

As the temple in the middle is in the same style as Baphuon, the baray was probably constructed in the 11th century. The east dyke leads to Ba Kheng temple. Some historian believed that the West Baray could have been a mooring place for the royal barges as well as a reservoir and a place for breeding fish.

The West Baray is a vast man-made lake, surrounded by an earthen levee which forms a dyke. According to legend, the young daughter of a ruler of Angkor was grabbed by an enormous crocodile, which made a large opening in the south dyke of the West Baray that can still be seen today. The crocodile was capture and killed. The princess, still living in its stomach, was rescued.

West Mebon Temple

West Mebon temple is located in the middle of West Baray on an island about 11 kilometers northwest of Siem Reap. The temple was built in the second half of the 11th century by King Suryavarman I, dedicating to Vishu Brahmanism. It was originally surrounded by a square rampart with three square, sandstone gopuras and a sanctuary on one level crowned with a lotus.



Most towers have collapsed, but the three on the east side are reasonably intact. A sandstone platform at the center is linked to a causeway of laterite and sandstone that leads to the east dyke. The sides of the towers are carved with lively animals set in small squares, a type of decoration found also at the Baphuon.

Roluos

Roluos is the site of an ancient center of Khmer civilization known as Hariharalaya, located about 12 kilometers from Siem Reap provincial town. It includes three temples-Preah Kor, Bakong and Lolei. After King Jayavarman II established his capital on Phnom Kulen in AD 820 inaugurating the Angkor Period, soon afterward he moved the capital back to Roluos perhaps for a better source of food or for defense purpose. King Jayavarman II died at Roluos in AD 850. It is generally believed that his successors remained there until the capital was moved to Ba Kheng in AD 905.

The structures of the Roluos group are distinguished by tall, square-shaped, brick towers on low pedestals. They open to the east, with false doors on the other three sides. A rampart originally enclosed the temple although only traces remain today. The library is a rectangular building with a vaulted roof and frontons. A temple often has two libraries, one on each side of the gopura preceding the central sanctuary.



Preah Kor Temple

Preah Kor temple is located between Bakong and Lolei on the western side of the road to Bakong. The temple was built in 9th century by King Indravarman I (AD 877-889), dedicating to Shiva Brahmanism. It is also a funerary temple built for the King's parents, maternal grandparents, and a previous king, Jayavarman II and his wife. Originally square in plan and surrounded by three ramparts with gopuras, the complex seems small today because of the dilapidated state of the rampart. The outer rampart is 400 by 500 meters square with gopuras on the east and west sides. A small terrace which is largely destroyed precedes the laterite gopura at the east. Long hall or





gallerise parallel the middle rampart, two each at the east and west, and one each at the northeast and southeast. There are galleries with a porch opening to east on the north and south sides of the walkway. An unusual, square, brick structure stands between the long hall and the gallery at the south. The brick rampart inside has two gopuras at the east and directly opposite on the west.



Three images of Shiva's mount Nandi are at the east of central area. Although only portions of the bulls remain, their original position can be discerned facing to the temple. The central area consists of brick towers set towards the east in two rows on a low platform. The shrine of Preah Ko are built near ground level—a typical feature of Khmer temple

that are dedicated to ancestors. The central towers are square in plan with a porch in each of the cardinal directions. Each of six towers of the central group was covered with elaborate stucco.

Bakong Temple

Bakong temple is south of Preah Kor temple. It was also built by King Indravarman I in AD 881, dedicating to Shiva Brahmanism. The temple was the center of Hariharalaya city and was probably the state temple of King Indravarman.

It is a temple-mountain symbolizing the cosmic Mount Meru. Four levels leading to the central sanctuary extend the symbolism, and correspond to the worlds of mythical beings—nagas, garudas, rakasas, and yakshas. The fifth and topmost level is reserved for the gods—the levels represent the five cosmic levels of Mount Meru.

The temple is enclosed within two separate ramparts. The out rampart measure 900 by 700 meters. It surrounds a moat, and there are causeways on four sides, which are bordered by low naga balustrades. The inner and smaller rampart has a gopura of sandstone and laterite in the center of each side of wall. Long



halls on each side lie parallel to the eastern wall. They were probably rest houses for visitors. Pairs of square-shaped, brick structure at the northeast and southeast corners are identified by rows of circular holes and an opening to the west. On each side of the processional way, just beyond the halls, there are two square structures with four doors. The inscription of the temple was found in the northern building. Further along the processional way, there are two long sandstone buildings standing parallels on each side and opening on to the causeway. These may have been storehouse or libraries.

The diminishing platforms are square in plan with stairways on all four sides. The central sanctuary is visible from each of the five levels because of the unusual width of the tiers. The sanctuary is square with four tiers and a lotus-shaped finial. Only the base of the original central sanctuary remains. The upper portion was constructed at a later date, perhaps during the 12th century, which explains the lotus spire that is characteristic of that period.

Lolei Temple



Lolei temple is located north of the main road in the center of Baray, close to a modern Buddhist temple. The temple was built in the late 9th century in 893 by King Yasovarman I, dedicating to Shiva and in memory of the King's father. Lolei is worth a visit just for its exquisite carvings and inscriptions which some consider to be the finest of the Roluos group. The temple was originally located in the center of a great Baray, the Indratataka. According to an inscription found at