

## **New Discovery at Koh Ker, the Lost City of Khmer Empire in 10th Century**

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**Abstract:** Ancient Cambodia, in Angkor time was rich and glorious. An abundance of temples and architectural infrastructures were built by Khmer kings from one generation to another, gradually, expanding the kingdom. New settlements were established, old settlements were enlarged, and centres of culture, administration, and politics were developed. Nowadays, the remains of the past glory of Cambodia can be seen throughout the country. These heritage sites are admired annually by thousands and thousands of national and international visitors. Angkor Wat and Preah Vihear temples are two of the sites recognized as World Heritage Sites and thus, Cambodia became known as “the kingdom of culture and wonder”. If we take a journey back to the 10<sup>th</sup> Century CE, we learn that Khmer king Jayavarman IV relocated the Chok Gargyar capital, now known as Koh Ker, from the Angkor area. At Koh Ker, Jayavarman IV built and lived in his new capital for twenty years. He also constructed many religious monuments dedicated to Hinduism, and installed irrigation systems and road infrastructure to support the economy. He did great things for the region during his époque and even implemented the concept of urban planning during his reign. The consolidation of king’s power with politics to ensure the country’s stability, security, and prosperity was another important feature of his reign. His city, however, lasted for only 20 years. It was abandoned shortly after his death. His successor, king Rajendravarmān II, moved the capital back to Angkor for unknown reasons. Because of the return of the capital from Koh Ker to Angkor, many historians believe that the Jayavarman IV was a usurper king. So what really was happening in the 10th Century? What role did Jayavarman IV and his city, Koh Ker play? Why did he relocate the capital from Angkor to Koh Ker? This presentation will explore the possible answers to these questions.