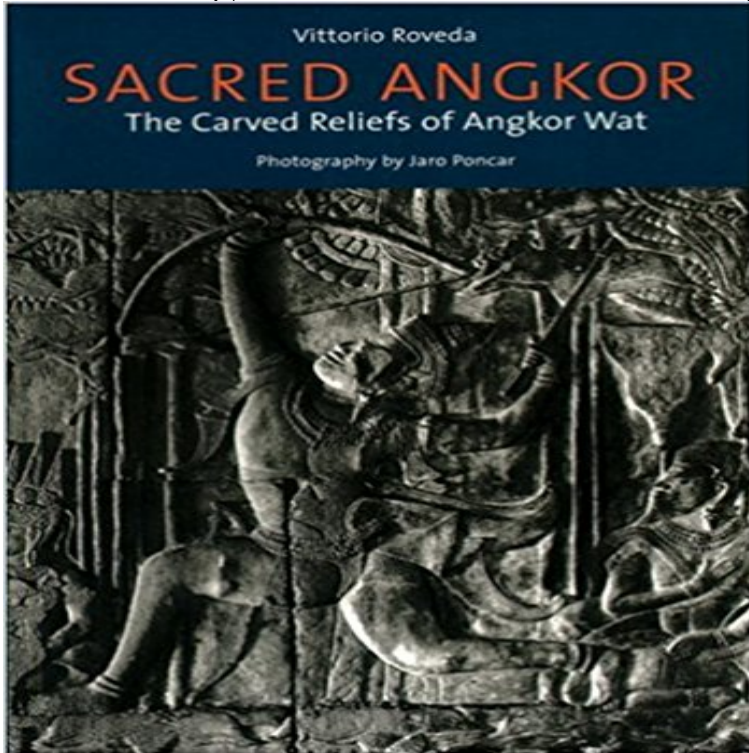


Sacred Angkor: Carved Reliefs Of Angkor Wat



The Khmer empire, which at its height covered the whole of present-day Cambodia and most of Thailand, flourished over 500 years. At its heart was Angkor Wat, the largest religious monument in the world, built during the reign of the Khmer king Suryavarman II, in the first half of the twelfth century. The temple was dedicated to Vishnu, and its magnificent architecture mirrored in microcosm the entire Hindu universe. To enhance its sacred nature, over 600 meters of bas-reliefs were carved on the walls of the third enclosure illustrating battles and processions, Heavens and Hells and the creation myth. Following the great success of Vittorio Roveda's *Khmer Mythology*, which unraveled the stories and significance of the relief carvings of numerous Khmer, the author returns to Angkor Wat to examine the magnificent carvings of the long galleries, the corner pavilions, pediments, lintels, as well as the lesser-known sculpted tapestry reliefs. The gradual reading of the reliefs as pages of an ancient book unravel the religious and secular symbolism with which Angkor Wat was imbued by the Khmers in the XII century. Aided by the photography of Jaroslav Poncar, Vittorio Roveda reveals the iconographic intricacies of this magnificent temple as never before.

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