

CHULALONGKORN UNIVERSITY
Southeast Asian Studies Program

JAYAVARMAN IV:
King Usurper?

Submitted to

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Chapter I - Introduction

In early April 2007, I went to Koh Ker for a study tour with my professors and friends and spent one day there. When arrived at Koh Ker, I was very impressed to see a huge city that had been built in merely 20 years. I wondered why King Jayavarman IV is considered by many scholars to be a Usurper while the city was huge comparing to Isanapura (Sambo Prey Kok) during Chenla period. During that time, unfortunately, I did not have motivation to find out more about this topic because I focused on a more recent history of Cambodia, the Khmer Rouge regime, which later became my specialty. After getting some recommended reading materials from Dr. Sunait Chutntaranond in Southeast Asian Civilization Class, I read *George Coedes's* work about *The Indianized States of Southeast Asia*, Michael Vickery's book about *History of Cambodia*, Claude Jacques's writing about *The Khmer Empire*, Michael D. Coe's *Angkor and the Khmer Civilization*, Ian Mabbett and David Chandler's *The Khmer* and other books about Angkorean history. My interest in King Jayavarman IV increased dramatically, especially, the speculation about King's Jayavarman IV's succession.

Before I talk more about my topic, I would like to explain the definition of term “Usurper”. According to Oxford dictionary, *usurp* means ‘make somebody position and/or power without having the right to do this.’ (2008: 489). Similarly, Dictionary.com gives a definition that ‘to seize and hold (a position, office, power, etc.) by force or without legal right’¹. From this definition, I can conclude that “*usurper*” means a person who hold position without having legal right or right to get it. Therefore, in this paper, I put a question whether or not Jayavarman IV had the right to claim his position as a king. I will look at three important elements in order to analyze and find possible answer for the topic. The three elements are Relocation the Capital, Rule of Succession and Construction at Koh Ker including arts and architectures.

Coedes wrote that, in 921, Jayavarman IV left the City of Yasodharapura (Angkor) to reign at Chok Gargyar (Koh Ker) taking Devaraja with him. It seems likely that it was a usurpation... (1968: 114). He might only prove this usurpation by looking at the relocation of capital or genealogy. During early Angkor era, the capital had been already moved from

¹ Dictionary.com, available at: <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/usurp>, (accessed 18/08/2012)

Hariharalaya to Yasodharapura. However, the only strange thing that King Jayavarman IV moving the capital to an area far from the previous capital -- Chok Gargyar (Koh Ker) is located about 90 kilometers from Yasodharapura (Angkor). I will look at the reasons why one Angkorean King, Yasovarman, moved the capital to another location which I believe would be helpful in understand the nature of relocation from Yasodharapura to Chok Gargyar by Jayavarman IV.

In addition, king succession during Angkorean period was also the good reason to look at in order to find if there was any rule for succession and what extent that royal family could claim their legitimacy to be the kings. As C. Jacques has reminded us, only 8 out of 26 rulers of Angkor were sons or brothers of their predecessors (cited by Mabbett and Chandler, 1996: 161). I will describe more detail about how each king got a throne in order to make conclusion about the rule of succession since we had not seen any written rule during Angkor about succession.

Finally, I will look at the huge construction of Koh Ker that would have been supported by his followers and people. In those constructions, the main temples for his legitimacy, Baray and others temples will be also explained. Moreover, Koh Ker style is recognized as one of architectural style during Angkor. The unique architectural style of Koh Ker and the huge construction might show the prosperity and high civilization of Koh Ker during Angkorian era.

Chapter II-Relocation of the Capital

In this chapter, I want to find out the nature of capital relocation during early Angkor by looking at the two capital relocation during early Angkor era from Hariharalaya to Yasodharapura and from Yasodharapura to Chok Gargyar (Koh Ker). As some scholars regarded Jayavarman IV a usurper; they probably looked at the capital relocation which was a little bit far from the previous capital. I will look at the reasons why one Angkorean King, Yasovarman, moved the capital to another location which I believe would be helpful in understand the nature of relocation from Yasodharapura to Chok Gargyar by Jayavarman IV.

a. Capital Relocation during Early Angkor

The first capital city during Angkor was called Hariharalaya. Angkor Empire has been believed to be founded by King Jayavarman II in 802 at Kulen Mountain. He descended from the mountain and built the city at Hariharalaya (Rolous). Hariharalaya was the capital city of Khmer Empire for nearly a century during the first king of Angkor, Jayavarman II, his son Jayvarman III and followed by Indravarman I. ‘The mini-city of Hariharalaya is almost entirely a creation of Indravarman’s decade-long reign, and established norms that were to guide architects and urban planners throughout the classic Angkor period.’ (Coe, 2003: 101). It was perhaps the glory time during Indravarman who built many temples and a giant lake, Baray, known as Indratataka. Yet, the capital was abandoned during Yasovarman I to Yasodharapura (Bakheng Mountain as central point). Before he moved the capital , Yasovarman I finished some works left by his father in Hariharalaya such as completely enclosing the Indratataka Baray, and constructing a large ancestral temple, Lolei, on an island (Mebon) in the middle of Indratataka (Ibid: 103). He made a decision to move the capital city from Hariharalaya to Yasodharapura where the capital city was there almost the entire Angkorian period.

There are a number of reasons for the relocation of the capital from Hariharalaya to Yasodharapura as were mentioned by Michael de Coe ‘there were probably several compelling reasons for this move – economic, sociopolitical, military, and probably religious. it was also probably Angkor region is strategically located about half way between the hills of Kulen and the margins of the Great Lake, on the right bank of the Siemreap River.’ (2003: 103). One

important thing that Yasovarman chose Angkor as a city mentioned by Coe is that he could use Phnom Bakheng, a 67 meters high hill with ovoid outline and an artificially flattened top, to be the center and to build his state temple, making this a new Mount Meru. Phnom Bakheng was probably the best reason for the relocation. Mabbett and Chandler also claim that ‘the capital site chosen by Yasovarman enabled him to have natural hill, the Phnom Bakheng, at its center. Symbolically it was the mountain of the gods, Mount Meru at the center of the cosmos, and the kingdom was the center of the world.’ (1995: 97). Coedes questioned the relocation of the Capital by King Yasovarman ‘what reasons provoked this relocation of the capital and determined the choice of the new location?’ (1968: 112). Coedes believed that the numbers of monuments had been built during the preceding reigns at Hariharalaya and Phnom Bakheng was the best place for the King choosing for the linga Yasodharesvara. By comparing to other hill around Coedes wrote, ‘now, of the three hills he had to choose from in the vicinity of hariharalaya, Phnom Bok was too high and awkward to mark the center of a city, and Phnom Krom was too close to the Great Lake. There remained Phnom Bakheng.’ (1968: 112-113). Yasovarman wanted to show his ability by construction new capital with huge construction project. Therefore, the reasons of moving this city might probably because of construction matter that enable the king to be more powerful or recognized by people.

b. Moving to Koh Ker

Some historians believed that moving the city from Yasodharapura (Angkor) to Chok Gargyar (Koh Ker) was one of the reasons of usurpation while few historians oppose this idea. Coedes did not mention much in his book *The Indianized States of Southeast Asia*. By citing from his previous publication and Finot publication about Sdok Kak Thom inscription, he wrote that ‘(in 921, Jayavarman IV) left the city of Yasodharapura to reign at Ch’ok Gargyar, taking the Devaraja with him.’ It was the reason that he assumed Jayavarman IV a usurper. The main question “why Jayavarman IV moved the capital from Yasodharapura to Chok Gargyar?”

Vickery wrote the same question mentioned above ‘why did he (Jayavarman IV) move to Koh Ker?’ (2001: 81). He then mentioned that there is no possible answer to this question, but he took Claude Jacques as a possible answer. ‘Claude Jacques believes that the prince of the royal family each had a district or province as his own, and that Koh Ker was the home province of

Jayavarman IV, where he decided to make his capital.’ (Ibid: 81). In his book entitled *Angkor*, Claude Jacques told us a short paragraph about the move of Jayavarman IV from Angkor to Koh Ker. While Jayavarman IV was not young in 921, ‘he was sufficiently powerful and rich to have already built the fine brick complex of Prasat Thom at Koh Ker, and he had doubtlessly already started the development of his capital at that date and perhaps a few years earlier.’ (Jacques, 1999: 67). Because Jayavarman had already done some constructions that was also a reason for him to keep Koh Ker as a capital city in 928 and it might probably he wanted to proceed with his ambitious projects. Another reason that Jacques illustrated in his book is that Koh Ker is a place where a lot of stones were available for large construction. He wrote, ‘the most striking feature of the art of Koh Ker is the huge size of the blocks of stone used for both the building the building work and the sculpture. There was plenty of sandstone available nearby, so there was obviously not the same problem of transportation as at Angkor. Also, it is possible that Jayavarman IV wanted to show that a “provincial” king was capable of accomplishing projects that were as impressive as, if not more so, those of Angkor.’ (Ibid: 69). It is clear, by Jacques, that the reason behind the move of Koh Ker was not considered as usurpation.

In summary, Jayavarman IV’s city relocation might not be related to usurpation for a few reasons. Firstly, if he waited until 928, he was not a usurper; secondly, he probably found that Koh Ker was a right place for large construction; finally, he had built some constructions before he officially succeeded his throne; so, he needed to continue his plan rather than moving back to Angkor. Through these reasons, I believe that in term of moving the capital, we cannot judge that Jayavarman IV was a usurper. In contrast, he was probably a great king who tried to find a place for his great construction plan which is the similar reason to the relocation from Hariharalaya to Yasodharapura by Yasovarman who probably also put the construction matter as his priority.



Figure 1: The Cambodian map showing Angkor city in Siem Reap province and Koh Ker which approximately 90 kilometer northeast of Angkor.

Source: Koh Ker Map, available at : <http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2012/02/28/arts/statue-map.html> (accessed 18/07/2012)

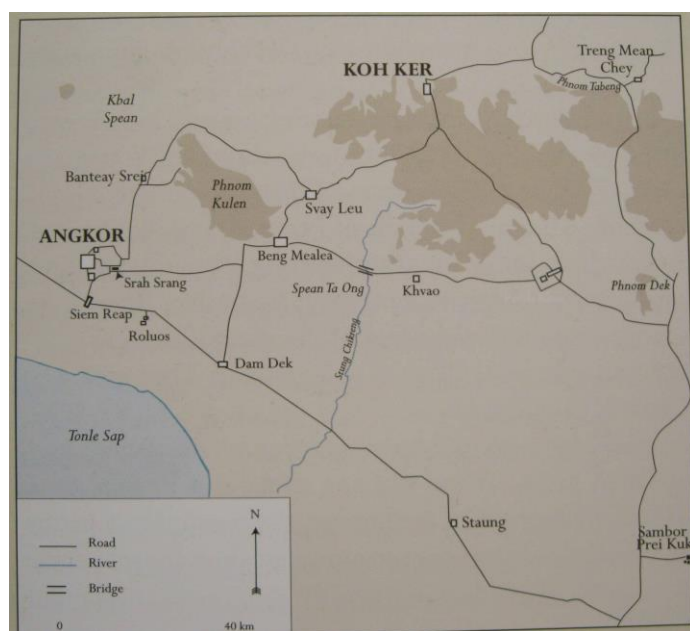


Figure 2: Map showing the road network linking Angkor with Koh Ker.

Source: Jacques, Claude and Lafond, Philippe: *The Khmer Empire: Cities and Sanctuaries from the 5th to the 13th Century*, River Book, Bangkok, 2007, p. 108

Chapter III - Angkorian Successions and Genealogy

King succession during Angkorian period was also the good reason to look at in order to find if there was any rule for succession and what extent that royal family could claim their legitimacy to be the kings. I will describe more detail how each king got a throne in order to make conclusion about the rule of succession since we had not seen any written rule during Angkor about succession. Moreover, I will look at the Jayavarman IV genealogy comparing to way of succession during Angkorian period in order to draw conclusion whether or not he could claim his legitimacy to be the king.

a. Blurry Rule of Succession during Angkor

Even Angkorian period about nearly five centuries was regarded as a high civilized period in Southeast Asian history, rule of succession was still blurry. Succession during Angkor period could not be identified as a common rule. Michael Vickery highlighted the problem of those European historians who studied Angkorean history. ‘The first European historians who studied Angkor considered that, like European, legitimate succession to the throne should be from father to eldest son, and they were surprised that so many of the Angkor kings were not sons of the preceding kings.’ (Vickery, 2001: 79). To be clearer about this blurry succession Mabbett and Chandler cited Jacques’s sentence ‘only eight out of twenty-six rulers of Angkor were sons or brother of their predecessors’ (1995: 161). What was really the way of succession during Angkor?

In order to understand more about the way of succession, the following sentences are the examples of way of succession during Angkor. Because Jayavarman II was the first king during Angkor, I will not go to discuss about his succession. I start with King Jayavarman III who got his throne from his father, Jayavarman II while Indravarman I appeared to have been linked to Jayavarman II’s line, though his genealogical claims do not make the connection explicit. For more example the first half of Angkor, up to Suryavarman I, the kings who succeeded their fathers were only Jayavarman III, son of Jayavarman II, (mentioned above); Yashovarman (son of Indravarman); the two son of Yasovarman (Harsavarman I and Isanavarman II) and the son of

Jayavarman IV (Harsavarman II who had very short reigns and was not very important); and Jayavarman V (son of Rajendrarvarman) (Vickery, 2001: 79). Moreover, most great kings during the first half of Angkor were not succeeded from their fathers. As Vickery continue in his book that ‘among the important kings, Indravarman, Jayavrman IV, and Rajendrarvarman followed kings who were not their fathers; and later both of Jayaviravarman and Suryavarman I, who fought for the throne, were outside the main royal family’.

If we look at King Jayavarman VII who was probably the greatest king during Angkorean period, he had to spend years fighting against Chams in order to make his way to dominance and inaugurated his reign as the Khmer emperor. George Coedes explained the detail genealogy about King Jayavarman VII in his “Indianized States of Southeast Asian”. In one paragraph, he wrote, ‘through his father, Dharanindravarman II, he was a second cousin of Suryavarman II, and through his mother, Chudamani, daughter of Harshavarman III, he was descendant of the kings of the dynasty that had reigned over the country and that was related, on the female side, to the ancient king of pre-Angkorian Cambodia. He was born at the latest in 1125, during the reign of Suryavarman II, and he married Princess Jayarajadevi, who seem to have had great influence over him.’ (1968: 169). It makes a clear conclusion that even the great king was not succeeded from his father.

In addition, the succession could be happened in both matrilineal and patrilineal. ‘Neither patrilineal nor matrilineal descent was a dominating principle of legitimacy. Some kings of Angkor (but not all) claimed links to Jayavarman II’ (Mabbett and Chandler, 1995: 160). Anyway, Claude Jacques and Philippe Lafond claimed a bit different to Mabbett and Chandler by showing that many kings were succeeded the throne by female line (matrilineal). They raised the case that ‘the kings had a considerable number of wives, supplemented by even greater numbers of concubines. This could not make the successions any easier, but there was always senior queen who, for unknown reasons, was known as the *mahishi*. Succession via the monarch’s wife is not always in evidence, but the genealogies engraved in the Sanskrit poems, apparently meant to justify the kings’ right to the throne, invoke their maternal lineage more often than that of their father’ (Jacques and Lafond, 2007: 24). They took the example of King Yasovarman I who play scant attention to his paternal lineage. He had to make his throne by fighting which his father intended to deny him. The same can be said of the records which mention Suryavarman I and Jayavarman VII. It is significant too that Suryavarman I had already

invoked the lineage of his first-rank wife Viralakshmi, a descendent of the wife of Yasovarman I, and that the same lineage would later be invoked by her sons, Udayadityavarman II and Harshavarman III. It can be said that there is no rule whether maternal lineage or paternal lineage can claim their legitimacy to get the throne during Angkor.

b. King Jayavarman IV succession

Since Angkorian kings claimed their legitimate succession in many different ways, it is hard to distinguish the legal and illegal succession and at the same way is hard to distinguish whether there were usurpers or not. Usurpation seems to be far from the reality in this case. In term of legitimate succession and royal genealogy, could King Jayavarman IV claim his legitimacy? It is the question that historian had been asked and hardly got the clear answer. In this section, I will raise different opinion about the succession of king Jayavarman IV.

As I have raised some general pictures of the ways that Angkorian kings succeeding the throne, Jayavarman IV was not very much different from those kings. George Coedes who is probably a leading historian studying Angkor history wrote shortly about Jayavarman IV's genealogy. He mentioned that Jayavarman IV was a maternal uncle of king Isanavarman II who apparently was reigning in 925. He also wrote that 'Jayavarman IV – whose posthumous name was Paramasiavapada – married a sister of Yasovarman, Jayadevi, by whom he had a son who succeeded him in 941 under the name Harshavarman II.' (1968: 114-115). Through this genealogy King Jayavarman IV more or less part of royal family and who more or less could claim his legitimacy.

In addition to Coedes, Claude Jacques and Phillippe Lafond wrote about Jayavarman IV not in detail. The same information is that Jayavarman IV had married a younger sister of King Yasovarman I (and therefore a daughter of Indravarman I, who had certainly died before or in 889). While Coedes mentioned the name of Jayavarman IV's wife was Jayadevi, Jacques and Lafond claimed that 'the queen, whose name remains unknown, was not necessarily a full sister of Yashovarman, but through her mother she was of high lineage, thus enabling Jayavarman IV to assert a legitimate right to the supreme throne of the Khmer.' (Jacques and Lafond, 2007: 107-

109). Even though they did not know name of Jayavarman IV's wife but they interpret that the legitimate right can also be through his wife who had high lineage to royal family.

Moreover, Jayavarman IV's genealogy was described in very detail by Vickery. He uses various inscriptions to prove the genealogy of the king. The genealogy was found in the inscriptions of Jayavarman IV and Rajendravarman. These statements are '(1) Jayavarman was son of a sister [half-sister] of Yasovarman [K. 522], (2) Jayavarman married an unnamed sister of Isanavarman's father, Yasovarman [K.286], (3) Jayavarman's first queen was a younger sister [half-sister] of Yasovarman [K.905], (4) Jayavarman had a son Harsavarman [K.686, K.905], (5) Harsavarman's mother was Jayadevi, younger sister of Mahendradevi [K.806], (6) Rajendravarman was elder brother of Jayavarman, of the same mother [K.677, K.957], (7) Rajendravarman was elder brother (first cousin) of Harsavarman [K.286, K.686, K.806], (8) Rajendravarman's mother was Mahendradevi, and his father was Mahendravarmarman [K.806], (9) Mahendradevi was descended from two *vap* named Kanthapasa and Brahmanarasi [K.165] who had served Jayavarman III [K.449].' (2001: 80). Through this detail information, Vickery drew a family tree of Jayavarman IV as follow:

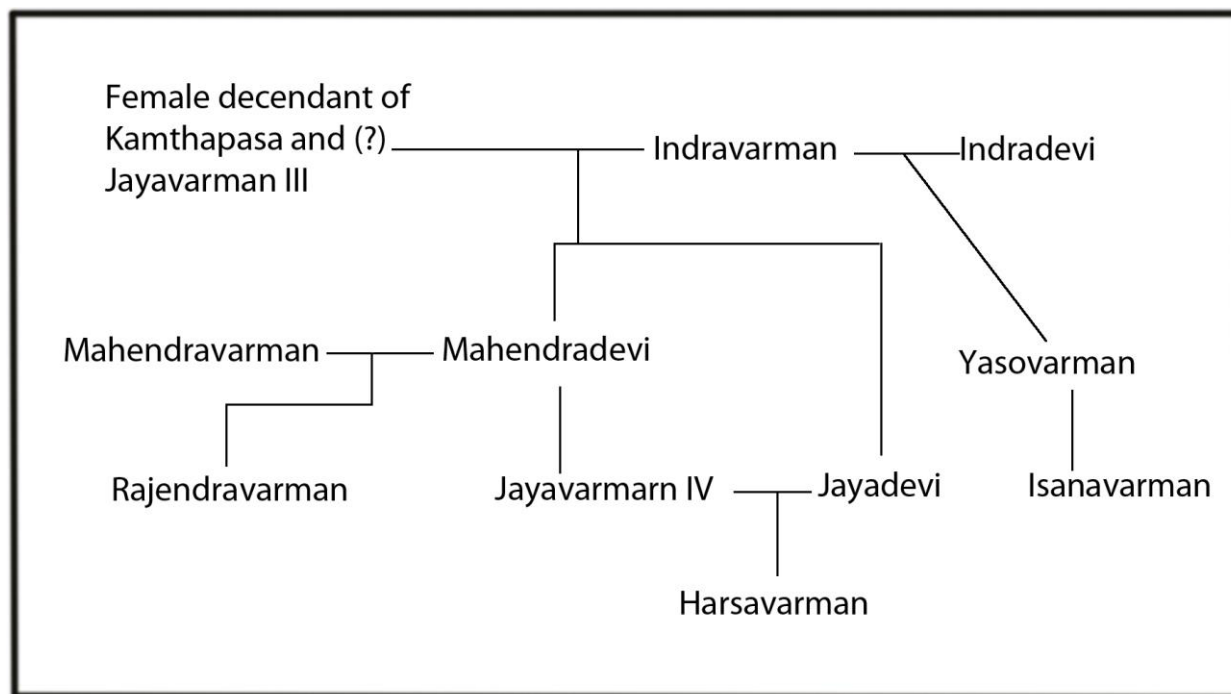


Figure 3: Jayavarman IV's Genealogy

Source: Vickery, Michael, (2001) *History of Cambodia*, Royal University of Fine Art, Phnom Penh, p 80

Then Vickery compared Jayavarman IV to other king during the first half of Angkor period. Jayavarman IV followed Yasovarman and his son in the same way as the succession Jayavarman III –Indravarman, and the succession by Rajendravarman was in the same type, moving sideways among men more or less in the same generation, before going on to the next generation, that of Jayavarman V (Ibid: 80). Vickery finally gave the conclusion that ‘all of the family details about Jayavarman IV show that he was a full member of the royal family, and not a usurper under the rules of the time.’

All in all, it is pretty clear that Jayavarman IV is full member of royal family, and he had right to claim his legitimacy as a king during Angkorian period since there is no common rule for succession during that time.

Chapter IV - City Construction at Koh Ker

In this chapter, I will look at the huge construction of Koh Ker that would have been strongly supported by his followers and people. In those constructions, the main temples for his legitimacy, Baray and others temples will be also explained in order to see his legitimate construction comparing to some great kings early Angkorian period. Moreover, Koh Ker style is recognized as one of architectural style during Angkor that later influenced the following architectural style during Angkor. The unique architectural style, art style of Koh Ker and the huge construction might show the prosperity and high civilization of Koh Ker during Angkorian era which probably opposed to the usurpation idea.

a. Legitimate Constructions for the Kings

First of all, I would like to give an overview for legitimate construction for kings during the first half of Angkor period. There are three main construction pattern had been built during Angkor are public work, state temple and ancestral temples. These kinds of constructions were probably the legitimate constructions for the kings in order to be recognized and to be legitimate king. It does not mean that all kings had to build these constructions, but for those kings who had built these constructions seemed showing their full legitimacy and power. ‘One of the historians, Philippe Stern, who was a specialist in art and architecture, said that there was a regular pattern on development in the reigns of Indravarman, Yasovarman and Rajendravarman, and also more than two hundred years later in the reign of Jayavarman VII. He discovered that there were three stages in their work of construction, (1) public works, such as building baray, or in the case of Rajendravarman, rebuilding the capital, (2) ancestral temples, such as Preah Ko, Lolei, and Mebon, (3) a central temple with the royal Siva-linga (Bakong, Bakheng, Pre Rup).’ (cited by Vickery, 2000: 81).

During Indravarman reign in Hariharalaya (Rolous), he had built the three pattern constructions mentioned above. He built a baray called Indratataka which is 3, 000 meters long and 800 meters wide. It could contain about 6 million meters cube. The construction of this baray is known as a public work because the baray would serve interest for people in order to use water for agriculture and other uses. Moreover, he built his state temple called Bakong, where the god

was Siva. Another temple, Preah Kor, was built to honor his ancestors. It has 6 towers in two rows. The central tower in the first row was built for Paramesvara (Jayavarman II), and the other two front towers were for his father and his mother father. The second row towers were for the wives of those men. These constructions were later followed by several kings.

Yasovarman I was also one of the kings who had built the three pattern constructions. Before moving from Hiriharalaya to his new city Yasodharapura, Yasovarman I built Lolei temple in the middle of the Indratataka to honor his mother and father and the mother and father of his own mother. After moving to Yasodharapura, he built a temple on the Bakheng Mountain. It was the state temple of the first city at Angkor. The name of divinity and of the temple was Yasodharesvara – ‘the Lord of (the one) Who Bears Glory’ (Freeman and Jacques, 1999: 69). Yasovarman I also built the East Baray namely Yashodhatataka which is now dry. It was the large construction due to its dimension of 7, 500 meters long and 1, 800 meters wide.

Even though some historian seemed ignoring what Jayavarman IV had built the city of Koh Ker for some of reasons, we clearly can see the same pattern of construction had been built during his reign in Koh Ker. Prang temple, Prasat Thom temple and Baray Rahal are the three pattern construction that mentioned during Indravarman, and Yasovarman.

When Jayavarman IV became ‘king of the Khmer kings’ in 928, he owed it to himself to commission a majestic State pyramid-temple at Koh Ker, since had elected to remain in his capital rather than take up residence at Angkor. (Jacques and Lafond, 2007: 120) He built it on a plot of land adjoining Prasat Thom to the west, no doubt to emphasize not only the continuity of his sovereignty but also to outdo his predecessors’ achievements. It is a seven level mountain pyramid to a summit 35 meters high. Jacques claimed that it was the highest Khmer temple-pyramid. Its square base was about 62 x 62 meters. It is the image of Mount Meru for king in order to claim himself as king of the Khmer kings. On the top of this Prang temple, there was ‘originally crowned by a linga more than a meter in diameter, on an elaborately-carved pedestal which rested on sixteen telamon lions.’ (Ibid: 120).

Following Indravarman and Yasovarman, Jayavarman IV built his public work, Baray, called Rahal. It was not as huge as Yasovarman's East Baray which is 7500 meters long and 1800 meters wide. It was only 1200 meters long and 560 meters wide. Still, it was a huge construction in term of geographical site which might need very hard work to build this Baray.



Figure 4: Prasat Prang and Prasat Thom which covered by trees and surrounded by moat.

Photo by: Phin Samnang

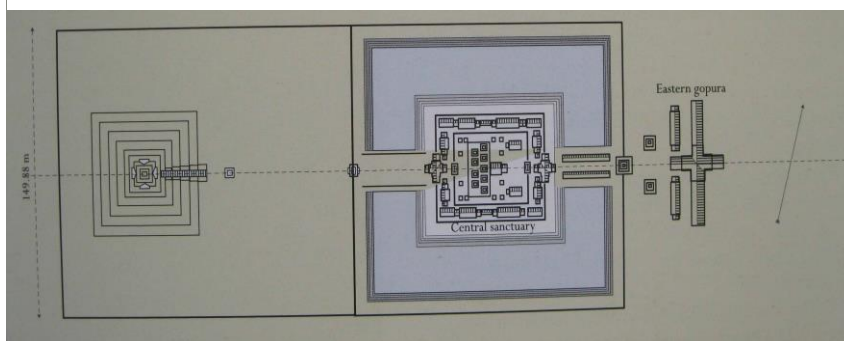


Figure 5: Plan of Prasat Thom.

Source: Jacques, Claude and Lafond, Philippe: *The Khmer Empire: Cities and Sanctuaries from the 5th to the 13th Century*, River Book, Bangkok, 2007, p. 111

b. Large Constructions during 20 years

Within about 20 years from 921 to 942, Jayavarman IV had built approximately more than 70 temples and one huge baray (Chen, Chanratana, 2012) which covered about 35 square kilometers. Anyway, most of his temples were built after he got official throne in 928. These projects illustrate the great wealth of Jayavarman's capital, which was located in what is today one of the poorest regions in Cambodia (Jacques, 1999: 67).

By analyzing on each construction and geographical area at Koh Ker, Dr. Chen Chanratana, a Cambodian scholar who wrote his doctoral thesis about Koh Ker, divided the constructions at Koh Ker during Jayavarman IV into three stages: The first stage of construction was from 921 to 928. It was the starting stage to extend the city from North to the South which is now from Koh Ker village and Trapeang Srae village to Prasat Thom, Prasat Prang, Rayal and others important brick temples around Rahal. The second stage of construction was 928 to 932 which Jayavarman IV continued his construction further south of the previous stage. He built



Figure 6: Prang of Koh Ker, the State temple of King Jayavarman IV (built between 921 to 941 A.D). He built this temple for his reign, dedicated to Linga Tribhuvanesvara (God Siva).

Source: Guimet Museum, photo taken during 1920-30s

several sandstone temples such as Prasat Lingas, Prasat Kramham (Red Temple), and other small temple made of laterite. The final stage of the construction was from 932 to 941. He still continued the extension city policy to the north of Prasat Thom and started to build other laterite temples such as Prasat Chen (Chinese Temple), Prasat Chrab, Prasat Banteay Pichan, Prasat Neang Khmao and other brick temples. Dr. Chen Chanratana gave the conclusion that it was maybe the first time of Khmer Art and Architecture to use laterite to build temples. Thought the three stages of the construction show that there are a number of important temple have been mentions in each stage of building those temples.

Jacques took the baray construction as an example of the hard working construction at Koh Ker. Baray Rahal is much smaller comparing with Yashodharatataka (the Eastern Baray) at Angkor which it dimensions is 7, 500 meters long and 1, 800 meters wide. The modest dimension of Rahal was only 1,200 meters long and 560 meters wide. However, its construction must have presented greater difficulties: because of the topography, the baray had in part to be cut out of the rock, while its alinment had to be almost north-south, which was unusual (Jacques, 1999, 67-68). The remains of a laterite sluice gate for allowing water to flow out and irrigate the surrounding lands are still visible.



Figure 7: Prasat Chen was built approximately during 932-935.

Photo: Chen Chanratana



Figure 8: Map of Koh Ker showing the huge city had been build during 20 years.

Source: Chanratana, Chen: The Summary of the book entitle: Koh Ker and Jayavarman IV, history, art and archaeology, 2012, p. 15

c. Unique Art and Architectural Style

There are ten kinds of architectural styles during Angkor period such as Kulen, Preah Kô, Koh Ker, Pre Rup, Banteay Srei, Khleang, Bapuon, Angkor and Bayon. Each architectural style has its own unique art and architecture which also can be indentified the period of construction. For example, Jessup mentioned that ‘everything about Koh Ker, the dimensions of its colonettes, the height of its gopuras, the size of its sculptures, is on a massive Scale’ (Jessup, 2004: 89-95). Jacques also raised the unique point of Koh Ker architectural style and wrote, ‘the most striking feature of the art of Koh Ker is the huge size of the blocks of stone used for both the building work and the sculpture. There are also several sizeable sanctuaries in brick’ (1999: 69). In another Jacques’ book also shows the huge doorway of Prasat Kraham which its height is about three times of human height (see photos of Jacques and Lafond, 2007: 118-119).

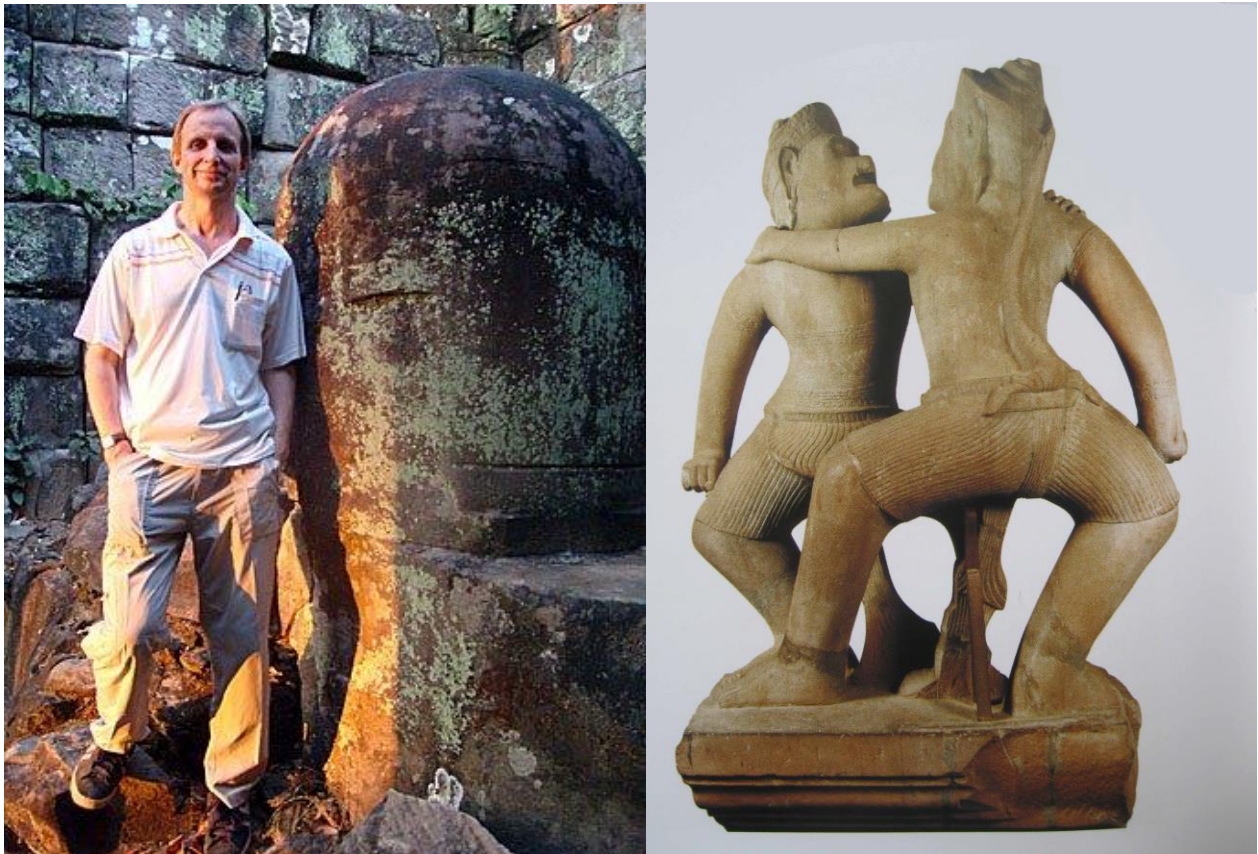


Figure 9: (Left) Mr. Andy Brouwer stand next to a 1.8 meters tall single stone Linga.

Source: <http://blog.andybrouwer.co.uk/2009/01/cambodias-largest-linga.html>

Figure 10: (Right) Sugriva and Valin from Prasat Chen now in National Museum; it is 280 cm tall and make of single sandstone.

Source: Jacques and Lafond, 2007, p. 128

When you visit National Museum in Phnom Penh, you will see a huge single sandstone sculpture of garuda from Prasat Thom standing at the entrance of the museum building. Its height is 193 cm. It is not a huge single stone sculpture from Koh Ker; Sugriva and Valin, Kneeling Male Attendant, Ganesha and other sculpture are also the sizable sculptures from Koh Ker. Moreover, the interesting thing that I noted about Koh Ker is also huge Linga temples. There are four Linga temples including an unfinished Linga without temple. The height of the single sandstone Lingas are about 1.8 meters and ‘each is estimated to weigh some fifteen tons’ (Ibid: 125). It is one of unique things about Koh Ker architectural style.



Figure 11: *garuda from Prasat Thom*

Source: http://blog.andybrouwer.co.uk/2010_04_01_archive.html



Figure 12: The west side of Prasat Kraham. The man in the doorway emphasizes its immense size.

Source: Jacques, Claude and Lafond, Philippe: The Khmer Empire: Cities and Sanctuaries from the 5th to the 13th Century, River Book, Bangkok, 2007, p. 118



Figure 12: *The lintel over the entrance door to the sanctuary, Prasat Damrei.*

Source: *Jacques, Claude and Lafond, Philippe: The Khmer Empire: Cities and Sanctuaries from the 5th to the 13th Century, River Book, Bangkok, 2007, p. 129*

Additionally, Lintel Styles Koh Ker of Jayavarman IV at Koh Ker occupied by a prominent scene, taking up almost the entire height of the lintel (Rooney, 2006). In the study tour report, Professor Vong Sotheara, a deputy president of History Department of Royal University of Phnom Penh, made a conclusion that “Koh Ker temples and construction have special art which was the new turning point of the development of art style and architectural style of Khmer construction. Its art and architectural styles had mainly influenced over Banteay Srei architectural style and other afterward constructions (Sotheara, 2007: 6). In short, unique art and architectural style of Koh Ker show the high civilization of this city.

In summary, this chapter want to highlight the prosperity of the empire during that time, and it also show us that there were probably a huge supports from people and official in order to make all the construction done. All the people, the bureaucracy, the Brahman and elites, which everyone could claim up to the throne if they are powerful enough, why would these people agreed to do this many difficult work. Why would they support him if he was a usurper? Therefore, Jayavarman IV could get all the support because he was respected by everyone and probably was a legitimate king; not a usurper.

Chapter V - Conclusion

As this paper attempt to answer a question “was Jayavarman IV a usurper?” possible answers are raised. Early scholars who study about Angkor pay little attention to this Jayavarman IV was probably due to their prejudice that he was a usurper. If he is usurper king depend on the factors that he was not son to previous king, and the relocation of the capital which was mentioned by some scholars, this paper proves different idea. In chapter two, the capital relocation was mainly because construction matter. Jayavarman IV moved the capital to Koh Ker because he probably saw the potential huge capital construction project which is similar to Yasovarman I’s capital relocation. Moreover, being a king during Angkorian period was not just a son of previous king; there was no concrete rule for succession. Due to his genealogy, Jayavarman IV was full member of royal family. Additionally, large construction might need hard work to complete. All kind of people and supporters agreed to support his hard work construction which probably showed the power that was legitimate. In return, if those scholars pay much attention to study Jayavarman IV, they would have come up with the different idea. Recently, a Cambodian scholar, Dr. Chen Chanratana, come up with his conclusion that Jayavarman IV was not a usurper.

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