

# ជ័យវរ្ម័នទី៧

## Jayavarman VII

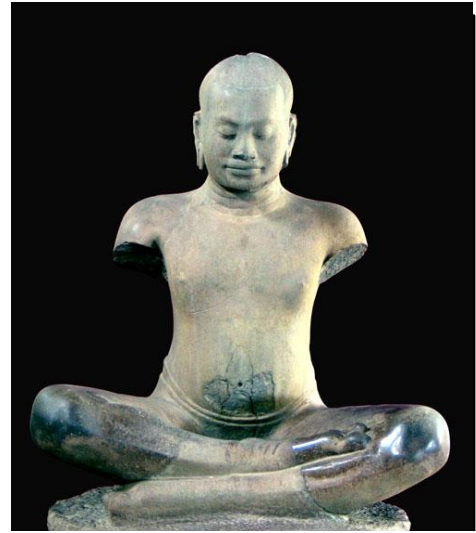
Reigned c. 1181–1218

Jayavarman VII (whose name means *Protected by Victory*) is one of the most well-known and celebrated Khmer kings of the Angkor Period (9<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> centuries) He became king of the Khmer Empire in 1181 and it was during his reign that the empire expanded to its greatest size; covering most of what are today Thailand, Laos, and Vietnam. At the time the Khmer also controlled important ports that were part of the sea trade between India and China.

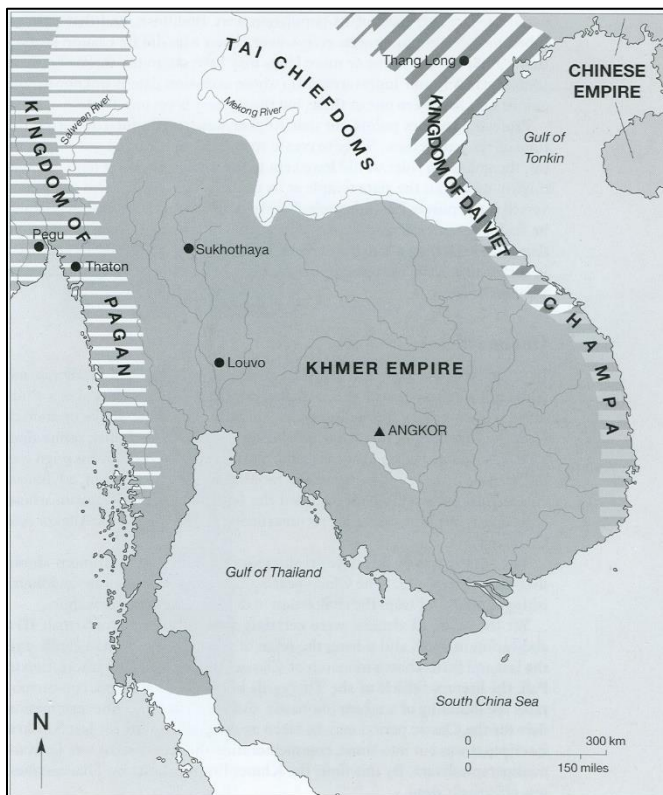
Influenced by his wife, Rajendradevi, who practiced Buddhism, King Jayavarman VII became the empire's first Buddhist King (previous Khmer kings observed Hindu practices). An inscription at the Ta Prohm temple complex comments on this subject:

*“He found satisfaction in the nectar of his religion, the Sakyamuni Buddhism of the Greater Vehicle, within which he identified a cult of deceased relatives with the characteristics of the compassionate Bodhisattva and Prajnaparamita.”*

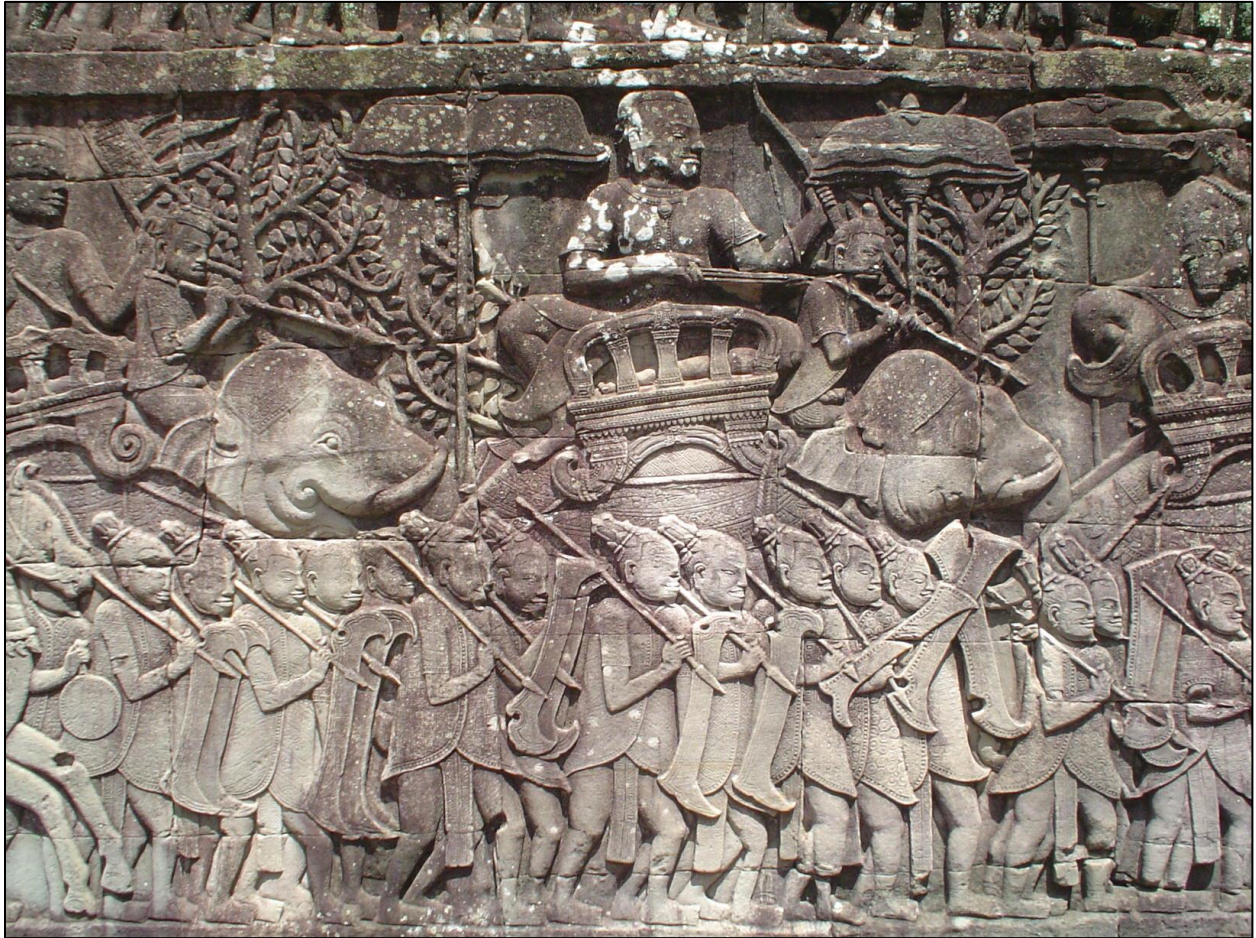
In the manner of previous kings of the Angkor period, Jayavarman VII was a prolific builder,



National Museum of Cambodia



constructing many temples in the Angkor region and other provinces. Additionally, the king established a network of roads linking distant parts of the kingdom along with 121 rest houses for travelers and 102 hospitals throughout the kingdom.



**Bas relief of Jayavarman VII on the Bayon Temple**

Source: National Museum of Cambodia