine sacred sites I have visited in Australia and South-East Asia. The S.E. Asian sites are temples which owe much to the Architect/Priests of either the Hindu or Buddhist faith. The two Australian sacred sites may be called 'temples'. They are of an entirely different provenance, yet share many characteristics with their S.E. Asian sacred sites.

I began my temple-hopping forays as an accidental tourist who stumbled on these monumental edifices without any appreciation of the fact that the buildings were architecturally encoded. As I continued my sight-seeing tours, it began to dawn on me that the S.E. Asian monuments were expressions, in one form or another, of the archetypal Mahameru, the Cosmic Mountain of Indian thought.

Once I discovered that temples of Indian design, whether of the Hindu faith or Buddhist faith, were miniaturised versions of the fabled Mount Meru, I then set about researching the specifications outlined by the great architect-priests. These specifications are outlined in an introductory chapter in which the reader will have to acquire a new vocabulary. Terms such as parikrama, pradaksina, prasaya, quincunx, omphalos, axis mundi, circumambulation, alignment, and so on, are some of the key words that are used to describe the metaphysical principles of temple design and structure.

The introductory chapter also illustrates the nature of the cosmic mountain by referring to Mount Kailas in south-western Tibet. It is a 'natural' temple whose location and shape introduces the reader to a few of the features of the 'home of the gods'. Worshippers at this 'temple' practise parikrama or ritual circumambulation. This particular rite is a method of worship which later became incorporated into the design of man-made temples.

The treatment of the nine major sites begins with an introduction to an Australian sacred site of great significance to both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people of Australia - Uluru.

I have referred to this sacred site as a 'Natural Temple in the Heart of Australia'. The S.E. Asian sites are then introduced according to two organising principles viz: simple to complex and natural to man-made. In such an ordering there is, of course, room for some disagreement. I have concluded my selection with the treatment of another Australian sacred site of significance to most Australians - The Australian War Memorial.

My reasons for adding the Australian War Memorial to the other eight sacred sites are given in the text. Some readers may disagree with me on the inclusion of the Australian War Memorial in this selection. My belief is that while the Australian War Memorial may have been designed as a memorial and a museum it has evolved as a funerary temple. It may not honour a King such as Suryavarman II or encode the cosmology of a world religion. It, nevertheless, does enshrine some of the noblest aspects of the Australian people.

I have visited these temples and sacred sites as a respectful and curious observer. Unfortunately I did not go as a pilgrim. I, therefore, did not have the intellectual and spiritual preparation necessary to gain the ecstatic pleasure that these monumental edifices are intended to evoke. Only on reflection and subsequent research have I been able to

undertake the process of decoding the symbolism of the architecture and the meaning of the cosmologies which are expressed in these sacred sites. It is a process that could occupy me a lifetime.

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INTRODUCTION

Temples and Sacred Places

I

The Archetypal Mountain

Cosmic Mountains

A great number of cultures are familiar with the concept of an archetypal or cosmic mountain. This high peak is the abode of the gods and is located at the centre of the earth. Such mountains link heaven and earth. The Iranians have their Haraberezait, the Norse their Himingbor, the Israelites their Mount Gerizim and the people of the Indian sub-continent, their Mount Kailas. At one time these mountains were regarded as the literal dwelling places of the gods. By ascending the dizzy heights of these mountains, prophets and priests were able to communicate directly with the gods. These mountains were held in reverential awe and were the scenes of meteorological phenomena such as lightning, thunder and volcanic emissions from the underworld. From their snow-capped peaks flowed the amrita-the cosmic elixir of life-water. This water was pure and life-giving and was regarded as holy and a blessing to the mere mortals who lived on the slopes and valleys below. On the Indian sub-continent the spiritual archetype of such venerated mountains is known as Mahameru. Perhaps the closest copy of Mahameru was Mount Kailas which has been so venerated for more centuries than Hindu or Buddhist priests can remember.

Mount Kailas

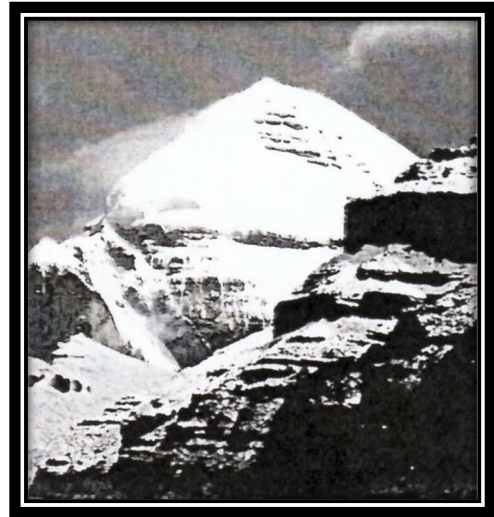
Mount Kailas rises to 5000 metres in south-western Tibet and is, to this day, revered by devotees of four religions. These devotees visit Mount Kailas as pilgrims unless, of course, they belong to the native Tibetan Bon-po. Hindus, Jains and Buddhists journey to the mount from afar so that they might gain merit through the performance of ritual circumambulation or parikrama. This ritual, though typically Indian, can be found in most religions and is evident in the tawaf of Muslim pilgrims around the Ka'ba and the stations of the cross performed by Catholic Christians.

King Rinpoche, Jewel of the Snows

The allure of the Mountain owes much to its location, size, shape and orientation. Its snow-clad sides allow for a prismatic display of reflected light at sunrise and sunset. This is especially so in the rarefied atmosphere of the Himalayas. The size of the mount is enhanced by its relative isolation and the fact that pilgrims can traverse its girth. Its shape is near-pyramidal and its triangular sides are faceted like a diamond. On its southern wall a vertical gash intersects a horizontal striation. This produces a swastika-like image which in Indian thought, is a symbol of power and fortune. Kailas has its four sides oriented to the four cardinal directions of the compass. Its distinctive appearance has earned it the title King Rinpoche or Jewel of the Snows.

Mount Kailas

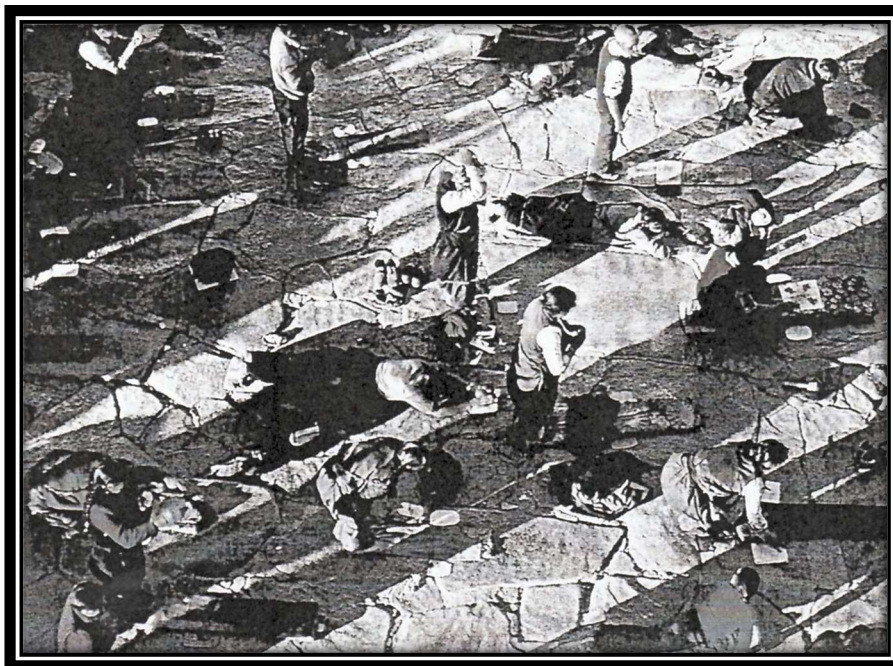
With its four distinct facades facing north, east, south and west. Mount Kailas looks like an enormous diamond. Three quarters as high as Mount Everest, the mountain is one of the tallest peaks in the Himalayas. Nearby is the source of the Indus, Sutlej and Bramaputra Rivers. The source of the Ganges is not far away. On its southern face a vertical gash crosses horizontal layers creating the image of a swastika. The word comes from *svastika*, the Sanskrit for well-being and good fortune. Buddhists regard the mountain as a mandala – the sacred circle from which the sacred rivers flow like the spokes of an eternal wheel.



The Atlas of Holy Places and Sacred Sites – p.119

Parikrama or Ritual Circumambulation

Parikrama, or ritual circumambulation, is a central concept in Indian theology and it is an aspect of merit. Merit may be obtained by prayer, alms giving, philanthropy and the performance of arduous tasks by giving obeisance and of enduring hardship. A pilgrimage to Mount Kailas and a circuit of its 52-kilometre girth provides ample challenge for those wishing to acquire merit. The route is over rough terrain and undulating rocky inclines. It can take from one to four days and is dependent on the fitness of the pilgrim and the length of stops at its cairns, chortens and monasteries (gompas). The highest point of the walk is 6000 metres. A Buddhist who performs parikrama once is said to have atoned for the sins of a lifetime. If 108 circuits are completed then Nirvana, or enlightenment is achieved. Some pilgrims traverse the route by prostration. This entails lying on one's stomach with outstretched arms then standing at the point reached by the fingers and repeating the process.



*Ritual Circumambulation and Prostration
(p 119 The Atlas of Holy Places and Sacred Sites)*

Lake Manasarovar is close to the southern edge of Mount Kailas. It too, is greatly revered. At one time it was encircled by eight Buddhist monasteries. This lake contains the scattered ashes of Mahatma Gandhi. The Lake is also a place of pilgrimage and many devotees from the Indian sub-continent perform parikrama around its shores.

Hindu, Buddhist, Jain and Tibetan Bon-Po Attitudes to Mount Kailas

Hindus revere Mount Kailas as the actual Mount Meru of Hindu theology. It is the home of the god Shiva and his wife Parvati. Lake Manasarovar was regarded by Hindus as being created from the mind of Brahma while Shiva was present on its surface as a reincarnated swan.

The Jains know Mount Kailas as Astapada. The first saint of their religious tradition of asceticism and non-violence was Rishabha. It was at Mount Kailas that he gained his enlightenment.

The Tibetan Buddhists regard Mount Kailas as the abode of Demchog who had four faces of four colours: red, blue, green and white. Demchog's consort, Durje phangmo, dwelt on a small peak to the west of Kailas. The native Tibetan Bon-Po regarded Kailas as a holy place long before Buddhism gained the ascendancy in Tibet.

Whatever faith the pilgrims profess the chances are that they will each pause at the mantras inscribed in rock and make an offering of a large pebble or stone at its numerous sacred boulders at the base of Mount Kailas. With the eventual spread of Hinduism and Buddhism throughout the Sino-Indic peninsula and the Indonesian archipelago the characteristics of Mount Kailas became elaborated and mythologised.

Theologising Mount Kailas into Mount Meru

In the course of time Indian thought accommodated itself to the idea that there were many sacred mountains besides Mount Kailas. Java had its Semeru and its Mount Penanggungan (along with many other sacred mountains). Bali had its Gunung Agung and Lombok its Mount Rinjani and so on. Gradually Mount Meru became a theological creation of considerable spiritual value and in the process physical geography phased into spiritual geography.

The Spiritual Geography of Mount Meru

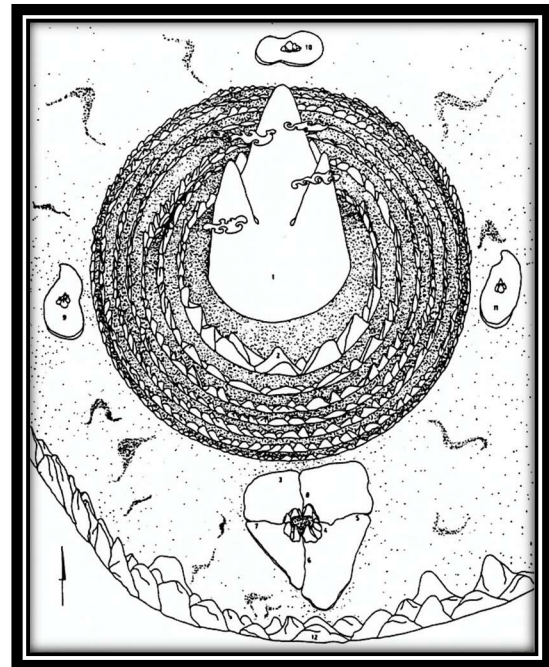
Accounts differ slightly on details concerning the spiritual geography of Mt Meru. This account is reliant on the outline provided by Jazques Dumarcaay in 'The Temples of Java'. The transformation of Hindu mythology by Burmese Buddhism also involved a transformation in the cosmic symbolism. However the simpler outline given by Dumarcaay is sufficient to illustrate the essential points even if it has some Buddhistic elements in it.

Mount Meru, the cosmic mountain, is 1,344,000 kilometres high and comprises a central summit and four (4) lesser ones. The mountain is surrounded by seven (7) circular chains of mountains separated by seven (7) oceans where the makaras or marine monsters play. Our pear-shaped world, Jambudwipa, is to the south of the 7 mountains and the 7 seas and lies in an eighth ocean. From Jambudwipa's central lake Anavatpa flows four (4) huge rivers viz. The Ganges, The Indus, The Oxus and The Tarim. These rivers, irrigate the world. The eighth ocean also contains other continents in which reside strange beings with circular, crescent-

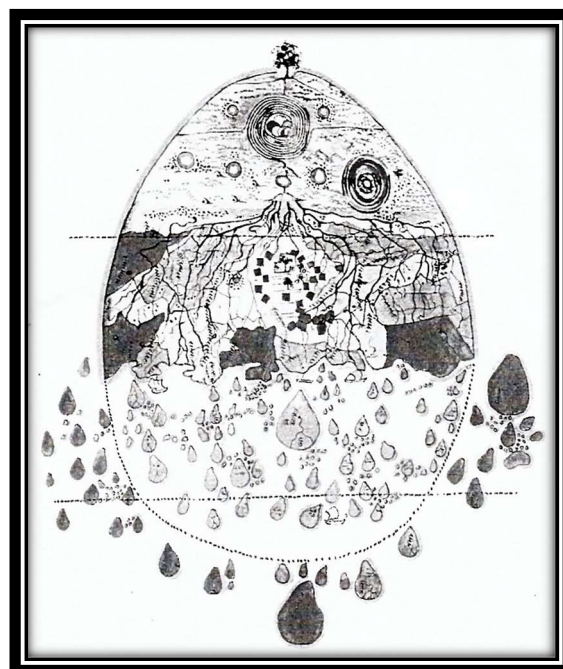
shaped or entirely square heads. At an extremely far distance is the girdle of the universe, the Chakravan mountains, which are composed of rock crystal.

In the Hindu version the gods dwell in caves hollowed out of the side of Mt Meru. These caves became the archetypal models of Indian and Javanese temples and their situation in relation to the light of the sun, moon and stars was incorporated into their location, orientation, and design.

1. Mount Meru.
2. The seven chains of mountains and the seven oceans around them.
3. Jambudwipa, the world in which we live.
4. Lake Anavatpa
5. The Ganges.
6. The Indus.
7. The Oxus.
8. The Tarim.
9. The world of round-faced creatures.
10. The world of crescent-faced creatures.
11. The world of square-faced creatures.
12. The chain of quartz mountains Chakravan, completely surrounding the universe.



Pictorial Representation of the Fabled Mount Meru at the Centre of the Universe
(Taken from p.90 – *The Temples of Java* by Jacques Dumarcaay)



Stylised representation of the cosmic centre according to Hinayana Buddhism
(Taken from p.90 – *Insight Guides 'Burma'*)

Enumerating the Characteristics of the Cosmic Mountain

In spiritualising or mythologising the Cosmic Mountain the Hindu (and later Buddhist) priests sought to retain a close correspondence to the original at Mount Kailas. [n doing so, they emphasised the importance of elevation, location, orientation, alignment and shape.

Elevation

The elevation of a mound, a mount, or a mountain, above its surrounding plain is a metaphor for seeking spiritual heights. If such a physical feature is covered with ice and shrouded with mist, it enhances its mystery. The verticality of a mountain also allows for its sub-division into ascending zonal regions. This aspect was particularly appealing to Buddhist theologians. They enunciated corresponding zones of spiritual development as one ascended the mountain. If the mountain was a volcano then its zonal segmentation could also include an underworld. Initially, Buddhist thought was content to identify three basic zonal levels of spirituality. These were:

The Sphere or Zone of Desire

The Sphere or Zone of Form

The Sphere or Zone of Formlessness.

These three zones were sub-divided over time to a point when Burmese Buddhism was able to identify 31 planes of existence.

Location

The location of cosmic mounts included an appreciation of their correspondence to the physical Mt Kailas and its theological counterpart, Mt Meru. It also necessitated taking into account its relationship to river systems, the seas and the mountain ranges. Not every mount or mountain could qualify as an equivalent Mount Meru. Mount Semeru in Central Java could qualify only when it was discovered that its top section had been sliced off and relocated as Mount Penanggungan. Gunung Agung of Bali also qualified because it was more or less centrally located in the island.

Orientation

There were geo-physical aspects attributed to the cosmic mount. In designating a site suitable for worship, Hindu priests laid great stress on its orientation in space. Its pyramidal sides had to face the cardinal directions of the compass. Hindu priests were also astronomers and they knew about the summer and winter solstices. They were particularly interested in a mountain whose natural markers and caves yielded an alignment with the rising sun at the winter solstice.

Alignment

The location and orientation of caves, sanctuaries, tunnels and sacred images often took account of the alignment of the sun or stars on particular days of the year.

Shape

In designating a mount or a mountain as a sacred place of worship, Hindu priests were particularly interested in its pyramidal shape. IES Edwards has suggested that this form probably arose in the observation of raying shafts of light bursting through an aperture in a clouded sky. Edward's suggestion was in relation to the Egyptian pyramids but it could also apply to many other cultures who adopted the pyramid as a model for temple building. Certainly, Mount Kailas has a pyramidal form.



A Sunlight Pyramid (p.71 *Marshall's Travel Atlas of Sacred Places*)

The Hindu priests knew much about geometry and like their Egyptian counterparts, they knew a great deal about the properties of regular and irregular solids. They enunciated the properties of the square pyramid and devised a spiritual geometry to correspond with the physical properties. It is this spiritual geometry which they encoded in their temple design.

The Churning of the Ocean of Milk

The Churning of the Ocean of Milk myth is a tale from the Hindu epic The Mahabharata and is found in *'The Book of the Beginning'*, chapter 5, verses 15 to 17. Because it is of Indian origin, it belongs to the cultural heritage of both Hindus and Buddhists. It appears in design and ornament in temples throughout Indonesia (especially Bali) and Cambodia. It features Mount Meru, Mount Mandara, Hyang Segara the god of the oceans, the great snake Naga Anataboga, another snake-Naga Basuki, Akupra King of the turtles, the white horse Ucaisrawa, the great jewel named Kastuba and the white gourd named Kamandalu in which the beautiful goddess Danwantari holds the Tirtha Ameitha or Elixir of Life.

The basic image of this creation myth is that of a dairy-maid using a whisk to chum milk into butter. However the ancient Hindu sages saw that such a domestic task was itself an image of a much greater cosmic event viz: the emergence of a volcanic island from the midst of the ocean. The microcosmic was but a reflection of the macrocosmic.

In their telling of the macrocosmic event the ancient Hindu sages told the story of Vishnu calling upon the cosmic serpent Naga Anataboga to uproot Mount Mandara from its location at Sangkadwipa and cast it into the ocean. In this ocean the gods (devas) and the demons (asuras) had been labouring for 1000 years but had not made butter and buttermilk because they had not worked cooperatively.



The Churning of the Sea Milk
(p.65 *Bali Sekala and Niskala* by Fred Eisman Jr)

Once Mount Mandara had been placed in the ocean it sank out of sight. Akupara, king of the turtles, came to the rescue and offered his back as a support for the Mount., Then the serpent, Naga Basuki, curled himself around the Mount as a pull rope. The devas pulled Basuki's head and the asuras pulled his tail in tum. In this cooperative manner they. laboured mightily causing smoke, fire and poison to issue from the mouth of Basuki and fiery rocks to rain down. This caused all of the animals to rush from the forests and run into the ocean and be drowned. In all this pandemonium and chaos, the waters boiled and seethed until eventually the waters turned into milk and the devas and asuras were exhausted.

At the request of Brahma, Vishnu revived the devas and asuras and after their renewed efforts a sun of 100,000 rays arose out of the ocean followed by the moon. Then the goddess Sri emerged from the sea, clothed in white robes. The sea also yielded the white horse, Ucaisrawa, and the apsaras or the celestial nymphs. The great jewel, Kastuba, which can grant any wish to its wearer also appeared. Finally, there arose the beautiful Danwantari, carrying the white gourd Kamandalu which held the Tirtha Amertha, the Cosmic Elixir of Life.

The Churning of the Ocean of Milk myth is the masterpiece of the bas reliefs in the East Gallery of the first level of Angkor Wat. It stretches for 160 feet or 50 metres. The gods and the demons are depicted in the statuary in the causeway leading across the moat to Angkor Thom. Indeed aspects of the leading characters in this myth appear in a statuary and adornment in many temples of Cambodian and Balinese design.

In this myth the actual Mount Mandara is transformed into the cosmic Mount Meru by the action of the gods. In the process of its transformation, it yields the secrets of spiritual life.

II Pratibimba or Imitating the Cosmic Form

Pratibimba

Pratibimba is a Sanskrit word which encompasses the idea of representing the cosmic form with an earthly model. If the gods could create Mount Kailas in the form of the heavenly Mount Meru, then it was not unreasonable to expect that man could do so too.

To be a faithful replica it would have to incorporate all of the elements of the cosmic blueprint. Its construction would require the skills of an earthly Visvakarman, the heavenly architect.

Temple Proliferation

A pilgrimage to Mount Kailas was not within the reach of every Hindu or Buddhist devotee. This fact contributed to the proliferation of localised temples which incorporated some of the design elements of the cosmic ideal. There were also financial constraints on most communities. These constraints limited the grandeur that could be achieved in temple construction. Nevertheless, over the centuries the Indian Priest-Architects developed an architectural and engineering tradition which enabled them, when financial circumstances allowed, to build some of the most amazing religious edifices known to man.

The extraordinary temple building frenzy which occurred at Pagan, Burma, between 1057AD and 1287AD gave the Buddhists ample opportunity to experiment with temple design. A similar Hindu outburst took place at Angkor in Cambodia between 1113AD and 1219 AD. The flowering of these cultures had important effects on the temple building programs of central Java.

Features of the Cosmic Blueprint

Temples of Indian origin, whether they be Hindu or Buddhist, attempt to simulate the archetypal Mount Meru. Their design elements incorporate references to the geo-physical and astronomical aspects of the location, orientation and shape. In designing their temples the architect-priests developed a spiritual geometry which encoded important aspects of the cosmology of the culture. This geometry was based on the characteristics of the square pyramid.

a) Geo-physical Features

These features refer to the orientation of the temple to the North Polar Star, and the cardinal direction of the compass, it also includes design elements which relate to the sun, moon and specific stars. A number of temples encode both the solar and lunar calendars. In some temples solar alignments into the inner sanctuaries are made to occur at the winter solstice.

b) Quincunxal Shape

Pyramid temples with five peaks were not built in India but they certainly abound in Angkor, Cambodia. The earliest appears to be the Bakheng which was built by Yasovarman I in the late 9th century. It had five towers on its upper terrace, 12 towers on each of the five tiers of the base and 44 towers around the base.

"The brick towers on the tiers represent the 12-year cycle of the animal zodiac. Excluding the Central Sanctuary, there are 108 towers, symbolising the four lunar phases with 27 days in each phase. The levels number seven and correspond to the seven heavens of Hindu mythology."

Odyssey Guide to Angkor, p.115

By the time Angkor Wat was constructed by Suryavarman II in the first half of the 12th century, the quincunx had been firmly established as a temple design feature. Indeed the symbolism of the cosmic blueprint had been elaborated to include provision for the oceanic motif.

c) *Spiritual Geometry of the Square Pyramid*

The square pyramid has a number of properties which, in code, enabled religious leaders to express aspects of their beliefs.

i) The Apex

The apex reaches heavenly to the infinite point while the base sits squarely on the earth or middle kingdom. The apex is at the intersection of four planes and is directly above the basal centre. In spiritual geometry the apex symbolises the summit of the world.

(ii) The Four Sides

The four sides symbolise the four directions of space. Most Indian-style temples faced eastward. Angkor Wat, being a funerary temple, faces west.

(iii) The Basal Centre or Omphalos

Temples are constructed at the centre of the world. Every point on the surface of a sphere is equidistant from the centre of the sphere. In effect this means that every temple on the earth is at a cosmic centre. Now the central point of a square pyramid is along the axis through the peak and the basal centre. Where this axis strikes the basal centre is known as the omphalos or cosmic navel. The base of the pyramid is the sphere of earth's activity.

(iv) The Axis Mundi

The axis mundi of the square pyramid is that axis which runs through the peak and basal centre. Where it strikes the basal centre is the cosmic navel which separates the heavens from the underworld. This point of intersection is where vertical and horizontal space meet.

(v) The Cosmic Spindle

The axis mundi is also regarded as the cosmic spindle about which the cosmic pyramid may be rotated. While the spindle remains stationary every point outside the spindle can be thought of as rotating at differential speeds. The greater distance a point is removed from the spindle the greater is its speed on rotation.

(vi) The Inscribed Pyramid

A square pyramid may be circumscribed or inscribed. Thus it may be said that a square pyramid mediates between two spheres. If the tangential points of the

inscribed sphere are linked they form an inverted square pyramid rotated to a 45° angle. This smaller square pyramid may be thought of as a microcosmic reflection of the original or macrocosmic pyramid.

III

Devaraja or Kings as Gods

The cult of Devaraja was specifically Angkorian but it has its equivalents in other cultures. It survived, in one form or another, right into the 20th century in Japan, Thailand and Cambodia.

The King as God

Inasmuch as the sacred mountain at the centre of the world was simulated in actual temple design, so too, was the rulership of Brahma from the heavenly city simulated in the rulership of the King (Rajah) from his negara or courtly palace. The King was an earthly reflection of the heavenly or cosmological ideal. While the western mind has relegated the 'Divine right of Kings' to the scrap heap of theories about the basis of sovereignty, the eastern or asiatic view upheld it as an exemplary model well into the twentieth century.

The Court or Negara as Exemplary Model

According to the Asian mind the court is a microcosm of the supernatural order. Its ceremonialism and ritualistic observances were the essence of political and social power. The King's power or potency was symbolised in the lingga and his sekti or charisma ensured the fecundity or fertility of the earth. Of particular importance was the reliability of water. The supply of water, the elixir of life, was entrusted to the king and he usually solved the vagaries of climate by providing extensive irrigation systems using lakes, ponds and canals. Later when the rulership function was divided from the priestly function, the symbolic power of water was used in religious ceremonies.

Enshrinement of Kings

In the oldest traditions the King was thought of as an incarnation of deity. However, with the passage of time, it is possible to trace a descent in status from God to semi-divine being, to priest and later to mere mortal. If a king was not an incarnation of deity he could be elevated to that status after death and his tomb made a shrine at which devotees could worship. The shrine was thought of as the body of the spirit enshrined.

The internment of Rakai Balitung in the Siwa Temple of the Prambanam complex is an example of enshrinement. Angkor Wat is a specific funerary temple in which the King had achieved the status of a God.

The King as a Reincarnation of Brahma or Siwa or Vishnu

Many Hindu temples are dedicated to one of the three pre-eminent powers or gods. Brahma is recognised as the creative power, Siwa is the destroyer (and re-creator) and Vishnu is the preserver. Each of these powers has a male/female aspect. Thus it is more correct to speak of Brahma/Sarasvati (Goddess of Knowledge and the arts), Siwa/Parvati (chief wife, has many forms also), Vishnu/Laksmi (Goddess of beauty). Vishnu became a popular deity in Cambodia and because of his role as a saviour he became useful to kings who wanted to proclaim themselves as a re-incarnation of Vishnu.

Buddhism

Some temples have been Hindu and Buddhist at different times. Angkor Wat was originally Hindu then became Buddhist. Borobudur was the same. Indeed, sometimes attempts have been made to effect a synthesis of the two religions. Gautama, the Buddha, was a Hindu who set about the task of reforming the excesses of Hinduism. His teachings eventually were promoted by two main schools of thought:

- (i) Mahayana Buddhism or the Greater Vehicle, and
- (ii) Theravada Buddhism or the Lesser Vehicle.

Mahayana Buddhism emphasises a number of paths to nirvana. Its scriptures are written in Sanskrit and its teachings spread through early Cambodia, early Indonesia, Nepal, Bhutan, Mongolia, China, Korea, Japan and North Vietnam.

Theravada Buddhism is 'the way of the Theras' or senior monks. Its scriptures are based on the Pall Canon and it is a more conservative and literal approach to the teachings of Gautama. This tradition spread to Sri Lanka, Burma (Myanmar) and Thailand where it is practised today.

Although these two streams of Buddhism are widely practised today, it is a mistake to think that there are no variants of either stream. Hinduism and Animism have been combined with each stream to produce a great variation in Buddhist sects from within the one country and between different countries. The Buddhism practised in the Shwedagon of Burma (Myanmar) bears little resemblance to that practised in the Luh Erh Men temples of Tainan.

Buddhism developed several approaches to reincarnation. One approach stressed the cyclical reappearance of the Buddha with his next appearance as the Maitreya Buddha. Another approach was through the elaboration of the doctrine of the Bodhisattvas who forsook nirvana in order to assist others to obtain enlightenment.

IV

Other Aspects of Temple Design

Temple Rites and Ceremonies

Temples are essentially the homes of the gods. They simulate the heavenly design and the controlling spiritual order of the cosmos. Their tiered levels lead vertically to more and more sacred areas and to higher and higher planes of existence. To the pilgrim they represent the journey from the profane to the sacred. As the pilgrim ascends the heights, he is instructed on his journey by reading the pictorial script and meditating on the content of its creation stories, the mythological dramas and the sacred wisdom and teachings of the masters.

On his journey, the pilgrim makes offerings and performs acts of obeisance and spiritually prepares himself to approach the holiest of holies. At least this is the ideal version.

With the development of the idea of the King as God and the emergence of the idea of the capital as an enlarged temple many of the exalted purposes of temples became debased. With the amalgamation of temple and state the secular was bound to gain the upper hand over the sacred. Temples which once held festivals to honour favoured gods became places

to celebrate local war victories with parades of soldiers and circuses, at least in its less hallowed precincts. Today, in the temple grounds of places like Wat Phnom Penh the atmosphere has a market ambience and the worshippers are as likely to be seeking good luck as they are to be giving thanks to God. Many temples in Asia strike the visitor as commercial enterprises. That was not their original function.

Rites of Worship

In their purer forms temples were places of worship and places of exaltation. They were also places of spiritual rejuvenation and renewal. They incorporated many rites of fertility that were enacted at the times of seasonal changeovers. The changeover to the new year has been, since time immemorial, the time at which devotees were enjoined to participate in the re-enactment of the creation myths of the culture. These creation myths were etched into the walls of the temple. By receiving instruction in these myths, devotees renewed themselves annually and by doing so participated in the processes of creation and fecundity. Devotees thus transcended the limitations of time and vitalised themselves by aligning themselves with the creative powers of the gods. In Hindu theology the gods are thought of as powers and personified as beings. In Christian theology it tends to be the other way around. The 'gods' are firstly beings and secondly, they are beings who possess powers.

The Importance of Water in Temple Building

Temple building requires much more than a design based on a cosmic blueprint. It requires materials, skilled artisans and a site with a capacity to sustain the physical wellbeing of the labourers. The location of major temples always takes into account the availability of water. This water is necessary for thirsty workers who may labour for decades. It is also used for aquaculture and for transport along its canal systems. Temples attract temple communities and the King's palace is invariably near the main temple. Water storage in barays is necessary to support the courtiers and their families as well as the priests attending to temple duties.

The Temple Plan as a Mandala

When a temple is viewed in plan, it reveals its shape as a mandala. A mandala is a meditative aid usually in the form of a square and circle. It is a shorthand or coded expression of a person's relationship to the cosmos. It may be presumed that temples encode their mandala for a whole people.

The Galleries of Bas Reliefs

Temples of Indian Origin usually include picture galleries of bas reliefs in each of their three terraces and about their internal walls. These bas reliefs are finely chiselled depictions of creation stories and the mythological deeds of the gods and legendary heroes. They also depict scenes of battles and events of historical significance involving previous Kings, heroes and the common people. In the case of Borobudur there are many reliefs illustrating scenes from the life and teachings of the Buddha. The pilgrim acquired merit in the very process of meditatively viewing these scenes as he made his journey progressively towards the temple summit.

The bas reliefs are in themselves a pictorial library. The collection of those at Angkor Wat constitute one of the finest achievements of the human race.

The Statuary

The statuary of temples is a complete study in itself. Unfortunately, a great number of statues have been destroyed, disfigured or stolen. This has happened as a result of war and the replacement of Hindu statuary with Buddhist reliquaries and vice-versa.

Libraries

With the advent of a writing script, temple design began to incorporate purpose-built libraries for the preservation and study of the sacred scriptures of Hinduism and Buddhism. At the Bayon and at Angkor such libraries flank the approach-ways to the temple.

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ULURU

A Natural Temple in the Heart of Australia



Uluru is also known as Ayer's Rock

“It is unsurprising that this massive rock, with its isolated position, its mysterious deeply grooved walls and uncanny changes of colours, should be steeped in Dreamtime legends. For it is a place where myth meets nature, as the anthropologist Charles Mountford observed: “When I learned the legends of the place. ... The immense and beautiful surroundings were no longer mere precipices, caves or splashes of colour; they had been vitalized by the stories that the Aborigines had told me...””

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Chapter 1

ULURU

I

Geophysical Attributes

A Mountain of Rock

Uluru is one of Australia's most visited natural wonders. In appearance it is a smooth mountain of rock that sits like an island in an ocean of orange-red desert sand in Central Australia. It may not be the world's largest rock but its obtrusion in such a barren and flat landscape magnifies its size and enhances its psychological impact on the visitor.

Location and Size

Uluru is about 300 kilometres south-west of Alice Springs. It is a rounded monolith as distinct from the nearby (30 kms N.W. away) gigantic outcrop of the numerous domes of The Olgas and the mesa-like formation of the distant Mount Conner (95 kms). Uluru rises some 348 metres and is 870 metres above sea level. It is 2570 metres long from east to west and is 1500 metres wide and its circumference is 8.6 kilometres. Its sheer height and bulk make 'The Rock' eligible to be listed as one of the natural wonders of the world.

Geological Formation

The formation of Uluru is thought to go back 600 million years to the Cambrian period when its layered strata were in horizontal formation as a sea bed. About 500 million years ago these horizontal layers were uplifted by an earthquake and folded above the sea level. Indeed a lake lapped its base during the cretaceous period gouging out bays and caves. The earthquake tilted the layered strata to an almost vertical (85°) angle. The original composition of the parent rock and its weathering has made the resultant upthrust highly resistant to erosion.

Chemically, the composition of the rock is a mixture of "quartz and feldspar with a large amount of cementing material consisting of brown and red oxides of iron and a little magnetite". The resultant coarse-grained sandstone is known by geologists as arkose. Although Uluru has been highly resistant to erosion, a process of exfoliation has formed some cracks and a flaking of its surface. These features, and other aspects of its shape and configuration, have inspired the local aboriginal residents to personify the rock in their mythology of the "dreamtime".

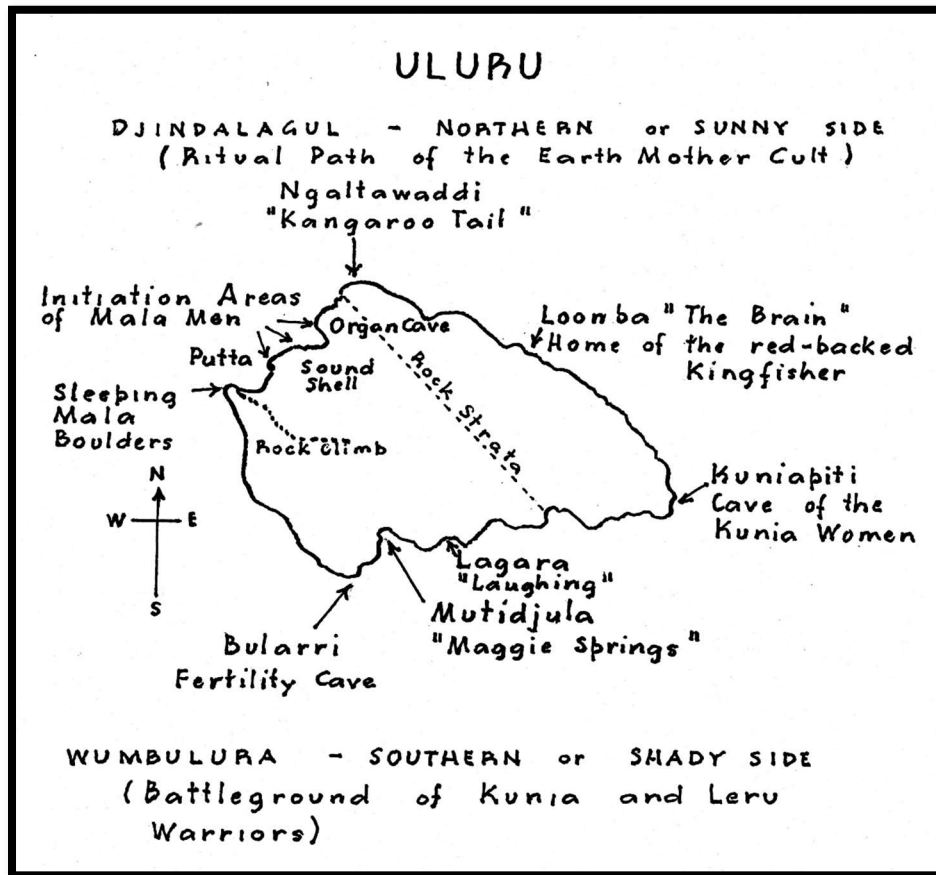
The original aboriginal inhabitants, the Uluridya, and their more recent descendants, the Pitjantjarjara and Yankuntjatjara, described the rock in terms of spiritual geology and a spiritual geography and history. For the local aborigines Uluru is a sculptured history and its physical features encode creation stories and the deeds of totemic ancestors.

Aboriginal Northern and Southern Aspects

The northern and sunny side of the rock was *Djindalagul* and this side held the secrets of the ritual-path of the Earth mother cult. The *Djindalagul* possessed the secrets of the *Kerungeral* ritual of the *Mala* or hare wallaby.

The southern and shady side was known as *Wumbulura*. This side held the secrets of the deadly chants of *arukwita*, the spit that kills. It was also the repository, or library, of the

legendary battles between the *Kunia* or carpet-snake people and the *Leru* or poisonous snake people.



The *Djindalagul* and the *Wumbuluru* were also the names of two moieties. There could be no marriages within either moiety. Thus the rock was also the home of the sacred law which governed daily family life.

European Discovery

Uluru is more commonly known in Australia as Ayer's Rock. This name of the monolith was designated by William Christie Gosse. Gosse was the first non-aboriginal person to actually visit the rock, although he was not the first non-aboriginal to sight it. The rock was first sighted by the explorer Ernest Giles on the 14th October, 1872.

(a) Ernest Giles

Giles sighted the rock while exploring the George Gill Range to the north of the Olgas. He named the Olgas after Grand Duchess Olga Constantinova of Russia and wife of King George of Greece. Giles caught a glimpse of the distant Uluru but could not advance because of the hazardous salty surface of Lake Amadeus. His maps of the area provided valuable knowledge for William Gosse.

(b) William Gosse

Next year on the 19th July 1873, William Gosse, the South Australian Deputy Surveyor-General, and his Afghan camel driver, Kamran, followed the path of 'the waterholes mapped by Giles until they approached the huge rock. After one unsuccessful attempt they managed to scramble barefooted up the only accessible slope at the north-west end. They named the monolith Ayer's Rock in honour of the Premier of South Australia, Sir Henry Ayers.

“The hill was one immense rock, rising abruptly from the plain. The holes I had noticed were caused by the water, in some places forming immense caves.”

So wrote the explorer William Gosse (right) 1842—81), who discovered Ayers Rock in 1873, and managed to climb to the top with his Afghan camel driver, Khamran.



Gosse was blissfully unaware of the fact that the local aboriginal people, the *Uluridtja* people, had named themselves after the rock. Giles, on departure recorded:

“certainly the most wonderful feature I have ever seen.”

When he returned a week later, he wrote:

“This rock appears more wonderful every time I look at it. And I might say it is a sight worth riding over eighty-four miles of spinifex to see.”

(c) Other European Visitors

Giles revisited the rock area one year after his first visit but was disappointed to find evidence that Gosse had beaten him to the rock itself. Tietkins visited the rock in 1889, Hom in 1896 and Basedow in 1903. Because the rock was virtually inaccessible by most forms of transport other than a camel, it remained relatively unknown to the non-aboriginal world until the mid twentieth century.

(d) Visiting Today

Uluru came under the control of the Australian Parks and Wildlife Service in 1980 and today a visitor can view the rock in great comfort. It is possible to enjoy a range of accommodation options that were unimaginable to the Kunia, Leru, or Mala people.

These options are available through the Yulara Resort complex. They include the Sheraton Ayers Rock Hotel, Red Centre Hotel, Yulara Maisonettes or one of the two camping grounds. Guided walks and tours can be arranged to inspect the rock and the nearby ‘mountain isles’.

II

Describing Uluru in Terms of Aboriginal Cosmology and Mythology

Aboriginal Cosmology

There is no complete uniformity in the beliefs of the numerous aboriginal tribal groups of Australia but there is sometimes a great deal of overlap. Generally, aborigines believe the world began as a large flat disc floating in space. The world had two levels: the earth and the sky. The earth was once a featureless plain until it became inhabited by giant, semi-human creatures who arose out of the earth where they had been slumbering. The sky was inhabited by the sun woman, the moon man and the numerous star people. The sky also was

inhabited by the powerful thunder, lightning and storm gods. Among some aboriginal groups the sky is also the abode of the dead. In other groups the dead find their rest on an island or in a jungle.

The Aboriginal Dreamtime

The giant, semi-human creatures resembled the animals and plants and yet acted like human beings. This was the period of the dreamtime. Active during this 'period' were such beings as *Purukapali*, the great creator; *Wuriupranali*, the sun-woman; *Japara*, the moon-man; the seven emu sisters; *Kulpunya* the dingo; the Ice Maidens of the Pleiades; *Wanambi* the sacred serpent and so on. The beings were the creators who wandered the earth and the sky and camped, fought battles, made love and performed ceremonies. Then mysteriously this dreamtime came to an end. The semi-human giants retreated into a mountain or rocky outcrop, a waterhole, or some natural feature. These heroic beings bequeathed the animals, birds, fish, lizards, and edible foods. They also left behind the first spears, woomeras and boomerangs, coolamons, didgeridoos, grinding stones and churingas. In addition to these artifacts, they also left the sacred law which governed such relationships as marriage, justice and the ceremonial rituals including the secrets of initiation. This knowledge, and its laws, are regarded by aborigines as immutable and absolutely binding.

It is a mistake however, to understand this Dreamtime only as the past. It is also 'the Eternal Now' and the future.

Aboriginal Mythology

Aboriginal mythology incorporates dreamtime creation stories, totemic ancestry, location myths, travelling myths, birth explanations, kinship relations, ceremonial rituals including body painting and scarring, dance, music, rock painting, story-telling and song lines.

These song lines trace the route of the ancestral spirits across the landscape. They reflect the aboriginal belief that the world was sung into existence by the spirits.

Aboriginal medicine, magic and the disposal of the dead are also elements of their mythology. While the details of these aspects vary from place to place, those which apply to Uluru, and the surrounding area, typify the nature of aboriginal mythology as it is found elsewhere.

The Mythological Significance of Uluru

The following abbreviated account of the mythological significance of Uluru is based on the account recorded by the late W E (Bill) Harney. Harney was employed as the first curator of the rock from March 1958 until October 1961. His notes were compiled from interviews he conducted with two aboriginal informants who had been born and initiated at Uluru some 50 years earlier. These aborigines were *Kudekudeka* and 'Big Foot Harry' *Imalung*. These men were *Uluridtja* men - a name derived from *Uluru* and *Tupidji* meaning 'open place' people.

Wanambi—Guardian of Uluru

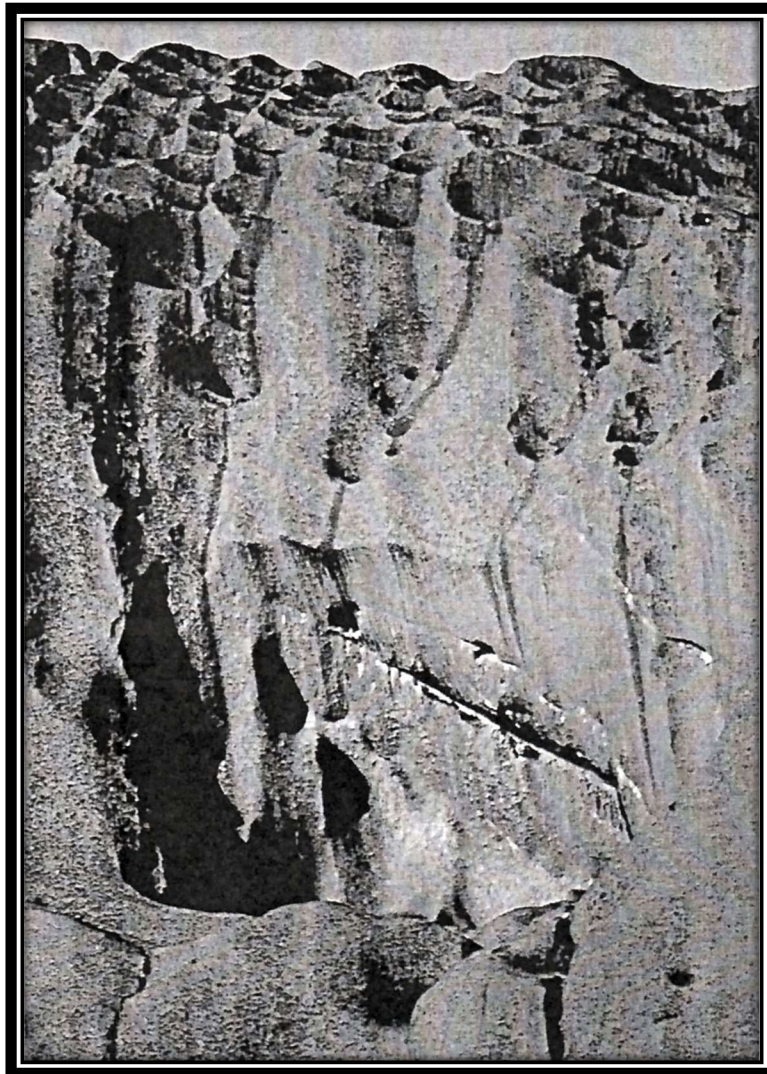
In the beginning there was no Uluru. Everywhere was an 'open place' and at that time Uluru was a low sandhill. Near the sandhill was a waterhole containing fresh, cool, bubbling water. The waterhole was the home of a great *Wanambi*, a spirit snake of many colours. This snake was as long as the rainbow. It was extremely malevolent and had an enormous head, a beard and spiking teeth.

The Dreamtime Creators

Within the sandhill and Waterhole slumbered the spiritual archetypes of men, women, serpents, lizards, goannas, hares, dingoes, kangaroos, Wallabies, rats, eagles, emus, honeyeaters and the strange owityeru tree, bloodwood tree and sandalwood tree. During the Dreamtime these creatures arose from their sleep and assumed giant forms that wandered about the landscape. They each possessed Kurumba or the essence of life which we now call spirit or mana.

The stones and trees of the area became the transformed bodies of the *tjukurapa* people. The Kurumba of each creature vitalised specific areas of the region of their habitat.

Wanambi still lives above the pool *Mutidjula* (Maggie Springs). Other spirit forms entered the clefts, caves, gutters, water stains and lichen patches of the rock.



Erosion patterns memorialise aboriginal mythology
(p.188 *A Timeless Grandeur*)

The Story of the *Kunia-Leru* People of *Wumbuluri* (South Side)

1. *The Webo*

The *Webo* is the tail of Uluru and is at the western extremity of the rock. About 450 metres south of *Webo* there is a clump of acacia trees (*Owwilitti*) out of which the *Uluritdja* made their spears (*wurumbus*). Near the tail is a rock shelter which was a traditional camping site of the *Leru* or poisonous snake people. These people came from the west as aggressors of the local *Kunia* people. The nearby cliff-face is pitted by round holes which were 'formed' as a result of the spear-throwing of the *Leru* warriors.

2. *The Meta or Loongardi i*

The *Meta* or *Loongardi* is known as the 'sleeping lizard' good luck stone.

3. *The Leru Stone*

The *Leru* stone tells the story of a friendly *Leru* warrior who gave a warning to the *Kunia* inhabitants.

4. *Bularri*

The *Bularri* is a cave-like shelter at the south west end of Uluru. It was used as a fertility cave.

5. *Mulu (severed nose of a Leru attacker)*

On the cliff-face to the entrance to Maggie Springs is an area known as *Mulu* or nose. Two small caves depict the nostril holes which were once covered by the severed nose. Above the nostrils there is a dark stain which symbolises the *Puturu* or headband of manhood. Amidst the boulders is a flat faced stone with a hole in it. This is the *Leru* warrior's shield or *Kooditji* which fell from his hand when it was pierced by a *Wurumbu* hurled by a *Kunia* spear-thrower. Two clefts in the rock face symbolise the *Djula* or stone knife used to stab the *Kunia* warrior.

6. *Mutidjula* (Maggie Springs)

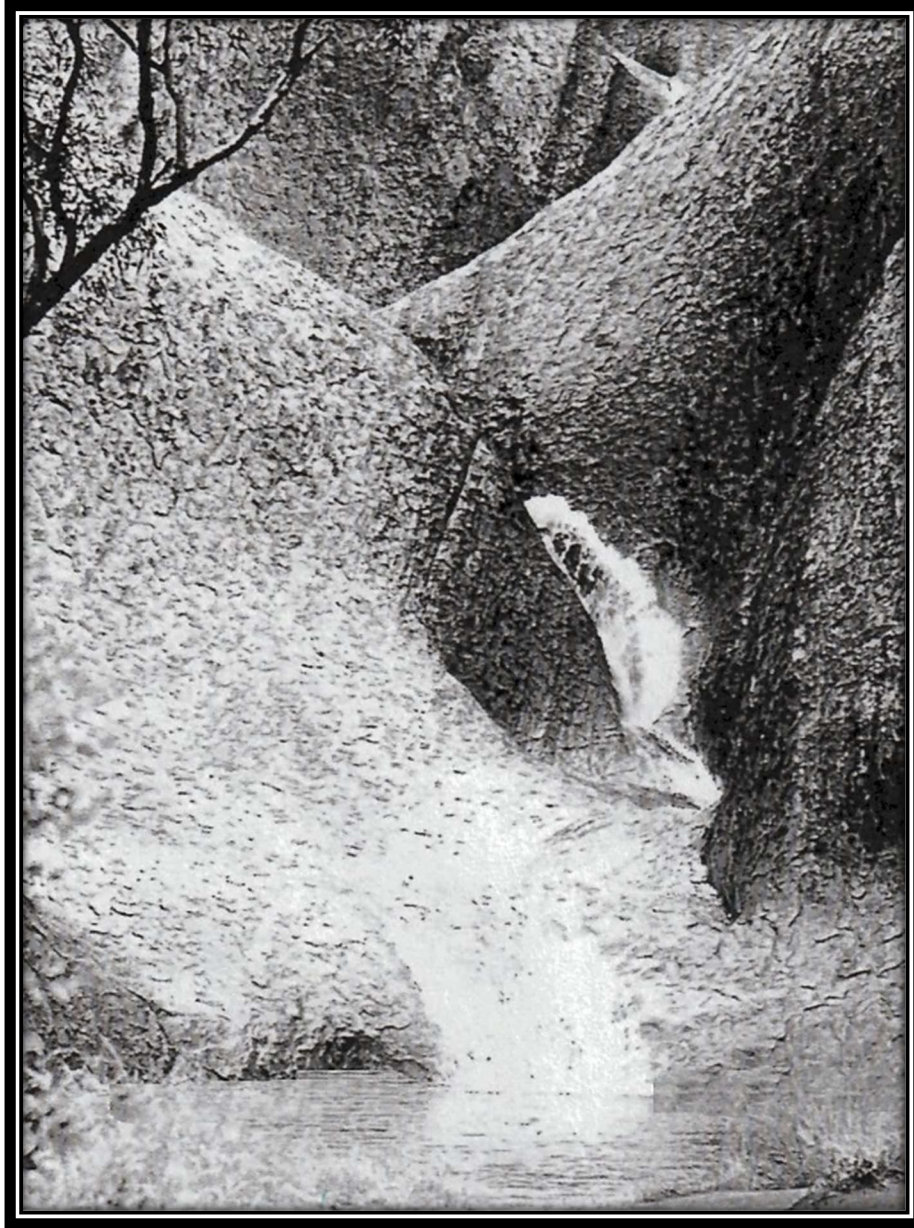
Mutidjula is the sacred fresh water springs of Uluru. The pool is where a celebrated *Kunia* warrior's blood flowed as he died. His mother *Ingridi* saw him fight and saw him die. At his death she spat the white *arukwita* death spittle on her digging-stick and struck her son's opponent on the face cutting off his nose. This stone is known as *Kulikudjeri's mulu*. *Ingridi's* body is the eastern wall of the gorge and her mouth is an open cavern. The white marks at the back of the cave are the death spittle used by *Ingridi*. The whole area is a hallowed battle scene and the boulders contain the spirits of both the *Kunia* and the *Leru* who were massacred. Only one *Kunia* warrior survived with a few women and children. They escaped to the eastern end of the rock known as *Kuniapti*.

7. *The Sacred Kapi Agalyu Wanambijarra*

Above *Mutidjula*, in a ravine, there is a waterhole which is the home of the sacred water python or *Wanambi*. If the *Uluritidja* people ever found *Mutidjula* empty, they would stand in the dry pool area and chant "Kuka, Kuka, Kuka". This chant stirred the sacred python (hidden above) and water once again flowed into *Mutidjula*.

8. *Lagari*

About 400 metres eastwards of *Mutidjula* is a large cave with the appearance of a gaping mouth. This feature is known as *Lagari* which means 'laughter'.



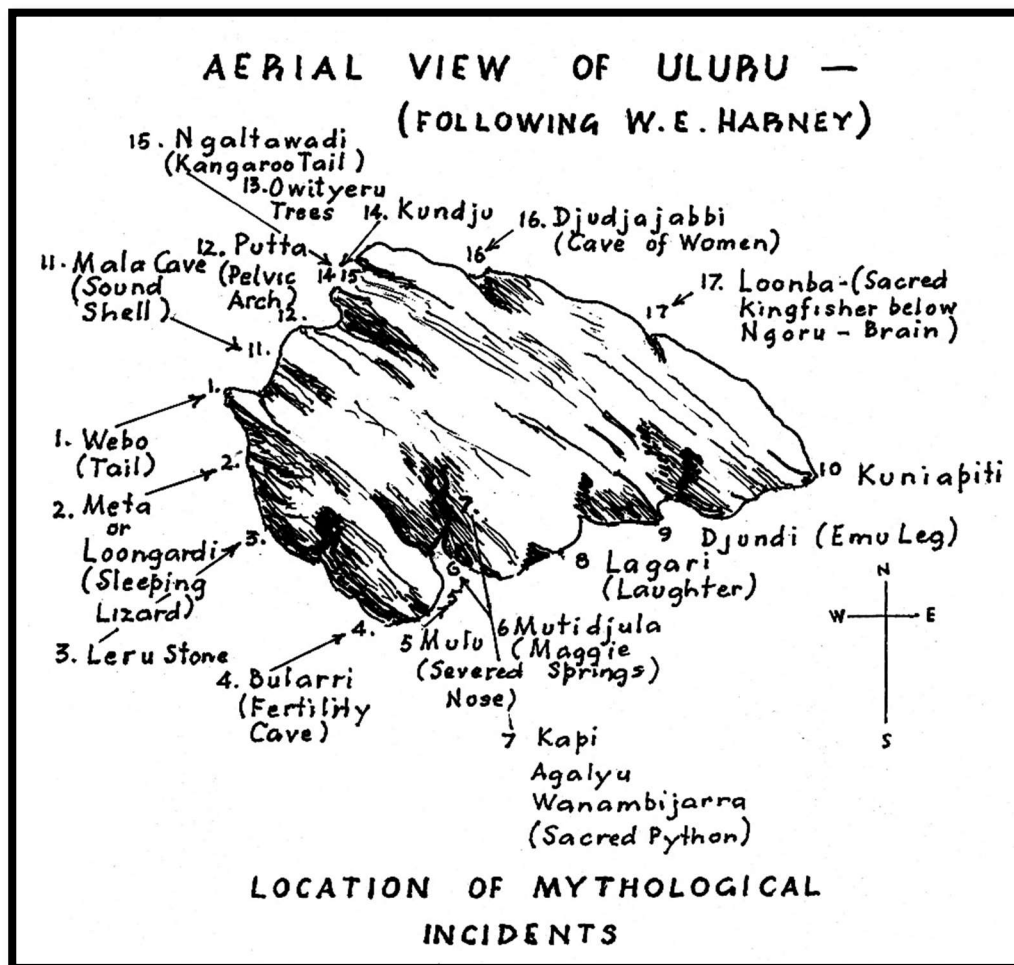
Mutidjula ('Maggie Springs')
(p.188 *A Timeless Grandeur*)

9. *Djundi* (Emu Leg)

Half-way along the southern side of Uluru is a small rock-hole under a slanting cliff face. It is shaped like an emu leg and is called *Djundi*. The rock-pool nestles among some sandalwood trees (*Arangoolie*). The fruit of this tree was highly regarded and is known today as a 'blue plum'.

10. *Kuniapiti*

Kuniapiti is on the eastern end of the southern side of Uluru. It was the final retreat of *Ingridi* and her husband *Ungata*, and the surviving *Kunia* women and children.



The Story of *Djindalgul* (The Northern Side)

This journey also begins at the *Webo* or tail of the western tip of Uluru.

11. *The Mala People at the 'Sound Shell'*

Near the *Webo*, in a smoke blackened rock shelter decorated with a few paintings, the Dreamtime Mala people visited. They were known as the Kangaroo-rat men or hare people. They used this place to prepare their young men for initiation and circumcision. The aboriginal women were strictly forbidden to watch the rituals associated with these ceremonies. They were sent from the shelter to a nearby hill called *Tabudja*.

12. *Putta Cave.*

This cave is one of a number of 'chest' caves about the rock. Other rock features are associated with parts of the body such as navel, belly, brain and so on. Between the *Mala* cave and the northern-most section of the rock is a small bell-shaped cave known as *Putta*. Tradition has it that inside this cave the spirit children of the *Malsa* are waiting to be born. *Putta* means 'pelvic arch' and is also a symbol of the marsupial pouch.

13. *The Owityeru Tree*

Going eastwards, the ritual *Mala* men saw the *Titjearras* or bristle-checked honeyeaters eating strange fruit from the nearby *Owityeru* tree. They copied the bird action in their ritual and chant. The *Owityeru* tree has died out in the area.

14. Kundju

Further eastward, past the sacred trees, there is another lot of rock shelters containing paintings of the Earth Mother and her initiates. In this vicinity there are some tall bloodwood trees and some small sandalwood trees beside a sandy watering place. This is Kundju or the main camp of the Mala people. On the face of this cliff is a crack which runs nearly to the top. This symbolises the sacred and secret Ngaltawadi.

15. The Ngaltawadi ("Kangaroo Tail")

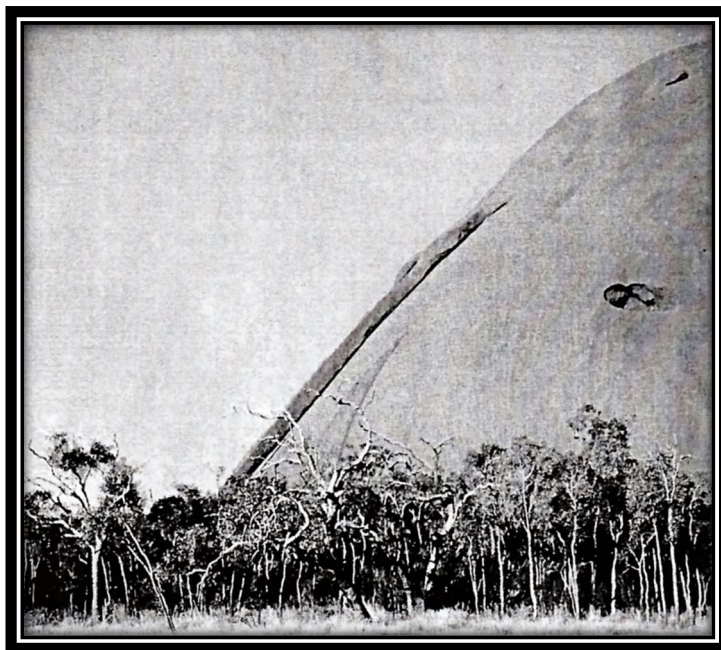
The symbolic *Ngaltawadi* is a rock slab towering against Uluru. It is joined to Uluru at its ends but allows the Wind to whistle through its un-joined cracks. It is a symbol of the hand-held ceremonial or ritual pole which is shown to young initiates at the time the elders are explaining their tribal law. This is the place where the young male initiates are decorated with the ritual headdress and the sacred hand-held *Ngaltawadi* 'pole' is painted with bright colours. After the ceremonies have been completed the elders open the veins of their arms and sprinkle their blood on the ground.

16. Djudjabbi ('Cave of the Women')

This cave is ritually divided. The aborigines chant: "The women of the camp await us, their bodies are exposed".

17. Loonba

Among the *Mala* an old Kingfisher woman made her home in the pitted slopes of the northern wall known as *Ngoru* 'the brain'. Her name was *Loonba*. She heralded the appearance of the magical spirit dingo, *Kulpunya* who could travel faster underground than a bird could fly. It was *Loonba* who chanted the warning "Hurry, awaken, the evil one is here, beware." She saw the spirit dingo run to the shelter of the willie-wagtail woman, *Djindradjindra* and enter the *Nginindi* rock-hole. *Kulpunya's* footprints can still be seen as cave-like formations. These were made as he leapt to capture the *Kudoong* or eagle chicks. *Loonba* also witnessed the murderous deeds of *Kulpunya* as he massacred the women and children at *Tabudja*.



A grove of young and flourishing Bloodwoods at the base
Of The Rock near the Kangaroo 's Tail.

III

Uluru - A Natural Temple

Experiencing the Sacred

Uluru can be described in terms of its geology, its geographical location and even by a catalogue of its physical features but to do so is to miss its essential nature. That nature is its over-powering spiritual appeal which evokes an experience of the holy. It is the sacred quality of that experience that made it a natural repository of the aboriginal dreamtime creation stories and the mythological accounts of the totemic ancestors.

This sacred appeal of Uluru is heightened by its isolation, its size and its changing colour. The colour of the rock varies according 'to aspect, distance, weather conditions and time of day'. These colour changes vary from salmon pink, golden-red, orange-red, bluish-purple, terracotta-red to an intense purple. This characteristic imbues the rock with a living, mystical quality and makes it easy to believe it could be inhabited by spiritual beings.

Although it seldom rains at Uluru, the rock assumes a majestic appearance when water cascades down its steep sides. Such a sight induces an experience of the holy which is truly wondrous.

The Cosmic Mountain

The Cosmic Mountain is an archetypal blue-print of the home of the gods. It is imaged time and again in man-made temples of Hindu and Buddhist architecture. It is possible, however, to trace the origins of this blueprint to such natural geographical features as Uluru. While Uluru does not exhibit the stylised elements of Mahameru, it is possible to understand it as a prototype of much later man-made temples of Indian design. Given this perception, it is possible to understand Mount Penangungan of central Java as a logical successor to Uluru and, in turn, a forerunner of Borobudur. These three mounts thus depict an evolutionary progression from a natural temple to a designed image of the cosmic mountain.

Uluru as a Natural Temple

Most temples of Indian origin sit on a rise of some prominence, and the verticality of their design aspires heavenward. Uluru does not sit on a mound but its height does lift the gaze heavenward.

The cosmic mountain is pyramidal in shape whereas the contours of Uluru are curved and smoothed. However Uluru does possess a number of caves and shares this aspect with the archetypal model.

Around the base of Uluru there are a number of rock-holes which contain water. *Muttdjuta* or 'Maggie Springs' on the south side is a permanent waterhole. These waterholes may not have had the same ritualistic function as *Jalatunda*. or *Belahan* at Mount *Penangungan* in Central Java, but it is, nevertheless, an aspect they have in common. Of course, Uluru's location does not allow it to image the waters of the seven seas. It sits, none-the-less, on a dry, sandy, seabed and the waters of an inland ocean once lapped its rim.

One of the most striking correspondences between Uluru and the archetypal ideal is its location. Uluru is, at least for Australians, situated in the centre of Australia at the Omphalos or cosmic navel and through its centre runs its Axis Mundi. There is something magnetically attractive about Uluru's location in the heart of Australia's red centre.

It is almost the greatest tourist venue for non-aborigines of Australia and for overseas visitors. Its attractive power owes much to its location and its appeal to primal instincts of worship and wonder.

The visitor to *Borobudur*, *Prambanarn* and *Angkor Wat* cannot help being amazed at the number of bas reliefs about the walls. These reliefs are carved in stone panels affixed to the gallery walls of these monumental temples. They are, in effect, a whole library of both the mythological deeds of the gods and ancestral heroes of the culture and also an engraved record of actual historical events. They have been arranged in a particular sequence and in the very act of viewing them, the pilgrim accumulated merit. However, at Uluru, this iconographic record is present only in the rock's natural features and its weathering.

In order to understand Uluru's 'record' of its mythological and historical past, it was necessary for the young aboriginal male to be initiated into its secrets by the *Tupidji* elders. The aborigines had an oral history and this was transmitted through the rites of initiation by annual rites of renewal and numerous other ceremonies. Incorporated in aboriginal rituals were stories of the dreamtime. These stories were portrayed in dance and accompanying music as well as by story-telling around an open fire. The natural features of the rock commemorated events of the past and particular sites commemorated particular events. Thus, the rock itself was like a sacred film documentary and the aboriginal elders were like theatre projectionists who enabled the young initiate to experience a pictorial consciousness of the deeds of their totemic ancestors.

In addition, many of the cave-like formations had paintings on their walls and ceilings. The meaning and significance of these cave paintings supplemented the secrets embodied in the natural features of the rock.

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Chapter 2

MOUNT PENANGGUNGAN

A naturally formed Mount Meru in East Java



Mount Penanggungan emerging from mist

“The legendary Mt Pawitra is identified today with Mt Penanggungan which spans the regional boundaries of Pasuruan and Mojokerto. This mountain ‘s unique shape, as well as its isolation on East Java’s northern plain, make Mt Penanggungan especially prominent. It has a central, almost perfectly rounded summit, below which lie four minor peaks, more or less symmetrically located in the cardinal directions. Little wonder, then, that the ancient Javanese saw in the form of Mt Penanggungan a reflection of the sacred Mahameru of Hindu mythology.”

Pp 122-123 Memories of Majapahit

Chapter 2

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Chapter 2

THE INDIANISATION OF JAVA AND MOUNT PENANGGUNGAN AS AN IMAGE OF MAHAMERU

I

The Indianisation of Java

Historical Context

Indonesia is now the most populous Islamic country in the world and its numerous mosques are of Arabic design. However their distinctive dome characteristic has only become pronounced in the last 500 years. Before the decline of the great Majapahit Empire (after 1519AD), the landscape would have betrayed many temples of Indian design. These temples were mainly of Hindu design but some were distinctly Buddhist. Today, the evidence of this Indianisation influence is hidden in a few surviving communities and in the archaeological remains of some of the most impressive temple ruins in the world.

Indianisation of Indonesia

The Indianisation of Indonesia took place over an extended period of time and the earliest influence is traced to the sage Aji Saka who arrived in Java in 78AD. It is a mistake, however, to see the process as a linear one which developed from this small beginning. The process probably began from the establishment of a number of trading posts in and around navigable ports in Borneo (Kutei East Kalimantan), Sumatra (Palembang) and West Java (Tarumanagara).

An early Indian Empire in Indonesian - The Sri Vijaya of Sumatra, Java

The Sri Vijayan Empire became a great maritime kingdom which began in south eastern Sumatra and extended its influence into Java and beyond. The Sri Vijaya developed from the amalgamation of a small number of Indian colonies established in Sumatra in the second century AD. The oldest Sri Vijayan relic, however, only dates from about the century when the Kingdom was still emerging as a power. The relic is of a shattered stone torso of a Buddha. It was found near Bukit Seguntung in the neighbourhood of Palembang.

The Sri Vijaya began to assume greatness from the 7th century onward. Its influence spread to nearby Banka, Malaya and Java. The actual name 'Sri Vijaya' did not come into vogue until the 11th century. It was adopted in honour of King Sri Vijaya who ruled this great maritime empire about 1017AD. He sent ambassadors to China and formed a trading association with the Chinese.

The Sri Vijaya maintained a powerful influence in Indonesia for about 600 years. The famous east Javanese Singosari ruler, Kertanagara, overpowered the Sri Vijayan Kingdom in 1275AD. Kertanagara was a devout Buddhist. Since the Sri Vijaya Kings were also Buddhists the influence of India on Indonesia has a strong Buddhistic streak from the beginning.

Tarumanagara in West Java

Chinese history records that the Liu Song emperor Wen Di sent envoys to three rulers in Indonesia in 449AD. One of these Indonesian Kingdoms was given the name He-luo-dan. It is thought that the Hindu Kingdom of Tarumanagara, near present-day Bogor, was He-luo-dan. The existence of this Kingdom can be established from seven brief stone inscriptions which have been dated from as early as the 5th century AD. One of these is still in situ at Ciampea, 15km west of Bogor.

Dan-Dan, Po-Li, She-Po and He-Ling

Again, Chinese historical documents record trade with Indonesian Kingdoms from the interior of Java. Dan-Dan (530-695AD), Po-Li (473-630AD), She Po, and He-Ling (640-818AD) were the Chinese names given to these four kingdoms. Dan-Dan was a Hindu Kingdom whereas He-Ling was Buddhist. In any case, they both had Indian based cultures.

Selected Indian Temple Remains in Central Java

There are few archaeological remains of significant Indian buildings or temples in West Java. No doubt they were of wooden construction. However, Central Java and East Java afford a great number of impressive stone buildings in various states of repair. In Central Java the remains of the Candi on the Dieng plateau testify to a period of great Indian influence. Borobudur and Prambanam are among the world's greatest archaeological sites. Penataran is also of great interest. The terraced sanctuaries of Mount Penanggungan deserve special mention (see below). The Penataran and Mount Penanggungan sites are in East Java.

The Oldest Temples on the Dieng Plateau

The eight 'candi' which remain on the Dieng Plateau are the surviving remains of some 200 such structures. The word 'Dieng' (di-hang) comes from the old Javanese honorific applied to deified ancestors and may be translated as 'the place of the gods'. The plateau is 2000m above sea level and lies within the caldera of a volcano. Nearby there is a lake, Telaga Warna, and the area exhibits many signs of volcanic activity.

Jacques Dumarcaay divides the candi into two groups:

Candi Built Prior to 730AD.

These comprise Candi Arjuna, built to venerate Siwa (Shiva). Nearby is Candi Semar which also honours Siwa. Arjuna once contained a lingga which was ritually bathed each day. The water overflow ran through a gutter going through the north wall and out a gargoyle in the form of a makara head. The interior walls have small recesses which held lamps.

Candi Semar is turned to the west front of Candi Arjuna. It was thought to have once contained a statue of the bull Nandi which was Siwa's vehicle of communication.

Candi Srikandi is decorated with external reliefs. Vishnu is pictured on the north wall, Siwa on the east wall and Brahma on the south wall. Although the roof is badly damaged it does depict the motifs of an incense burner and a water vessel or Kendi.

Candi Gatokaca is furthest west of Candi Arjuna and is now in total ruins. It is nearly identical in design to that of Candi Dvaravati which is away from the main group of remains on a hillside some 850 metres away.

Candi Built Between 730-780 AD

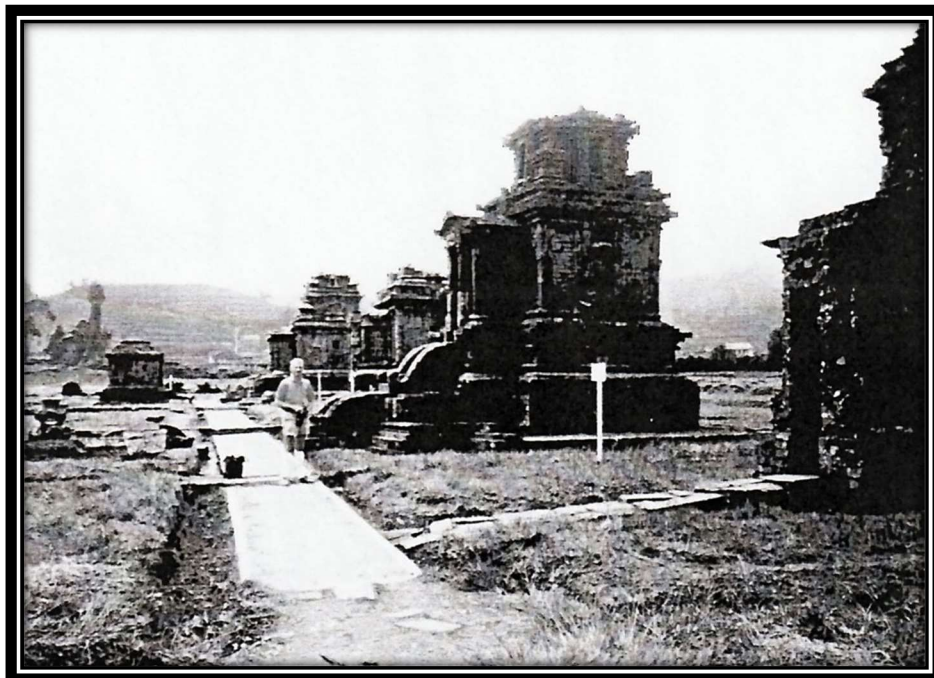
Candi Puntadeva and *Candi Sembrodo* are south of *Candi Arjuna* and *Srikandi* while *Candi Bima* is much further away in a southerly direction. *Birna* is regarded as unique in Java and may have design influences that derive from *Candi* built in Orissa, in east central India. Unlike the other Dieng *Candi*, it faces east and not west. Its octagonal base supports three tiered layers. Sculptured faces gaze outwards and its pyramidal roof anticipates the later design of *Mendut*.

The Sanjaya and Sailendra Kingdoms in Central Java

Sanjaya was a Javanese king of the Hindu faith who ruled in the region north of central Java in the early part of the 8th century. His successor, Panangkaran, became a vassal of another line of Javanese kings known as the Sailendra. The Sailendra were adherents of Buddhism. In 832AD a Sailendra queen married a Sanjaya king. Thus central Java was a region in which Hinduism and Buddhism developed side by side. The monumental Prambanam temple complex is a legacy of the Hindu influence. The Buddhist Sailendra influence eventually gained the ascendancy over the Sanjayan and in the space of 100 years they built an amazing number of religious monuments. The best known of these include the temples of Kalisan, Sari, Sewu, Sojiwan, Mendut, Ngawen, Pawon and the 'temple mountain' of Borobudur.

The Transfer of Power from Central Java to East Java

Pu Sindok moved the palace from Central Java to East Java in 929AD. This was not long after the Prambanam temple complex had been completed. This sudden move was probably a result of a violent eruption of nearby Mount Merapi.



On the Dieng Plateau

II Mount Penanggungan

Sacred Mountain Mythologies

The concept of the sacred mountain at the centre of the world came to Indonesia through Indian thought. Its most visible expression appeared in the temple designs of both Hindu and Buddhist architect-priests. Naturally, there were some adaptations to local requirements and interesting variations of the controlling myth. One Balinese legend tells of Pasupati, ie Siwa (Shiva) dividing the great Mahameru into Mount Agung and Mount Batur where the male characteristics were located in Gunung Agung and the female ones were attributed to Batur. Another legend tells of a three-fold division of the great Mahameru into Mount Semeru (East Java), Gunung Agung (Bali) and Mount Rinjani (Lombok) to form a "spiritual transmission line" to energise the inhabitants. Perhaps the myth which tells of the de-capping of Java's highest mountain peak, Mount Semeru (3,676 metres) is the most intriguing.

The "De-capping" of Mount Semeru

Mount Semeru in East Java is greatly venerated by the Tengger Highlanders who are the surviving remnants of the once numerous Hindus of Java. The more numerous Hindus of Bali also venerate Mount Semeru even though it is in East Java. Mount Semeru is actually some 20 kilometres to the south of the spectacular Bromo caldera and a guided tour of the area can be arranged through the Mahameru Mountain Climbing Club of Malang. The Hindus of Bali have, in recent years, erected a temple on its slopes and pilgrimages from Bali are undertaken for worship at this sacred mountain site.

According to legend all of the mountains of Java were once separated from Gunung Semeru after its mythological journey from the Himalayas. There is however, another legend which gives especial prominence to a lesser-known mountain. According to this supplementary legendary material, Mount Semeru was de-capped and the base left as the present Gunung Semeru, while the central peak and its four subsidiary peaks came to rest on the plains south of Surabaya. This summit of the transported Mahameru was originally called Mount Pawitra but today is known as Mt. Penanggungan.



Mount Semeru, East Java

Mount Penanggungan—location, size and shape

Mount Penanggungan is situated some 50 kilometres due south of Surabaya. It is only 1,650 metres high and is dwarfed by many of the peaks in the Arjuna/Welirang range further south.

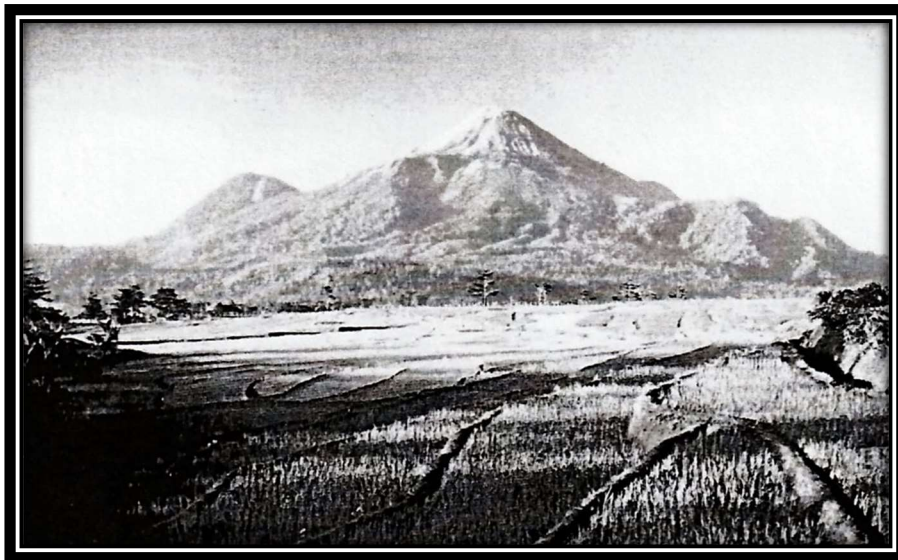
It derives its religious significance from its unique shape.

Mount Penanggungan (1652 m) is situated 50 kms due south of Surabaya. Its unique quincunx shape is the similitude of the Cosmic Mount Meru. There are some 81 religious shrines on its slopes.

It has a central, almost perfectly rounded summit, below which lie four minor peaks, more or less symmetrically located in the cardinal directions. Little wonder, then, that the ancient Javanese saw in the form of Mt. Penanggungan a reflection of the sacred Mahameru of Hindu mythology.

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The mountain contains a number of religious monuments which have inscriptions spanning a period of more than five centuries, from AD 977 until 1511. The earlier monuments include the two ceremonial bathing pools of Jalatunda and Belahan while the later monuments comprise a large number of terraced sanctuaries higher up on the mountain's northern and western slopes.



Mount Penanggungan

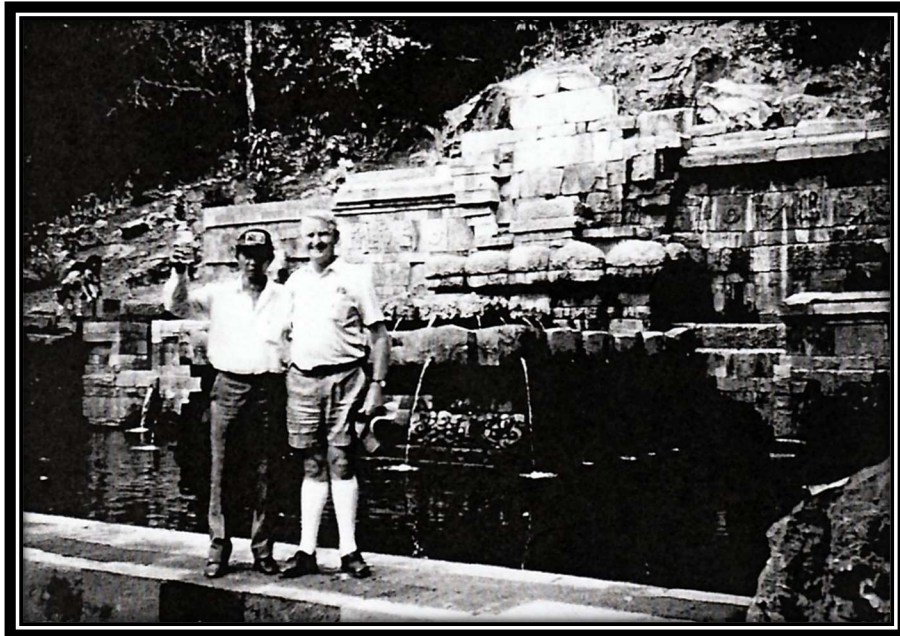
The Ceremonial Bathing Pools

There are two ceremonial bathing pools at Mount Penanggungan. These have been connected with the historical figures of Pu Sindok (the first King of the Isana Kingdom); Udayana, (who ruled conjointly with his wife Mahendratta in Bali (AD989-1022)); and their son Airlangga who returned from Bali to rule in East Java from AD 1030. There is thus a direct connecting link between Mount Penanggungan and Bali.

Jalatunda

The bathing pool Jalatunda lies 500 metres above sea level at the western foothills of Mt. Penanggungan. Without a guide, it is difficult to locate. It can be found by following a narrow road from Watukosek to Jedong via Ngoro. It is also accessible from Trowas. The bathing place is filled by water from a spring. This also provides a perennial supply of holy water for pilgrims. The overall dimensions of the rectangular pool are approximately 17 metres by 7 metres.

Two small bathing pools flank a central mass from which issues five frontal spouts. Goldfish swim leisurely in the main body of the pool. The wall backdrop to the pool has been partially restored but a 14th century carved relief depicting scenes from the Arjuna saga has been relocated in the National Museum of Jakarta together with a spout in the form of Mt. Meru. This spout once stood above the centre of the back wall. The sacred spring was made into a bathing pool in AD 977 and it has been associated with the Balinese ruler Udayana, father of King Airlangga.



Agung and Mark standing in front of the Jalatunda (or Jolotundo) bathing pool (AD 977) which is at the base of the western foothills of Mt Penanggungan. Agung is holding a bottle of holy water from the spring.

Belahan

The Belahan bathing pool is a little more inaccessible than Jalatunda and lies about two kilometres south of Gempol on the eastern side of Mount Penanggungan. Unlike Jalatunda the pool was constructed of bricks rather than stone blocks. It was probably begun in AD950 and added to in the 11th century. An inscription indicates that in AD 1049 the monument received the ashes of King Airlangga. The back wall to the small pool once contained three statues recessed into the brick wall. The statues are of the two wives of Vishnu viz Laksmi and Sri. Water spouts from the breasts of Laksmi but the statue of Sri is now dysfunctional. The central statue has been removed to the new Archaeological Museum at Trowulan. It depicts Vishnu seated at peace on the back of his means of communication, viz a garuda. It is carved from reddish tufa and the over-life size sculpture is thought to represent King Airlangga in the guise of Vishnu his patron deity.

It is interesting to note that the statuary in the bathing pools at Goa Gajah in Bali depict water spouting from containers in a manner which, although not identical to that of Belahan, is suggestive of some connection. Like the Jalatunda bathing place the one in Bali also has two ablution tanks separated by a central motif.



The Belahan bathing pool is 2 kms south of Gempol on the eastern side of Mount Penanggungan. The statues are of Vishnu's two wives - Laksmi and Sri. The statue of Vishnu as Airlangga is depicted in plate 8 (taken from p 325 *Indonesia Travel Guide*).

The Terraced Sanctuaries of Mt. Penanggungan

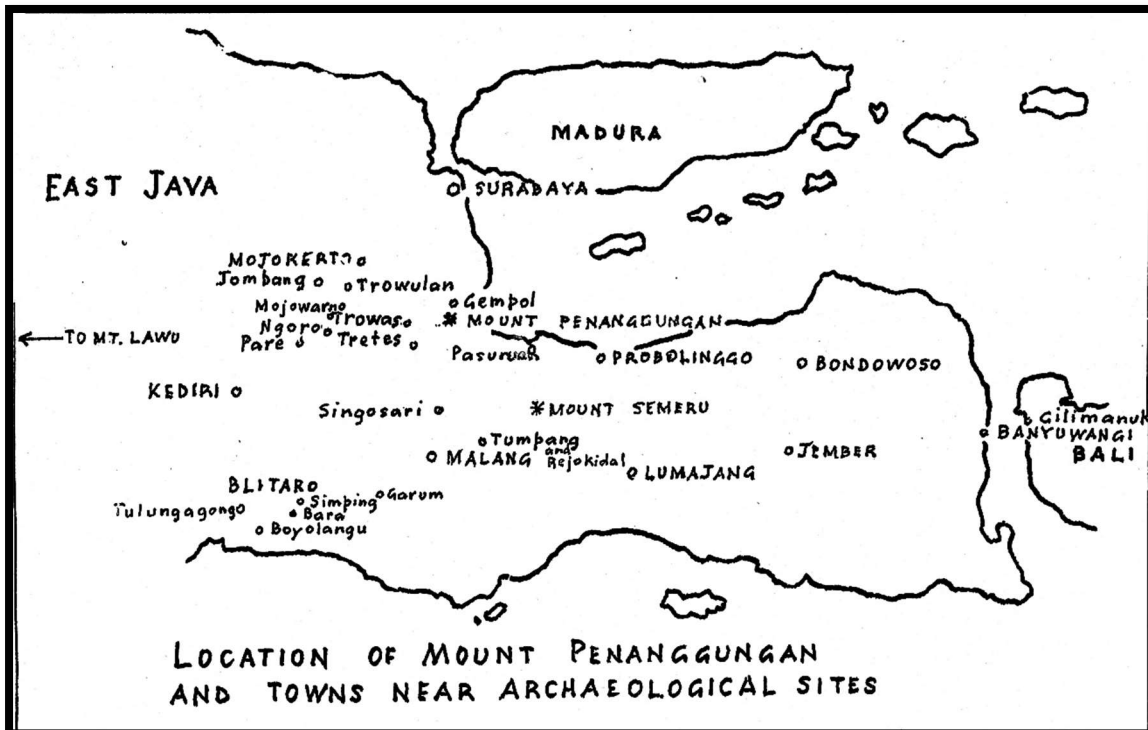
An old pilgrimage trail leads up the mountain behind Jalatunda to most of the 81 separate sanctuaries. The majority of them are at or about the 1000 metre line and most were constructed during the period of the Majapahit Kings. The more accessible of the sites can be found on the slopes of the minor peaks of Bekel and Gajah Munkur. The sanctuaries take the form of three or more stone-faced terraces built around the natural contours of the mountainside and oriented to the summit of the mountain. Each of the stepped monuments has a stairway and a type of altar or 'ancestral seat' (pelinggih) at the crown. Relief carvings can be found at some of the sites. It is thought that each of the monuments was built by a minor kingdom in much the same way as minor kingdoms of Bali erected edifices on Mt. Gunung Agung where Besakih, the mother temple of Bali, was erected. It is thought that the building of these ancient-style temples embodied a reversion to the Worship of ancestral spirits and heroes that characterised a much earlier stage of Javanese religion.

Principal sites on Mount Penanggungan

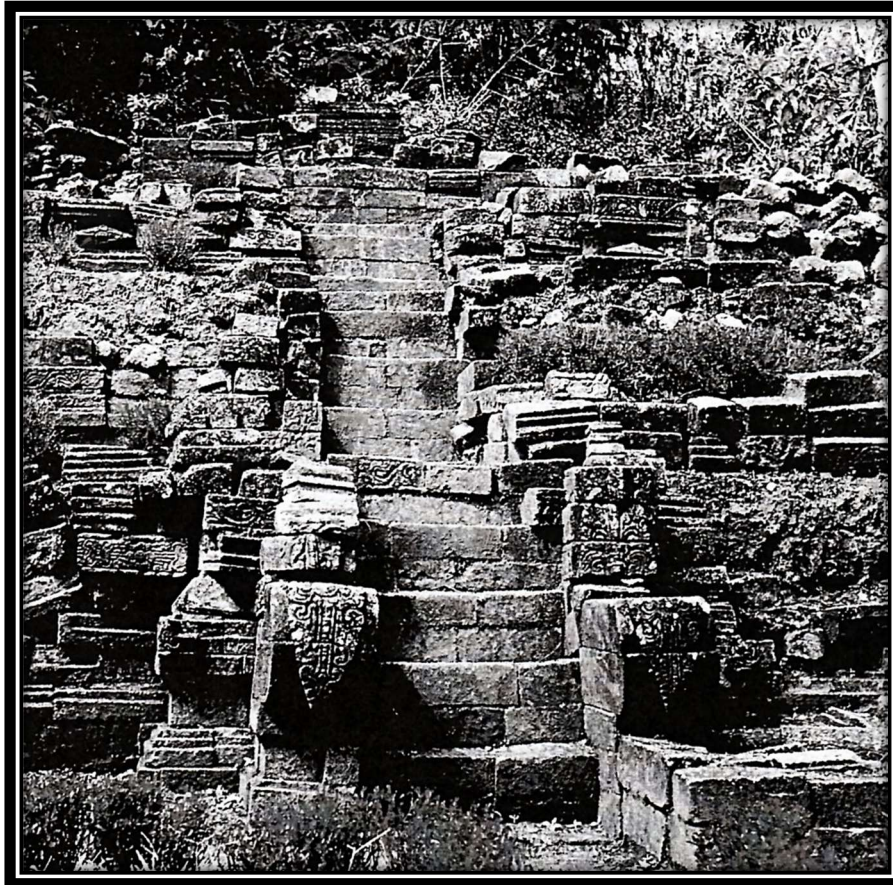
Research of Mt. Penanggungan began early in the 20th century and by 1930 some 81 separate sites had been located. In 1951 a uniform system of naming and identification was proposed by Professor van Romondt and it is followed to this day. The following short list is outlined in *Memories of Majapahit*, page 124. Roman numerals are bracketed. It should be noted that tour guides are considered essential and are provided through the archaeological services of the Trowulan Museum.

Name	Name	Name	
Jalatunda	977	Guru (XLVII)	
Belahan	10P C	Siva (XLVIII)	
Carak (1)		Triluko (II)	
Kerajan Dharmawangsan (III)		Lurch (L)	
Merck (VI)		Lemari (LIX)	
Wayang (VIII)		Putri (LXI)	1414
Area Dwarapala (IX)		Yudha (LX)	
Goa Botol (X)		Pura (LXII)	
Arca Mecan (XIV)		Kendalisada (LXV)	
Bayi (XV)		Naga (LXVI)	
Meja (XVI)		Pendawa (L-XVII)	
Sinta (XVIIa)		Lemari (LIX)	
Meja (XVIIb)		Goa Kursi (LXX)	
Genuk/Gentong (XVIIc)		Goa Widodaren (LXXX)	
Batu Bergambar (XVIII)		Indrokilo	
Puncak (XIX)		Pasetran	1456
Griya (XX)		Gambar	1388, 1399
Menara (XXI)		Gambar Wetan	1410, 1438
Gaja Mungkur (XXII)		Bocok	1436
Selakelir (XXIII)	1434	Jedong	1385

Memories of Majapahit - p.124



Location of Mount Penanggungan



Memories of Majapahit – p.131

An Evolving Temple Design—Uluru, Mount Penanggungan, Besakih, Borobudur Uluru is a naturally occurring sacred mountain with an ever present supply of fresh water at Maggie Springs. Its natural features 'record' the cosmology, mythology and history of the aboriginal inhabitants. The secrets of this sacred record belong to the oral 'library' of the aboriginal inhabitants. These secrets are passed on to future generations through initiation and renewal ceremonies which incorporate story-telling, drama, dance and song. The only visible manmade additions to Uluru are the cave paintings.

Mount Penanggungan is also a naturally occurring sacred mountain but it has many man-made additions to its archetypal shape. These additions are about 1000 metres up the mountain and they are oriented to the central summit. They are thought to have been erected to honour venerated ancestors from minor kingdoms. Some of these tiered stone altars are embellished with relief carvings which are, naturally, more permanent than paintings. Besakih is the famous mother temple complex of Bali and it is situated about 1000 metres up the slope of Bali's highest mountain, Gunung Agung. The Pura Panataran Agung is the central cluster of 57 shrines and pavilions about which are 4 other clusters of shrines in each of the cardinal directions of space. The Besakih complex is thought to have been similar to Mount Penanggungan in its early days. From the 9th century it began to acquire shrines honouring venerable visitors from Java. In later years Besakih accumulated shrines etc from the districts or local kingdoms of Bali in a similar manner to Mount Penanggungan. Borobudur, in Central Java, has the appearance of a unitary temple which soars heavenwards terrace upon terrace. It is actually a hill which is encased with balustrades and stone panels of bas reliefs. Unlike Mount Penanggungan and Besakih, its many shrines (to the Buddha) are incorporated into a single building.

These four sacred temple sites possess characteristics which later found expression, to varying degrees, in such monumental temples as Prambanam, Angkor Wat and the Shwe Dagon of Myanmar.

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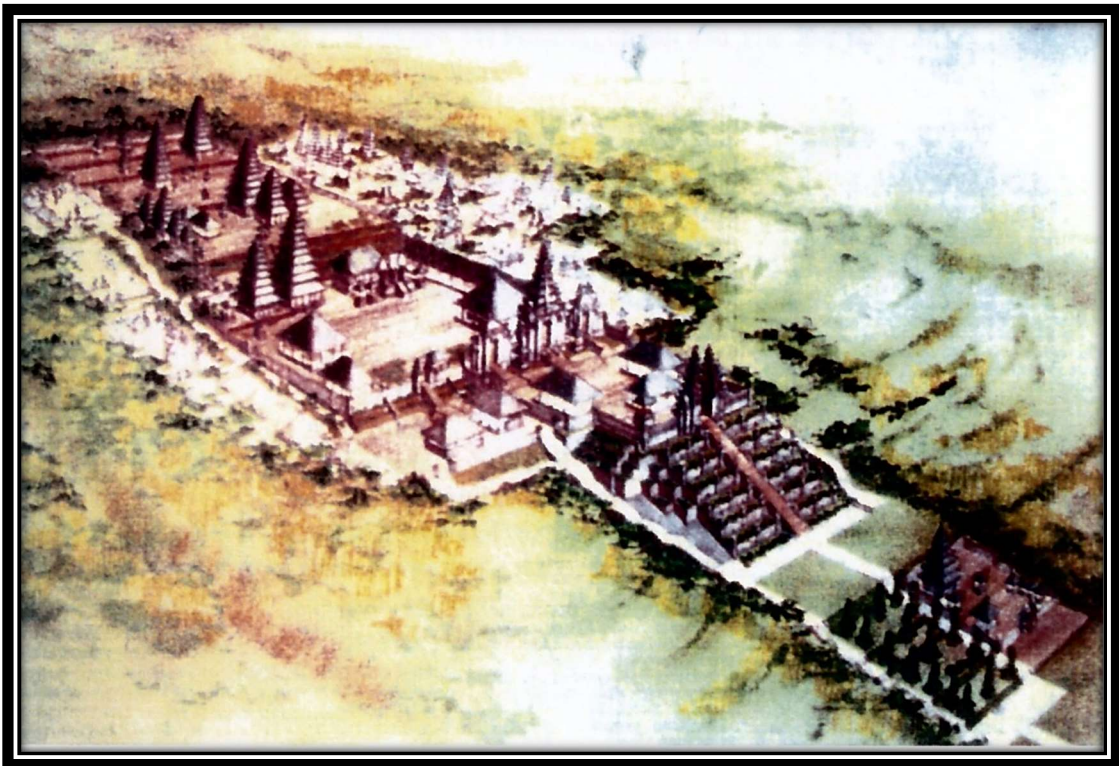
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PURA BESAKIH

A Balinese State Temple on the Slopes of Gunung Agung



Besakih — Mother Temple of Bali

“Within the Besakih complex, the paramount sanctuary is the Pura Panataran Agung with its lofty merus on a high bank of terraces. Steps ascend in a long perspective to the austere split gate. Inside the main courtyard stands the three seated shrines enthroning three aspects of God: Siwa, God as creation; Paramasiwa, God without form; and Sadasiwa, God as half male and half female. Many interpret this trinity to be Vishnu, Brahma and Siwa.”

Insight Guides - Bali, p.298

Chapter 3

PURA BESAKIH STATE TEMPLE OF BALI

I

Mother Temple of Bali

A Temple Complex

Design Is Between Mt Penanggungan and The Shwedagon

Approach to Appraisal

II

Sacred Space and Sacred Time

Thousands of Merus

Sacred Space

To and From

Up and Down

Centre and Circumference

The 11 Directions of Space

Axis Mundi

Radial and Spheroidal

Centripetal and Centrifugal

Polarity and di-Polarity

Metaphysics of Triads

Sacred Geometry

Projective Geometry

Sacred Time

III

Ceremonies and Festivals of Agama Bali at the Village Level

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Tumpek Celebrations

The Galungan Days

The Odalan

Melasti

Cremation

Nyepi

Manusa Yadnya or Rites de Passage

Birth Ceremonies

Kepus Pungsed

Ngelepas Hawon

Tutug Kambuhan

- Telubulan
- Oton
- Ngempugin
- Maketus
- Mungghah daa/Teruna
- Mapandes
- Pawiwahan
- Pawinteran
- Tumpek Celebrations
 - Tumpek Landep
 - Tumpek Uduh
 - Tumpek Kuningan
 - Tumpek Krulet
 - Tumpek Kandang
 - Tumpek Ringgit or Tumpek Wayang
- The Galungan Days
- The Odalan
- Melasti
- Cremation
- Nyepi

IV

Pura Besakih - State Temple of Bali

Location on Gunung Agung

History

- A Terraced Sanctuary

- A Syncretic Blend of Animism and Hinduism

- Sri Markandeya (8e Century)

- Mpu Kuturan

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Besakih - AStateTemple

Panca Dewata or the Relationship of Pura Panataran Agung to 4 other Temples

Pura Panataran as Divider

Exemplars of Tiga Kayangan

Subsidiary Temples of Pura Panataran Agung

Pura Panataran Agung - The Terraced Sanctuary and its symbolism

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- Terrace 2

- Terrace 3

- Terrace 4

- Terrace 5

- Terrace 6

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Selected Ceremonies of State conducted at Pura Besakih

- Bhatara Turun Kabeh - An Annual Festival
- Panca Wali Krama - a 10 year Festival
- Eka Dasa Rudra - A 100 Year Festival
- Ceremonies of The Eka Dasa Rudra Festival (1979)
 - The Opening Ceremonies
 - Preparations
 - MaPedada
 - Taur Eka Dasa Rudra
 - The Ma pedan
- Concluding Remarks

Chapter 3

Pura Besakih

State Temple of Bali

I

Mother Temple of Bali

A Temple Complex

Pura Besakih is the spiritual nerve centre for the whole of Bali. The provincial government accepts the ultimate responsibility for its maintenance although it delegates most of its powers to a governing Hindu Council.

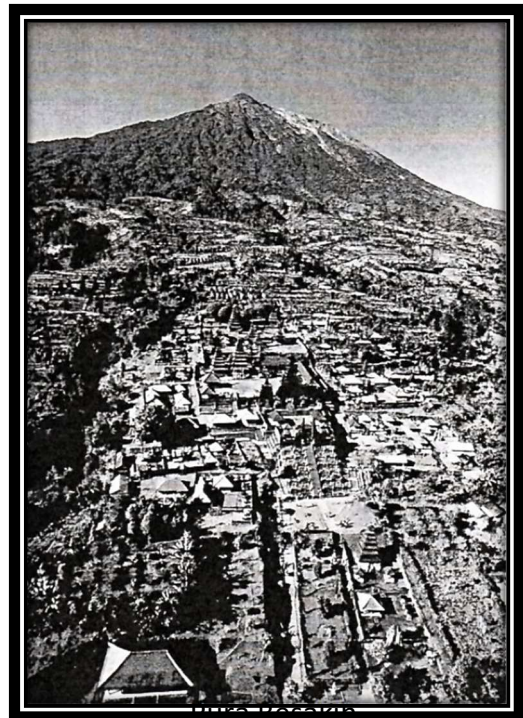
Strictly speaking, Pura Besakih, is not a single architectural entity. It is a whole complex of temples and temple structures of which Pura Panataran Agung is the most eminent. Over its one thousand years of existence, it has accumulated 86 temples and 22 main temple complexes. Within its boundaries there are some 198 religious structures as well as a number of homes for the villagers who live on the site.

Design is Between Mt Penanggungan and Shwedagon

In evolutionary terms, Besakih stands somewhere between the stepped monuments of Mount Penanggungan in East Java and the unified complex of the Shwedagon of Burma. Both of these sacred sites are aggregates of sacred buildings from minor tribal groupings. The Penanggungan collection lacks architectural unity whereas the Shwedagon achieves architectural integrity through the commanding dominance of its golden stupa.

Approach to Appraisal

The visitor to Pura Besakih, especially if he is from the western world, finds great difficulty in appraising the bewildering number of edifices. To begin this process, it is necessary to gain some appreciation of the Balinese concepts of space and time and a working knowledge of ceremonies and festivals of Agama Bali as it is practised at the village level. Once this has been acquired, it is possible to understand that Pura Besakih is the temple of all temples in Bali. Its use is concerned with uniting all of the island's religious observances and is appropriately referred to as the Mother Temple. Some of the greatest religious festivals of the world are held at Pura Besakih. The greatest of these is the Eka Dasa Rudra festival which is held once in 100 years (according to the Saka lunar calendar).



A temple complex on the SW slopes of Mount Gunung Agung (3142m)

II Sacred Space and Sacred Time

Thousands of Meru's

Agama Bali is a creative blend of local Animism and Javanese Hinduism. Most Balinese trace their ancestry to Java from whence great numbers migrated towards the end of the first millennium and fled in even greater numbers with the collapse of the Majapahit rulers of Java in the sixteenth century. These Javanese migrants, with the guidance of some Architect-Priests, re-established their form of Hinduism and dotted the landscape with their distinctive shrine and temple architecture. Today there are more than 20,000 temple complexes which feature their meru shrines.

The Balinese mere is named after its mythological Indian prototype and, in overall design, is pyramidal in structure. Merus are multi-tiered like Chinese pagodas, and they vary in size according to the number of thatched roofs. The highest merus have eleven roofs or tiers and these tiers correspond to the eleven levels of the world mountain, Maha Meru. Such towers are built by royalty. Lesser castes construct merus of nine, seven and five tiers.

The most important Merus are those of Pura Besakih, the 'Mother' Temple of Bali. Besakih is also the state temple of Bali and it functions as the spiritual hub or nerve centre of Balinese cultural life. It is located on the slopes of the sacred mountain Gunung Agung which is the axis mundi, the cosmic spindle and the navel of the world.

Sacred Space

Gunung Agung is Bali's most sacred mountain and rises to 3142 metres in the central eastern part of the island. It is the Balinese Mount Meru and is the dwelling place of the gods. Spatial characteristics are determined by using Gunung Agung as a point of reference. Its spatial characteristics are held to be sacred.

- *To and From*: the sacred mountain follows the Kaja/Kelod axis. 'Towards' the mountain is sacred. The Kaja/Kelod direction is variable and is entirely dependent on what part of Bali one lives. The Kangin/Kauh axis is fixed and is a genuine east/west axis that corresponds to the rising and setting of the sun. East is the second most sacred direction. Villages and house compounds are aligned Kaja/Kelod. The family temple is in the most sacred position, Kaja-Kangin. Everyone sleeps with his or her head towards Kaja or Kangin. The kitchen and granary, however, are Kelod. The animal pens and garbage are the furthest Kelod.
- *Up and Down*: the sacred mountain carries the same corurotations as "to" an "from", ie 'up' is sacred and 'down' is profane.
- *Centre and Circumference*: the sacred mountain is at the omphalos or cosmic navel of the universe. It is also the point through which runs the cosmic spindle. At the centre everything is still while at the circumference everything is moving at great speed. The centre of the spiritual compass of the Balinese is Pusem from which Siwa (Shiva) and his consort reign.

- *The 11 Directions of Space*: Balinese space is sub-divided into spiritual vectors. There are four cardinal vectors and four inter-cardinal ones but they do not correspond to the compass directions. They have a mobility that the compass directions do not possess except for the Kauh-Kangin axis which follows sunrise to sunset or east-west. Pusem is at the centre where man exists and to this is added 'up' and 'below'. The 'up' realms are the heavens of the gods while the 'below' realm is the realm of negativity, the home of the bhutas and Kalas and where bad Karma is purged in hell.
- *Axis Mundi*: the axis mundi runs through the cosmic navel or cosmic spindle. There are an infinite number of axes mundi. This may be explained by understanding that a sphere can be defined as the sum of its axial diameters. On the surface of a sphere, there are an infinite number of points each of which subtends a diameter through the centre to an antipodean polar point.
- *Radial and Spheroidal*: a sphere may be defined as the movement of a radius through an infinite number of positions from a fixed end. In the Balinese mathematics of space, radial and spheroidal are polaric.
- *Centripetal and Centrifugal*: Balinese space is the playground of forces or powers. These forces are both centric or tangential. Inasmuch as a circle can be defined as a point which is expanded, it can also be defined as the sum of its tangent planes. This polarity is beautifully imaged in the crystalline formation of calcium carbonate and the polar formation of silica. The former expands concentrically from a point while the latter is formed tangentially by planar forces. Man is suspended, as it were, between the limestone forces of his skeleton and the silica forces of his skin!
- *Polarity and di-Polarity*: The Western mind regards polarity as a pair of opposing attributes which are mutually exclusive such as North and South Pole. In Balinese metaphysics, polarity is mutually inclusive. Each pole is positive and negative at the same time. This means that it is better to speak of di-polarity. Whereas Newton claimed all colour was contained in white light, Goethe saw colour as the outcome of the struggles of light and dark where each pole played an additive and subtractive part in colour production. Goethe's approach is a typical Balinese one.
- *Metaphysics of Triads*: The Balinese universe has an upper world of gods and heavens; it has a middle world of man and an under-world of demons and hell. The ruling gods form a trinity. Brahma is the creative power, Wisnu (Vishnu) is the sustainer and Siwa (Shiva) the destroyer and re-creator. Man is likewise, triadic. He has a head, a body and limbs. These triads act as a beam balance. When the balance becomes uneven, then it is necessary to alter the fulcrum. This may require an appeasement to the negative spiritual powers through offerings to the bhutas and Kalas. In making such offerings the balance is brought into equilibrium again.

- *Sacred Geometry*: Balinese architectural practice does not possess the sophistication of the architect-priests who designed Angkor Wat. However, both traditions draw on the accumulated wisdom of the so-called 'sacred geometry'. The provenance of this geometry is thought to be in the mystery schools of India, Egypt and Greece. In essence, it was regarded as the language of the gods. Its elements included the form creating properties of the sphere, the vesica pisces, the torus, the vortex, the four ethers, the perfect solids, the phi ratio and the earth grid.
- *Projective Geometry*: Although projective geometry is a relatively new form of knowledge to western man, it is patently obvious to a visitor to Bali (with such knowledge), that Balinese culture presupposes an understanding of such a geometry. This is especially clear in the countless ways in which the culture attempts to relate the microcosm to the macrocosm. As the sphere mediates between the point and the plane, so too, does man mediate between the earthly and the heavenly. Similarly, the line is equally related to points and planes with point, line and plane forming a trinity. The metaphysics of Balinese Hinduism is underpinned with an ancient knowledge of projective geometry.

Sacred Time

In Balinese Agama not only has space been sacralised but so, too, has time. The Balinese are more concerned with the qualitative aspects of time than they are with its quantitative aspects. They ask not what amount of time has elapsed but rather how significant or auspicious this moment, or this event, might be. The Balinese are preoccupied with the intersection of time. The present is the intersection of both the past and the future and yields 'the eternal now'. Their Pawuton calendar is based on the celebration of intersecting cycles of time and their almanac is used as a companion guide to action (see Pt III on the Tumpek celebrations).



Besakih

III

Ceremonies and Festivals of Bali Agama at the Village Level

Home and Village Ceremonies as an Introduction to Besakih

Pura Besakih will not yield its secrets to a casual tourist. It will present as a bewildering collection of strangely constructed shrines whose meaning and function appears a mystery. Its 55 annual ceremonies and its 10 year and 100 year festivals, although spectacular, are almost impossible to appreciate by a Western visitor.

In order to decode the meaning of Besakih, it is necessary to first acquire a working knowledge of the smaller home and village temples. This will serve as an introduction to the state ceremonies and rituals practised on such a grand scale at Pura Besakih.

The following seven ceremonial events are enacted at the village level and they provide some insight into the more spectacular rituals reserved for the Mother Temple of Bali (see Part V).

Ceremonies Observable at Local Temples

- Manusa Yadnya or Rites de Passage
- Tumpek Celebrations
- The Galungan Days
- The Odalan Festivities
- Melasti
- Cremation
- Nyepi

Visitors to these ceremonies are usually very welcome but care should be observed in matters of dress and common courtesy.

1. Manusa Yadnya or Rites de Passage

The passage of a Balinese person from the 'womb to the tomb' is marked by a ceremony for each of the 13 stages:

1. Birth Ceremonies
2. Kepus pungsed - The umbilical cord falls off
3. Ngelepas hawon - 12 days after birth
4. Tutug Kambuhan - 42 days after birth
5. Telubulan - 105 days after birth
6. Oton - 210 days after birth
7. Ngempugin - Adult teeth appear
8. Maketus - Last milk tooth falls out
9. Munggah daalteruna - Puberty
10. Mapandes - Toothfiling
11. Pawiwahan - Marriage; and
12. Pawintenan - Purification for Study.

These rites are known as *manusa yadnya*. Each of the 13 ceremonies consists of four basic sub-ceremonies:

- Sacrifice to the evil spirits;
- Purification of the candidate;
- Wafting the essence of the offering; and
- Prayers

The Toothfiling Ceremony is probably the most interesting to western tourists. It is a compulsory ceremony and is not necessarily performed in the order listed above. The Balinese Marriage Ceremony is a most impressive event.

2. Tumpek Celebrations

Tumpek celebrations occur 6 times in the Pawuton cycle of 210 days.

- (a) Tumpek Landep occurs at the first coincidence date of the 7 day and the 5 day cycle. Weapons of war, the sacred Kris and metallic vehicles such as motorcycles, trucks and automobiles are blessed with holy water, offerings are made and prayers said.
- (b) Tumpek Uduh occurs five weeks later on the second coincidence date (ie 7 x 5 days). This is a day to offer respect to trees (especially the coconut palm).
- (c) Tumpek Kuningan is regarded as the most important of the Tumpek celebrations because it also marks the end of the Galungan Days (see below). 'Kuning' means 'yellow' and refers to the prominence given to tumeric-stained rice offerings made to the deified ancestors.
- (d) Tumpek Krulet occurs on the 4th coincidence of the 5 day and 7 day cycle in the 176 week. On this day offerings are made to the musical instruments, masks and dance costumes.
- (e) Tumpek Kandang falls 5 weeks later on Saturday of Uye in the 22nd week of the 210 day Pawuton cycle. The word 'Kandang' is the Balinese word for the household animal pen. The ceremonies conducted, thus honour domestic animals, especially cows and pigs.
- (f) Tumpek Ringgit is the last in the 35 day series and is alternately referred to as Tumpek Wayang because it is a day set aside to bless the shadow puppets. It is considered very unlucky for a baby to be born out this day. Arrangements have to be made for a compensatory special ceremony should this occur.

3. Galungan Days

The Galungan days occur during Tumpek Kuningan in the 10 days between Wednesday of the 11th week and Saturday of the 12th week. The most important regular religious celebrations in the 210 Pawuton cycle are held in this period. School attendance is forgone during this period and the normal life of the village gives way to the veneration of the dead ancestors. The ancestral spirits return to their former homes and are welcomed with prayers and offerings. Bananas are used extensively in the offerings and attention is devoted to the preparation of 'Jaja' or rice cakes. Pigs and turtles are slaughtered on the day preceding Galungan and satays are prepared. If an ancestor has not been cremated then offerings and prayers are made at the graveside. As with all Balinese festivals, the preparation and the period following, have almost as much meaning as the festival itself.

4. The Odalan

Odalans are temple anniversary celebrations and are held yearly (according to the 210 day Pawuton year) for every temple in Bali. Since there are over 20,000 temples in Bali, each with different anniversaries, it is not too difficult to attend one.

The preparations for this three-day festival may take a week and they are just as important as the main event. Great attention is given to the preparation of foodstuffs and offerings. Canangs, [amaks, Sampians, Daksinas and elaborate Banten Tegeh are assembled with devotional care. Rice cakes (Jaja), Satays and many varieties of fruit are assembled for this 'annual' three-day festival. Attention is also given to the preparation of caru, or blood sacrifices, to appease the evil bhutas and Karu. Above all, the priestly preparation of holy water is central to the celebration.

Odalans are truly festive occasions. Apart from their overtly religious nature, they combine many forms of entertainment. These include gamelan playing, masked dancing, wayang Kulit or shadow puppetry, and, by special dispensation, cock-fighting is permitted on the first day. A barong group may be invited to perform to add greater significance to the celebrations. At odalans, the pratimas are taken out of their enclosed shrines and the gods are invited to dwell in them. As the celebrations come to a conclusion the pratimas are thanked and restored to their sanctuary inside the shrines.

5. Melasti

The Melasti celebration usually occurs just before Nyepi or New Year's Day (see below), but can be held at other times. It is a purification ceremony for the pratimas and for the whole village.

It is a crowded event. The village forms a processional march to a source of water which may be a holy spring, a lake or the ocean. Umbrellas shade each of the pratimas which are the home for the spirit of a god. With the gongs clanging, the flags and banners waving and the people in their colourful costumes, this ceremony is quite spectacular. The ceremony climaxes with the sprinkling of the pratimas with the tirtha amertha (or holy water) which imbues new life into the statues.

6. Cremation

Balinese cremation ceremonies are both solemn and festive occasions. Usually the whole banjar or village attends. Cremations entail a great deal of preparation and considerable expense. Apart from the preparation of offerings, there are expenses involved with the preparation of the casket and for the stipend of the priest. Poorer members of the village sometimes take advantage of the goodwill of more affluent ones and share in a cremation. In such cases, they disinter the bones of their dead and participate conjointly in the cremation.

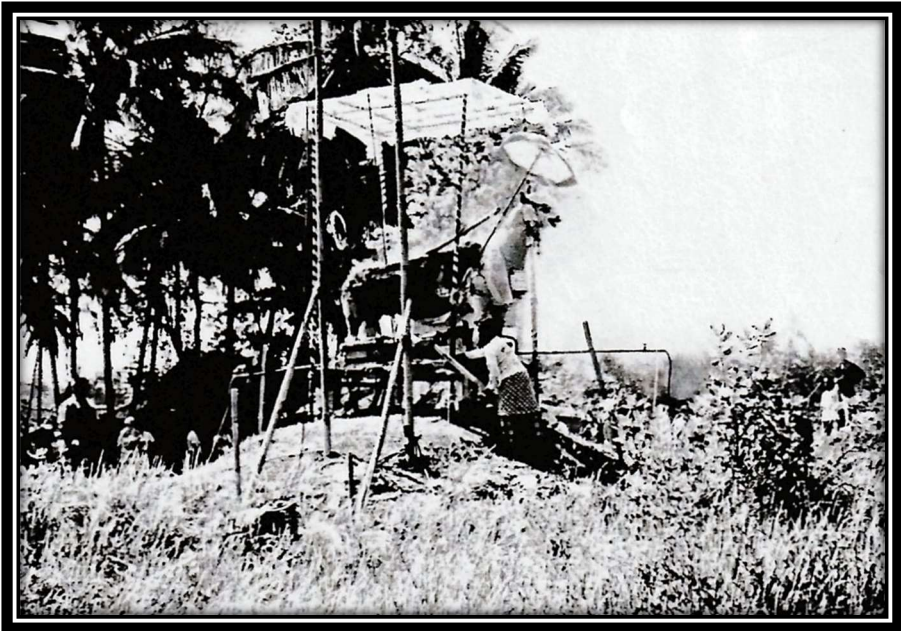
7. Nyepi

Nyepi is the first day of the Saka year or lunar year and occurs on the first day of the 10 month Kedasa, generally in March. It is a day of silence, prayer and meditation observed to show respect for the evil bhutas and Kalas. Offerings are made to the evil spirits and in the evening crackers are exploded to alert the evil spirits to the presence of the gifts. It is an example of the Balinese worshippers seeking to obtain balance in their lives and thus gain

health. Papier maché figures of the demons are paraded through the streets and lanes of the villages. This parade brings a close to the period of silence.



Melasti Ceremony



Cremation at Batuan

IV

Pura Besakih - State Temple of Bali

Location on Gunung Agung

The Besakih complex is 60 kilometres north-east of Denpasar in the Rendang district of the Karangasem regency. It is 22 kilometres north of Klungkung. Pura Besakih lies on the south-west slope of the highest mount in Bali, Gunung Agung (3142 metres). The temple complex is about 1000 metres up the slope. The Balinese people regard Gunung Agung as a similitude of the fabled cosmic Mount Mahameru of Hindu cosmology. It is the axis of the world, the home of the gods and the navel of the earth. Gunung Agung bears a special relationship to Mount Semeru (3676 metres), the highest peak in Java, and to Mount Rinjani (3726 metres), the highest peak in Lombok. This relationship is held to be a spiritual force field. Gunung Agung is held in such high regard by the Balinese people that in every local temple complex, there is a shrine dedicated to the spirit of Mt Agung.



Side view of Pura Besakih

History

A Terraced Sanctuary

Some scholars have suggested that the present site of Besakih was once a terraced sanctuary in which neolithic man practised his own form of nature worship. The actual terracing of the slopes of Gunung Agung suggests a relationship to Mount Penanggungan in central Java.

A Syncretic Blend of Animism and Hinduism

With the arrival of Hinduism from Java there was a syncretic blending of animism with hinduism. This mix has persisted and has given rise to a unique form of religion known as Agama Bali.

Sri Markandeya (8th century)

Sri Markandeya is honoured as the founding father of Besakih. A Siwaite priest from Gunung Raung in the Basuki area of East Java, he led two colonising trips to Bali. On his second trip he performed the Pancadatu. This was the ceremony of Burying the Five Metals viz: gold, silver, iron, copper and precious stone. This burial spot now has a seven-roofed meru and

the site is known as Pura Basukian. This small temple is on the right-hand side of the main flight of stairs leading to Pura Panataran Agung.

Mpu Kuturan

Mpu Kuturan is an honoured Architect-Priest who lived during the reign of King Udayana Warmadewa and Queen Mahendradatta.

Kuturan wrote the first encyclopaedia of Hindu-Balinese Building Law known as the *Hasti Bumi*, *Hasti Kosala Kosali*. He introduced

- the Tri-kahyangan Temples of village life: each village has the bale agung (the assembly hall of the gods), and the temple of creation or Pura Puseh, the temple Pura Desa and the Pura Dalem.
- the Tri-Loka or tripartite organisation of the village and the home compound to correspond with the head, body and limbs of man.
- the Kangin-Kauh axis which is not fixed as the Kaja-Kelod or 'North-South' axis.

Danghyang Niratha

Danghyang Niratha was also a much esteemed Architect-Priest and helped advance Kuturan's planning designs. He added the Pura-Puri or Temple-Palace edict to Kuturan's principles of town planning. This edict overlaid the lotus motif to the existing Sad Kahyangan temples. Pura Besakih was auspiciously located at the centre of the prototypic lotus. Niratha also extended Kuturan's manuscript of ritual observances, the *Widhi Tat Twa*. He is credited with the introduction of the fabulous Eka Dasa Rudra festival which was a purificatory ritual to be held at Besakih every 100 years.

Besakih — A State Temple

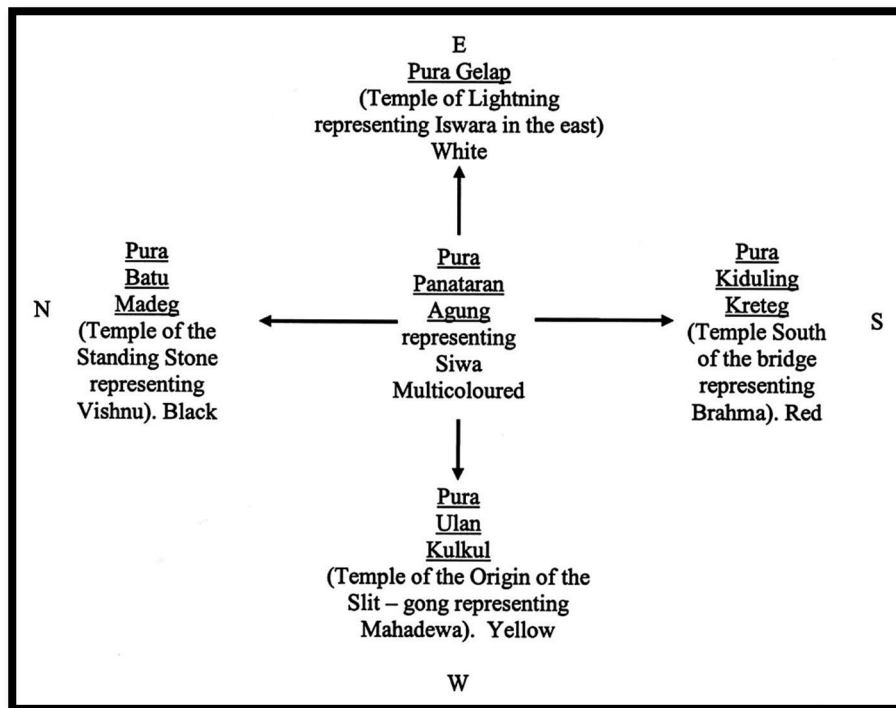
In the course of time Besakih acquired the status of a state temple for the nearby Gelgel and Klungkung Kingdoms. Eventually this recognition broadened to include the other Balinese Kingdoms. Today it is venerated as the mother temple of Bali and its maintenance is both a religious duty and a state commitment.

Panca Dewata or the Relationship of Pura Panataran Agung to 4 other Temples

Pura Panataran Agung is what the casual tourist calls Besakih. Actually, it is the largest and most centrally located of all the Besakih temples. It contains 57 shrines and pavilions on a seven-tiered terrace. Pura Panataran Agung bears a spiritual geographical relationship to four other temple clusters.



Steps leading to the Candi Bentar at the main entrance to Pura Basakih



Note: The cardinal points of the compass are for ritual purposes only. Actually, Pura Gelap is to the North, not to the East.

These five temples are linked together in a series of important ceremonies:

- Aci Pangenteg Jagat in Pura Gelap
- Aci Panyeed Brahma in Pura Kiduling Kreteg
- Aci Pangurip Jagat in Pura Ulan Kukul
- Aci Panaung Bayu in Pura Batu Madeg and
- Aci Bhatara Turun Kabeh when the gods all descend together in Pura Panataran Agung.

Of these five temples three are considerably larger than the others: Pura Kiduling Kreteg, Pura Batu Madeg and Pura Panataran Agung. These three temples represent the Trimurti, the Hindu trinity of Brahma the creator, Vishnu the Preserver and Siwa the Dissolver and Re-creator.

The three gods are imaged in earth, water and air.

Pura Panataran Agung as Divider

Pura Panataran Agung has 11 temples below its terraces and 7 temples above its terraces. It can be taken as a line of division. Some of the 11th temples below are associated with ceremonies for the underworld:

- Pura Bangun Sakti (dedicated to Anantabhoga the cosmic naga or serpent)
- Pura Basukian (dedicated to the other cosmic naga used to churn the milky sea to produce amert(h)a, the elixir of life)
- Pura Goa is connected with naga Basuki
- Pura Manik Mas is thought to be associated with Bedawangnala, the cosmic turtle who supports the universe on his back.

The temples above the terraced entrance to Panataran Agung include:

- Pura Panataran Agung
- Pura Kiduling Kreteg
- Pura Baru Madeg, and
- Pura Gelap
- Pura Tirtha
- Pura Pangubengan, and
- Pura Paninjoon completes the seven.

The space in front of Pura Panataran Agung is where the bhuta yadnya Eka Dasa Rudra are held.

Exemplars of Tiga Kahyangan

The principles enunciated by the Siwaist priest Niratha outlined the ideal of a three-folding (tri-loka) of village temple functions. Three Besakih temples are held to be spiritual prototypes of the three village temples:

- Pura Basukian is the Pura Puseh or Temple of Origin;
- Pura Panataran Agung is the Pura Desa of Temple of the Community, and
- Pura Dalem Puri is the Pura Dalem or Temple of the Dead.

Subsidiary Temples of Pura Panataran Agung

In addition to the three 'public' temples referred to above, there are four special subsidiary temples associated with particular clans:

- Pura Ratu Pasek,
- Pura Dukuh Segening,
- Pura Panyarikan, and
- Pura Ratu Pande.

When the gods of Besakih leave the temple precincts for the sacred bathing, the deities of these temples always lead the procession.

There is also a complex of temples (known as padharman temples) that bear a special relationship with Pura Panataran Agung. These temples honour the deified ancestors of particular clans. The largest of these is the Padharman Dalem whose merus are in honour of the deified Kings of Gelgel.

Pura Panataran Agung - The Terraced Sanctuary and its symbolism

The flight of steps leading to the Candi Bentar should not be confused with the 7 terraces of the Pura Panataran Agung complex:

Terrace 1 - Symbol of the need for man to purify himself before coming into the presence of deity.

The split-gate entrance is on the first terrace. Whether there are 6 or 7 terraces is not easy to determine but to accord with Hindu doctrine there ought to be 7.

Terrace 2 - Symbolises the worship of man to deity through prayer and offerings and man's receipt of blessings.

The Padma Tiga or Triple Lotus shrine is on the 2nd terrace. This is the most important shrine in the whole Besakih complex. It is dedicated to Sanghyang Widhi Wasa in his manifestation as Tripurusa, ie Siwa, Sadasiwa and Paramasiwa. The shrine has three padmasana on a common base. The padmasana were introduced by Niratha in the 16th century. The padmasana is an empty chair for Sanghyang Widhi.

Terrace 3 - Symbolises the contribution that holy men and priests have rendered to Bali Agama.

On terrace three, there are a number of merus and shrines honouring important personages and clan members who once worshipped at Besakih.

Terrace 4 - Symbolises life giving forces emanating from the gods.

On the 4th terrace, there is a simple bale structure sheltering two pairs of ancient statues of male and female deities each with four arms. They are thought to be representational of Sanghyang Surya-Candra (literally Sun-Moon). They date from about the 12th century. Among other gedongs and bales there is an 11-roofed meru dedicated to Ida Ratu Sanaring Jagat, who is Lord Radiance of the world (an aspect of Sanghyang Widhi in his power of lightning).



Pura Panataran

Terrace 5 - Symbolises the energy of the principle of duality

On terrace No. 5 there is, among other buildings, an 11 roofed meru dedicated to Sanghyang Wisesa, a manifestation of Sanghyang as Lord of Spiritual powers.

Many worshippers pay homage here after worshipping at the Padma Tiga (Terrace 2)

Terrace 6 - Symbolises the duality principle that underlies all creation

This terrace is actually the top one. (Terrace 7 may be between Terrace 2 or 3 or a very narrow one above Terrace 6). This terrace has a simplicity about it which is in keeping with the ancient mountain worship. Two shrines are dedicated to aspects of the sacred mountain:

- To the left is Ida Ratu Bukit Kiwa, or Shrine to the Lord of the Left Mountain, or Ida Ratu Bukit Lord of the Summit, and
- To the right is Ida Ratu Bukit Tengen, or shrine to the Lord of the Right Mountain, or Ida Ratu Pemeneh.

This pair of shrines symbolises the doctrine of dualism 'rwa-bhineda' that characterises all creation.

V

Selected Ceremonies of State conducted at Pura Besakih

- 1. Bhatara Turun Kabeh**
- 2. Panca Wali Krama**
- 3. Eka Dasa Rudra**

It is unlikely that a visitor to Bali would have the opportunity to witness these three ceremonies. They occur infrequently but because they are of great significance to Balinese people, a brief description is necessary to complete this section.

Bhatara Turun Kabeh

The Bhatara Turun Kabeh is the climax of the normal Besakih festival year. It usually falls in April on the full moon of the tenth lunar month and is held in the central Besakih temple known as the Pura Panataran Agung. The name Bhatara Turun Kabeh means the Gods All Descend Together. This festival is held over a one-month period and provides an opportunity for Balinese people from all over the island to pay homage to their gods and ancestors. In 1979 this annual festival formed part of the 100-year Eka Dasa Rudra festival and a description is given in David Fox's 'Once A Century'. On this particular occasion, 5 buffaloes were sacrificed, three in front of the Triple Lotus Shrine, one in front of the Sanggar Tawang Shrine, and one on the ground near the Bale Kembangsing pavilion in readiness for the mapeselang ritual.

"Special buffaloes must be used. For example, those in front of the Triple Lotus shrine had respectively a blackish hide (Kebo cemeng), a reddish hide (Kebo bang), and in the centre a whitish one (Kebo anggrek urulan)."

"Once a Century" by David Fox, p.125

The heads, hides and hooves were laid on the ground forming bridges linking earth to heaven.

An offering of blood mixed with eggs, coconut and rice was prepared for the demons. This offering was poured around the buffalo sacrifices. The pratimas were then taken down and carried around the temple three times while being welcomed by a pendet dance, three baris dances and a rejang dance. After prayers by the pedantas the pratimas were returned to their pavilions. This climaxed the two-hour ritual.

Panca Wali Krama - A 10-year Festival

The Panca Wali Krama ceremony is theoretically a 10 year festival held at Pura Besakih for the whole Balinese population. It is a thanksgiving festival and was held in 1933, 1960 and 1978.

Eka Dasa Rudra - A 100-year Festival

The Eka Dasa Rudra is Bali's most significant and most spectacular ceremony. Naturally it is conducted at Besakih Pura, the Mother Temple of Bali on the slopes of the sacred mountain Gunung Agung. Thus, it is celebrated at both the axis mundi and the omphalos of the earth.

The festival is actually a series of separate ceremonies conducted over a period of two months. These ceremonies climax in the great Taur Eka Dasa which is an enormous purificatory sacrifice. The name "Eka Dasa Rudra" may be translated as "the eleven Rudra". In turn, this may be taken to mean the driving of Rudra out into the 11 directions of space. In this context Rudra is that aspect of Siwa which is wild and destructive. The eleven directions of space are the four cardinal directions plus the four intercardinal directions, "up" and "down" and "centre". The exorcism of Siwa's destructive powers is done in order to balance his creative powers because Siwa is both creative and destructive.

Ceremonies comprising The Eka Dasa Rudra Festival (1979)

The Opening Ceremonies

These ceremonies comprise Matur Puning, Pamalik Sumpah and Guru Piduka.

Preparations

The preparations involve welcoming the Holy Water (at Mount Semeru in East Java), Washing the Rice, Bringing down the Deities, Welcome to the Visiting Gods and those of Besakih, the Cleansing Rituals at places in and outside of Besakih, Mehsti continues - the procession then moved followed by Pakelem which is the ceremony at the crater of Mount Agung.

Pamendak -the welcome back ceremonies given to the gods after Melasti.

Mapepada or Ceremony of Welcoming the Animals/Creatures

In 1979, eighty-five species of animals were gathered for sacrificial offerings and after being sprinkled with holy water and being blessed, they were paraded for viewing. The procession of animals moved three times clockwise around the outside of the temple enclosure. Following the third circumambulation, each animal was symbolically killed by the sacred sword of the Smith. The creatures were actually killed at a later time outside of the temple. The creatures include a 'garuda' (eagle), a 'tiger', (a leopard cat), a white cow, goose, ducks, goats, water buffaloes, cows, goats, deer, dogs, a black monkey, cats, birds, centipedes, snakes, beetles, flies, hornets, fish, etc.

Taur Eka Dasa Rudra

This part of the festival was the focal point of all of the ceremonies which comprise the Eka Dasa Rudra. It is the time for the centennial purification of the universe. Purification requires an offering and the shedding of blood. In order to purify the universe, it is necessary to offer up the essences of the earth's creatures. Both the gods and the demons have to be placated. The taur enclosure contains the remains of slaughtered animals and the other sacred offerings are sprinkled with holy water during a ceremony which

lasts for three hours. The ceremony was brought to a close with the priests leading the millions of worshippers in the worship of Sanghyang Widhi. This was then followed by a frenzied rush by the worshippers to 'souvenir' a portion of the offerings to take home. In typical Balinese fashion, solemnity is combined with frenzied abandon!

The Mapedan

During Mapedan the pratimas are once again taken from their pavilion and blessed again by prayers and offerings.

Concluding Remarks

Pura Besakih is the Mother Temple of Bali and its location on the slopes of Bali's highest mountain, Gurung Agung, is in conformity to the archetypal Mahameru of Indian mythology. It is at the axis mundi of the world and the cosmic navel. It is the home of the gods.

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BOROBUDUR

A Buddhist World Mandala in Central Java



"Borobudur is both a Temple and a complete exposition of Doctrine"

The Art of Southeast Asia – p.227

"In the whole course of my life I have never met with such stupendous and finished specimens of human labour and of the science and taste of ages long since forgot, crowded together in so small a compass as in this little spot."

Memories of Majagahit, p.17, An exclamation of Captain George Baker early in the 19th century.

Chapter 4 BOROBUDUR

I Introduction

A Gigantic Terraced Mound
Sailendra - King of the Mountain
Three Aligned Temples
Mendut
Pawon
Borobudur

II The Stages of Constructing Borobudur

Location
Stages of Construction
Stage 1
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An Achievement of Monumental Proportions

III Decoding the Symbolism of Borobudur

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Spiritual Pedagogy
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IV Discovery and Restoration

Chapter 4 BOROBUDUR

I Introduction

A Gigantic Terraced Mound

Borobudur is the largest Buddhist monument in the world. Strictly speaking, it is not a temple but a gigantic terraced mound. In an architectural and engineering sense, it is a single entity whereas the terraced sanctuaries of Mount Penanggungan and the shrines of Besakih are dispersed across their respective slopes. The entire monument covers an area of 1.5 hectares and although of Buddhist design, its symbolism borrows heavily from the Hindu archetypal temple Mahameru. Its design incorporates bas reliefs, Buddha statues in niches and trellised stupas and a five-kilometre circumambulation to its central summit. Although it is a single edifice, it bears a relationship to nearby temples.

Sailendra - Kings of the Mountain

Borobudur was constructed in several stages between 780 and 850 AD. It is the most imposing Buddhist temple built by, or for, Kings of the Sailendra dynasty. Other Buddhist temples in the region include Candis Kalasan (778 AD), Sari, Sewu (782 and 792 AD), Lumbung, Plaosan (835-860 AD), Sojiwan (790 AD). These temples exhibit architectural features also found in Borobudur. A treatment of these other Buddhist temples can be found in Chapter 5.

The Buddhist Sailendra Kings ruled contemporaneously and in the same region as the Hindu Sanjaya dynasty. The relationship between the two dynasties was so agreeable that a Hindu King even married a Buddhist princess and built a number of Buddhist temples in honour of her (see Chapter 5).

The Sailendra Kings are alternately known as 'Kings of the Mountain'. It is likely the Sailendra, Kings of Indonesia were descendants of the ruling house of Funan, Cambodia. Indeed the rise of the Kmers in Cambodia owes a great deal to Jayavarman II who lived a substantial part of his life at the Sailendra Court in Central Java. Jayavarman II returned to Cambodia and took with him a great deal of the building knowledge of the Sailendra of Java.

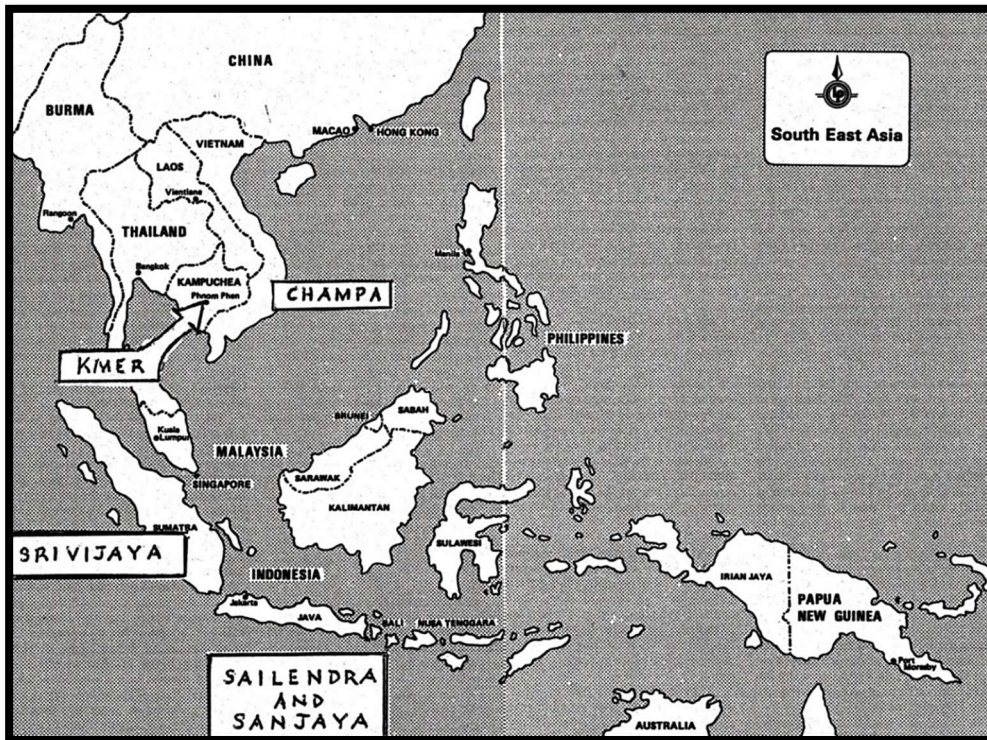
The Sailendra were expansionist in policy and for a time governed parts of Malaya and subdued Tonkin. They are best remembered for their construction of Borobudur in Central Java.

The name 'Borobudur' is a contraction of an expression which means 'Mountain of accumulation of merits of the ten states of Bodhisattva'. The title given to the Sailendra viz 'Kings of the Mountain' is a thinly veiled allusion to the mountain temple Candi Borobudur.

Three Aligned Temples—Mendut, Pawon and Borobudur

Candi Borobudur, Candi Pawon and Candi Mendut are in alignment and it is highly probable that the pilgrim from distant lands visited Mendut first then crossed the Elo and Progo Rivers ceremoniously to visit Pawon before undertaking the ascent of Borobudur. The area around Borobudur contains a number of smaller ruins including one in the cemetery of Bajong

village between Mendut and Pawon. Candi Canggal is on a hill Guning Wukir 6 kilometres east of Borobudur. Other temple remains of a Hindu origin can also be found in the general area.



Mendut

Mendut is the oldest of the three aligned temples and was the first ancient ruin in Indonesia to be restored. It is thought to have been originally constructed during the reign of King Indira (784-792 AD) and modified in the middle of the 9th century. It was found in 1834 with cattle grazing on its roof. Volcanic mud had engulfed the Kedu Plain and Mendut's central stupa was knocked down. The temple itself was left relatively intact and excavations revealed three of the largest and best preserved statues inside. In the centre is Sakyamuni, the historical Buddha. The statue is three metres high and is carved from a single block of stone. Avalokitesvara in his head-dress, is on his right and either Manjusri or Vajrapani is to his left. The three forma triumvirate of bodhisattvas termed Garbhadhatu and they represent advaya or ultimate reality. From them issued the five Tathagata, or dhyani buddhas. The central figure holds his hands in the dharmacakra mudra, setting the wheel of law into motion. At one time the porch permitted morning light to enter through an opening to fall on the face of Sakyamuni. Outside the walls are adorned with decorative panels and so too is the base. The walls of the stairway have more -reliefs which continue inside the entrance. The roof is pyramid shaped.

Pawon

Candi Pawon was restored in 1903 and although much smaller than Mendut, it is regarded as a jewel of Javanese temple architecture- It has unusually small windows and its reliefs depict bearded men dispensing riches. It may have been a sanctuary for Kuvera, god of wealth although its name Pawon derives from the Javanese word for "ash".



Candi Mendut



Candi Pawon

Borobudur

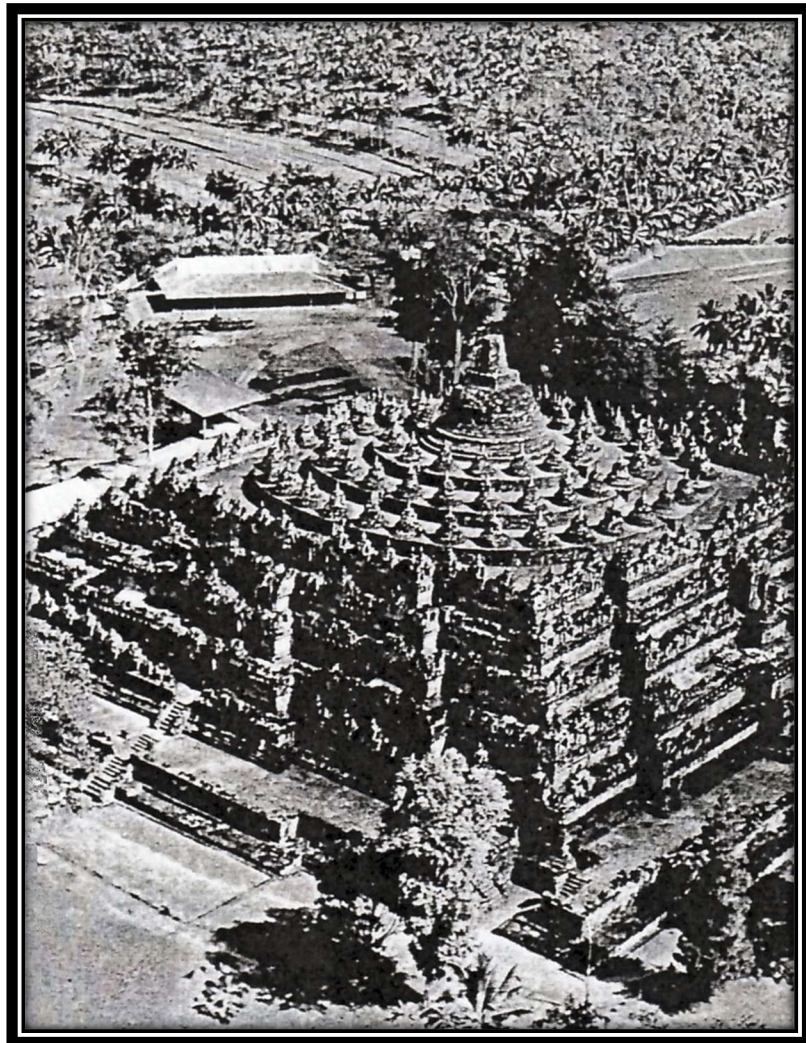
Borobudur was the intended centre of pilgrimage after the Buddhist devotees first paid their respects at Mendut and Pawen. Its five kilometres of terraces and its 1400 bas-reliefs provided the pilgrim with the spiritual narratives that allowed him to ascend the pathway to nirvana.

II

The Stages of Constructing Borobudur

Location

Borobudur is one of the greatest temple constructions in the world. It is thought to have been constructed in five stages between 780 AD and 850 AD. Visitors may inspect this recently restored monument by travelling 42 kilometres to the west of Yogyakarta to a small hill above the volcanically-ashed Kedu Plain.



Borobudur

Borobudur was not constructed according to an original master-plan. It is a composite aggregation of architectural elements which were expressive of developing ideas of symbolism that gave iconographic representation to Buddhist beliefs. A visit to the building is meant to be a pilgrimage through which one discovers his true self and finds enlightenment. In horizontal plan Borobudur is a cosmic mandala and to ascend its heights is to undertake a spiritual journey through the planes of existence. The pilgrim receives instruction of this journey by reviewing scenes depicted along galleries of stone pictures on reliefs. These pictures embody lessons on history, religion, morality, art, lifestyle etc, which, if followed, assist the devotee to attain Buddhahood.



Borobudur's Stages of Architectural Construction

The choices of the site of Borobudur conformed to the Hindu idea of the archetypal temple of the cosmic mountain located at the centre of the universe. Its numerous niches symbolise the meditative caves found on the side of the fabled Mount Meru and its original multi-tiered spire was in the similitude of Meru's central peak.

(a) Stage 1

The original plan was in the design of a stepped pyramid of three terraces. There were no balustrades. This suggests that the building may have been of Hindu design in its first stage.

(b) Stage 2

The building was given an additional two terraces and a round structure was begun at the top. The ground-level terrace had 160 bas reliefs but these became concealed with the widening of the foundations and the increasing of their height. As a result of these extensions, the stairways were remodelled.

(c) Stage 3

The round structure of Stage 2 was demolished and replaced with three circular terraces around which 72 stupas sheltering figures of the Buddha were erected. At the centre of the third circular terrace, a large, unadorned bell-shaped stupa rose spire-ward to 423 metres above ground level. The cattra was destroyed by lightning and its present height is now only 315 metres.

(d) Stages 4 and 5

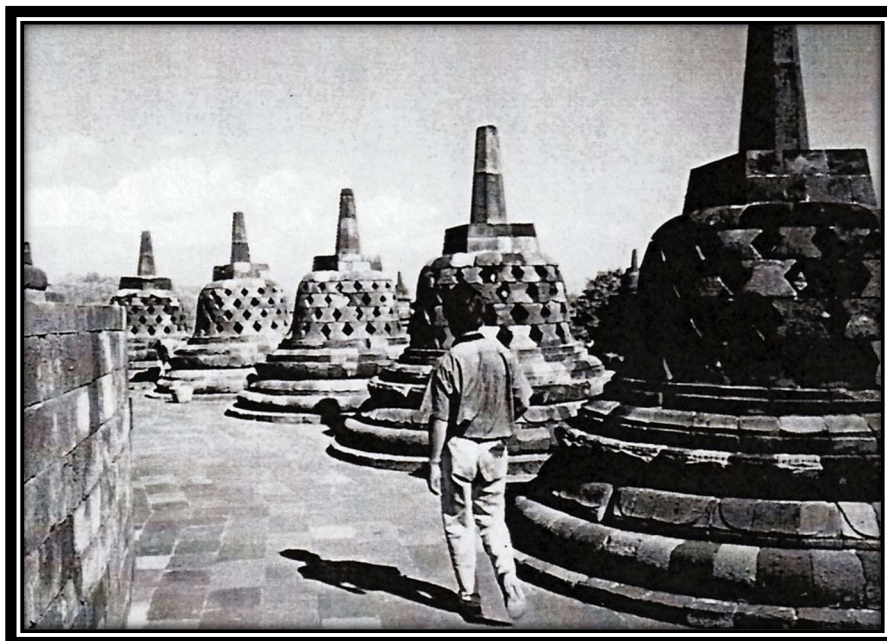
The fourth and fifth stages involved minor alterations to stairways and archways and the addition of new reliefs.



Trellised Stupas

An Achievement of Monumental Proportions

Borobudur has no cave-like inner sanctuary and because of this, some have argued that it is not a temple at all. Whatever designation is given to the monument, it represents a religious and social achievement on a colossal scale. Borobudur encases a natural hill and its overall pyramidal shape required some artificial fill. Thus it is built about an earthen core. The erosion of this core over the centuries almost led to its collapse.



It has been estimated that the construction of Borobudur exhausted five generations of people living in the region. The labours of 10,000 men over almost a century of construction,

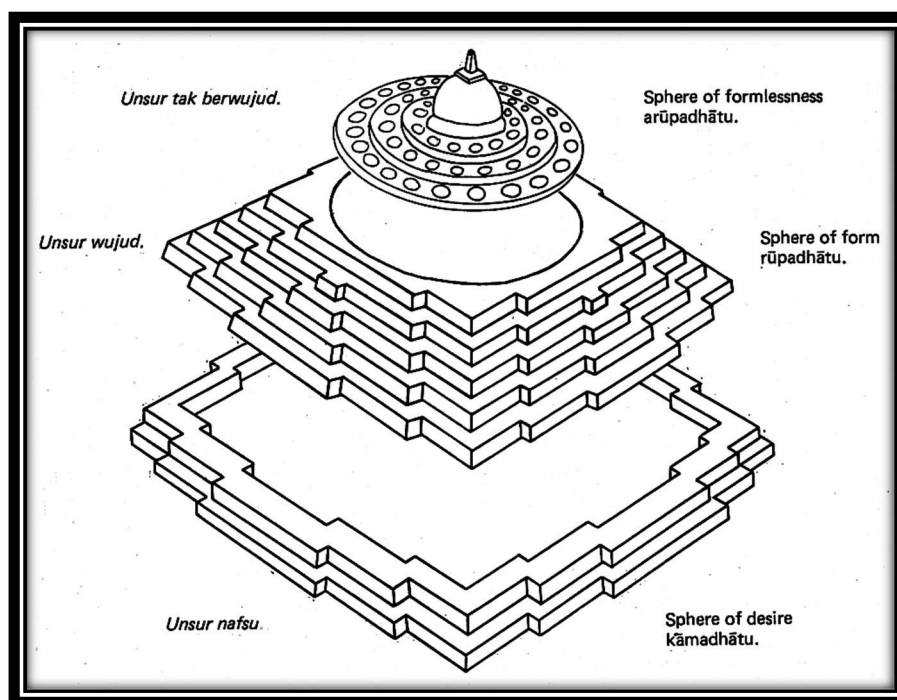
were required to quarry its 16 million pieces of andesite stone and transport them to the site with only primitive equipment. The base alone comprises 13 thousand cubic metres and is adorned with 160 bas reliefs. The 4 galleries above the bas contain 1300 pictorial reliefs and 1212 decorative panels. There are 504 Buddha statues of which 72 are in trellised stupas and 432 in open niches on 5 balustrades of the 4 galleries. There are stairways, arches and a central stupa as well as paving stones to enable the pilgrim to walk the 5 kilometre journey to the summit. The supply of hammers, chisels, mallets, levers, ropes etc for the workers would have been a huge task alone. When one contemplates the food, clothing and shelter required for the workers and artisans, then some idea of the magnitude of the undertaking can be appreciated.

III

Decoding the Symbolism of Borobudur

As an Image of the Archetypal Temple

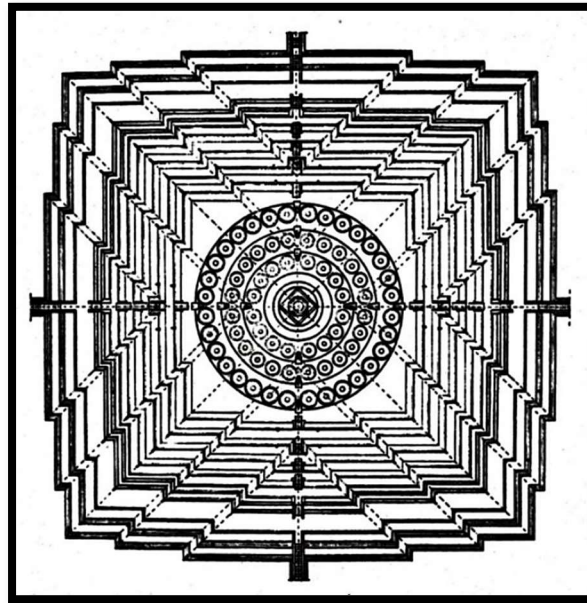
Borobudur embodies several features of the archetypal temple at the centre of the world its siting on a hill and its nearby rivers meet the requirements of a partial similitude. Its overall pyramidal form approximates the cosmological model. In its elevation, it ascends from the lower world through the middle Kingdom into the heavenly realm. In Buddhistic thought, this is translated as proceeding from the sphere of desire, through the sphere of form into the sphere of formlessness. In the Borobudur design the cosmic ladder is scaled by climbing the staircases connecting the ten galleries: Sphere of Desire (Kamadhatu) two galleries, Sphere of Form (Rupadhatu) 5 galleries, and Sphere of Formlessness (Arupadhatu) three galleries.



Borobudur as a World Mandala

In horizontal plan Borobudur is a great mandala which consists of six concentric “square-type” shapes within which three circular shapes are inscribed. The circular dome is in the centre with a very small square inscribed within its circular base. Thus, the pilgrim on his

journey through the temple, traces the path of the mandala as he ascends to its central point.



As a Mandala

Mudras or Hand Positions of the Buddha '

The 504 Buddha statues in open niches (432) and trellised stupas (72) are reminiscent of the meditative caves ascribed to the cosmic Mt. Meru. The Buddhas sit serenely in their semi-enclosures but may be distinguished by their hand positions or mudras. There are 6 mudras or hand gestures among these 1.5 metre statues and the pattern of their occurrence is as follows:

On the first four galleries

- (i) *Eastern side:* The Buddha is depicted in the Bhumisparea mudra where he calls on the earth as a witness;
- (ii) *Southern side:* The Buddha is depicted in the Wara mudra symbolising charity;
- (iii) *Western side:* The Buddha is depicted in the Dhyana mudra or the gesture of meditation;
- (iv) *Northern side:* The Buddha is depicted in the Abhaya mudra symbolising fearlessness;
- (v) *On the entire fifth balustrade* the hands of the Buddha are in the Witarka mudra symbolising reasoning;
- (vi) *The statues of the Buddha in the 72 stupas* depict the Buddha in the Dharmacakra mudra which symbolises the turning of the wheel of law.



The Dharmacakra Mudra

Spiritual Pedagogy

Borobudur is not simply a textbook of the spiritual life or a manual of discipline; it is a whole cultural library in iconographic form. The statues, bas reliefs and panels in carved stone tell the story of the Buddha's life and with scenes depicting the Buddha's teachings, it explains how the pilgrim may proceed to enlightenment by following the principles of the eight-fold path.

The Bas Reliefs of the Foundations

The 160 bas reliefs of the original foundation were not discovered until 1891. They were covered up when extensions were made to the base in Stage 2 of the construction. Some of these reliefs have been left exposed on the south side. The others were photographed and the extensions replaced during restoration. These reliefs depict scenes which illustrate the causes of suffering resulting from an attachment to the realm of desire. There are scenes concerning love, hatred, punishment, happiness, hope and the destitution of hell.



Reading the Pictorial Narrative of Bas Relief

Pradaksina-Ascending the Cosmic Mountain and Accumulating Merit

The pilgrim is enjoined to commence his spiritual journey by viewing the iconography, and meditating as he does so, from the eastern side. There is a sequence to the journey of 10 rounds through the galleries and balustrades until one reaches the main wall of the fourth gallery. The journey is done clockwise. The journey upwards is said to be contained in the meaning of the word 'Borobudur', ie, 'Mountain of the Accumulation of Merits of (ten) States (of the Budhisattva)'. In undertaking the journey, one was enacting pradaksina and accumulating merit in the very act of walking.

IV Discovery and Restoration

One of the most amazing historical facts about Borobudur was its poor utilisation. It was completed in 850 AD and virtually abandoned at the fall of the Sailendras in 856 AD! It may be said that the processes of decay set in from that time and that the focus of temple building switched to the erection of Hindu temples.

Although the existence of Borobudur was always known by the local inhabitants in the Yogyakarta region, it did not come to the notice of Europeans and the outside world until the publication of Thomas Stamford Raffles' *The History of Java* (1817). By that time Borobudur was partially buried by volcanic ash, cracked and warped by earth movement and overgrown with undergrowth and brushwood. In 1815 Raffles commissioned a Dutch military engineer,

H.C. Cornelius to inspect the monument. Cornelius employed more than 200 labourers over 45 days to tidy its appearance and report on its structural defects. Daguerreotype photos and drawings were made in due course. In 1873, I. van Kinsbergen completed a photographic record. J.W. Ijzerman discovered the hidden reliefs of the base in 1885. These reliefs were exposed then photographed in 1890-91. This entailed the removal of 13,000 cubic metres of stone and its replacement. A major restoration was undertaken between 1907-1911 by a team under Theodor van Erp. Since that time many reports and inspections were made about the deteriorating condition of the temple caused by the erosion of the natural hill about which the temple was built.

The Indonesian government made an appeal to UNESCO for assistance in restoration and as a result a restoration committee, under the coordination of Professor C. Voute was formed in 1971. The actual restoration took place between 1975-1984 with sponsorship from UNESCO but with the majority of funding from the Indonesian government. Over one million stones were marked, moved to sheds, cleaned, repaired, treated with herbicides, stored and finally replaced. This enormous task was facilitated by using a computer program provided by IBM Indonesia. The total cost was nearly \$8 million US.

Borobudur now stands in its awesome glory, a spiritual beacon from the past, to light our pathway to the heavens.



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LORO JONGGRANG

A Hindu Temple Complex on the Prambanam Plain, Central Java



Candi Loro Jonggrang's largest Shrine is dedicated to Siwa

"The last great monument of the Central Javanese period is indeed a colossal work, probably built soon after 900 and before 930 AD when the Kings retreated from central to eastern Java. It is not Buddhist but Siwaist (or Hindu), and represents once more the shrine in the form of the cosmic mountain."

The Art of Southeast Asia p.250

CHAPTER 5

TEMPLES OF THE PRAMBANAM PLAIN – BUDDHIST AND HINDU TEMPLES AND THE LORO JONGGRANG COMPLEX

I

Buddhist Temples

Location

The Name 'Prambanam'

The Yogyakarta Region

The Hindu Sanjaya and the Buddhist

Sailendra Kingdoms of the 8th Century

Buddhist Temples on the Prambanam Plain

Candi Kalisan

Candi Sari

Candi Sewu

Overall Design

The Central Edifice

The 72 sub-temples or Perwara

The 8 minor temples or Apit

The Surrounding 168 sub-temples

The Surrounding Wall

Candi Bubah

Candi Lumbung

Candi Plaoson

Candi Sojiwan

Other Buddhist Temples in the Region

II

Hindu Buildings on the Prambanam Plain

Candi Ijo

Candi Sambisari

The Keraton Ratu Boko

III

The Hindu Loro Jonggrang Complex

The Name and Legend
The Three Courtyards of the Loro
Jonggrang Complex
The 224 Candi Perwara
The Central Yard of Loro Jonggrang
 The Eight Large Temples
 The Eight Small Temples

The Central Siwa Temple
 Main Entrance (East)
 The Southern Entrance
 The Western Entrance
 The Northern Entrance

Lokapala
Siwa as Kala
The Ramayana Reliefs
The Siwa Temple as a Royal Mausoleum

Other Large Courtyard Temples
The Brahma Temple
The Vishnu Temple
The Nandi Angsa and Garuda Temples
The Apit Temples
Restoration of the Loro Jonggrang Complex

I

CHAPTER 5

TEMPLES OF THE PRAMBANAM PLAIN – BUDDHIST AND HINDU TEMPLES AND THE LORO JONGGRANG COMPLEX

I

Buddhist Temples

Location

The Prambanam Plain is 20 kilometres east of Yogyakarta on the road to Solo. It contains the greatest concentration of archaeological sites of temples in Indonesia. The best preserved and most spectacular is the majestic Loro Jonggrang Complex of Temples. This group of temples was a place of worship for adherents to the Hindu faith. Strangely, however, most of the nearby temples were places of Buddhist worship.

The Name Prambanam

The generally accepted view is that the name Prambanam derives from a tax-free village known as Paramwan where residents maintained temples instead of paying taxes, an alternative explanation proposes that the name is a variation of Brahmana.

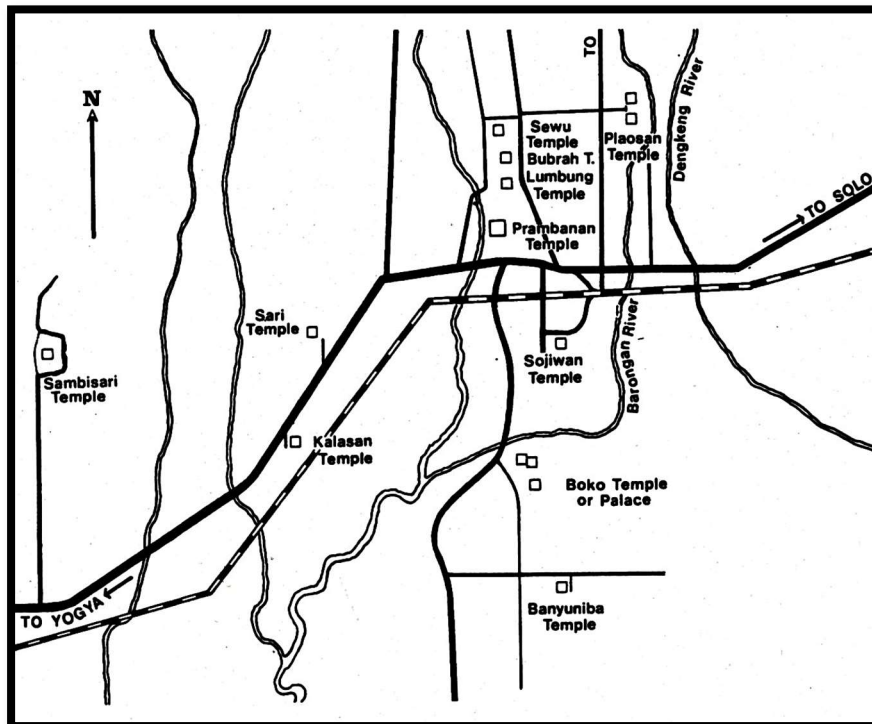
The Yogyakarta Region

The Yogyakarta region of central Java is one of the most agriculturally productive regions in the world. With Mt Merapi to the north and the Indian Ocean to the south, it became a temple building centre between the 8th and 10th centuries.

The Hindu Sanjaya and the Buddhist Sailendra Kingdoms of the 8th Century

Although it has been inhabited for two thousand years, the earliest known Kingdom was that of Sanjaya (717 to 746 AD). Sanjaya and his successors were Hindus and did much to promote the worship of Siwa in the region known traditionally as Mataram. Nearby, a Mahayana Buddhist dynasty also ruled. It was known as the Sailendra or 'Kings of the Mountain'. The Sanjaya dynasty became responsible for the Prambanam complex and other Hindu temples. The Sailendra built Borobudur and other Buddhist temples. In later centuries the Hindu and Buddhist religions achieved a sort of synthesis which involved the worship of Siwa-Buddha.

Location Map of the Temples Around Pramanam



Buddhist Temples on the Prambanam Plain

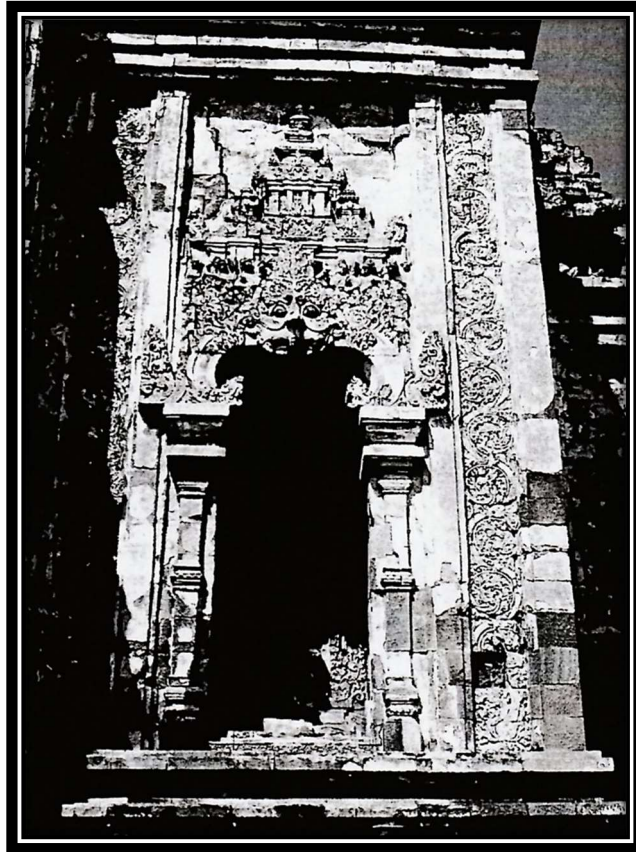
The surprising aspect of Candis Kalisan, Sari, Sewu, Lumbung, Plaosan and Sowijan is not so much that they were Buddhist temples, but rather, that most of them are located within a radius of one kilometre of the massive Hindu Loro Jonggrang complex.

Candi Kalisan (built 778 AD)

This Buddhist temple was built by the Sailendra King Cri Mararaja Rakai Panang-Karan. It was dedicated to Devi Tara, the Sakti or Spirit of Buddha. The temple decoration is highly sophisticated and the menacing Kala Makara over the entrance on the south wall is finely executed. The decorative features, once carved in stone, were coated twice with a stucco which consisted of two parts of lime and three parts of sand. Archaeologists have recovered many Buddhist relics from the remains of a number of encircling stupas.

Candi Sari

Candi Sari was probably built at the same time as Candi Kalisan. It was most probably a Buddhist monastery. In overall design, it is a three-storied rectangular block crowned by rows of stupas. It has three windows on the long side for each story except that on the ground floor on the easterly aspect it has two windows and an entrance doorway. The short sides have two windows on each level. Inside, Candi Sari had a processional corridor around raised shrines on the ground floor. The second and third floors are thought to have been used for living quarters and study. The outside walls are finely decorated. These decorative images depict male bodhisattvas, Kinnara and sensuous female deities in dance positions.



Candi Kalasan, east facade



Candi Sewu (782 and 792 AD)

Candi Sewu is a very large Mahayana Buddhist complex that combines architectural features reminiscent of the contemporaneous Borobudur and the nearby Hindu Loro Jonggrang complex (see below Part I1). Its 249 separate temples and shrines are congested into an area 185 metres long and 165 metres wide. In plan, the total complex is an architectural mandala which is not immediately apparent because of its ruinous condition. Its design plan anticipates the later layout of the Hindu Loro Jonggrang complex which was built less than one kilometre distant. The two complexes illustrate that there was concordance between architectural styles and suggests the possibility of religious syncretism.



(Rawson p.245)

Overall Design of the Sewu Complex

The Sewu complex consists of a symmetrical square patterning about a central edifice of 28 sub-temples, 44 sub-temples, 8 minor-temples larger than the sub-temples, 80 more sub-temples and a final 88 sub-temples.

The Central Edifice

The main shrine, in its original form, was almost the same in design as that which was adopted later by the architect-priests of the central Shiva temple in the Loro Jonggrang complex. The easterly aspect provided entrance to the main shrine area, but provided no access to the three other shrine areas under the same roof. Entrance to these other shrine areas could only be made through approaches from the north, south and east. Early modifications to the internal structure provided panelled doorways to connect the 4 smaller shrine areas about the central shrine area. This allowed for the rite of circumambulation. This change also gave rise to a complete renewal of the statuary and an alteration of the altar size.

A low stone wall enclosure on the four sides separated the central edifice from the two rows of sub-temples.

The 72 sub-temples or Perwara

The sub-temples surround the Central Edifice in a square formation in two parallel rows. The inner row had 28 small shrines and the outer row had 44. The term 'Perwara' means 'bridesmaid'. A concourse for assembling worshippers included 8 minor temples at the next perimeter.

The 8 minor temples or Apit

One of these temples has been restored and it stands some 13 metres high. The temple is an enclosed shrine erected on a square plinth whose corners are removed. It has two compressed stories and it is roofed by circles of miniature stupas and capped by a large stupa. The roofing design is like a miniaturised version of the top part of Borobudur. The lower part of these temples was modified by adding a porch and inserting door casing. These additions partially obscured the original decoration.

The surrounding 168 sub-temples

An additional two rows of sub-temples provided a square-like formation about the complex. The inner rows had 80 perwaras while the outer rows had 88.

The surrounding wall

The surrounding walls have an entrance gate in the centre of each of its 4 sides. Each entrance is flanked by two giant Dwarapala or menacing guardians.

Candi Bubrah

Candi Bubrah is in ruinous condition. It was built 200 metres to the south of Candi Sewu and along with three more ruinous temples was part of an integrated temple system with Sewu. Candi Lor once stood 200 metres to the north, Candi Asu 200 metres to the south and Candi Kulon was 200 metres to the west of Sewu.

Candi Lumbung

Candi Lumbung is only 300 metres away from the Candi Sewu complex. Lumbung is also a temple complex but is not on the same scale of Sewu. The ruins suggest a main temple construction of 20 sides. To the east of the central structure is another structure which was square in shape. The foundations that remain suggest another three structures. These five buildings comprise the central group and they are suffounded by 16 Candi Perwara. The name 'Lumbung' could be applied to the function of the complex. In Javanese 'Lumbung' means 'rice barn'. However, the buildings are not in the shape of a Javanese rice barn. The statuary recovered from the site suggest that it was a fertility temple with the Lingga-Yoni phallic symbols very much in evidence.

Candi Plaoson (835-860 AD)

Candi Plaoson was built by the Hindu King Rakai Pikatan for his Buddhist wife and Queen. It is situated a kilometre east of the Candi Sewu and it was erected between 835 and 860 AD. This complex consists of two imposing edifices viz Candi Plaoson Lor and Candi Plaoson Kidul and the auxiliary buildings. Candi Plaoson Lor was restored in 1960. It is a rectangular building like Candi Sari and its base is three stories high. Its roofing is the same height again and it is, like other Buddhist temples, in the likeness of the top half of Borobudur. On its lower level it once contained three groups of three statues in three rooms. The central statue of each group is missing but is thought to have been a bronze image of the Dyani Buddha. The flanking bodhisattvas are still in place.

Candi Ptaoson Kidul is a similar structure to Plaoson Lor though in much worse state of repair. Kidul is to the north of Lor. Both Candi have courtyards which are enclosed by walls. Guardian Dwarapala flank the gateways. The two Candi are surrounded by 116 stupas of bell-shape design and 58 small temples or Perwaras.

The Plaoson complex testifies to the enormous goodwill that must have existed between the Hindu community and the Buddhist community.

Candi Sojiwan(790 AD)

Candi Sojiwan is yet another Buddhist temple built by the Hindu King Rakai Pikatan for his Buddhist wife Queen Sri Pramodawardani. The Queen's original name was Ralftiyan Sanjiwana. The name 'sojiwan' is thought to be a variation of 'Sanjiwana' and became the name of the village where the temple stands. Candi Sojiwan is sited two kilometres south of the colossal Hindu Loro Jonggrang complex. The Candi Sewu complex is situated the same distance to the north of Loro Jonggrang.

Sojiwan was used as a monastery and its bas-reliefs are based on the Pancatantra rather than the Jataka. Another unusual feature of this Buddhist temple was revealed when a grave was discovered in the centre of the main hall.

Other Buddhist Temples in the Region

Candi Bunyuniba has been restored and is about 2 kilometres south of Prambanam's Loro Jonggrang. Candis Barong and Gopolo lie south of Ratu Boko's palace. Candi Abang is even further south. Payak is south of Piyungan and features a bathing pool.

II

Hindu Buildings on the Prambanam Plain

The most prominent of all the temples on the Prambanam Plain is the majestic Hindu complex known as Loro Jonggrang. However there are two other Hindu buildings which deserve attention also. They are the Ijo Temple and the Temple or Palace. Loro Jonggrang will be treated in Part III.

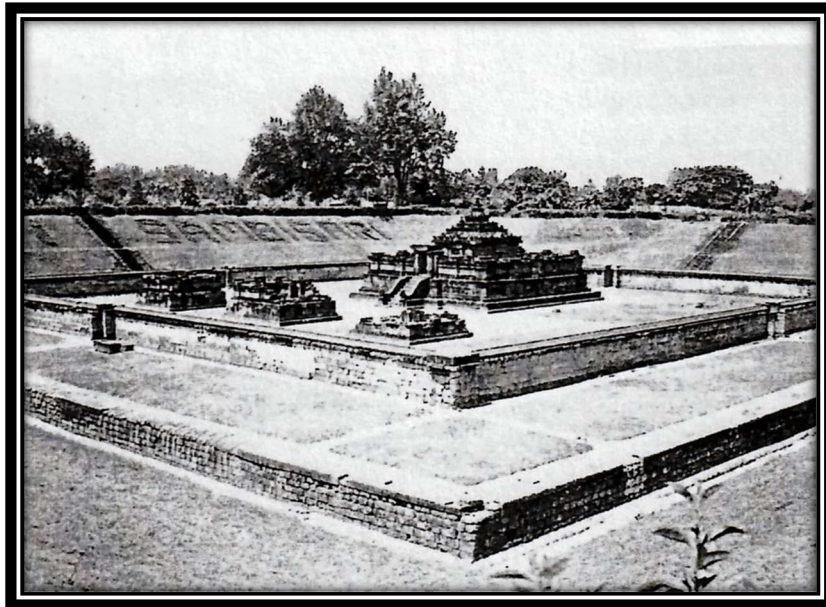
Candi Ijo

The ruins of Candi Ijo lie nearly 3 kilometres south of Loro Jonggrang on the left side of the road to Piyungan. The remains of the main temple can be found on the uppermost of three terraced levels. The footings of a temple are all that remain on the first terrace. On the second terrace there are the remains of four temples of square plan and two 'perwara' small temples. The main temple on the third terrace faces west and has three smaller temples immediately in front of it. The western orientation is indicative of a funerary temple. A number of relics were unearthed in the floor of the temple. These included bars of gold, gold rings, gold coins, a red agate and a gold chain.

Candi Ijo was used for the worship of Siwa. It's terraces and sacred trees suggests that it was probably a place of ancestor worship.

Candi Sambisari

Candi Sambisari (812-838 AD) is the largest temple discovered intact. It was discovered in 1966 under 6 metres of volcanic ash. The site has been completely excavated and can be viewed by turning off the Yoga-Solo main 5.5 kilometres west of Loro Jonggrang and continuing for 1.5 kilometres. The temple was dedicated to the cult of Siwa in the form of a linga placed on a superb plinth in the main temple.



Sambisari Temple

At one time this squat temple would have been entirely covered by a wooden pavilion. The method of layout in the terracing is similar to Loro Jonggrang where the marker stones were replaced in a similar fashion by small linga. The symbolism of the male and female genitalia is clearly in evidence and identifies Sambisari as a fertility temple dedicated to Sewa.

Keraton Ratu Boko

The Keraton Ratu Boko translates as the 'Palace of King Boko'. Its remains lie on a range of hills known as Kidul Agung about 2.5 kilometres south of the magnificent Loro Jonggrang temple complex. It may have been built by King Balaputeradawa as a palace fortress and a seat of government. Its impressive entrance gates lead from one terrace to another where the unusual architecture is repeated in the palace facade. The ruins indicate that the site had an audience hall, a garden, a pool and a number of houses. A square platform to the left of the impressive gates has been identified as a type of crematorium and bone fragments have been unearthed. Several hundred metres to the north there are two man-made meditation caves whose roofs have collapsed. This area was used as a quarry. It is likely that Ratu Boko was originally built by a Buddhist King but later occupied by a Hindu King.

Other Hindu Temples in the Region

There are a number of small Hindu temples in the region. The three Candi Kuning are sited on the road from Blabak te Boyali. Candi Serogedug is near Ratu Boko and Candi Merak is near Klaten in the Malang area.



The magnificent gate of Keraton Boko

III

The Hindu Loro Jonggrang Complex

Location

The Hindu Loro Jonggrang temple complex dominates the Prambanam Plain with its massiveness and soaring verticality. It was built on the east bank of the Opak River only 1 kilometre from the impressive Buddhist complex - Sewu. The Loro Jonggrang complex is awe-inspiring and is probably the most visited of temples within the region. It was completed in 856 AD to celebrate the victory of the Hindu King Rakai Pikatan over his Buddhist rival. Although Sanjaya Hindus were in a minority, they finally gained the ascendancy over the Buddhist Sailendra. This rulership, however, was characterised by goodwill. Indeed, a number of Buddhist temples were built by the Hindu Kings for their Buddhist subjects. As time passed, some of these temples were given a more characteristic Hindu design.

The Name and Legend

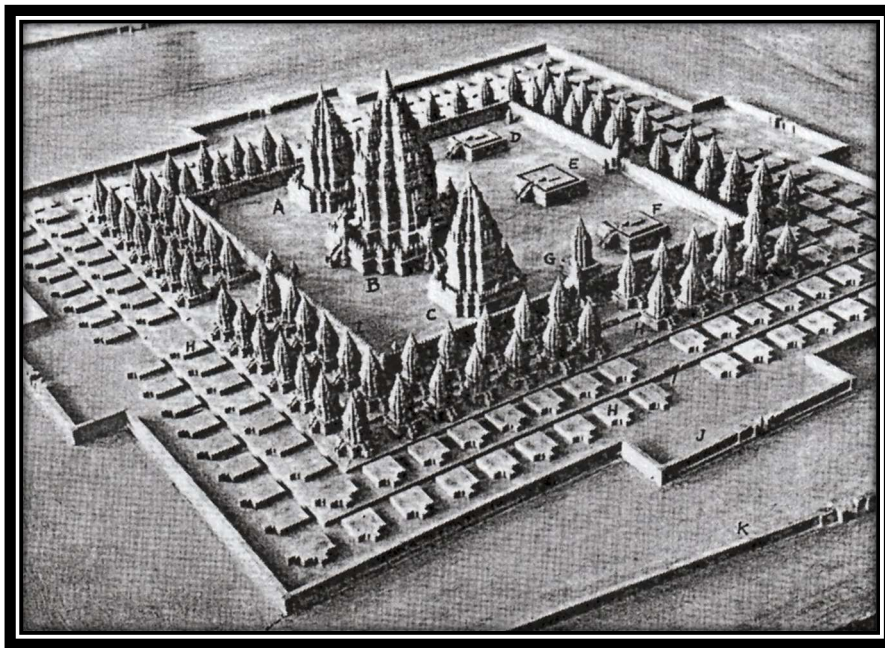
The name 'Loro Jonggrang' translates as 'slender maiden'. It derives from the legend of Prince Bandung Bondowoso who slayed the terrible King Baka and sought his daughter's hand in marriage. The daughter of King Baka was the beautiful Princess Loro Jonggrang who contrived an impossible condition of marriage. The princess disliked the prince because he had slain her father and also because Bondowoso was ugly. The impossible condition was that she would marry the ardent and contrite prince provided he constructed a complex of 1000 temples in a single night! With the aid of the gnomes, he set about the task and completed 999 of the temples. When Loro Jonggrang realised the task was almost complete she enlisted the support of her maidens to make a noise to awaken the roosters so that the gnomes would be frightened and unable to complete the final temple. As retribution Bandung Bondowosa cursed Loro Jonggrang and she was changed into stone. The voluptuous statue of Durga in the main Siwa temple is said to be the image of Loro Jonggrang and can be seen to this day.

The Three Courtyards of the Loro Jonggrang Complex

The Loro Jonggrang sits in a triple set of terraced square yards. It had a total of 240 temples within these yards. The outer yard had no temples, the middle yard had 224 temples or perwara of uniform design and size (6 m x 6 m x 14 m high), and the inner yard contained 16 temples of varying size including the now restored central sanctuary to Siwa.

The 224 Candi Perwara

'Perwara' is translated as 'bridesmaid'. This means that the 224 small shrines were subsidiary to the 'slender virgin' housed in the main Siwa temple. Only a few of these temples have been reconstructed. They consisted of a cella with an entrance facing the cardinal points. The corner shrines were constructed with two openings each facing the directions of the walls at the corner. The upper part of the Candi Perwara consists of three false storeys and a finial.



Rawson, p.250

Inside each of the Perwara is a Sumuran which is a shape resembling a well into which statue was placed. No statues have survived. Indeed, the visitor to the complex is denied the impact that the 224 Perwara must have had on the worshipper in the days of its imperial and architectural grandeur.

The Central Yard of Loro Jonggrang

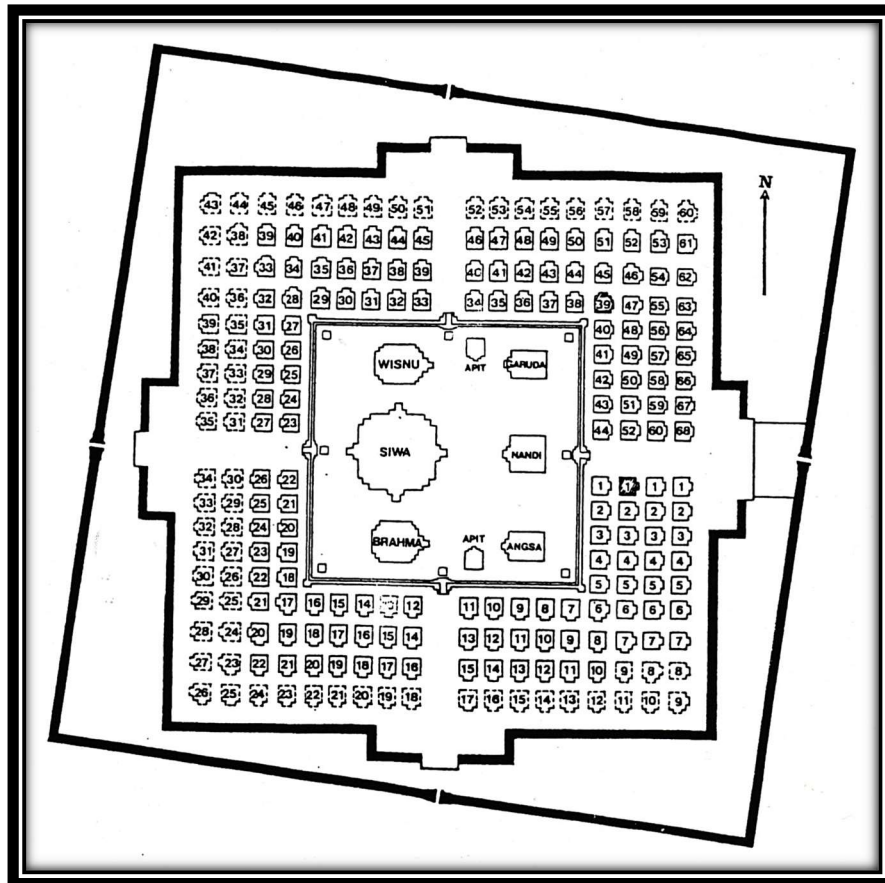
The Central Yard of the Loro Jonggrang contains a total of 16 temples of which the 47 metre central Siwa Temple is the most imposing. It has now been restored (1953) and the Brahma Temple to its south was restored in 1987. There are 8 large temples and 8 small temples in the 110 x 110 metre enclosure.

Eight Large Temples

- (a) The Siwa Temple with the Nandi Temple in front
- (b) The Brahma Temple with the Angsa Temple in front
- (c) The Visnu Temple with the Garuda Temple in front
- (d) There are 2 Apit Temples, one on the north edge between the Visnu and the Garuda Temple and the other on the south edge between the Brahma and the Angsa Temple.

Eight Small Temples

- (a) There are 4 Kelir Temples at each of the small entrances
- (b) There are 4 Menara Sudut Temples in each of the four corners of the enclosure.

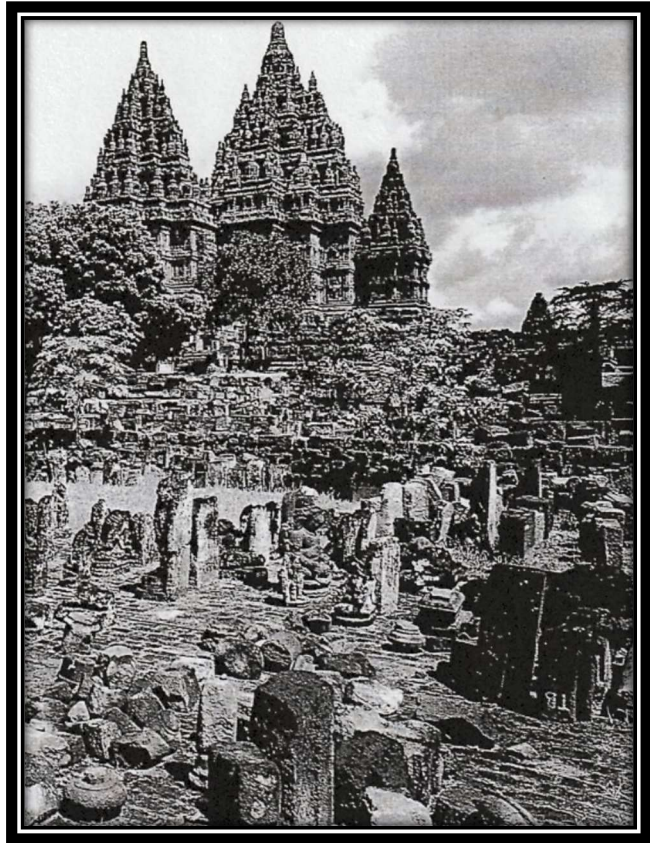


The three-yard enclosures of the Prambanam complex.
 (Taken from 'Guide to the Prambanam Temple' 1991)

The Central Siwa Temple

The centrally located temple in the complex is Candi Siwa known locally as Loro Jonggrang. It is an impressive architectural statement. It is 47 metres high and its base measures 34 x 34 metres. It was built to honour the god Siwa and its construction is thought to have commenced during the reign of Rakai Pikatan (846-855 AD) and completed in the reign of Raja Balitung (898-910 AD).

In design it is similitude of the cosmic Mount Meru and its three vertical divisions are an architecturally coded correspondence to the foot, body and head of the archetypal man.



Main Entrance (East)

There are four entrances into Candi Siwa. The main entrance is approached up a flight of steps guarded at the top by Nandiswara and Mahakala. Inside there is a large chamber which contains a 3 metre high statue of Siwa as Maha Dewa. In Siwa's two back hands is a fan and a rosary. The front right hand holds a lotus bud while the left hand holds a small spheroid representing the seed of the cosmos. On Siwa's forehead there is a 'third' eye and his headband is a snake. The symbol of a skull and a sickle at the crown verify the status as Maha Dewa. The statue stands on a base with lotus flower decoration. It is believed that this base was used as a stand to hold the holy water used to perform lustrations on the sacred image. This purificatory water, and the fragrant flowers also used, were much prized by devotees.

The image is thought to be of a King as a reincarnation of Siwa.

Southern Entrance

The chamber or cella on the southern side contains an image or statue of Siwa as Mahaguru (Great Spiritual Teacher). This image of Siwa is commonly known as Agastya. Siwa in this manifestation is imaged as an older man, bearded, moustached and pot-bellied. His right hand holds a rosary and a water-pot is in his left hand. A trident stands on his left side. Agastya is portrayed as a peace-lover.

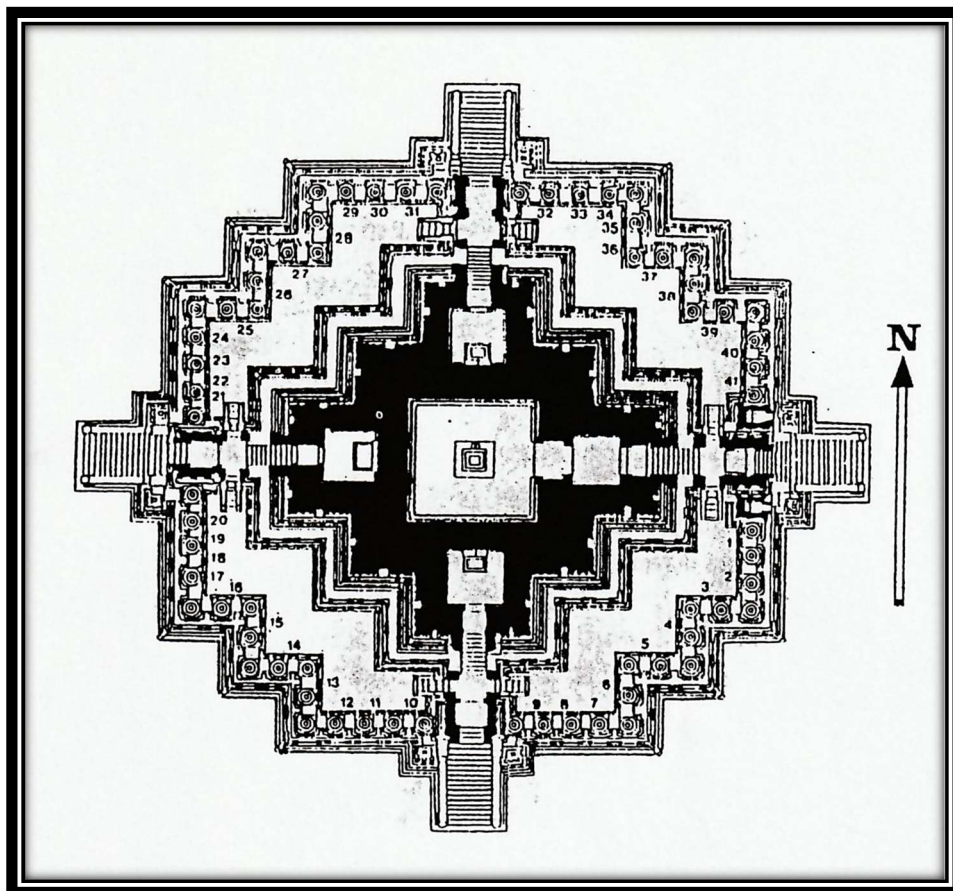
Western Entrance

A statue of Ganesha, Siwa's son, is in the western chamber. Ganesha has the head of an elephant and the body of a man. Ganesha symbolises wisdom, science and is a problem solver. Ganesha's two back hands hold a Cakra and a crescent moon. The front hands hold a tusk and a science pot. His trunk rests in a bowl from which he continually draws knowledge and wisdom.

Ganesha was born from the union of Siwa and the goddess Uma. During her pregnancy, Uma was affected by the god Indra passing in front of her on the back of the elephant Eravatta. This occurrence resulted in her son being born with an elephant's head. Ganesha's head is ornamented with a skull and a snake headband.

The Northern Entrance

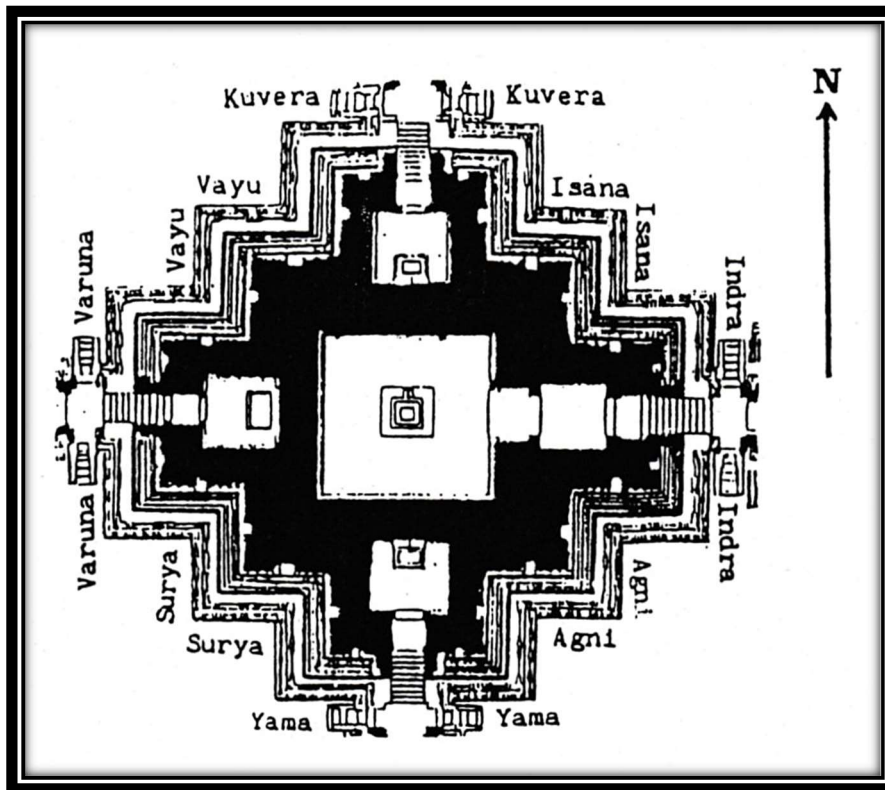
The statue in the chamber inside the northern entrance is of the voluptuous wife of Siwa known as Durga Mahisasura Mardani. She is depicted exorcising an asura from a reclining bull on which she stands. Durga has 8 arms. Her right hands hold a Cakra (a few weapon), a Khadga (a hammer), Mahesa (reclining bull). Her left hands hold a winged Sankha, a Kenthaka (shield), a Dhanus (a bow) and the frizzy-hair of the dwarf giant Mahisasura. Durga is the image of Loro Jonggrang, the 'slender maiden' after whom the total complex is named. The actual image is said to be the likeness of King Balitung's wife.



Plan of Central Siwa Temple depicting the main chamber and the three smaller chambers.

Lokapala

The Hindu religion spiritualises space by regarding the 8 intercardinal directions of space as spiritual vectors under the influence of a deity. This belief is translated into sculptured representations of the 8 gods and their escorts on 16 of the faces of the main temple's base.



Map of the position of the Lokapala gods in the temple Siwa

Intercardinal Direction	Deity	Symbol
East	Indra	Holding a Wajra
South East	Agni	Censer with 7 tongues of fire
South	Yama	Holding a Danda
South West	Surya	Ratna on a Padma (Lotus)
West	Varuna	Holding weapons (Nagapasa, Cangka)
North West	Vayu	Holding a tongue of fire on a Padma
North	Kuvera	Holding a Padmaniaddi, wearing pearls
North East	Isana	Three-pronged spear or trident

Siwa as Kala

Siwa has many manifestations. His main task as one of the Trinity of the ruling Hindu gods is that of Destroyer and Re-creator. In the Siwa Temple decor his is also represented as Kala or the god of Time who both destroys and recreates. Kala is sculptured as a frightening ogre with bulging eyes; large incisors and even larger upper canines. As a doorkeeper or guardian he protects the entrances to the inner sanctum. He reminds the devotee that he is master of destruction (Kala Rudra) and the god of Death (Kala Mukha) and is to be greatly feared.

The Ramayana Reliefs

A visitor to Prambanam has two wonderful opportunities to view scenes from the captivating Ramanyana epic. He can view a magnificent dramatic and musical rendition in the specialty designed theatre not far from the Temple complex and he can inspect a series of sculptured reliefs on the inside walls of the walkways of the Siwa and Brahma temples. There are 24 panels around the balustrade of the Siwa temple, some of which depict 2 or 3 separate scenes in the one panel. The adjacent Brahma temple has 30 panels which, likewise, depict more than one scene. Together, the panels comprise a sequence which begins to the left of the entrance to the Siwa temple and proceeds clockwise. The story continues in the same manner about the base of the Brahma temple.

The Siwa Temple as a Royal Mausoleum

The relics of Rakai Balitung and his funeral gifts lie buried in a stone case under the pedestal of Siwa as Maha Dewa in the eastern chamber. The grave-pit is 14 metres deep and the stone encasing is suspended at a depth of 9 metres. Rakai Balitung did not live to see the whole complex completed. His interment within the main Siwa temple suggests that he was greatly venerated as a ruler of a mighty Kingdom.

Other Large Courtyard Temples

The Brahma and Vishnu temples flank the central Siwa temple to the south and north respectively. The three temples face east. The overall dimensions of the two temples are the same. Their bases are 20m x 20m and they are each 37m high. They each contain a single chamber.

The Brahma Temple

Inside the Brahma Temple is a statue of Brahma with 4 heads and 4 hands. His right arms hold a rosary and his left arms hold a Kamandalu or water pot, the holder of the creative power of water. Brahma is responsible for the processes of creation. His hair is formed into a 'Jata' or crown, and his eyes are closed in a meditative pose. The four faces symbolise the four vedas:

- *Rig Veda* faces the east
- *Yajar Veda* faces the south
- *Sama Veda* faces the west
- *Atharva Veda* faces the north

The Vedas are the oldest and most venerated sacred books of the Hindu religion. Although not written until about the birth of Jesus, they were recited from memory for about 1000 years prior to that time.

The Yishnu Temple

Vishnu is the god who preserves and protects creation. The temple to Vishnu contains a statue of him which has only one head but four hands. He holds a club, an oyster, and a cakra. The balustrade of the temple features a number of relief panels (12) which depict scenes in the life of Krishna. Krishna is another re-incarnation of Vishnu, following Rama.

The Nandi, Angsa and Garuda Temples

These three temples are directly in front of the Siwa, Brahma and Vishnu temples respectively. They are dedicated to the vehicles or means of communication of the trinity of the gods, ie the ox for Siwa (Nandi), the goose or swan for Brahma (Angsa), and the garuda

for Vishnu. The statue of the ox can be seen on site while the statue of the garuda is now kept on the south side of the archaeological office. The statue of Angsa, the swan is missing. The three temples are badly in need of restoration.

The exposed chamber of the Nandi temple contains a statue of an ox in a crouching position. It measures two metres in length and has no ornamentation. The chamber also contains two other statues. One is an image of Surya the Sun god atop a chariot drawn by seven horses. The other is an image of Dewa Chandra the Moon god whose chariot is drawn by ten horses. The chamber of the Angsa temple is now bare but the Garuda temple contains a small statue of Siwa.

The Apit Temples

The two Apit temples lie between the two sets of three temples near the northern and southern entrances. Although they have chambers they have no statues and their function is not known.

The Restoration of the Loro Jonggrang Complex

The restoration of the Loro Jonggrang complex is an enormous undertaking. The task began in the period 1930-33. The central Siwa temple was completed in 1953 and the Brahma temple in 1987. The Vishnu temple should be restored in the mid 1990s. Only two of the 224 Perwara temples in the second courtyard have been restored. It is a source of great wonder that such a monumental building undertaking was even conceived, let alone achieved. It is even more baffling to understand why such a labour of love was abandoned soon after its completion.

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Chapter 6

ANGKOR WAT

The Funerary Temple of Suryavarman II in Cambodia



ANGKOR WAT

Photographed by Heidi Smith, Canberra

"Angkor Wat, like other Kmer temple-mountains, was a microcosm, a replica in stone of Kmer cosmology. The central temple was Mount Meru, the pivot of the world, at whose summit lived the gods. Its five towers symbolised Meru's five peaks, the enclosing wall represented the mountains at the edge of the world and the surrounding moat, the ocean beyond."

Angkor by George Coedés - Pp 18-19

ANGKOR WAT

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ANGKOR WAT

I

The Funerary Temple of Suryavarman II

On Earth as in Heaven

Angkor Wat is the largest and most magnificent of all the Sino-Indic temples. Its design more completely encapsulates the essential characteristics of the archetypal Mahameru than any other building. The architect-priests who designed this colossal man-made structure sought a means of harmonising the earthly with the celestial. Only by building a faithful replica in durable stone could the earth and its people prosper.

The Meaning of the Name Angkor Wat

Angkor Wat is one of the best preserved temples of the Angkor region in northern Cambodia in the province of Siem Riep. The Angkor region covers an area of 310 square kilometres and the remains of more than 1000 temples can be found there. The word 'angkor' means 'city' or 'capital'. There have been many capitals of the Kmer culture.

The following table details the capital cities in the pre-Angkor period (2), the Angkor period (7) and the post-Angkor period (1). The term 'wat' is a Thai Buddhist one which describes a Buddhist temple with a monastery. However the building was built as a Hindu funerary temple for King Suryavarman II. It only acquired its Buddhist title after the sacking of Angkor Thom in 1432 by the Thais.

Successor to Baphuon

It has been estimated that II built Angkor Wat during a period of 30 years of his reign between 1113 AD and 1150 AD. The King built it as a natural successor to Baphuon which was later incorporated in the grounds of the city of Angkor Thom.

Angkor Wat is thought to contain more stone in its construction than the great pyramid of Kephren in Egypt with its stone more carefully dressed and ornamented. At the time of building, Angkor was densely populated and the Wat was not close to the Phimeanakas, the old palace of his predecessors. It is thought that Suryavarman II lived in his major construction. He certainly intended that his spirit would remain within the monument.

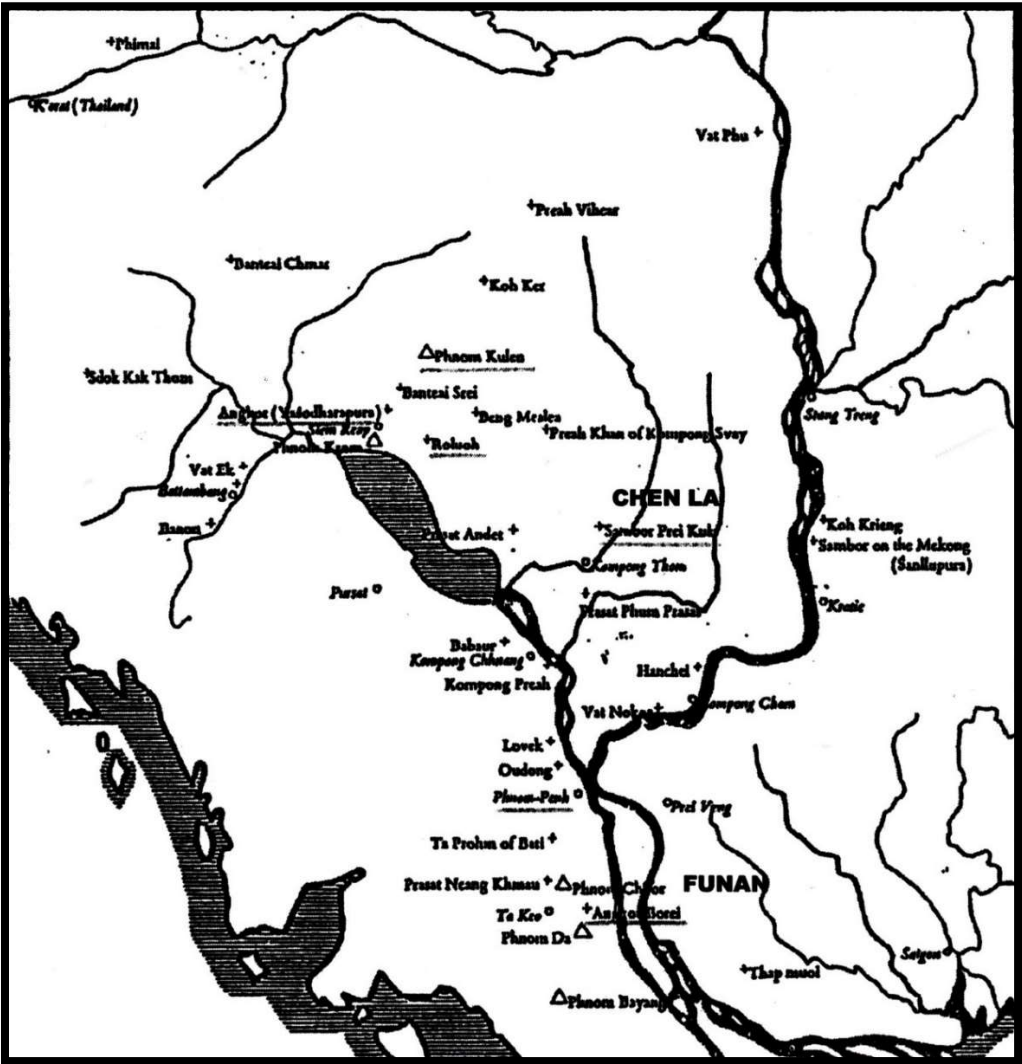
Funerary Temple of Suryavarman II

Scholars are in agreement that Angkor Wat was built as a funerary temple for Suryavarman II and they cite two pieces of evidence to support their claim. The first is the fact that the monument faces to the west instead of to the east as was customary for Kmer temples. The second is that the narrative galleries of bas-reliefs have been ordered in a counter-clockwise direction and are to be read prasaya. This processional is typical of funerary temples.

Early Kmer Chronology

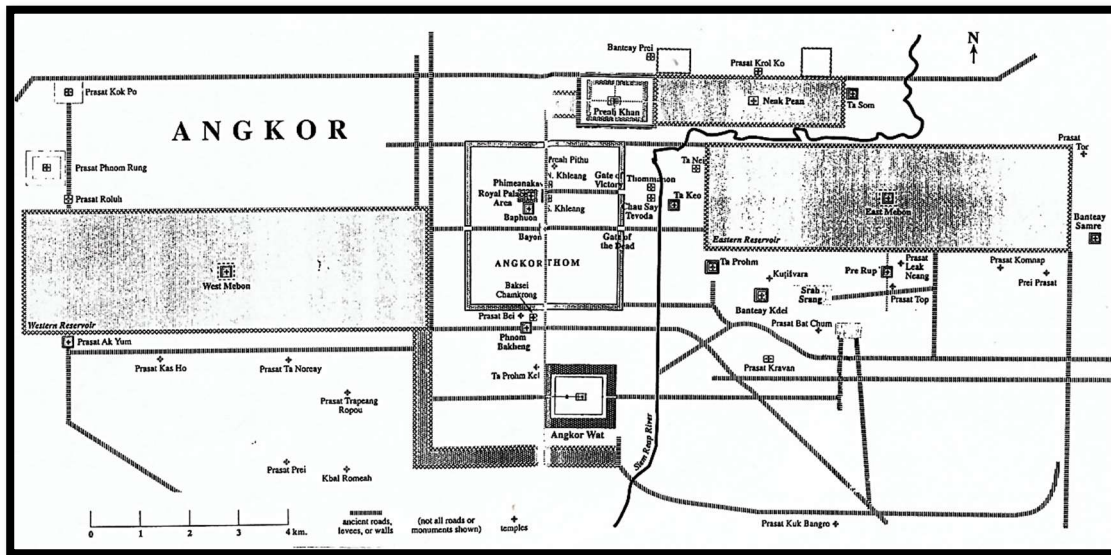
Period	King	Capital
<i>Pre-Angkor</i> (1 st –6 th Century) Funan	Kaundinya Jayavarman (478–514)	Angkor Borei
Chenla	Isanavarman Jayavarman I (645–681)	Sambor Prei Kuk
<i>Angkor</i>	Jayavarman II (802–850) Jayavarman III (850–877) Indravarman I (877–889) Yasovarman I (889–900) Suryavarman II (1113–c1150) Jayavarman VII (1181–1219)	Angkor Indrapura Hariharalaya Amarendpura Mahendrapura (Mount Kulen) Hariharalaya (Rolous) Yasodharapura—commonly known as Angkor. Angkor Wat built in the S.E. sector of Yasodharapura Angkor Thom became the new capital of the Kmers.
<i>Post Angkor</i> Phnom Penh		Phnom Penh After the sacking of Angkor Thom by the Siamese in 1432 the capital was transferred south.

Map of Cambodia



- ▲ Monuments sited on a hill or mountain (phnom)
- Modern City
- ✚ Ancient Site

Sites of Kmer capital cities and Temple location
Kmer Art in Stone – p.13



Angkor Wat in relation to nearby Temples (including Angkor Thom), Reservoirs, Roads and the Seam Reap River

Scholars, however, are not in agreement as to what happened to the mortal remains of King Suryavarman II. There are several theories proposed about the disposal of the Kings ashes. They may have been deposited inside the central statue of Vishnu in the central tower of the temple. Thus the King and the God would forever be one.

“Whatever glory accrued to the statue of Vishnu in the central tower was shared, in part, by the King”

*Angkor Wat, Time, Space, and Kingship, p.257,
by Eleanor Marmikka.*

A second theory proposes that the remains of the King were suspended in the vertical shaft of 27 metres (89 feet) below the centre of the upper level. The French archaeologists did not discover the existence of this shaft until nearly 500 years after the sacking of Angkor by the Thais. According to this theory the remains of King Suryavarman II would lie on the central axis of the cosmos. This axis, in Hindu cosmology, is the churning pivot which links the cosmic navel with the heavenly Mount Meru. This theory is reminiscent of the design elements of the Siwa Temple in the Prambanarn complex in Central Java where the relics of Rakai Balitung were encased.

II Angkor Wat - A Guide

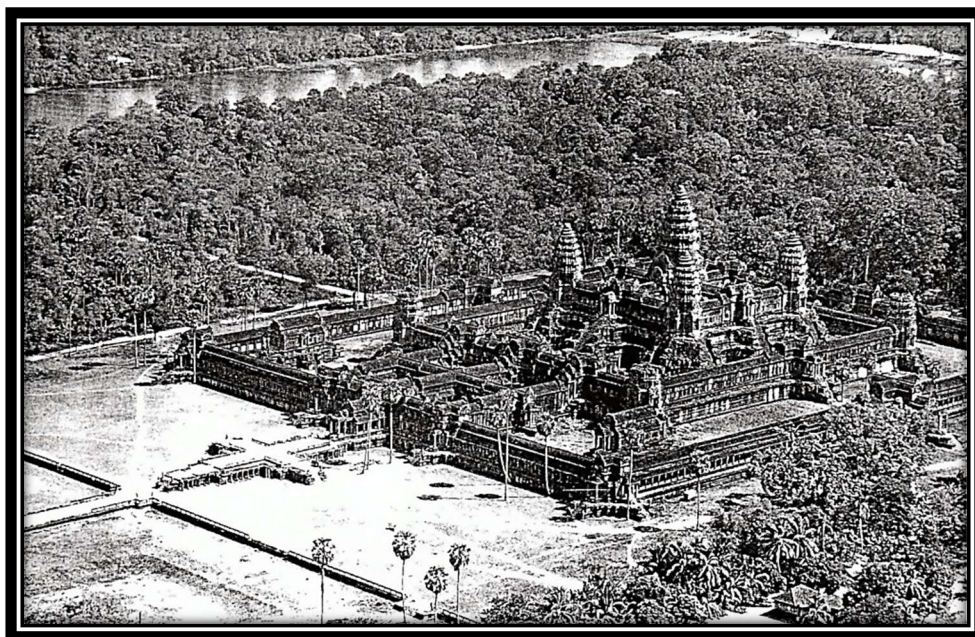
A visit to Angkor Wat is an experience which is so overwhelming that the tourist is unable to process the grandeur of its overall construction or assess the relationship of its parts. The following brief guide can do little more than introduce the determined temple-hopper to some of its architectural elements. Angkor Wat is worthy of a lifetime of study.

The Western Facade Side Elevation



Odyssey Illustrated Guide – p.90

It is not easy to capture a good ground-level photograph of the whole Angkor Wat complex. An oblique-angled aerial shot reveals that it is a 3-tiered terraced structure with each terrace being a rectangle of diminishing size as one climbs to its central point. On the uppermost, or third terrace, there are 5 towers or peaks which give it the quincunxial characteristic of the fabled Mount Meru. Four of the towers are in the corners of the third terrace and the fifth tower, which is the largest one, dominates the axial centre of the complex, and is 213 metres above ground level. In side elevation, only three of these towers can be seen. The national flag of Cambodia incorporates Angkor Wat in elevation as its central symbol.



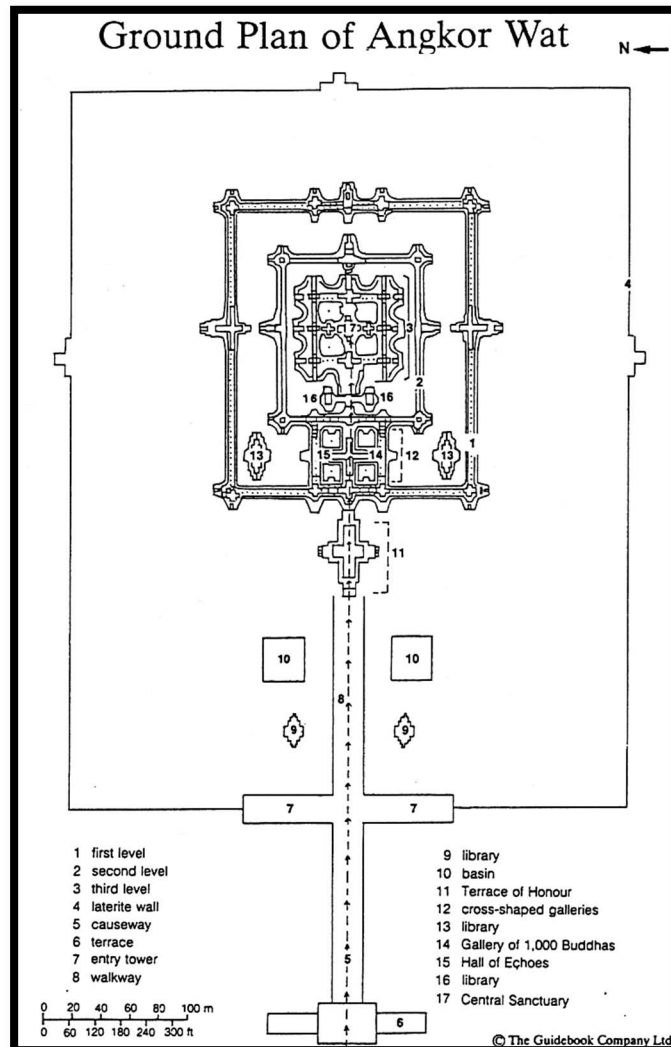
Aerial view of Angkor Wat the southwest

The moat around Angkor Wat is 200m wide but very shallow. It forms a sacred periphery of water that separates the temple from the secular world. At the heart of the enclosed, tree-filled confines, sandstone galleries and towers rise skyward. They are reached by a long western causeway that almost seems to be a continuation of the east-west road leading to the front of the temple.

Angkor Wat, Time, Space and Kinship – p8

Angkor Wat in Architectural Plan—A World Mandala

Angkor Wat is surrounded by a rectangular laterite wall 1.5 kms x 1.3 kms. This wall encloses a moat which is 190 metres wide. The moat surrounds the rectangular land area at the centre of which is the actual temple complex. Thus, in plan, Angkor Wat is a set of reducing rectangles except that the third terrace containing the 5 towers is square. To the Hindu worshipper, it was a world mandala whose meaning was experienced by tracing its walkways as one ascended ever closer to the heavens and abode of the gods.



*Odyssey Illustrated Guide to Angkor, An Introduction to the Temples – p.86
by Dawn Rooney*

The Sandstone Causeway

In order to gain access to the actual Angkor Wat temple it is necessary to cross the 190 metre wide moat which surrounds the temple grounds and the temple itself. The moat has a perimeter of 5.5 kilometres.

(i) The Sandstone Entrance Terrace

In order to cross the causeway from the western approach it is necessary to pass through a raised sandstone terrace in the shape of a cross. Large stone statues of lions act as guardians on either side of the entrance. This entrance is only to cross the 'sea' and is not to be confused with the actual entry gate on the other side of the moat.

(ii) The Causeway Paving

The causeway is paved with sandstone slabs cut in irregular shapes which are, nevertheless, expertly fitted to one another. The left-hand side has more original sandstone than the right—hand side which has been renovated by the French. Each paving stone has a hole which once housed a wooden peg. The peg was used to haul the stones into position and afterwards sawn off. Halfway across the causeway there is a block of sandstone with two feet carved on the surface. This particular block was apparently cannibalised from the entrance balustrade of Angkor Thom.

The Entry Tower

Once the moat is crossed one is at the Entry Tower to the temple grounds. It is the symbolic gateway to the heavenly Kingdom. This tower once had three upper portions which have collapsed leaving only a covered gallery with two outside porches wide enough to admit elephant-borne dignitaries. A figure of an 8-armed Vishnu statue stands on the right inside of the central porch. Traces of original colour remain on the ceiling of the entry tower to the left.

The Raised Walkway

The distance to the main edifice is a further 350 metres beyond the Entry Tower. The journey is along a walkway 9 metres wide and slightly higher than the causeway. Flanking each side of the walkway is a low balustrade of short columns which support 6 pairs of long nagas or serpents. These nagas are seven-headed giant cobras which represent the mythical water serpents that churn 'the sea of milk' in the ancient Hindu creation story. The many-headed naga is a ubiquitous symbol in Cambodian architecture and is one of its distinctive adornments.

(i) The Libraries

As one proceeds along the Walkway there are two libraries some 30 metres to the left and right of the Walkway and in the grassed courtyard. The libraries are identical in design and, in plan, are in the shape of a cross. Today, the libraries are in a poor state of repair and some of the columns have been replaced by cement copies.

(ii) The Two Basins

A little further along the Walkway there are two basins 65 metres x 50 metres inserted into the courtyard and located just after the libraries. The one on the left is filled with water but the one on the right is dry.

(iii) The Terrace of Honour

Immediately in front of the main entrance tower of Angkor Wat and at the end of the Walkway is the raised Terrace of Honour. This terrace has carved moulding about its base and supporting columns. Steps are on three sides of the terrace and these steps have lions on pedestals guarding the approach to the raised terrace. This terrace is known as the Terrace of Honour and was used for the reception of dignitaries and the performance of ritual dances on ceremonial occasions.

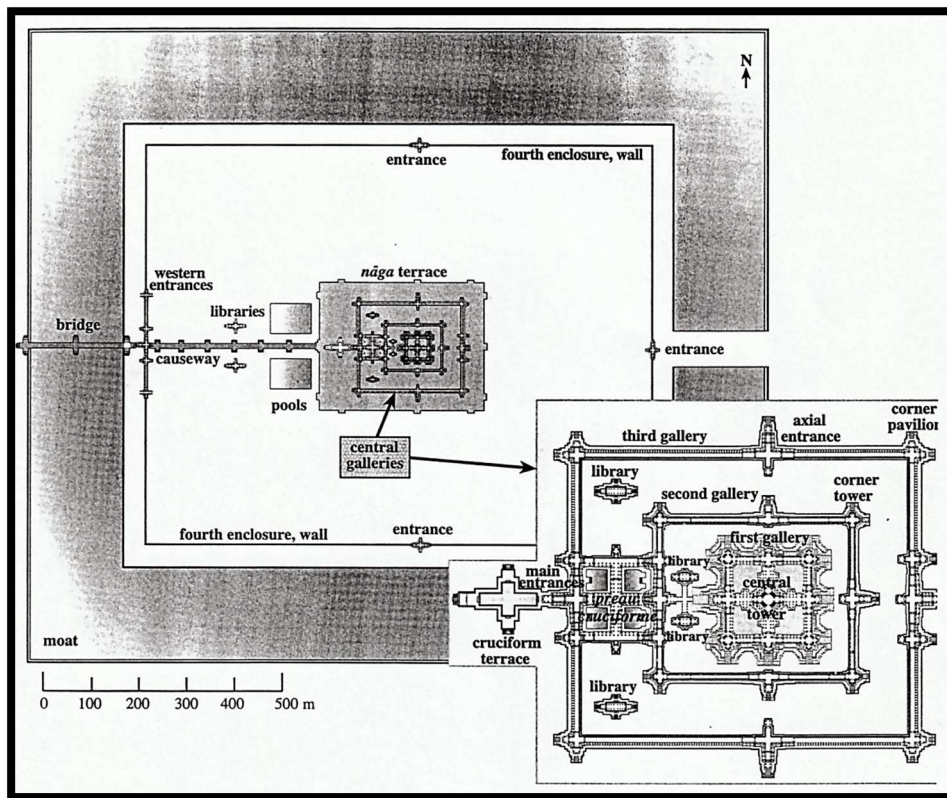


Ruined Library Flanking Nagahead Balustrade of the Causeway

The First Level or Gallery of Bas-Reliefs

Angkor Wat rises to 3 levels. On the first level there is a gallery of bas reliefs which surrounds the whole of Angkor Wat on its four sides. This gallery has been protected from weathering by a roof supported on the outside by 60 or so columns on each side of the total structure.

The bas reliefs on the western and eastern sides extend for 187 metres and are 2 metres high while those on the northern and southern sides extend for 215 metres and are 2 metres high. Together with the western and northern corner pavilions, there are 1200 square metres of sandstone carvings on the first level.



Angkor Wat
Approaches and Central Galleries

Viewing the Bas Reliefs (Prasaya)

This temple is a Hindu funerary temple and the pilgrim is instructed to turn right at the western entrance and continue walking counter-clockwise. This direction of movement is known as Prasaya and Hindu funerary temples are designed for viewing in this manner. Other temples, such as The Bayon, are to be viewed clockwise and this is known as Pradakshina. The pilgrim acquires both instruction and merit in the very act of circumambulation. On the other hand, the curious tourist is completely overwhelmed at the sheer quantity of pictorial iconography and can do little more than marvel at the prodigious amount of workmanship and skill in their creation. The bas reliefs of Angkor Wat constitute a world art treasure of unsurpassed value and, even for the non-pilgrim, invoke a sense of awe and profound respect that transcends the pettiness of religious affiliation.

Themes depicted in the bas reliefs

The study of the bas-reliefs is a challenging task and calls for detailed observation as well as historical research. In general terms, the themes depicted derive from two main sources: Indian cosmology/mythology and secondly, Kmer history. The summary below is taken from the *Odyssey Illustrated Guide*.

West Gallery

Battle of Kurukshetra

Battle of Lanka

Corner Pavilion

Scenes from Ramayana

South Gallery

Army of King Suryavarman II

Judgment by Yama Heaven and Hell

- East Gallery
 - Churning of the Ocean of Milk
 - Inscription
 - Victory of Vishnu over the Demons
- North Gallery
 - Victory of Krishna over Bana
 - Battle between the Gods and the Demons
- Corner Pavilion
 - Scenes from Ramayana

The Cross-shaped Galleries

The Cross-shaped galleries provide the linkage from the first level to the second level and they span the second courtyard. There are two galleries with square columns in the shape of a cross and a courtyard divided into four equal parts with paved basins and steps. Three features can be noted at this point of the journey to the central tower:

(i) *The Hall of Echoes* is to the left and the visitor is invited to pound his/her chest with one's back to the wall in order to experience the resonating sound.

(ii) The Gallery of 1000 Buddhas is to the right. It contains only a handful of Buddha statues about 4 metres high and nearly all are headless. These statues are imports from the post-Hindu period and are probably headless as a result of a counter reformation.

(iii)

The Two Libraries

Outside the connecting cross-shaped and tiered galleries are two library buildings in the courtyard. These two buildings, to the left and the right, area repeating motif of the two libraries in the outer courtyard referred to earlier. Their presence suggests that if the pilgrim is to proceed with his ascent of the cosmic mountain he must be equipped with additional knowledge.

The Second Level Gallery featuring The Asparas or Celestial Courtesans

The second level gallery surrounds the cosmic mountain and is some 6.5 metres higher than the first level gallery. The outer walls of this gallery are undecorated and enclose a rectangle 100 metres x 115 metres.

The inside walls of the gallery are decorated with 1500 asparas or 'celestial dancers' in a great variety of poses and adornment. The great Angkor scholar Henri Parmentier is reported as saying to André Malraux:

"To some observers the celestial dancers seem affected and monotonous, to me they me Grace personified, the highest expression of femininity ever conceived by the humankind"

(*Angkor* by M. Freeman and Roger Warner - p.182)

The asparas have come to be one of the most important symbols of the Kmer culture and idealise the role of the woman in that culture. They are celestial nymphs of perfect beauty and allurement and have the status of minor deities. In Hindu mythology they were created by the Churning of the Ocean of Milk. They appear in a wide variety of coiffures, head-dress,

costumes and jewellery. The artistic and enticing gestures of these heavenly courtesans was, no doubt, the inspiration for the development of the courtly dance of the Kmer palace.

The asparas at Angkor Wat first appear grouped in twos and threes which is a break from their traditional representation. Later, in the central sanctuary, the asparas are depicted in larger groupings, and with even greater elaboration.

The Third Level where Entry is Limited to King and High Priest

Only the King and the High Priest were allowed to proceed to the upper or third level of Angkor Wat. The third level rises over 40 metres above the second level. Its main feature is the central tower which is surrounded by 4 minor peaks at each of the corners of a square base. This quincunxial configuration is in the similitude of the fabled Mount Meru.

(i) The Square Base

The square base is 60 metres x 60 metres and can be climbed by ascending 40 steps (12 sets) which are set at a 70° angle. These staircases rise 13 metres to the upper level.

(ii) Repetition of Architectural Motifs

In general plan, the upper level repeats the patterning of the lower levels. There are even two libraries flanking the western entrance however, the corner pavilions of the second level are here transferred into minor towers. Again there is a narrow covered gallery with a double row of pillars and windows but the scale is greatly reduced. There are also four paved courtyards. The main feature however, is the majestic central tower.

(iii) The Central Tower-Sanctuary and Mausoleum

The central tower rises to a height of 213 metres above ground level and is 40 metres above the second level. It contains the central sanctuary which once housed the sacred image of the temple. This tower originally had four porches opening to the cardinal directions but after the sacking of Angkor by the Thai army in 1431, they were walled-up. Some 500 years later, when reopened by French archaeologists, a discovery of great interest was made. A vertical shaft 27 metres deep, from the centre of the upper level was found. A hoard of gold objects was found inside the shaft. This shaft is reminiscent of the one found in the Siwa Temple at Prambanam, Central Java, where the remains of Rakai Balitung were located.

The sacred image was that of King Suryavarman II in the form of Vishnu. This image is no longer present. Phillip Rawson states:

"It is clear that Suryavarman intended the Wat to be his own mortuary shrine; it is also clear that he intended it as a kind of premature wish-fulfilment. He had constructed his heaven, complete with asparas, before his death, as a visible demonstration that his nature was divine. Incarnate as Vishnu, heaven would automatically be his after death. "

The Art of South East Asia - p.96

Phillip Rawson describes the design of the central tower in these terms:

"The Central Tower is the most magnificent of them all. The tower spires have I storeys and a crown, and are square, with a series of multiple-recessed profiles and centre projections that make them look octagonal. They show the full-fledged curved outline of a sprouting bud which gives the impression that each storey is rising out of the one beneath.... Only on the towers does the accumulation of moulding and the multiplication of carved motifs become dense, with repetitions of the flamboyant gable- cartouche. The whole Wat, in fact, is a single massive sculpture."

The Art of South East Asia - p.87

III

Angkor Wat-A Copy of the Cosmic Blueprint

Angkor Wat - A Spiritual Creation

The creation of surplus wealth with its spin-off of surplus man-power, the accessibility of an architectural tradition and the availability of suitable buildings do not, of themselves, produce prodigious architectural and engineering wonders. Such wonders are creations of the spirit and can only materialise from spiritual impulses and a vision of the 'city beautiful'.

Angkor Wat - An Image of the Cosmic Mountain

Angkor Wat, and to a lesser extent many of its forerunners, is in the image of the Cosmic Mahameru or the fabled Mount Meru. It is a copy of the heavenly archetype stone and was built to bring heaven to earth and be a fitting home in which the gods could dwell among mere mortals. As such, its design incorporated all of the characteristics of the heavenly model. Its overall shape, its location and its functions simulated aspects of the heavenly abode-even to the point of replicating the surrounding seas of the cosmic Mount Meru.

Characteristics of the Cosmic Replica

The cosmic mountain, or archetypal mountain, appears in a great number of cultures in various guises but has the following common characteristics:

- It is a Zonal Link between Heaven and Earth
It is sometimes a link between three regions rather than two viz: heaven, earth and the underworld. It has an entrance gate through which one may ascend or descend from the middle Kingdom or earth zone as if climbing or descending a staircase or ladder.
- *It has an Axis Mundi*
The two or three zones 'spin' on the same axis as if the axis were a diameter of a spinning sphere.
- *The Central Zone is at the Omphalos*
The omphalos is the cosmic navel and lies beneath the cosmic summit along the axis mundi at the centre of the cosmos.

- *The Ascent to Heaven is through more and more rarified sub-zones*
Sometimes these sub-zones correspond to planetary spheres or planes or heavens at the extremity of which is a solar deity.
- *It has a Quincunxial Design*
It is in the overall shape of a quincunx of a central square pyramid flanked by four smaller pyramids protruding from each of the cardinal directions at a lower level.
- *It is surrounded by water*
Although the cosmic blueprint specifies that the cosmic mountain is surrounded by 7 oceans and 7 mountain ranges, Angkor Wat partially fulfils this image with its surrounding moat.

God on Earth as in Heaven

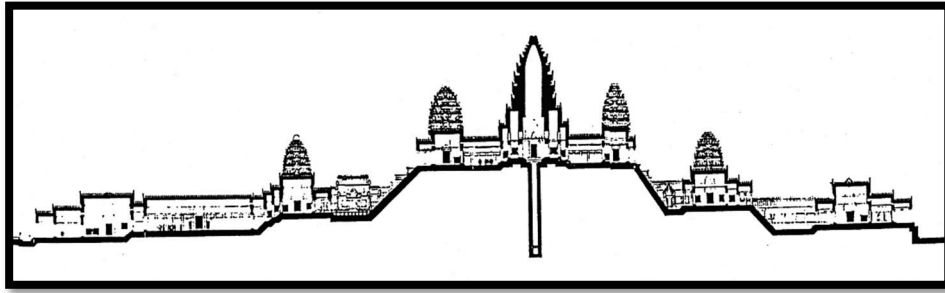
In order for their God-King to reign permanently among them the Kmer people had to adopt two essential practices. Firstly, they had to house their God in a durable building that would last for eternity and secondly, they had to adopt a religious convention which denied the reality of the King's death-for, by definition, God's do not die. This second requirement was solved by the construction of funerary temples in which the spirit of dead Kings could reside in the statuary.

The Importance of the Devaraja Cult

The genius of the Kmer Kings resided in their formulation of the doctrines associated with the King-as-God model of sovereignty and the priestly promulgation of the rites of the Devaraja cult. It was this that sustained the loyalty and provided the motivation for the labouring citizens. In building the great Temple cities the Kmer people were building the heavenly city on earth, the concept of 'merit'. The gaining of 'merit points' is a strong motivator. Throughout Cambodia and Buddhist Asia, devotees are intent on accumulating 'merit points' to avert the possibility of being reincarnated at a lower level than their present spiritual level. They say prayers, burn incense at altars, make offerings, give alms to the poor, feed priests, make donations to temples, undertake studies and give voluntary labour to temple construction in order to accumulate merit. The very rich build shrines, donate precious gems, erect statues and act philanthropically in order to accumulate merit. Kings and rulers build temples and cities for the same reason.

Interment of Kmer Kings

Cremation is normally preferred over interment by Hindus. However, with the advent of Suryavarman II, a decided preference for entombment and its extension to enshrinement can be detected.



In Section - Illustrating Funerary Vault
Odyssey Illustrated Guide to Angkor - An Introduction to the Temples, pp 90-91; Dawn Rooney

Enshrinement

The method of interment had a number of connotations for the Cambodians that are not normally held by Hindus. For them, entombment and architectural design were virtually synonymous. The body of the cosmic God-King was incorporated into the body of the temple. Similarly the statue of the God-King was not simply a likeness, it incorporated his 'sekti' or spiritual essence. The statue of a supposedly 'dead' King was in fact quite the opposite. It was very much 'alive'! Again, the location of the linga at the exact centre of the royal city emphasised the living potency of the 'dead' King. George Coedés seeks to explain the relationship between architecture and living presence:

"Angkor Wat can be called a sanctuary to Vishnu but the Vishnu worshipped there is not the ancient god Vishnu, or any of the forms of his traditional incarnations (Rama, Krishna etc) but King Suryavarman II, identified with Vishnu after his death, embodied in him and living in this mausoleum — so beautifully decorated with graceful asparas - much like Vishnu in his celestial palace."

Angkor by George Coedés, p.31

Furthermore, Coedés explains that, as a man, the King lived in a palace built of perishable materials but in the form of a god he dwelt in a palace of enduring stone. When the common people were admitted into the temple precincts on special occasions, it was "not to offer prayers or sacrifices for divine mercy, but rather to prostrate themselves before the image of the God-King or Buddha-King" (p.32).

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ANGKOR THOM and THE BAYON

A fortified walled city and the ultimate in Baroque architecture



Entrance causeway leading to an entrance tower,
Guarding the walled city of Angkor Thom

Chapter 7

ANGKOR THOM and THE BAYON

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Chapter 7

ANGKOR THOM and THE BAYON

I

The Golden Age of Jayavarman VII

Angkor Thom

Angkor Thom is located 1700 metres north of Angkor Wat in the Angkor region of the Siem Reap province of northern Cambodia. Unlike Angkor Wat, it is a collection of buildings rather than a single monument. Angkor Thom is actually a fortified walled city and its name means 'great city'. It was built by Jayavarman VII between 1181 AD and 1219 AD on the site of the old Royal Palace and the Baphuon - both of which were built before Angkor Wat.

King Jayavarman VII

King Jayavarman VII was the last great King of Angkor. He was born around 1125 AD and was a cousin to the illustrious King Suryavarman II who had built Angkor Wat when Jayavarman was a boy. He ruled as King between 1181 AD and 1219 AD and during that period he achieved naval supremacy over the invading Chams, instituted Mahayana Buddhism as the established religion and built an astonishing number of public buildings and temples. It has been said of him that he shifted more stone than all his predecessors put together.

Jayavarman VII's Empire

Jayavarman VII, after ousting the Chams, and sending them back to what is now South Vietnam, set about restoring order in his empire and even extending it. Under his rule the Kmer Empire spread from the coast of Vietnam to the borders of Pagan in Burma and from the vicinity of Vientiane in Laos to much of the Malay Peninsula.

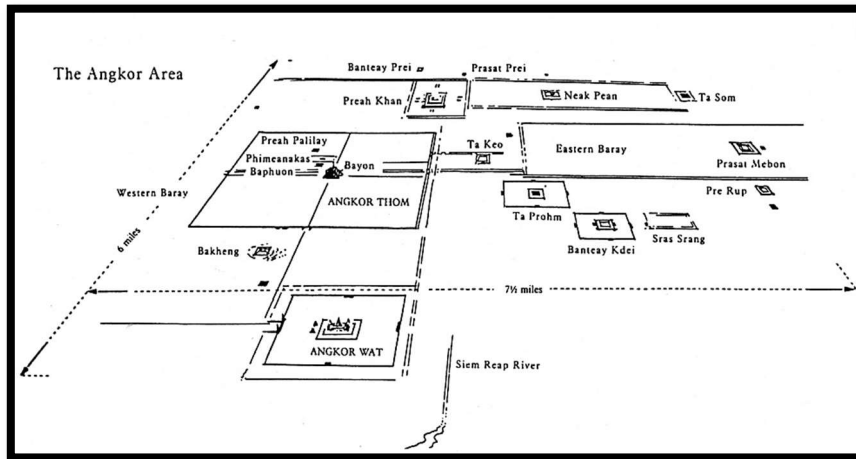
Institution of Mahayana Buddhism

After restoring order to the Kmer Empire Jayavarman VII made two far-sighted decisions:

(i) Effecting a Synthesis between Hinduism and Buddhism

The first of Jayavarman VII's decisions was to effect a synthesis between the traditional Hindu world-view and the more popular Buddhist world-view. A type of syncretism had already emerged in Central Java which had given rise to the cult of Siwa-Buddha. However Jayavarman's fusion of the two streams of thought was achieved in a quite different manner. His solution was to focus on the doctrines associated with the concept of the bodhisattva.

A bodhisattva was a perfected human being who chose to renounce Buddhahood in order to assist others on their pathway. This doctrine was essentially Hindu in origin. Jayavarman added the further notion of a re-incarnating Buddha which orthodox Buddhism would not normally allow. This new religion regarded the historical Gautama as the 4th Buddha who had once been Kok Santho, Neak Komano and Kassapa. In addition to being these Buddhas, he had come back many times as a Bodhisattva. Indeed, between Kassapa and Gautama, he had incarnated 108 times!



Modern Cambodian Buddhists attest that their late King Norodom (1835-1904) will be re-incarnated as the future 5th Buddha - Lord Maitreya, in the Buddhist year 5000. It could be averred that such a claim was very convenient and politically self-serving. To be critical of the king was to be critical of the Lord of the Universe. No doubt this belief was repulsive to Pol Pot.

(ii) Rebuilding Angkor Thom

The second far-sighted decision of Jayavarman VII followed logically from the first. It was to rebuild the old city of Angkor Thom and establish a new golden age.

Jayavarman's Extensive Public Works

Apart from his territorial acquisition, Jayavarman VII is known for his extensive public works. He built 102 hospitals and 121 pilgrims' rest houses along the major roads to Angkor. In the area of Angkor he built the major temples of Banteay Kdei, Ta Prohm, Preah Khan and the lesser ones of Ta Som, Neak Pean, Krol Ko and Ta Nei.

Outside of Angkor he built Banteay Chmar, Wat Nokor and Ta Prohm of Bate. The rebuilding of Angkor Thom with its great wall and moat would have been achievement enough for a monarch who did not assume the throne until he was 60 years of age! It is, however, Jayavarman VII's building of the Bayon Temple in the centre of the walled city Angkor Thom that was his greatest achievement.

III

Angkor Thom—A Centre of Buddhist Culture

A Fortified Walled City

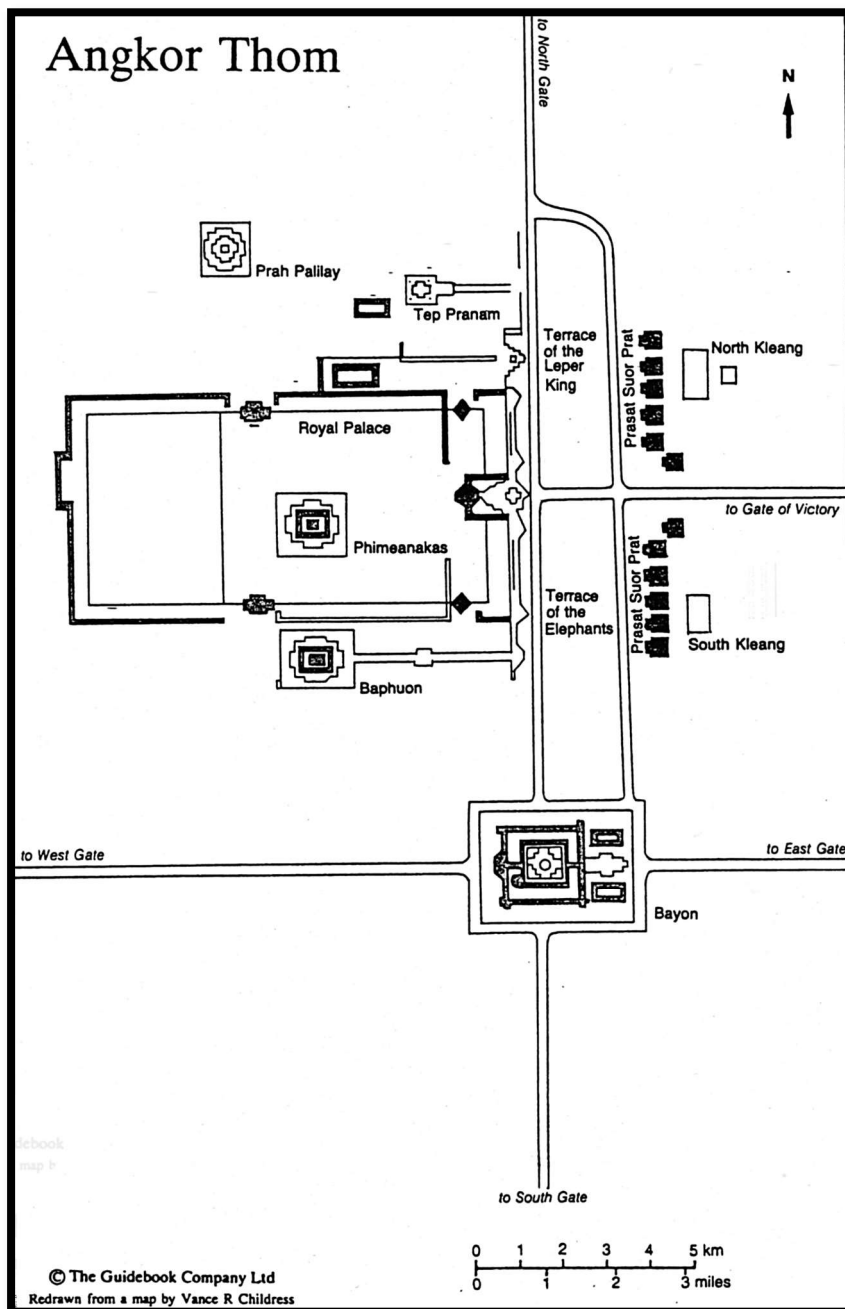
Angkor Thom was the last capital of the Kmer Empire. It was constructed by King Jayavarrnan VII during the period 1181AD and 1219AD and after several attempts it was captured and sacked by the Thais in 1431AD. After its sacking the capital was moved to Phnom Penh. The defence fortifications of the capital city included a moat, a high wall, five causeways, entry towers, corner temples and an earthen embankment-inside the wall. These fortifications were constructed to protect the King who was revered as a living Buddha. They encompassed his palace and the treasures of the Kmer Empire, the administrative centre of the Kmer nation and the lives of the 120,000 subjects of the King who lived within the city walls.

The Fortifications

The fortifications had both a military defensive purpose and a spiritually protective purpose which made the inhabitants of the city feel safe.

The Moat

In plan the city of Angkor Thom was a square with each side 3 kilometres long. A moat 100 metres wide completely surrounded the walls of the city. Apart from its military deterrent function, it was also a useful reservoir of water for irrigation and aquaculture. In spiritual terms it was in the similitude of the cosmic ocean that surrounded the fabled Mount Meru. This was important to the Kmers because they held to the belief that the greater the correspondence of the earthly construction to the cosmic blueprint the greater their peace and prosperity.



The High Wall

The high wall which surrounded the city was 12 kilometres in total length and 8 metres high. At the top of the wall there was a parapet walkway which provided for sentry duties and military defence. The wall was constructed of laterite blocks and from a spiritual point of view, it was in the similitude of a protective mountain range that girdled the cosmic mount. At each corner of this massive wall a Prasat Chrung or small temple was built. It no doubt doubled as a sentry box. Inside the wall there was a 25-metre earthen embankment which not only supported the wall but also served as a road around the city. At the foot of this sloping glacis, a canal ran all the way around the city.

The Five Giant Causeways

Access to the city across the moat was provided by 5 causeways which led to 5 entry towers. Four of these entrances bisect the walls which face each of the cardinal directions. The fifth causeway is a second entrance on the eastern wall, slightly north of the east-west axis. This fifth causeway is in alignment with the Phimeanakas within Angkor Thom and Ta Keo outside the city. The causeway leads through a 'Gate of Victory' to the Terraces of the Elephants and the Leper King.

Each of the causeways is lined with 54 stone figures on each side. The figures on the right parapet are demons and those on the left are gods making a total of 108. They are the guardian spirits of the underworld and the presiding genii of the heavens.

Each row of figures is united by a railing which is in the design of a serpent or Naga. This railing, or serpent's body, runs under the arm nearest the causeway. The head of this serpent is a seven-headed, open-mouthed cobra. The serpent's tail frames the entrance of each gopura or entry gate.

The Kmers not only adopted the Hindu Naga myths, they actually embellished them in their ornamentation. The churning of the Ocean of Milk myth gives great prominence to the part played by the serpent Vasuki whose body was wrapped around the cosmic axis or spindle so that it could spin as an axle when tugged by opposing powers. The action of the devas and asuras solidifies the milk into a buttery substance and produces the cosmic elixir of life thus guaranteeing prosperity- The figures lining the causeways are a sculptural representation of this creation myth.

There is another symbolic meaning that is conveyed by utilising the Naga motif on causeways such as Angkor Thom, Angkor Wat, The Bakong and so on. The Naga symbolises the rainbow which is a bridge between earth and heaven. Thus the visitor to Angkor Thom is crossing the bridge that leads to the reflection of the heavenly abode of the gods.

The Entrance Towers

These sandstone towers rise to 23 metres and are known as gopuras. Above the gateway there are 4 heads carved in stone, each facing a cardinal direction. They are related to the Buddha as inner King (Lokeshvara) but also symbolise the power of Jayavarman. The lower half of each gate is modelled like an elephant with 3 heads. The Hindu god Indra sits at the centre of the elephant with an aspara, or heavenly maiden, at each side. Indra holds a thunderbolt in his left hand.

The Corner Temples

In each of the corners of the wall there is a small sandstone temple dedicated to the bodhisattva Avalokitesvara. These temples are known as Prasat Chrungs and they have inscriptions which identify Jayavarman VII as the builder of Angkor Thom. They no doubt also served as defensive lookouts with concealed windows of unusual ornamentation.

The Bayon as Axis Mundi

The Bayon was built nearly 100 years after Angkor Wat but has not weathered nearly as well. In Jayavarman VII's Angkor Thom the Bayon lies at the centre of the city. Although it was a Buddhist temple, it kept alive a great deal of Hindu symbolism. According to George Coedes it "centralised the double power, secular and divine which each of the sanctuaries of the Jayabuddhamahanatha represented in the distant provinces" (Angkor by George Coedes p.100). Part III of this chapter describes the Bayon in greater detail.



The Entrance Tower to Angkor Thom

Inside the Walls of Angkor Thom

Angkor Thom enclosed residences of priests, palace officials, military personnel and the common people. The common people lived in wooden and straw huts and numbered as many as 120,000. Naturally, the buildings of wood have perished over the years but their appearances have been preserved in the iconography of the stone bas reliefs. Even many of the stone structures have weathered very badly and, in many instances, have tumbled down.

The Royal Palace and other important buildings

The Royal Palace within Angkor Thom belonged to the kings of the 10th and first half of the 11th century. Only the foundations and an enclosing wall with its entry towers remain (see diagram). Within the palace grounds stood the Phimeanakas. To the south of the palace enclosure are the ruins of the Baphuon and to the north stood Tep Pranam and Prah Palilay. Immediately to the east of the entry tower is the Terrace of the Leper King and the Terrace of the Elephants. It is difficult for the casual tourist to process all of this information and, at the same time, reconstruct in his imagination the buildings now fallen into ruin.

The Phimeanakas (978 AD)

The temple of Phimeanakas is near the centre of the palace enclosure. Its central sanctuary is on a base with 3 laterite tiers and may be climbed by using the western stairway. It was thought to have been crowned with a golden pinnacle. Some of the Kmer kings resided in this symbolic mountain where the serpent-spirit appeared, disguised as a woman, and with whom they had to co-habit every night lest they die!

The Baphuon (1050-1066 AD)

The Baphuon is to the immediate south of the palace walls and was built by Udayadityavaman II. It marked the centre of the city that existed before Angkor Thom was reconstructed. Its building was a colossal achievement even though it is in a ruinous condition today. Some restoration work is currently being done.

The Baphuon was dedicated to Siva and was enclosed by a rectangular sandstone Wall 425 metres long and 125 metres wide. The height of the topmost of its 5 terraces must have been approximately 23 metres with its 'Tower of Bronze' reaching something like 48 metres above ground level. The first and second terraces were surrounded by sandstone vaulted galleries and there were towers at the terrace corners and gate pavilions. There were also 4 libraries on the lowest terrace. Bas reliefs depict forest scenes and aspects of daily life. The Baphuon was, in many features, a forerunner to Angkor Wat and a temple mountain in the similitude of Mount Meru.

Tep Pranam and Prah Palilay

These two temples lie just outside the northern wall of the palace. Tep Pranam is an 82m by 34m cruciform Buddhist terrace and was erected by Y3.SOV3I'I'II3.1'I I at the end of the 9th century. Prah Palilay was erected by Jayavarman VII and is 200 metres north of the northern wall of the Royal Enclosure.

The Terrace of the Leper King

Jayavarman VII had this terrace and the Terrace of the Elephants built at the end of the 12th century. The Terrace of the Leper King is a stone wall and platform 7 metres in height and five metres long. The faced sandstone wall is decorated in bas-reliefs which are divided into 7 registers. There is both an exterior wall and an interior wall. The statue of the Leper King on the terrace is only a copy. The original is in the courtyard of the National Museum in Phnom Penh. The figure is naked and without sexual organs. Some scholars believe that Jayavarman II was a leper and that the terrace was the location of a royal crematorium.



Copy of Leper King Statue

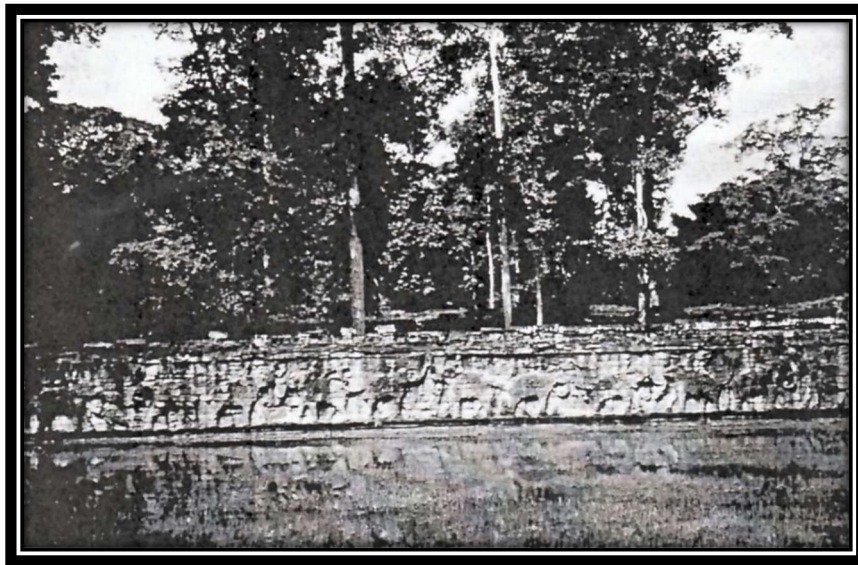


Original in the National Museum

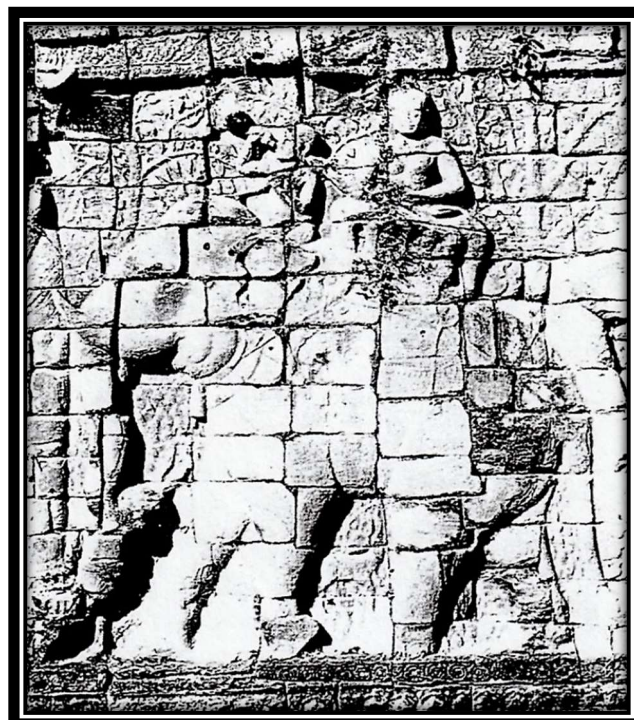
The exterior wall has carvings of mythical beings - serpents, garudas, giants and women with naked torsos. The interior wall has themes similar to those on the exterior wall and a low frieze of fish, elephants and a river. The mythological elements depict characters normally associated with the slopes of the fabled Mount Meru and its subterranean slopes. The walled terrace thus represents the fabled mountains which girdle the great cosmic Mount Meru.

The Terrace of the Elephants

The Terrace of the Elephants is over 300 metres long and faces the Royal Enclosure from the east. It was used as a reviewing stand for public ceremonies and served as a base for the King's grand audience hall. The middle section of the retaining wall is decorated with garudas and lions while each end depicts a carved parade of elephants.



The Terrace of the Elephants within Angkor Thom



Scene from Terrace of Elephants (*Rawson*, p.109)

III

The Bayon

The Ultimate in Cambodian Baroque

The Bayon of Angkor Thom must rank as one of the most amazing buildings ever constructed.

An engraving by Louis Delaporte made in 1868 is an imaginative reconstruction of what his artist's inner eye perceived it to be in its day of splendour. He depicts it as a gigantic looking birthday cake sculptured in stone with its tiered decorations celebrating the 54th anniversary of a four-faced god. Today its corroding ruins look like the remains of a Gaudi-like, bombed out, Rhineland castle—a folly on a grand scale set in an improbable jungle setting. Its ruinous state nevertheless evokes mystery and awe. It invites the tourist to seek the reasons behind its unusual design and to seek a means of decoding its veiled symbolism. In a strange way, its now tattered lacery represents the ultimate in Cambodian baroque architecture.

The Bayon - A Buddhist Mount Meru

The Bayou was built nearly 100 years after Angkor Wat, though one would never guess that fact by looking at its ruinous appearance.



The Bayon with the Walled City of Angkor Thom

In having the building constructed Jayavarman VII was well aware of what Suryavarman II had achieved in building Angkor Wat. It is reasonable to assume that Jayavarman wanted to match his illustrious forebear who had died in 1107, some 74 years before Jayavarman had ascended the throne. Whereas Angkor Wat was the Hindu version of Mount Meru, Jayavarman had to incorporate the Buddhist version of the cosmic mountain. Furthermore, the classical linearity of Angkor Wat had to be replaced by an imaginative style that projected the modernity and impulses of the new state religion.

History of Discovery

In 1431 the Cambodian or Kmer Empire was overrun by the Thai Kingdom, from the Thai capital of Ayutthaya.

After the sacking of Angkor Thom, the capital of the Kmer Empire was relocated at Phnom Penh where it is to this day. From that time the glory of the Bayon began to fade and the ravages of the jungle began their insidious processes of strangulation.

It was many years before people outside Cambodia gained any knowledge of its existence. The Chinese Chou Ta Kuen had visited Angkor in 1296 and thereafter traders from Japan, Arabia, Spain and Portugal must have heard something of the fabulous stone temples of the interior. Dutch, English and French adventurers followed the traders. In the 19th century American and French missionaries visited Angkor. However systematic accounts of Angkor may most properly be attributed to French scholars (even though it was an Englishman, John Thompson, who gave the world the first photographic account of the ruins in 1875).

The Ecole Francaise d'Extreme

The French explorers and scholars of the 19th century included Henri Mahout (1860), Doudart de Lagree (1866), Louis Delaporte (1871), Francis Garnier (1873), Fourniercau (1890) and Tissandier(1893). As an outcome of the labours of these men the Ecole Francaise d'Extreme Orient (French School of the Far East) was founded. Notable French scholars of the 20th century include Jean Commaile (first conservator of the monuments at Angkor), Lunet de Lajonquiere (published first complete plans of the ruins), H. Parmentier, H. Marchal, George Coedes and many others.

Location of the Bayon

It was not until 1910 when Lts. Buat and Ducret of the Service Geographique made the first topographical maps of the region that an accurate survey of the Bayon was made. The central tower of the Bayon rises at the exact intersection of the diagonals of the slightly imperfect square wall enclosure of Angkor Thom (there is an error of 2t2" in the western wall). This fact alone, is strong evidence that Jayavarman II, from the very beginning, when the grounds of Angkor Thom were still not walled, had planned to erect a most significant building. Its discovery and investigation by the Ecole Francaise d'Extreme shows that its siting was not accidental. It lies on the axis mundi of Jayavarman's new Mount Meru.

The Central Tower - A later addition

The Bayon is constructed on top of an earlier monument and while being erected, it underwent important modifications. It was originally intended to be on a single level. The central tower was a late addition and transformed the building into a Buddhist version of the cosmic Mount Meru.

The Central Tower rises some 46 metres high and it was probably built to replace the 'Golden Tower' referred to by the Chinese emissary Chou Ta Kuan in 1296:

At the centre of the Kingdom rises a Golden Tower flanked by more than twenty lesser towers and several hundred stone chambers. On the eastern side is a golden bridge guarded by two lions of gold, one on each side, with eight golden Buddhas spaced along the stone chambers. North of the Golden Tower of Bronze (The Baphuon), higher even than the Golden Tower (The Bayon), a truly astonishing spectacle.

Odyssey - Guide to Angkor, p82

Central Sanctuary

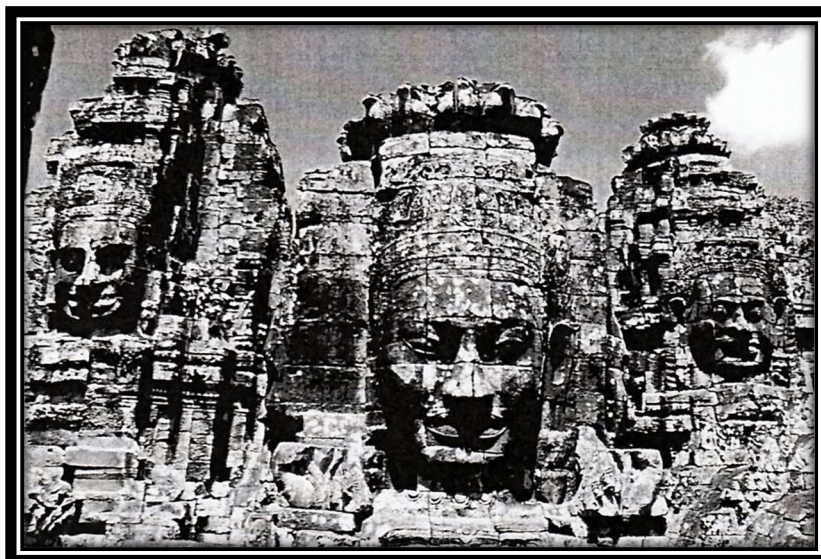
The Central Tower contains a circular central sanctuary in which stood an enormous statue of Buddha. This statue was later recovered from an open pit under the central tower and was installed in a pavilion south of the avenue leading from the Royal Palace to the Gate of Victory. The statue had been dislodged during a violent Brahman reaction following the death of Jayavarman. All of the Buddhist idols were beheaded at that time.

The Fifty-four Sculptured Towers

The Central Tower dominates the mass of sculptured and carved stones which comprise the Bayon but it does not obliterate the effect that the 54 sculptured towers have on the visitor. This effect evokes wonder and curiosity. The wonder is related to the fact that each tower has four identical faces smiling enigmatically into each of the four cardinal directions. The puzzlement arises from the questions these 216 identical sculptures invoke. Why would anyone want to design a building with such a repetitive motif? Who could these gargantuan visages represent with their broad foreheads, downcast eyes, wide nostrils, and thick lips beaming in a smile?

Images of Lokeshvara

The direction of the smiling faces suggests a benign omni-presence overseeing the Khmer Kingdom. The number of towers is the same number of Gods and Demons flanking the causeways into Angkor Thom and may possibly symbolise the number of times the Buddha had incarnated. It is now agreed among scholars that the face represents Lokeshvara (Avalokitesvara), the compassionate Bodhisattva of Mahayana Buddhism.



Jayavarman VII smiles enigmatically from each of the 54 towers of the Bayon in each direction.

The uniqueness of style in the Bayon suggests the announcement of a new religious impulse that would constitute a clear departure from the previously Hindu-based architectural forms. Whatever the reason for the change in style, the Bayon is certainly one of the most unusual and striking temples ever built. The style blurs the distinction between sculpture and architecture and, in its newness, must have induced a sense of wonder by its overpowering and invasive presence.



The Two Galleries

The first, or outer gallery, is square in plan and is at ground level. The second, or interior gallery, is not a continuous aisle as the first gallery is nor is it on a uniform level, the four corners are at a slightly lower level than the walkways.

The Outer Gallery

The outer gallery is 66m x 66m and has 8 entry towers—one in each corner and one in the middle of each side. The roof of this gallery is missing and the pillars which supported the roof stand in splendid isolation like sentinels in line. The roof would have provided some protection for the gallery of bas reliefs which form the unofficial enclosure on all four sides.

The Bas Reliefs

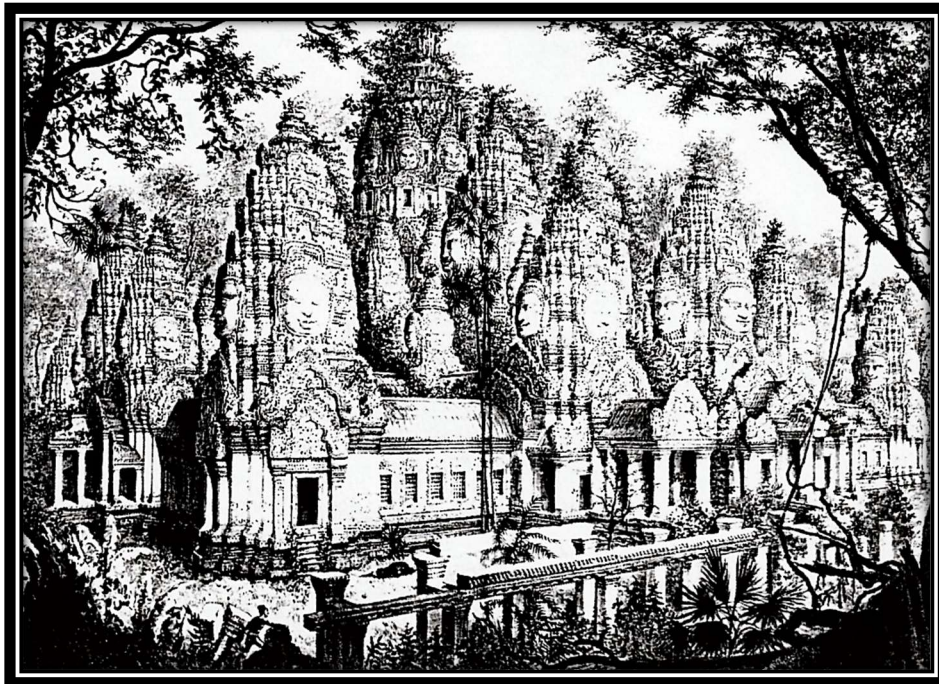
The outer gallery contains genre scenes of everyday life among the Kmer people. The journey of the pilgrim through this visual history began at the East Gallery and continued clockwise through scenes which depict military life, palace life, home life, military battles between the Kmers and the Chams, naval battles, medical practices, hunting scenes, cockfighting, fishing scenes, wrestling, sword-fighting, chess playing, boar fighting, carpenters at work, masons, blacksmiths, weaponry, archery, elephants as vehicles of war, tiger attacks, dressing of sandstone, circus life, animal scenes and meditation scenes.

The Two Libraries

On the east side, behind the gallery wall and in each corner there are two libraries.

The Inner Gallery

The Inner Gallery is also square in plan and is some 37m x 37m. The bas reliefs of this gallery differ in theme very markedly from the day-to-day life scenes of the outer gallery. The thematic material is devoted to mythological scenes of Hindu inspiration. The galleries in this enclosure are separated by rooms, cells, and fragments and the aisle is not continuous as in the exterior gallery. Some of the scenes depicted illustrate a military procession, ascetics and animals at the base of Mount Meru, a palace and a cortege of musicians, a fishing scene with asparas flying overhead, Shiva carrying a trident, Vishnu descending towards Shiva, a mountain with wild animals, a tiger devouring a man, a princess walking amidst a group of asparas dancing on lotuses, Shiva sitting in his celestial palace, Vishnu at the site of temple construction and Shiva in a palace with Vishnu.



Engraving by Louis Delaporte showing the Bayon restored as the artist imagined it in 1868. (See p171)

On the West Gallery, if one approaches the NW corner pavilion there is a creation scene which depicts the churning of the Ocean of Milk myth. On the North Gallery Siva is depicted dancing with Asparas flying above. Vishnu, Brahma, Ganesha and Rahu again make appearances. The final scene tells the story of the Leper King.

Asparas

Asparas are celestial dancing women who entertain the gods. They are the sensual rewards of Kings and heroes. In Hindu mythology they always performed with the celestial musicians and one is surprised to see them as decorative elements in an essentially Buddhist temple. They are carved into gallery columns and appear extensively on the outer wall of the central sanctuary on the upper terrace.

Concluding Remarks

The Bayon was built by King Jayavarman VII as an essentially Buddhist Mount Meru-like temple. After the death of the King there was a violent Brahmanic reaction and Hindu worship was restored. The statue of the Great Buddha in the central sanctuary was cast into a pit and the Buddha statues through the Bayon were de-capped. It is thought that at this time, the middle of the 13th century, the 16 chapels were removed and linga objects installed with other Sivaite symbols.

Again; there was yet another period of upheaval which ushered in the form of Theravada Buddhism which is practised to this day.

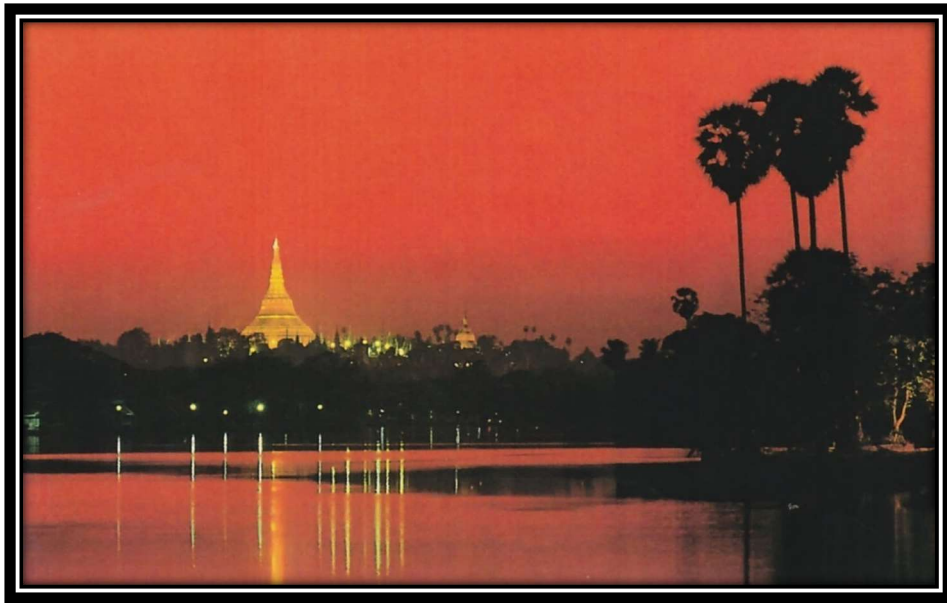
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THE SHWEDAGON

The Golden Stupa of Yangon

A Cultural Library



The Shwedagon Yangon Myanmar

“The Shwedagon rose superbly, glistening with its gold, like a sudden hope in the dark night of the soul of which the mystic write, glistening against the fog and smoke of the thriving city.”

W. Somerset Maugham *“The Gentleman in the Parlour”*, 1930.

Chapter 8

THE SHWEDAGON

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Chapter 8

THE SHWEDAGON

I

The Shwedagon as a Cultural Library

A Buddhist Mount Meru

The central spire of the Shwedagon dominates the skyline of Yangon as a golden beacon lighting the pathway of the earthly pilgrim to the highest spiritual realms. Its shape is not quincunxial in the tradition of Hindu merus but its central peak is, nevertheless, a Buddhist version of the fabled cosmic mount. Its design also encodes more than Buddhist cosmology because Burmese Buddhism also incorporates a great deal of hill-tribe animism. The task of decoding the design elements of this magnificent complex of buildings is a challenging and rewarding undertaking.

Burmese Cosmology

Burmese cosmology is the key to unlock the design secrets of the Shwedagon. The elements of this cosmology are:

Mount Meru

Mount Meru is at the centre of the world and it is surrounded by 4 islands situated in each of the cardinal directions of the compass.

Jambudipa

Jambudipa is the most southern of the 4 islands and is the only place where future Buddhas can be born. Although Jambudipa is a place of relative misery, it is the only place where one can accumulate merit points to rise through the 31 planes of existence.

The 31 Planes of Existence of Mt Meru

The 31 planes of existence may be divided into 3 broad bands:

(1) The 11 planes of Karna-Loka

- a) Beneath the human
 - (i) The demon and ghost world
 - (ii) The animal world
 - (iii) Hells
 - (iv) Purgatories
- b) Within the sensuous realm
 - (v) The realm of nats
 - (vi) The realm of devas
 - (vii) The realm of nagas
 - (viii) The realm of garudas
 - (ix) Gods of pleasure

- (x) Gods of pleasure
- (xi) The human realm

(2) The 16 Planes of Rupa-Loka

The beings who have progressed to this band of spiritual existence still belong to the material world but have freed themselves from sensual desire. They have entered into 'the 16 heavens of Brahma'. They are born without the aid of parents and if they progress to the upper 5 planes of Rupa-Loka they are in the realm of 'pure abodes'.

(3) The 4 Planes of Arupa-Loka

These 4 planes are at a stage beyond the realm of subtle material matter (Rupa-Loka). Arupa-Loka is known as the realm of formlessness. The 'inhabitants' of these non-material realms of spirituality are disembodied intellects. "The planes of existence are no longer places; they comprise (in order):

- the infinity of space
- the infinity of consciousness
- nothingness
- neither perception nor non-perception"

Insight Guides. A P.A. Productions, p.44

The purpose of life is to escape being re-born into the 31 planes of existence, ie to be free from the wheel of samsara.

The 37 Nats

It is said the Burmese 'love the Buddha, but they fear the nats'. The nats are nature spirits who are part of the animistic religious heritage which existed long before Buddhism gained a toehold in Burma. Theravada Buddhists cannot beseech the Buddha directly, but they can use the nats as intercessionists. Indeed, the nats are placated by offerings and prayers so that they might effect cures. The nats have stories associated with them and in telling these stories Burmese scholars manage to weave them into a great deal of Burmese history.

Sacred Space

The Burmese accept the Indianised view of space and regard the 8 directions of space as spiritual vectors as well as compass orientations. They also combine this concept with a recognition of the influence of the planets or planetary deities. The planets are also represented by animals whose dominant characteristic exert an astrological influence over the destiny of man.

Rahu a Mythical Planet

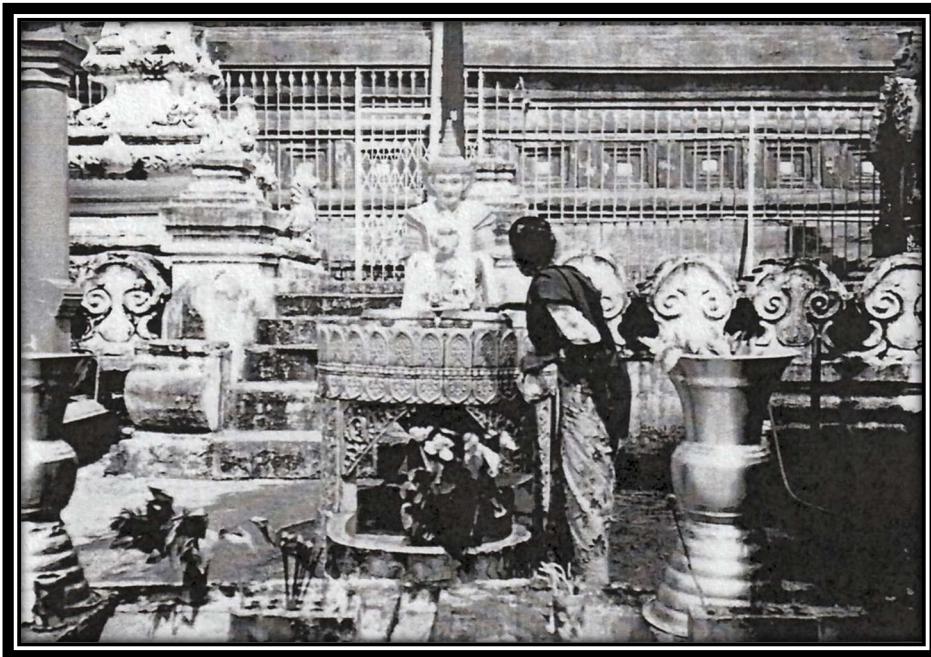
Rahu is not a real planet. Astronomically, it is the DragOn's Head, ie the ascending node of the moon's orbit with the ecliptic. Ketu is another mythical planet and is the descending node of the moon's orbit.

The Garuda is a Mythical Bird

The Garuda is a mythical bird which guards Mount Meru. It is also known as galon.



Thagyamin (Left) King of the Nats, and
Bo Bo Gyi (right) Guardian Nat of the Pagoda



Making an offering at a Planetary Post

Direction	Planet	Animal
East	Moon	Tiger
Southeast	Mars	Lion
South	Mercury	Tusked Elephant
Southwest	Saturn	Naga
West	Jupiter	Rat
Northwest	Rahu	Tuskless Elephant
North	Venus	Guinea Pig
Northeast	Sun	Garuda

The Eight-Day Week

<p>NORTHWEST Yahu (Wednesday Noon–midnight) Rahu (Mythical Planet) Tuskless Elephant</p>	<p>NORTH Friday Venus Guinea Pig</p>	<p>NORTHEAST Sunday Sun Garuda</p>
<p>WEST Thursday Jupiter Rat</p>		<p>EAST Monday Moon Tiger</p>
<p>SOUTHWEST Saturday Saturn Naga</p>	<p>SOUTH Bohddahu (Wednesday Midnight to noon) Mercury Tusked elephant</p>	<p>SOUTHEAST Tuesday Mars Lion</p>

Note

Duration of Planetary Influence

The planets differ in the duration of their influence: Moon (15 yrs), Mars (8 yrs), Mercury (17 yrs), Saturn (10 yrs), Jupiter (19 yrs), Rahu (12 yrs), Venus (21 yrs), and Sun (6 yrs).

The Shwedagon as a World Mandala

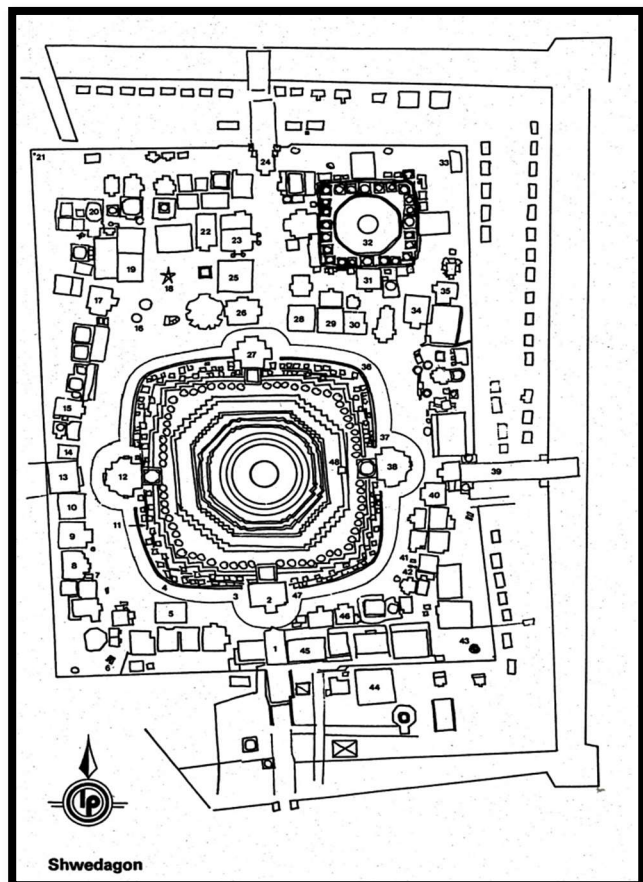
The Shwedagon, like all temples, is sited at the “Centre of the World” and its central stupa is the axis mundi. Its verticality ascends the planes of existence and leads to the highest spiritual realms. Its horizontality depicts the path of life with its labyrinthine byways which test the pilgrim seeking enlightenment. In plan this horizontality may be depicted as a mandala.

A mandala is a spiritual map. The word is derived from the Sanskrit for ‘circle’ but is now used to refer to a sacred diagram typically in the formation of a circle enclosing a square or sometimes triangles. They often depict symmetrically arranged deities and some have a labyrinthine character with entrances or doorways. The passageways of the maze leads to a focal point or centre. It is an ‘imago mundi’ and a symbolic pantheon. In Tibet mandalas are often painted on scroll-like hangings called ‘tankas’ and sometimes they are designed on a flat surface with coloured sands.

Neophytes used a mandala as a meditative aid to concentrate and direct their worship from the peripheral cares of the world to the centre of their spiritual self. The advanced initiate visualises his mandala and journeys to his centre through inward meditation. Those not so well advanced can take advantage of using the labyrinthine walkway around the central stupa of the Shwedagon and achieve much the same result. The design and construction of this edifice is, in reality, a solid mandala. Devotees “who complete the circumambulation may be seen in a prayerful mode praying on the Ground of Victory in the northwest quadrant.

Sacred Time

The weekday on which an individual is born is of immense significance in Burmese cosmology and astrology. It determines his name, his place of worship and influences his choice of marriage partner. The days of the week are aligned with the 8 directions of space, the eight planets and the 8 animals. In order to achieve this alignment, the 7 day week is subdivided into 8 segments with Wednesday being divided into 2 days viz AM and PM.



The Shwedagon as a Mandala,
Burma: A Survival Kit, p.75

The Shwedagon as a Cultural Library

The Shwedagon provides the pilgrim with the opportunity to enter into the collective unconscious of the Burmese race. The candidate subliminally absorbs the vast amount of cosmological, mythological and historical data in the very act of circumambulation. The numerous acts of prayer and meditation in the devotional halls reinforce this experience.

Architecture and Cosmology

The cosmology of Burmese Buddhism is expressed in its architecture. This complex is a model of the Burmese universe with its axis mundi and its omphalos, or cosmic navel, running through the 31 planes of its verticality. The Central Spire with its gleaming sun-gold surface and gem encrusted hti is an imaginative representation of Mount Meru where the gods rule from the heavens in regal splendour. In horizontal plan the Shwedagon is a world mandala with its orientation aligned to the cardinal directions of space and the influence of the 8 planetary spheres. A primitive animism inspires the erection of shrines to the nats while the tree of life motif is revered in the Bodhi Tree.

Mythological Influences of Hinduism, Animism and Buddhism

Burmese mythology has three sources: viz an imported Hinduism, an indigenous animism and a syncretic Buddhism.

Influence of Hinduism on Burmese Mythology

The Hindu influence is largely suppressed but is imported into Theravada Buddhism through the doctrine of the reincarnating Buddha who in his previous existences once lived in India. The cosmology of Burmese Buddhism is a metamorphosed form of the Hindu version. Even the Footprint of the Buddha has representations of Mount Meru, the seven mountain ranges around Mount Meru, the four island continents and the seven great lakes of the Himalayas. The Footprint also depicts other symbols of Hindu origin including such auspicious symbols as the wheel, the conch, the swastika, the naga, the elephant, the peacock, the lion, the tiger, the bull, the lotus and so on.

Influence of Animism on Burmese Mythology

Burmese religion is not pure Buddhism. It incorporates a great deal of indigenous animism into its theological structures. The King of the Nats, Thagyamin, is very well respected in Burmese worship. He is sometimes known as Sakka and as Indra in Hindu mythology. Bo Bo Gyi is venerated as the guardian of the pagoda itself. There are 37 nats in the animistic pantheon and each of these nature spirits is associated with a tale in much the same way that Saints have a tale associated with their life. Soothsayers, seers and miracle workers may be consulted to use their good offices to effect cures and bring good fortune to those in need.

Influence of Buddhism on Burmese Mythology

Burmese mythology is, naturally, predominantly concerned with the lives of the 28 Buddhas and more especially, the life of the 28th Buddha, Siddharta Gautama. Tales from the life of the Buddha are written in The Pali scriptures and interpreted in the Tripitaka or 'Three Baskets' of commentary. These texts can be found in the Shwedagon's Museum and Archives. Other tales of the Buddha are depicted in the carved wooden lacery that decorates the pyatthat, or towers, of the devotional halls and the screen carvings inside the halls. Many of the walls of the tazaungs are decorated with painted frescoes depicting stories from the life of Gautama. There are

far too many statues of the Buddha in the complex to count. These Buddha images depict the Buddha in different positions and with different adornments. The crowned Buddha image represents him as a Cakravartin or Universal Ruler. The most common image is of the Buddha in the cross-legged position with his left hand in his lap and his right hand touching the earth in the gesture of the bhumispara mudra. The spiritual reflexology of the reclining Buddha is in the Hall of the Buddha's Footprint. This Hall is in the northwest quadrant and is to the north of the Hall of Hair-washing in the same quadrant.

Magical Influences of Astrology and Alchemy

The transition from mythology to history is not completely effected in Burmese thought. There is still a place in modern Burmese thought for magical thinking as it is expressed in a pervasive ancient astrology and a medieval left-over alchemy.

Astrology

The astrological determinants of life are given full expression in the Shrine of the Eight Buddhas and Eight planets. However, the Eight Planetary Posts, situated at each of the cardinal and inter-cardinal points are heavily patronised as well.

Alchemy

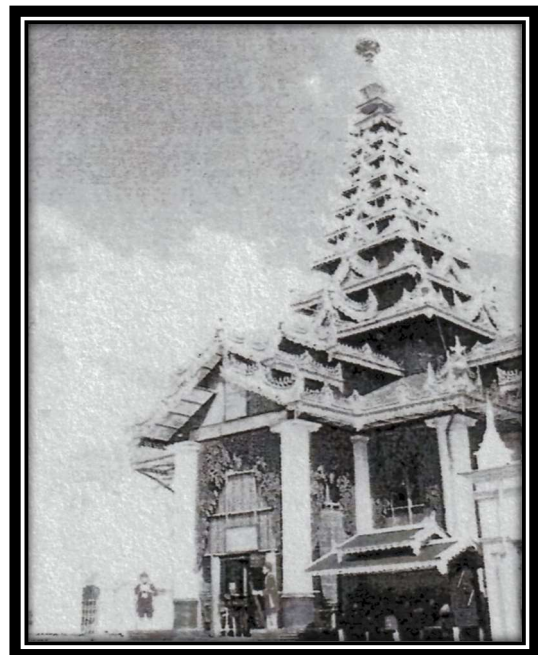
The quasi-magical influences of alchemy are covertly attested in the Hall of Wizards. Bo Bo Aung is venerated as the most powerful of the wizards. Other favoured wizards are the wizard of Iron and the wizard of Incantations or Mantras.

Visible History

The Shwedagon contains a building which is known as the Hall of Shwedagon Inscription 1996. It houses three stone slabs inscribed by Dhammazedi (1472-1492 AD) in Pali, Mon and Burmese. These inscriptions record the efforts of the Kings of Hathawaddy to enlarge the pagoda. An English translation is on the back wall. In a way, these inscriptions bring the Shwedagon into the realm of historicity. The subsequent improvements to the Shwedagon are all matters of historical record and in their variety and style are a pot-pourri of cultural history. As an architectural entity the Shwedagon is a whole cultural library.

HALL OF THE WIZARDS

The wizards are those who practise the occult arts including alchemy, *Shwedagon*, p.47



II

The Shwedagon as a Pagoda

The Name 'Shwedagon'

'Shwedagon' is a composite name: Shwe: the prefix '**shwe**' means 'golden' and forms part of the name of several Burmese temples, eg the Shwezigon Pagoda of Pagan, the Shwemawdaw Pagoda of Pegu and the Shwesandaw of Pagan. **Dagon**: 'Dagon' was the name of the early Mon village where modern Yangon (Rangoon) is situated.

Stupa's and Pagodas

After the final release of the Buddha his relics were divided into eight equal parts and enshrined in eight Great Stupas or reliquary monuments. The sanskrit 'stupa' and the Pali 'thupa' is literally a mound, tumulus or monument erected over sacred relics of the Buddha. The term 'pagoda' refers to a Buddhist sanctuary with a stupa and its enclosure. The shape of a stupa may vary with the country of origin from the simple mound-like 'sanchi', to the Sinhalese 'dagoba', the 'chorten' of Tibet and the multi-roofed pagodas of China and Japan. The fact that there are more than eight stupas throughout the world derived from the action of King Asoka (273-232 BC) in subdividing the relics of one stupa into 84,000 smaller relics.

Relics of the Last Four Buddhas on Singuttara Hill

The Burmese form of Theravada Buddhism gives special veneration to the three Buddhas before the birth of the 28th one - Gautama Siddharta. The last four Buddhas, in order were:

Buddha	Relic
Kakusanda	Water Filter
Konagamana	A Robe
Kassapa	A Staff
Gautama	Eight Hairs

Legendary material tells the story of two brothers, Tapussa and Bhallika, who gave a honey-cake to Gautama who, in gratitude, gifted the two merchants with eight of his hairs. The brothers determined to enshrine these hairs on Singuttara Hill where the Shwedagon now stands. Relics of the three previous Buddhas were already enshrined on this hill.

On the full moon day of Tabaung, a Wednesday, the enshrinement took place. The brothers dug a relic chamber 44 cubits square and 44 cubits deep. This chamber was filled knee-deep with jewels of all kinds and on this 'sea' a jewelled ship was placed. The relics of the first three Buddhas were placed in a tiered receptacle made of rubies, then in a receptacle made of jewels. "The eight sacred hairs were washed in water and placed in a ruby casket before being placed in tiered receptacles like those of the others" (*Shwedagon* by U. Tun Aung Chain and U Thein Hlaing, p.1). These receptacles were then covered by a stone slab and a golden pagoda 44 cubits high was erected on top. The golden pagoda was encased, in turn, by a silver pagoda, a pagoda of gold and copper alloy, an iron pagoda, a marble pagoda and finally a brick pagoda.

This traditional account is painted as a mural on one of the walls of the pagoda.

Legendary Origins

The origins of the Shwedagon are shrouded in legend. It has been established that King Anawrattha of Pagan visited the Dagon during his reign (1057-1090 AD). King Byinnya U of Pegu had the pagoda renovated in 1372 AD and .50 years later King Binnyagyon raised the stupa to a height of 90 metres (295 feet).

Gilding the Stupa

Queen Shinsawbu came to the throne at the age of 59 years and ruled during the period t453-t472 AD. She made extensive improvements to the pagoda and donated her own weight in gold (40 kg or 90 lb) so that the main stupa could be gilded. Her son-in-law and successor, King Dhammazedì, was also a great patron. He donated four times his weight in gold and added to it his wife's weight in gold.

The Story of Three Bells

King Dhammazedì also donated a 30-ton bell to the Buddhist cause and it was placed in the Shwedagon. In 1608 it was plundered by the Portuguese mercenary Philip de Brito y Nicote. However on its way to the smelting works it fell into the Pegu River where it lies to this day.

A second bell was cast in 1779 and it met a similar fate at the hands of British pillagers. This was the 23-ton bronze bell donated by Singu (1776-1781 AD) and known as the Maha Gandha Bell. It to fell into the river while being transported to the smelting works. It was later raised by the Burmese and returned to the Shwedagon.

A third bell was donated by King Tharrawaddy in 1841. This bell weighted 42.5 metric tons and is known as the Maha Tissada. It sits on the north-east side of the enclosure.

Donations and Merit

The Shwedagon is a treasury of gold, precious metals, diamonds and precious stones. This wealth has accumulated over the centuries by generous gifts from rulers, merchants and worshipful devotees of Buddhism. Offerings and gifts given freely and unselfishly earn merit in Buddhist theology. This merit helps to free the individual from the wheel of rebirth.

An Emporium of Gems and Precious Metals

Apart from the value of the real estate and the extensive buildings which comprise the Shwedagon pagoda it has accumulated assets in gold, diamonds, gems and so on. It has been estimated that "the central stupa is plated with 8688 gold slabs each worth \$US400. The tip of the stupa is set with 5,448 diamonds and 2,317 rubies, sapphires and topaz. A huge emerald sits in the middle. All this is mounted on and above a 10 metre high hti (umbrella) built upon seven gold plated bars decorated with 1,065 golden and 420 silver bells" (*Burma - Insight Guides*, p.123).

A One-time British Fortress

The Shwedagon has had a chequered history and at times its treasures have been pillaged. British troops have done so on two occasions. On 11th May 1824 Sir Archibald Cameron used the Shwedagon as his headquarters and again on the 4th April 1852 the British regained occupancy. The third Anglo-Burmese War took place in 1885 and British rule was not surrendered until the 4th January 1948. However, as far as the Shwedagon was concerned, it was restored to Burmese authority in September 1929.

Architecture

Xuanzang's Explanation

The prototype of the typical Burmese stupa was explained by the learned Chinese monk Xuanzang who went on a pilgrimage to India from 629-645 AD.

The Buddha took his three cloths, folded each one into a square and piled them on the earth, beginning with the largest and finishing with the smallest. Then turning over his alms bowl, he placed it on top of them and set up his begging staff upon the whole. 'Thus' he said, 'is a stupa made', and this was the first model.

(*Shwedagon* by U Tun Aung Chain and U Thein Hlaing, p.15)

The Terrace and its Four Entrances

The Shwedagon complex sits on a 5.6-hectare terrace (14 acres) on Singuttara Hill. This hill is three kilometres north of the city centre of Yangon (Rangoon) and is 58 metres (190 feet) above sea level. The terrace is 275 m x 215 m and its main walking area is inlaid with marble pavers.

There are four approaches to the terrace from each of the cardinal directions:

Approach	Number of Steps
The Southern Stairway	104
The Northern Stairway	128
The Eastern Stairway	118
The Western Entrance	Once had 166 steps but now has 4 escalators

The southern entrance is most commonly used and visitors have to run the gauntlet of licensed sellers of offerings, flowers, incense and souvenirs.

Temple Guardians

The southern entrance to the temple is guarded by two menacing monsters, ie a half-lion, half-griffin (a leogyph) and a man eating ogre. It is an interesting exercise to observe the different portrayals of temple guardians in different cultural settings. The leering bhomas of Balinese temples, the nagas of Cambodian origin and the fiery dragons of Chinese temples are dire warnings to visitors that only those with a pure heart may enter on holy ground. At the Shwedagon this also involves removal of foot-wear.

The Central Stupa and the 64 small Stupas

The central stupa dominates the terrace in its central position and its gleaming verticality. It soars to a height of nearly 100 metres (326 feet). At its base it is octagonal in plan and its circumference is 433 metres (1421 feet). On each of its eight sides it has 8 smaller stupas. The four immediately opposite the stairways are the largest of the 64 stupas and they mark the four cardinal directions. The 'corner' stupas are smaller still while the remainder are approximately 9 metres tall.

Sections of the Central Stupa

The Plinth

The central stupa sits on a plinth with its accompanying 64 miniature stupas. This plinth stands 6.4 metres (21 feet) above the level of the numerous tazaungs, devotional halls etc.

The Base

The Rectangular, Octagonal and Circular Terraces or Bands

(i) Rectangular Terraces

Immediately above the plinth are 3 rectangular terraces known as pichayas which raise the spire to 62 feet 4 inches.

(ii) Octagonal Terraces

The 5 octagonal terraces are layered atop the rectangular terraces and they are known as the shithmyaung. They add an additional 25 feet 10 inches to the height.

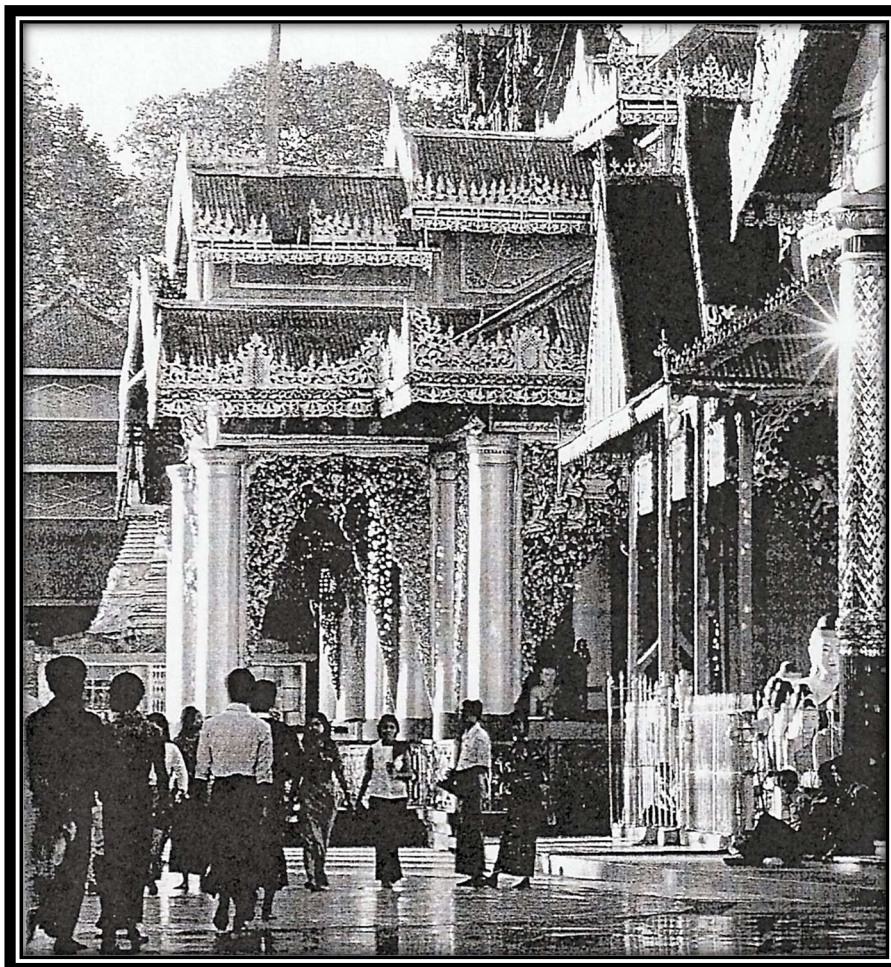
(iii) Circular Bands

Five circular bands in decreasing circumference raise the height of the stupa to 112 feet 4 inches. These are known as kyiwun.

The Dome

The Bell and Alms Bowl

The 'bell' and 'alms bowl' constitute the dome of the stupa which is not hemispherical like the Great Stupa of Sanchi in Madhya Pradesh, about 40 miles from Bhopal. The 'bell' and 'alms bowl' add an additional 45 feet 11 inches to the height of the stupa.



On the Terrace

The Spire

The spire is conical in shape and has 4 distinct elements viz: the protuberant coils, the double lotus throne, the banana bud and the umbrella or hti.

(i) Coils

The Protuberant coils are 7 irregularly spaced bands of decreasing size and are known as the vaulted turban. These bands are known as Hpaung yit and they add an additional 43 feet 4 inches to the stupa.

(ii) The Double Lotus Throne

This feature looks like an upturned lotus on an inverted lotus being separated by a ring of spherical bosses or "glass globes". This feature adds another 28 feet 10 inches to the stupa.

(iii) The Banana Bud

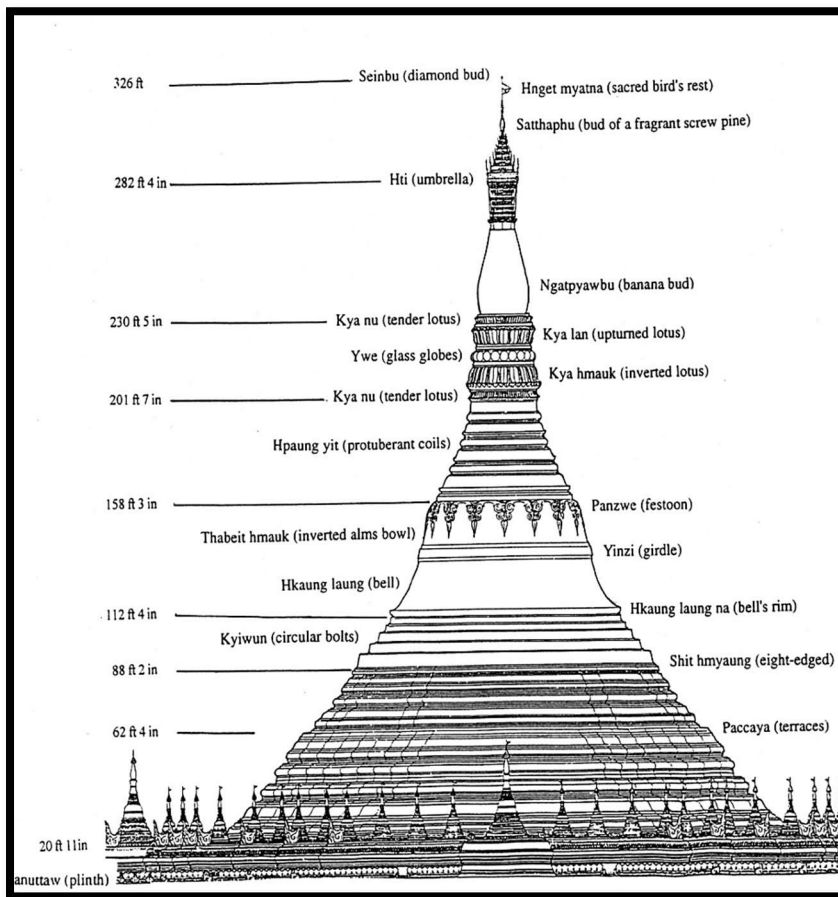
This part of the spire is shaped like an elongated teardrop and is known as Ngatpyawbu or the banana bud. It is 16 metres in height or 52 feet.

(iv) *The Umbrella or Hti*

The spire is crowned by a 10 metre hti or umbrella (33 feet) and above it rises a 4.6 metre (15 foot) Vane capped by a golden orb (sinbu), tipped with a 76-carat diamond. The hti consists of 7 concentric bands which reduce in size as they ascend. They are pyramidal in elevation and their shape symbolises the cosmic Mount Meru. The 7 bands atop each other symbolise the 7 encircling rings of mountain ranges about Mount Meru.



The Central Stupa and the 64 small Stupas



The dimensions of the Shwedagon's central Stupa and minor Stupas

The Naungdawgi Pagoda

This pagoda looks like a small edition of the Shwedagon's central stupa and is the second largest edifice in the pagoda complex. It is also known as the Elder Brother Pagoda in honour of Tapussa who brought the 8 hairs of the Buddha to the Shwedagon. The Naungdawgi Pagoda was the original sacred shrine for the hairs of the Buddha. The Pagoda was supposedly erected by King Okkalapa and later enlarged by King Bayinnaung. The relics of the Buddha were transferred to the central stupa.



The Naungdawgi Pagoda, *Shwedagon*, p.49

III

Shrines, Halls (Tazaungs) and selected Memorials on the Terrace

Circumambulation

Pilgrims and local devotees perform the important rite of circumambulation. In this devotional form of obeisance, the towering central stupa is regarded as the cosmic Mount Meru and the devotee becomes the encircling sun orbiting the cosmic axis in a sun-wise or clockwise direction. This spiritual journey starts in the east (sunrise) and passes through each of the spiritual vectors where the south is symbolic of the zenith, the west of the sunset and the north the nadir. This sun journey corresponds to the four main events in the life of the Buddha:

- the nativity (east)
- the enlightenment (south)
- the first sermon or enlightenment (south)
- the final release or Parinibbana (north)

Thus the rite of circumambulation is a miniaturised re-enactment of cosmic events and provides for a ritual identification with the life of the Buddha.

The devotional Halls at the Four Cardinal Points of the Compass

There are a great number of Buddha statues on the terrace. The most important ones are in the devotional halls at the four cardinal points. These four devotional halls (Aryongan tazaungs) are dedicated to the last four incarnations of the Buddha:

Devotional Hall	Location
Kakusandha (25 th)	East
Konagamma (26 th)	South
Kassapa (27 th)	West
Gautama (28 th)	North

The Pagoda of the Eight Buddhas and Eight Planets

In Burmese Theravada Buddhism there have been 28 Buddhas who have achieved enlightenment. Eight of these twenty-eight are depicted in niches of a pagoda in the northwest corner of the ambulatory path. Between the niches are figures of animals and birds, which symbolise the 'eight' planets and the 'eight' days of the week. The eight Buddhas are the 23rd (NE), the 25th (E), the 4th (SE), the 5th (S), the 22nd (SW), the 13th (W), the 26th and Gautama (N), ie the 28th.

The Planetary Posts

There are 12 planetary posts on the terrace near the plinth. There are two similar posts at the four cardinal points on either side of the devotional halls and one each at the four intercardinal points. They are painted vermilion and devotees make offerings of water or flowers or perform acts of propitiation. The symbols of the animals appear at the base of their respective posts.

Selected Places of Interest

Visitors to the Shwedagon need to be accompanied by an experienced guide in order to absorb the basic layout and importance of the shrines and functions of the many halls and meeting places. An explanatory handbook and an architectural plan is also a helpful aid. Most handbooks and guides list the buildings on the platform in the order of circumambulation. This orderly approach is recommended for the serious student but for the casual tourist it provides too much information. The following buildings provide a sample from each of the quadrants, but they are not given in order of importance.



The Maha Bodhi Temple (centre).

The dark building to the right is the Strand Market Two-Pice Hall.

Northeastern Quadrant

The Maha Bodhi Temple

The Maha Bodhi Temple draws attention to itself because of its unusual design which is not typically Burmese. It is in the northeastern quadrant and is a replica of the Mahabodhi Temple at Bodh Gaya where Gautama gained enlightenment.

Hall of the Wizards

The Hall of the Wizards is opposite the Hall of the Buddha's Footprint. Two wizard figures stand at the entrance, viz: the Wizard of Iron (ie alchemy) on the left, and the Wizard of Incantations or Mantras to the right. Above these figures in the pediment are some magic squares. In Burmese culture magic is very much alive and of all the Wizards the beneficent Bo Bo Aung reigns supreme.

Not all the images in this hall are of wizards. The hall also has images of Hindu deities who have been assimilated into Buddhism. These include the Hindu deity Brahma, the god of creation and his consort, Sarasvati, the goddess of knowledge.

The Southeastern Quadrant

The U Nyo Pavilion

This graceful pavilion was built in 1930 through the generosity of Dr U Nyo. Inside the hall the ceiling and the columns have elegant mosaic work. A set of 17 carved wooden panels illustrate events in the life of Gautama Buddha. This tastefully designed building is also testimony to the importance attached to merit in Buddhist thought. Benefaction is a means to gaining merit thus reducing the number of reincarnations.

The Bodhi Tree (Tree of Wisdom)

In the southeast corner of the platform is the principal Bodhi Tree (*Ficus Religiosa*) of the Shwedagon. There are others elsewhere. The Bodhi Tree is a symbol of enlightenment and this particular tree has been grown from a seed or sapling from the tree at Bodhi Gaya in India. It was under this original tree that Gautama received his enlightenment.

The Southwestern Quadrant

Shrine of Bowdaw Thagya and Bo Bo Gyi

This shrine is in the south western quadrant and these two important nature spirits are represented by statues encased in glass. Bowdaw Thagya is King of the nats and is on the left side. Bo Bo Gyi is the Guardian Nat of the Shwedagon and is to the right. A visit to this shrine provides an introduction to Burmese animism.

The Rakhine Hall

The Rakhine Hall is in the southwestern quadrant. Its portico is supported by four Corinthian pillars although its roof is typically Burmese with intricately carved wood filagreeing in each roofing level. Inside the hall is the much loved Vessantara Jataka and the Suvannasama Jataka. A jataka is a birth narrative. These birth narratives are depicted in the beautifully carved wooden screens.

The Northwestern Quadrant

The Hall of Great Prosperity

The Hall of Great Prosperity houses the largest seated image of the Buddha at the Shwedagon. It is 9 metres or 30 feet tall. The hall is quite large and is used for lectures and ceremonies for special occasions such as the Full Moon Day of Tazaungnon (October-November). The name of this Tazaung testifies to the Asian-mind's preoccupation with good luck or good fortune.

The Hall of Singu's Bell or the Maha Gandha Bell

This hall is also in the northwest quadrant. This bell was donated by King Singu (1776-1781 AD) and it weighs 25 tons and is 2.1 metres or 7 feet high. It is 2 metres wide at the mouth and is 30 cm or 12 inches thick. The bell has an inscription which records the prophecy that Singu would become the future Buddha.

The Hall of Singu's Bell was built by U Shwe Ni in 1861 and rebuilt in 1920 by his son-in-law and his family. The hall contains fine screen carvings and paintings both of which illustrate scenes from the life of the Buddha. The Hall of Tharyarwaddy's Bell is also of great interest and it is larger and heavier than Singu's bell. It is to be found in the northeastern quadrant.



Hall of Singu's Bell (left), and Hall of Prosperity (right)



Singu's Bell

Concluding Remarks

It is not possible to do justice to the majesty and might of the Shwedagon in any book, let alone in a chapter of this size. The Shwedagon is much more than a towering golden stupa and a collection of devotional shrines and halls sitting atop a hill. It is an experience of a lifetime in which the pilgrim is able to participate mythologically into the spiritual centre of the universe. In the process, the pilgrim not only transcends time and space, but unites himself with the highest aspirations of mankind. Through meditation and devotion, the outer temple and the inner temple become one.

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THE AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

**An Attempt by a Secular Culture
to Acknowledge Its Spiritual Roots**



The Australian War Memorial, Canberra, A.C.T.

*'The Lana Down Under' has a Temple without a King
and a religion without a Priest.
It enshrines the nobility of the common man.*

THE AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

I

An Attempt by A Culture To Acknowledge Its Spiritual Roots

Australia as a Multi-Cultural, Pluralistic and Secular Society

Australia and World Religions

Temples in Australia

A Museum and a Memorial

The War Memorial as a Funerary Temple

Echoes of Greece with a Touch of Byzantine

The War Memorial as a Mediterranean Building

Temple Characteristics of the War Memorial

- Two Guardians
- Mausoleum
- History of Battles
- Holy of Holies
- Venue for Rituals and Ceremonies
- Oriented and Aligned

II

The Commemorative Area

1. The Hall of Memory

The Mosaic

The Cupola

- Deciphering the Mosaic
- The Centre
- The Circumference
- Geomantic Principle
- Birth of a National Consciousness

The Cornice

The Four Pillars

The Three Stained Glass Windows

The Mosaics Beneath the Windows

The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier

2. The Cloisters and the Roll of Honour

3. The Courtyard

III

Kings and Priests

Politics and Religion

Relationships Between Kings and Priests

The Sovereignty of Australia

A Temple Without a King or Priest

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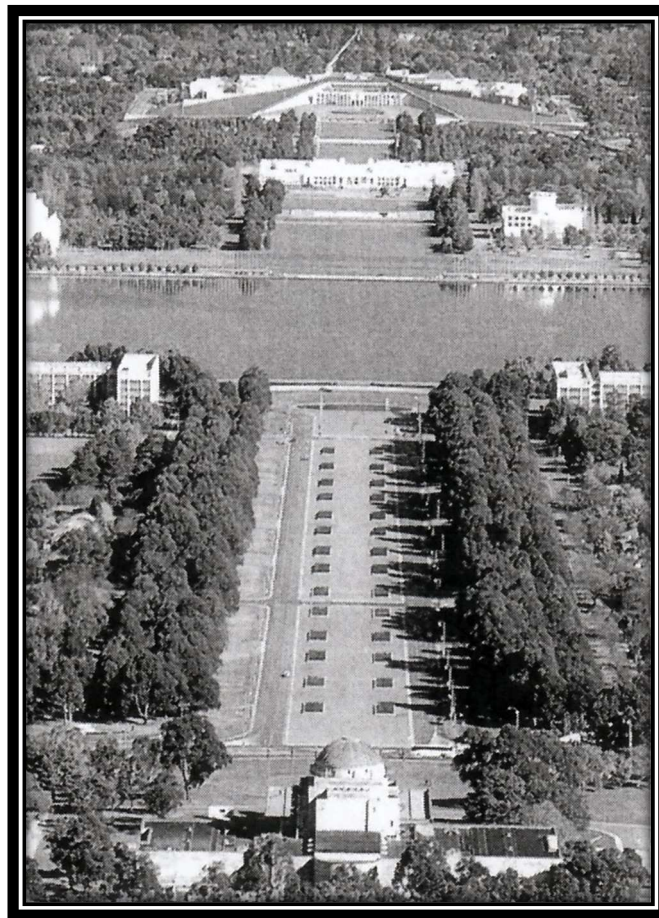
The Australian War Memorial

An Attempt by a Secular Culture to Acknowledge Its Spiritual Roots

I

Australia as a Multi-Cultural, Pluralistic and Secular Society

The Australian Aborigines have maintained a deeply spiritual relationship to their land even though there was little uniformity in language or beliefs among their hundreds of tribal groups (see Chapter 2). With the advent of British settlers, Australia developed into a collection of isolated colonial offspring. While British institutions were adopted, in the main the emerging self-governing colonies never adopted the established religion of the mother country. When the colonies federated in 1901 there was little doubt that Church and State would be separated. During the first one hundred years as a Commonwealth, Australia moved away from its white-Australia policy to a more broadly based pluralistic and secular society.



The War Memorial lies on the Axis which bisects the Parliamentary Triangle and links the Memorial and Parliament House

Australia and World Religions

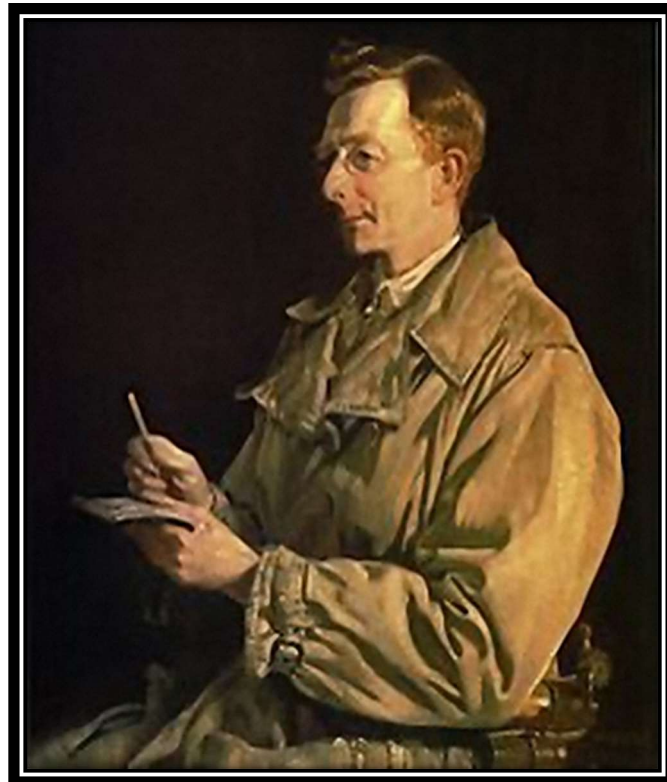
Historical research will, no doubt, reveal that Australia has always had representatives of world religions. However, it was not until the 1970's that these religions gained visibility. Until that time Australia considered itself secular but Christian! Today, that ambivalence has given way to a recognition that Australia is now host to visible numbers from Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Jewry, Mormonism and Bahá'ism.

Temples in Australia

Apart from Islam, each of the world religions mentioned above, have erected temples of some eminence in Australia. The Nan Tien Buddhist temple outside Wollongong is probably the best known. The Bahai Temple at Mona Vale was one of the earliest built in Australia. Not so well known are the Mormon Temples located in Sydney, Adelaide and Brisbane. It is not generally known that the Latter-Day Saints Church (Mormon) is a temple building community as well as a church building one. In addition, there are a number of buildings known as temples which do not have specific temple functions.

A Museum and a Memorial

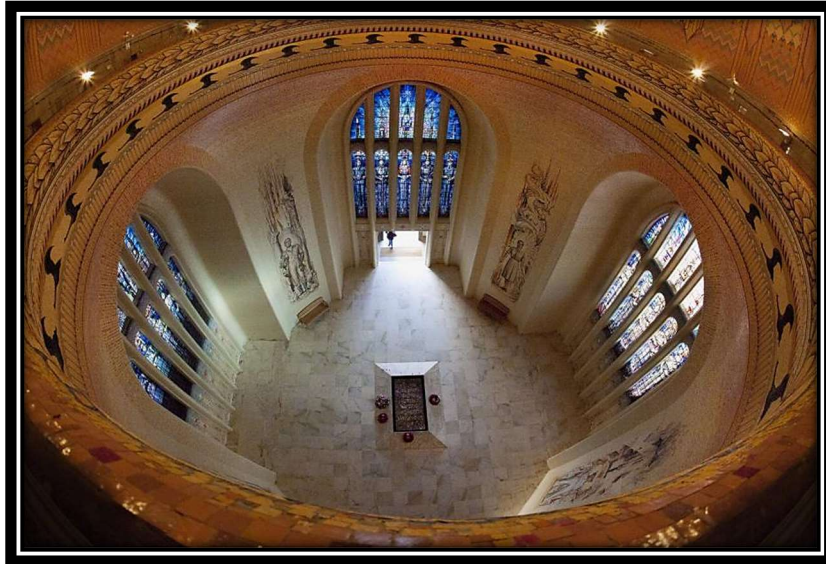
The impulse to build a memorial sprang from two ideas of C.E.W. Bean, the official War Correspondent and War Historian of World War I. He wanted a War Museum to house the artefacts and relics of the Australian ex-servicemen. More importantly, he was conscious of the impracticality of parents and relatives of the 61,500 war dead visiting the graves and memorials in far away Europe and other remote burial places. Even if the relatives were able to afford and make the trip overseas there was no focal memorial to commemorate the 18,000 Australians who had no gravesite to honour them.



George Lambert
C.E.W. Bean

The War Memorial as a Funerary Temple

Most Australians would not recognise the Australian War Memorial as a temple in the accepted sense. Yet, in a strange way, it has become one. This has developed more by evolution than intention.



The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier



On the 11th November 1993, an unknown soldier, whose remains had been exhumed from a cemetery in France was re-interred under the floor of the Hall of Memory. His Tomb thus became an official War grave. It represented the gravesite of the 18,000 Australians who were never given a burial during World War I.

In another sense, The Unknown Soldier is the archetypal representative of all Australians whose service in the interest of their country, has passed without recognition. The Australian War Memorial is a funerary temple, not of Kings or Emperors, but of the ordinary man. With the interment of the Unknown Soldier, Australia gave expression to its ennoblement of the common man.

Echoes of Greece with a Touch of Byzantine

A competition was held to design a suitable memorial. Only two satisfactory entries were received and the two successful architects, John Crust and Emil Sodersteen, were asked to collaborate on a joint project. They agreed on a Byzantium-style of a building with an arresting dome-shaped Hall of Memory dominating the skyline.

At the foot of Mount Ainslie, in a dry-grassy sheep paddock, this touch of 'exotica' would give cause for comment. Monumental buildings of this nature, in an Australian landscape, had no home-grown architectural tradition on which to draw.

With its cloisters, its Latin Cross and its dome there is an expectation that its spiritual symbolism would be based on the Christian tradition. According to Guy Freeland, the Hall of Memory, however, reflects a civil religion rather than a personal religion.

“Clearly the religious pluralism of Australia, the absence of an established church, and a secular Constitution could all be seen as predisposing factors for the development of civil religion.”

Canberra Cosmos by Guy Freeland, p.76

The War Memorial is a Mediterranean Building

The echoes of Delphi are enumerated by Freeland:

The Sacred Way	Anzac Parade
The Temenos	The ceremonial parade ground and grass Amphitheatre
The Altar	The Stone of Remembrance
The Sacred Pool	The Pool of Reflection
The Commemorative Records	The Roll of Honour
The Spoils of War	The war relics and artefacts
The Horns of Consecration	The pylons framing the Hall of Memory and Mt Ainslie
The Sacred Tree	The Lone Pine
The Temple Proper	The Commemorative Area
The Cella or Sanctuary	The Hall of Memory
The Cult Image	
The Sacred Mount	Mount Ainslie

ibid, p.76

The Foundation Stone was laid on Anzac Day 1919 but economic circumstances delayed the building of the new monument. The Memorial was opened on Anzac Day 1941.

Temple Characteristics of the War Memorial

The War Memorial was not built as a temple. It has nevertheless, assumed and acquired several characteristics found in temples.

- **Two Guardians**

It has two Guardians standing watch at the entrance to the Memorial. In esoteric thought these two are known as the Lesser and Greater Guardian and they appear at the thresholds of various temples in different guises. The two lions which stand as guardians in the War Memorial are two carved lions in stone.



The Lion Guardians at AWM Entrance

Each of the lions holds a shield emblazoned with a double-barred cross. These statues were gifted to the Australian Government in 1936 by the Burgomaster of Ypres, Belgium. At the third battle of Ypres in 1917, 6,000 Australian troops were killed, and 32,000 were wounded or reported missing. The two lions were damaged.

In a tribute to the 6,000 Australians who died at Ypres these treasured possessions now act as Guardians to the Australian 'Menin Gateway'.

- **Mausoleum**

The Bayon, Angkor Wat and Prambanam each held the bodies of their respective builders. In these instances the interred body was a King. In Australia the War Memorial now contains the body of a representative of the common man.

- **History of Battles**

Most temples depict on their Walls a history of the Wars fought by the King and his predecessors. The War Memorial has its brass plates which are Rolls of Honour listing the names of the dead from theatres of War. These theatres include the Sudan, China, the Boer War in South Africa and various localities of World War I and World War II. Later theatres including Korea, Malaysia, Indonesia, Vietnam and Peacekeeping theatres have been added to keep the record current. The Memorial, itself, records the history of these engagements with dioramas, videos, paintings, artefacts, sculptures, displays etc.

- **Holy of Holies**

Temples have their holy of holies. The War Memorial is no different in this respect. Its commemorative area features a Hall of Memory which is a sacred place (see Part II below).

- **Venue for Rituals and Ceremonies**

Temples are places where annual ceremonies are enacted, pilgrimages held and offerings made. The War Memorial certainly qualifies on those accounts.

- **Oriented and Aligned**

Temples are built with particular attention given to their alignment with the sun, moon and stars, to their orientation to the cardinal directions of space and their location along a convenient traffic route. While the siting of the War Memorial in Canberra at the foot of Mount Ainslie does not fit all of these criteria, its siting at the national capital of Australia and its alignment on Canberra's central axis endows it with a significance of great meaning. This siting represented a great personal achievement for Charles Bean.

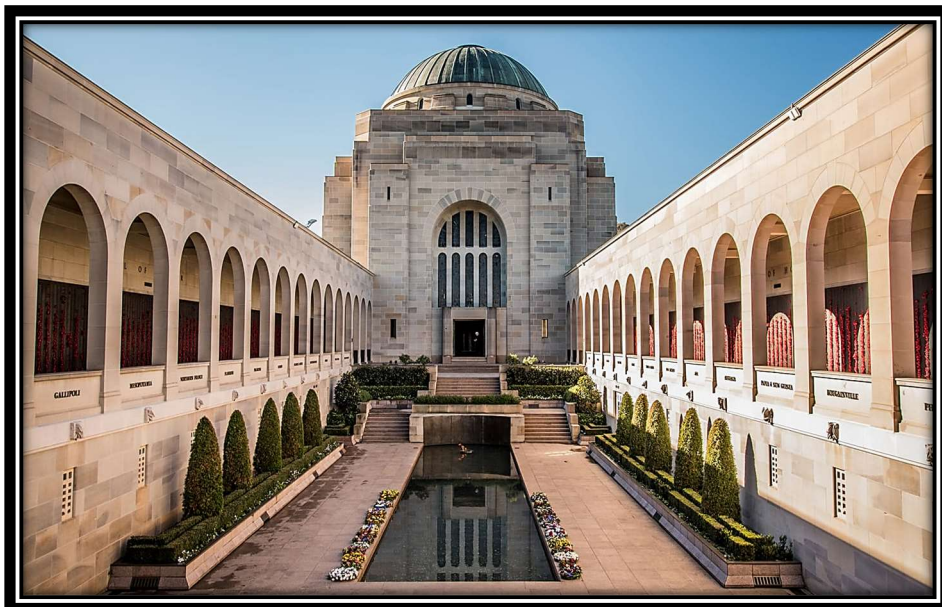
II THE COMMEMORATIVE AREA

The Commemorative Area is the heart of the Memorial. It contains:

1. **The Hall of Memory** which now contains the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.
2. **The Cloisters** which are lined with bronze panels bearing the Roll of Honour.
3. **The Courtyard** which contains the Pool of Reflection and the Eternal Flame.

1. The Hall of Memory

The Hall of Memory is the focal point of the National War Memorial. The overall design of the building is in the Byzantine style and the side arched cloisters provide arcades which lead to a massive eighty feet high dome. This dome dominates the silhouette of the building. Inside, it provides an enclosing space which dwarfs the viewer and inspires reverential awe. The acoustical properties of the hall magnify the slightest sound. Silence Within is at a premium.



The Hall of Memory flanked by the Western (L) and Eastern (R) Cloisters with their Rolls of Honour

Charles Bean (1879-1968) controlled the theological concepts which governed the overall design of the War Memorial. It was not to be a building which glorified war nor was it to promote triumphalism or personal glory. The Hall of Memory was to be a sacred shrine to the fallen. It was not to be a Christian Chapel, though there was to be nothing in its new mythology to be offensive to Christian ideals.

The interior of the Hall of Memory was designed by a gifted mythologist. Napier Waller (1893-1972) had training as an artist. He lost his right arm of World War I and taught himself to draw and paint with his left hand. He exhibited wartime drawings and water colours throughout Australian cities and also developed skills in linocuts. In 1929-1930 he studied stained-glass making in England and mosaics in Italy. He had a particular interest in legendary and allegorical subjects. Napier Waller's windows were installed in 1950 but his mosaic was not completed until 1958.

The Hall contains the following features:

- The Mosaic
- The Cupola and the Cornice
- The Four Pillars
- The Three Stained Glass Windows and the Mosaic Panels beneath them
- The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

The Mosaic

The walls and the giant cupola are unified by a continuous mosaic. This mosaic consists of more than six million tesserae which were imported from Italy. The tesserae were laid by a team of war widows under the direction of an Italian craftsman. The mosaic was designed by M. Napier Waller and was not completed until 1958.

The four angles of the Hall depict four figures in the uniforms of the fighting services of the 1939-45 War. These figures are: a sailor, a soldier, an airman and a woman who is a representative of all servicewomen. These four large figures have a background of design symbols. These symbols heighten the visual presentation. For example, the soldier is depicted with a half-raised left arm, gesturing heavenward. In the encircling light he glimpses the bird-like spirits of his dead comrades. He has gratitude in his heart because he has been spared to return to his loved ones. He makes a silent pledge, never to forget his comrades and to build a better world.

The Cupola

The Cupola rises 26 metres above the Tomb of the Unknown Australian Soldier. Its magnificent mosaic provides a stellar canopy of blazing light that suggests its radiance shines from the spiritual centre of creation.

Guy Freeland believes that Charles Bean gave expression to the controlling ideas incorporated by Napier Waller into the design of this encrypted mosaic. Indeed, Freeland writes of Bean as a great theologian of an Anzac Cult which regards the Hall of Memory as its Holy of Holies. The mosaic, on this reckoning, contains the text of the new Gospel.

The decipherment of the hidden text must take into account not only the presence of a number of symbols but must understand that it is a mandala which takes its viewer into the core of the universe and into the core of his being!

Deciphering the Mosaic

The Cupola has a Centre and a Circumference:

The Centre

The centre blazes with incandescent light. This brightness makes it difficult to see that it also contains a vortex or spiral and *one of the 5 stars of the constellation Crux Australis viz. Alpha Crucis (Acrux).*

The other 4 stars of the Southern Cross: Gamma Crucis, Beta Crucis, Delta Crucis and Epsilon Crucis can be found just outside the inner circle.

The Vortex or Spiral is also difficult to see. It is a symbol of cosmogenesis viz. a galactic spiral. Our own Sun lies some 30,000 light years from the centre of our spiral galaxy known as the Milky Way.

Superimposed on (say) α Acrux, is the *7-pointed Federation Star*. Thus, the centre has 3 elements:

- α Acrux
- The Spiral
- The Federation Star.

Collectively, this trinity is known as the *Spiritual Sun*.

Circumference

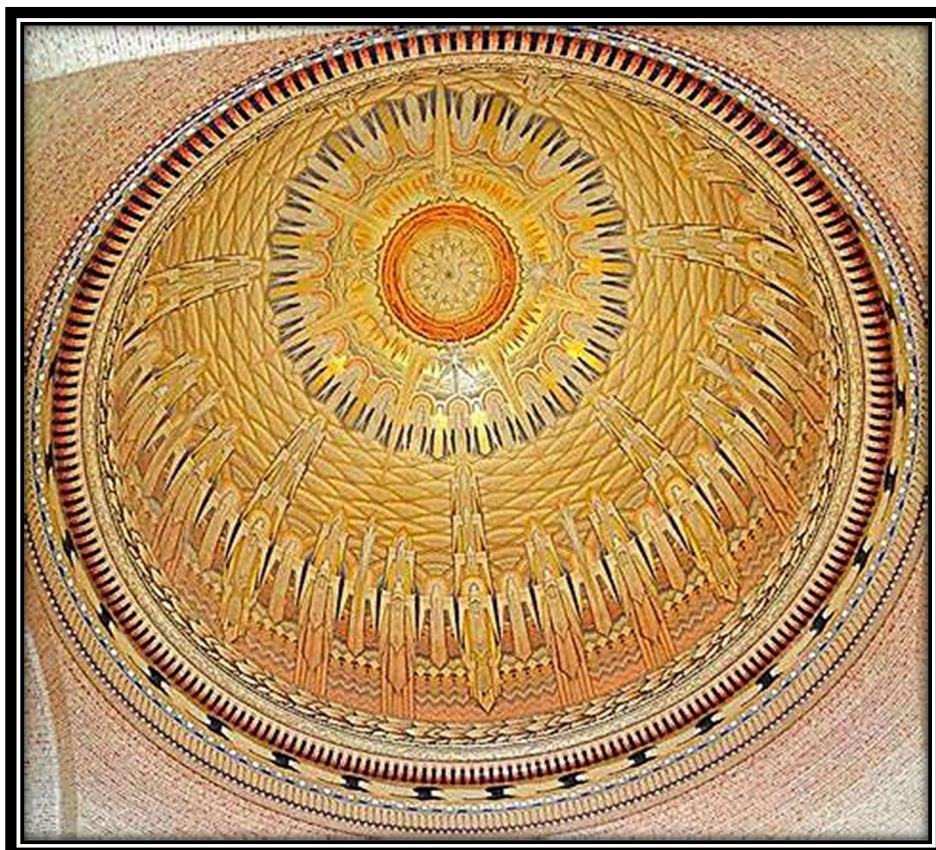
At the circumference of the wattle wreath there are 7 pairs of hands. They are found midway between the 7 rays of the Spiritual Sun. These open hands are releasing tiers of winged sarcophagi. They symbolise the souls of the dead ascending to the cosmic centre point.

The ASCENDING WINGED SARCOPHAGI and the DESCENDING RAYS OF THE FEDERATION STAR stand as dyads. They are in a state of spiritual symbiosis and energise each other. The flow of spiritual energy is both radial and spheroidal, both inwards and outwards.

Geomantic Principle

The number 7 features repeatedly in the design:

- The seven rays descending from the Federation Star of the Spiritual Centre.
- The seven columns rising from the seven pairs of open hands.
- The large circle is subdivided into multiples of seven. Apart from this initial segmentation into fourteen (2×7) there are thirty-five (5×7) sarcophagi around the Spiritual Sun and forty-two (6×7) sarcophagi around the lower rim of the cupola.



Birth of a National Consciousness

Charles Bean and Napier Waller understood that the legislative establishment of a new nation did not automatically constitute the birth of a national consciousness. Such a consciousness could only be forged in the crucible of a shared destiny. It required a triumph over adversity and a sacrificial testing. The Anzac Legend had these necessary elements. It required the genius of Napier Waller to clothe this legend into the language of myth.

The Cornice

The circular cornice incorporates such Australian motifs as wattle leaves, black swans, and an unbroken golden chain symbolising continuity. (A.W.M. Leaflet).

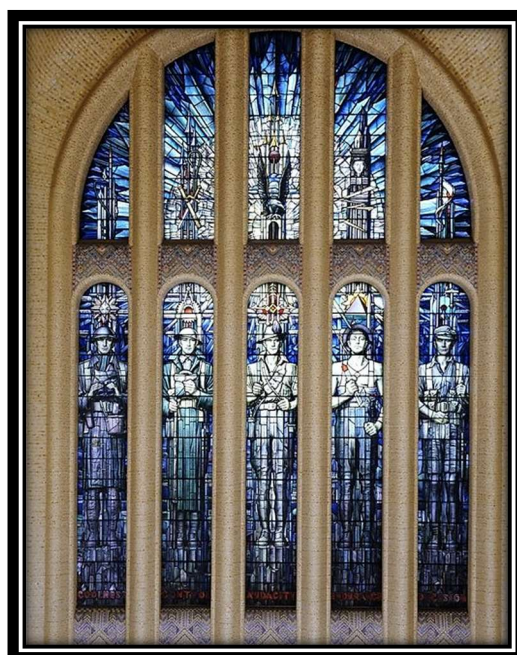
The Four Pillars

The four pillars reiterate the vertical lines of the four mullions in each of the three stained glass windows. From a design point of view, they are meant to add to the unity of the overall design. However, from a viewer's point of view, the four pillars are not as successful as the eighteen-foot sculpture that was once in the apse. The four pillars symbolise water, earth, fire and air. These 'elements' were anciently thought to be the basic constituents of the natural world. Most visitors think that Janet Laurence's sculptures are too abstract. The pillars are made of different materials:

Element	Material	Qualities Symbolised
WATER	Glass	Change, Transfiguration of Souls
EARTH	Stone	Permanence, Endurance, Death
FIRE	Metal	Energy, Passion, Patriotism, Bravery
AIR	Wood	Disembodied spirits, souls of the dead

The Three Stained Glass Windows

The three stained glass windows with the vertical mullions and horizontal transoms were also designed by Napier Waller. Each of these windows is subdivided into five panels. These fifteen panels depict a different service figure and symbols associated with their service designation. The portraits also designate ideal character attributes of the different service roles.



Napier Waller's East Window

Summary

South Window

Service Figure

Aircraftsman
Signaller
Nurse
Trench-mortar man
Naval Captain

Personal Attribute

Resource
Candour
Devotion
Curiosity
Independence

West Window

Service Figure

Lewis Gunner
Naval Gunner
Infantryman
Airman
Artilleryman

Social Attribute

Comradeship
Ancestry
Patriotism
Chivalry
Loyalty

East Window

Service Figure

Infantry Officer
Infantryman
Light Horseman
Wounded Soldier
Australian Soldier

Fighting Attribute

Coolness
Control
Audacity
Endurance
Decision

Each of the fifteen figures is portrayed in the uniforms of the A.I.F. and R.A.N. in the 1914-18 war. *'The prevailing deep blue toning of the windows produces a quiet atmosphere and contrasts with the light-toned mosaic of the walls.'* (A.W.M. book by Peter Stanley).

The Mosaics Beneath the Windows

The mosaics beneath each of the three stained glass Windows have panels which are patterned in combinations of blue and red ensigns of the crosses of St. George, St. Andrew and St. Patrick.

The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier

On the 11th November 1993 an unknown soldier, whose remains had been exhumed from a cemetery in France, was re-interred under the floor of the Hall of Memory. His Tomb is an official war grave. It represents the grave site of the 18,000 Australians who have no grave site as a result of World War I battles.



2. THE CLOISTERS AND THE ROLL OF HONOUR

There are two cloisters which provide access to the Hall of Memory. They are the Western and Eastern Cloisters. These arcaded Walkways are lined with bronze panels bearing the Roll of Honour. This contains the names of all those Australians who died in, or as a result of, war. The names are listed without distinction of rank or decoration but in the units in which they served. The Western Cloister begins its listing with the names of the dead of the colonial wars in the Sudan, in China and in the war in South Africa. The names of the 60,000 dead of the 1914-18 World War follow. The Eastern Cloister continues the sombre record into the 1939-45 World War and the subsequent conflicts including Korea, Malaysia and Vietnam. A total of 100,000 names are now listed.



The Roll of Honour and Cloisters

3. THE COURTYARD

The Courtyard contains the Pool of Reflection with a formal garden framing the edges. The garden contains Rosemary, the plant of remembrance since Roman times. The Eternal Flame surmounts the Pool of Reflection. It is a constant reminder to all Australians to remember the sacrifices of the war dead, LEST WE FORGET.

III

Kings and Priests

Politics and Religion

The fundamental task of every culture is to define its own position in relation to sovereignty. This means, ultimately, that a culture must make provision for the resolution of tension between political authority and religious authority. In Judaic-based cultures this dual allegiance is imaged in the twin pillars of Jachin and Boaz. In more recent political theory it is understood as the struggle between Church and State. The tension between the two arises because Kings finance and build temples and sometimes they want to have more authority than the priests who design and administer them. Occasionally, Priests want to be Kings.

Relationships Between Kings and Priests

Logically, there are a number of possibilities between the claims to authority of Kings and Priests.

1. The KING is greater than the Priest.
2. The King is less than the PRIEST.
3. The KING and the PRIEST have equal authority.

However, over millennia a number of other possible relationships have been tried:

4. The King and the Priest are the one person; OR
5. There is no King and no Priest.

The Sovereignty of Australia

Australia's position on sovereignty is a peculiar variant of No. 5 above. Australia has an Absentee King/Queen and no Priest. The Absentee King/ Queen resides in England and is the Defender of the Established Church of England in Great Britain. This church is also known as the Anglican Church in Australia. The English Queen, however, is not the Defender of an Established Church of Australia. Australia has an Absentee King/Queen.

A Temple Without a King or Priest

The most important annual service celebrated at the Australian War Memorial is held on the 25th April each year. This service commemorates Australia's most humiliating loss in its history of warfare. The commemoration of a defeat rather than a victory is a characteristic Australian gesture.

On Anzac Day the absentee sovereign's representative, the Governor-General, is usually in attendance. Prayers and sacred hymns are led by military chaplains on a rotational basis.

The 'land down under' not only has its National Parliament encased in a hill over which citizens may walk, it has a Temple without a King and a religion without a Priest!

It enshrines the nobility of the common man!



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