

YOGATM MAGAZINE

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REJOICE, RENEW, GROW

**TEMPLE
WISDOM**

**NAOMI
GROSSMAN**
TRANSFORMATION THROUGH
yoga

**yoga
&
Islam**

**AGEING
GRACEFULLY**

**yoga
&
INTEROCEPTION**

SPIRITUAL TEACHINGS
SHIVAPURI BABA



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Essraa Nawar

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Photographer: Hatem Bassam Hatem

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TEMPLE WISDOM LESSONS FROM ANCIENT TEMPLE TRADITIONS

Words: Shola Arewa

Photos: Shola Arewa &
Talitha Khachik Photography



Ancient Temples are sacred spaces found all over the world. Build to honour the Gods and Goddesses of old. Whether situated along the Nile River of Egypt, the vibrant Ganges of India, or other distant lands, Temples stand to support our spiritual and cultural needs. They offer personal and collective solace in challenging times. Temples remind us of our connection to the Divine and our own inner Divinity and greatness. They are centres of learning, spiritual practice and community. Temple Wisdom is magical and timeless. It transcends generations, because the secrets of old continue to enrich our lives to this very day.

Transformation

Visiting Temples in both India and Egypt has had an immensely transformative effect on me. They have the power to transport you from the secular to the sacred, from the ordinary to the awe-inspiring. The vast scale of some of the Ancient Temples is enough to take your breath away. The architecture, the sculptures found in and around Temples. The exact placement and precision, often aligning with the stars to create a powerful energy, all in reverence to an unseen force, greater than us. The creative force that brings everything into being. Known by different names and qualities, yet sharing one purpose. Temples exist to cultivate and share wisdom; they are centres of pilgrimage and healing. Temples of old were also centres of ritual and study, housing great libraries and schools for spiritual and personal development. Magical places where energy was elevated and souls saved. They were hubs where communities gathered for support and festivities. Temples played a crucial role in the everyday life of people and continue to do so in some cultures.

My heart gently opened four decades ago, while quietly sitting in a Temple in Rishikesh on the banks of the Ganges. I sat listening to a group of women

chanting harmoniously, as tears rolled down from my eyes, a wall of pain melted in my heart. I felt the sweetness of the Divine. I received the answer to a question I had been asking. Yes! There is more to life. I became a life-long devotee of truth and seeker of spiritual wisdom. A magical and transformative experience, that led me to become a Yoga Teacher in India, a practitioner of sacred ritual and trainer of Psycho-spiritual teachings that heal. Currently, I'm developing a system of healing based on Ancient Egyptian Temple Wisdom, called *Shekem Maat*. As I work on it, I am brought to the magic and magnificence of Temples both in Egypt and India, the similarities in teachings and the importance of the Goddess, the Divine Feminine Energy.

The Divine Feminine

Temples were built to honour the Goddess and Divine Feminine Energy, the Energy of the mother of all creation. In Aswan the Temple at Philae is dedicated to the Goddess

Auset, who the Greeks later called Isis. Auset is the Divine mother, a wife, sister, healer. A worker of miracles and magic. She heals her husband Asar (Osiris), restoring his life force and becomes the first woman to have an immaculate conception, giving birth to Heru, (Horus). Auset teaches us how to love and nurture. Her wisdom is profound, she plays an important role in the cycle of life, death, and rebirth, encouraging us to embrace life changes and the potential for renewal and rejuvenation. Reverence to Auset in ancient times highlights the significance of feminine power and leadership. A wise Goddess with a crucial role who continues to be loved and revered. Philae Temple was the last place the Ancient Egyptian rituals and practices were observed after the rise of Christianity. It remains a sacred site and powerful place of healing until today.

Like the Nile in India, the Ganges River sustains millions of people,



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providing water for drinking, agriculture, and daily activities. Ma Ganga, is the name given to the Ganges River and the Goddess that flows through her. Gangotri Temple, in Uttarkashi, is a much loved pilgrimage site visited by devotees of the Goddess Ganga. The Temple is dedicated to Ma Ganga, who is seen as the source and force of the sacred river. Ganga embodies compassion and forgiveness. She cleanses and purifies souls. She can grant moksha, liberation from the cycle of birth and death. She epitomises purity, a quality bestowed on her by Shiva, which she shares with others. Ganga embodies Shakti, powerful female energy. She is a wife with three husbands, Shiva, Vishnu and Brahma. Her son Kumara was born to avenge evil on earth, much like Heru, who also had the task of fighting evil.

These powerful Goddesses embody Divine Feminine Energy. They sit at the intersection of birth, life and death. Fertility, nurturing, and the cyclical essence of life are their wisdom teachings. We learn to appreciate the unity of spirituality, nature, and our human experience. They inspire deep respect for the feminine, creating balance and removing negativity. Temples are places where we have the opportunity to sit and reflect on the significance of the Goddess and cultivate Shakti. We too can embody the powerful energy of compassion, healing, leadership, unity and gain a deeper spiritual understanding.

City of Temples

Life could not exist on earth without the generous heat and bright light of the sun. When the sun went down on the horizon, our Ancestors didn't take for granted that it would return the following day. Hence, they were in reverence daily when the sun rose and greeted them. Great Temple complexes were created in gratitude to the sun's powerful energy. Everything was made possible by the mighty rays of the sun.



The Temples of Karnak in Egypt and Konark in India are both mighty feats of architecture and design dedicated to sun gods.

Karnak is thought to be the largest religious building ever built. A colossal Temple to the Sun God Amun Ra, with its famous hypostyle hall consisting of 134 gigantic papyrus shaped columns. The Temple is called the City of Temples, because it houses a collection of great Temples built by numerous Pharaohs. It's home to the Goddess Mut, wife of Amun Ra, and their son Khonsu. God of the moon. I was fortunate enough to visit the newly opened Khonsu Temple last year, I took time to meditate alone in the Temple, where the energy was so palpable and vibration so strong. Sekmet, the lion headed Goddess and her husband Ptah can also be found there. I really felt like I was walking in the footsteps of the Gods and Goddesses of old.

Konark is another great Temple, this time in India built to honour Surya, the great Sun God. Konark Temple, is known for twenty-four magnificently carved wheels. The Temple is designed as the great chariot of the Sun God. Seven horses representing seven days of the week, twelve pairs of wheels represent twelve months of the year and twelve zodiac signs. The total of twenty-four wheels signifies the number of hours in a day, creating an enormous sundial. The wheels are also seen as the wheel of life. The perpetual cycle of creation, preservation and destruction.

Temples are places where we get the opportunity to marvel, not just at the incredible sculptures and their meaning, but to re-connect with the natural world and the energies that fuel our life force and keep us alive, as the ancients did. So next time you're doing a round of sun salutations, remember you are using your body temple in honour of the great golden disk in the sky that maintains all life.



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This, for me, is Temple Wisdom, the resonance between the Divine, the natural world and we humans. Temples remind us of our greatness and offer an opportunity for cosmic alignment. Thousands of people flock to Stonehenge at summer solstice when the sun is aligned with the stone circle. One of the earliest Temples precisely aligned with the sun.

Your physical body is also seen as a great Temple. The Temple at Luxor is laid out according to the proportions of the human body. The feet at the doorway, leading through several gateways and chambers to the head which is the shrine room and holy of holies. This is the Journey we take through the chakras from the root to

the crown, it is our spiritual evolution, as we increase in awareness towards liberation and God realisation or enlightenment.

Some Temples are dedicated to the most potent and creative force we have, the energy responsible for our very existence. Sexual energy, was honoured for the life it gives, much like the sun. Khajuraho Temple in Madhya Pradesh, is known for its erotic sculptures and the dance of Shiva and Shakti. It also depicts in sculpture the spiritual journey and principles of dharma, *kama*, *artha* and *moksha*, these are principles for living a fulfilled life, that integrates, ethical living, material success, personal happiness, and spiritual liberation.

Temple Wisdom and Yoga Practice

Yoga practice emerged from the Temple and there is much that supports our practice today. Yoga comes from the philosophy and teachings of the ancients. It comes from being aligned with the universe, and the natural world. The sun, moon and stars. The elements of air, fire, water and earth, the trees and the animals. The nature that surrounds us is our true essential nature. The word for the Gods of Ancient Egypt is *Neter* meaning nature. Let me share three

ways Temple Wisdom can elevate your spiritual practice today.

Reverence: is to cultivate deep respect and awe, it recognises that which is greater than us, yet flows through, around and permeates every cell of your body. Yoga is union with this great force, called *atman* in India or *shekem* in Egypt. Your body is a Divine Temple. When you arrive on your yoga mat, cultivate a sense of reverence.

Beauty: create beauty and harmony around you. Light a candle, use incense or essential oils, whichever works best for you. Arrange flowers and crystals, maybe images that uplift, or mandalas for focus. Create a sacred space that amplifies your connection to the Divine.

Invocation: is to call on the Divine, to give thanks and praise and ask for guidance or a blessing. Auset (Isis) used invocation to heal her husband. You may have a question you want answered. Take a moment to be still and turn within, you could offer a prayer, and call on wisdom from a Deity you resonate with or whose qualities you want to enhance in yourself.

Allow your yoga practice to become a profound ritual that elevates your consciousness and invokes the magical. With reverence, natural beauty and connection to the Divine we feel less alone, we are happier, and we radiate love in the world. All qualities that enrich your body, mind and spirit.



Caroline Shola Arewa, known as "The Energy Doctor," helps you elevate energy and up-level your life. A leading figure in spirituality and wellness for over three decades. Shola has transformed countless lives internationally as a Psychologist, Speaker, and Author of five bestselling books, including *'Opening to Spirit and Energy 4 Life'*. Shola's latest programme, *'Shekem Maat Healing System'*, draws on profound Kemetic/Egyptian healing arts.

Shola also coaches and mentors' yoga teachers and wellness professionals, who are ready to take a Quantum Leap in life and business. Shola will help you design and develop your highest contribution with an abundance of love and laughter.

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