

FENG SHUI CONSULTANTS NEW ZEALAND

"Feng Shui - Maximizing Your Natural Potential"™

NEWSLETTER

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My recent work trip to Thailand was topped off by a short vacation in Cambodia; my first trip to that tiny kingdom. Whilst I have spent considerable time in Thailand over the years, I had never ventured across the border into war scarred Cambodia and was especially keen to visit the ancient temple sites of the ancient kingdom of Angkor. These beautiful sites reach back over a thousand years. However, as so often is the case with travel to the tropics from more temperate climes; I had left Auckland in mid winter temperatures of 8C degrees only to arrive in a Bangkok sweltering under daily temperatures of 38/39C degrees and very, very high levels of humidity. Stifling! All very well. And, "What do you expect Danny? you might ask? But when working on feng shui in such heat, I am often required to work outside, (Helloooo? that's **Outside!**), in direct sunlight, and with the heavy concrete bases that are so integral to the kinds of buildings I am looking at, especially in these heavily industrialised zones, the ambient temperatures can easily be several degrees higher. This therefore, means working in temperatures that are often in the mid 40's! Would you like to join me? Nevertheless, working in a country like Thailand is always fascinating for me, and once again, I was intrigued by the immediacy of the effects of feng shui in such settings.

One of the more interestingly visible, and so easily identifiable feng shui factors, was a large double Drawn Bow from the Chao Phraya River as it flowed south of Ayutthaya, near Bang Pho. Here, not only are there two large convex bends to the river as it splits; known in feng shui parlance as a *Drawn Bows*, but from the generative side of the river, at least one *Jade Belt*. This was evident in real terms by the very impressive and fancy traditional Thai teak house built right on the river's edge. These are very expensive to build these days! In fact, there was another, not quite so visible, a little further south along the river. Note the red tiles.



You can see the bend in the river at this point which forms the auspicious Jade Belt from the left side of the river.



The continuation of the Jade Belt along the Chao Phraya River, south of Ayutthaya and north of Bangkok.

From the Google Earth images below you can see the same feng shui factor at work at the guest house I chose to stay at in Siem Reap, Cambodia. Here too is a very distinct *Jade Belt*. Needless to say, they have constantly positive rates of occupancy!



Above: Jade Belt wrapping guest house from the Siem Reap River



Guest house is blue roofed building to left of river. Note broad grassed expanse which serves as auspicious Ming Tang or open space to front.

Siem Reap is a little delightful town with genuinely friendly people. I guess one of the things that strikes the visitor, is that in spite of, or perhaps despite their recent

and tragic past, the Khmer people demonstrate an incredible level of resilience and enterprise in getting themselves back on their feet. Anyone planning a trip really should read up not only on the ancient history but also the more modern. I strongly recommend William Shawcross's classic *Sideshow, Kissinger, Nixon and the destruction of Cambodia*, and Christopher Hitchen's damming *The trial of Henry Kissinger*. Both give invaluable and thought provoking insights to the highly illegal American intrusions across the Cambodian border during the Vietnam conflict of the 60's and 70's.

Quote:

Life is like a camera:
Focus on what's important
Capture the good times
Develop from the negatives
and.... if things don't work out
Take another shot!
Unknown

Book Review:

Heretic: Why Islam needs a Reformation now.

By Ayaan Hirsi Ali

This is a fascinating read, one I simply could not put down. Written by a Somali émigré; raised at first in war-torn Somalia. With her teacher father being subjected to increasing harassment by government authorities for his very mildly liberal views, he fled across the border, initially to neighbouring Ethiopia, then eventually Kenya. Her mother's dour disapproval of Ethiopian strands of Islam didn't allow her to follow with the children. Instead she took the children to Saudi Arabia, where they faced persistent and deepening discrimination for being black, African and female. Eventually her mother, growing more alarmed at Saudi prejudice, took the family and joined her husband in Kenya. Up to this time, Ayaan was an obedient and devoted Muslim girl. However, apparently settled in Kenya, her parents began insisting she marry an older man; one very much not of her choosing, and move to Canada with him. She rebelled. Supposedly en-route to her wedding, she absconded on stopover in Germany and fled to the Netherlands, where she immediately applied for and was granted asylum. Awe struck by the care and liberality of the Dutch and their political and social systems, but alone and terrified of the terrible retribution that she knew was sure now to befall her, she began questioning everything she had ever felt she knew, including her own strong Islamic convictions. What follows is a mesmerising story of the results of a first class modern Western education on this highly intelligent and articulate young woman and her personal journey to awakening. What she has to say therefore, about her self-discoveries regarding fundamental Islam and by extension, Islam itself, are well worth reading. The thrust of what follows is that Ayaan herself begins finally to understand the devastating role that religions have in fact played throughout history, and in particular the three so-called desert religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. She eventually sets out on a long and fascinating journey away from the religious life in which she was raised. Led by a growing sense of social awareness, she begins to question the complicity of ordinary Muslims who have

long maintained a wall of silence and evasiveness when confronted with the appalling acts of violence now committed world-wide in the name of Islam. Arguing that in a modern Catch 22 that many sincere Muslim people today find themselves, they cannot hide behind the fallacies of Islam being a religion of peace, or that it has been hi-jacked by thugs. Indeed she castigates Western leaders like Obama and David Cameron for perpetuating this particular line of neoliberal spin; pointing out that everything that is done today in the name of Islam is unequivocally based on the Quran. *"It simply will not do for Muslims to claim that their religion has been 'hijacked' by extremists. The killers of IS (Islamic State) and Boko Haram cite the same religious texts that every other Muslim in the world considers sacrosanct."* Ayaan Hirsi Ali pulls no punches and dares to point to the massive elephant in the room that few others seem dare point to. The gist of her remaining arguments is the proposal that the only realistic way out of the growing spiral of international violence is for there to be a modern day reformation within Islam as there was in the 1500's in Christendom. She makes coherent and compelling arguments for her case; writing in clear and articulate terms that anyone interested in what's happening today from the growing world-wide threat of militant Islam will want to read, and think seriously about. A compelling and important writer, indeed a polemicist; hopefully we can expect to hear much more of, and from this brave and intelligent woman.

Quote:

"Tolerance of intolerance is cowardice."
Ayaan Hirsi Ali



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