

Introduction to History of Architecture in India
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Temple and Mosque

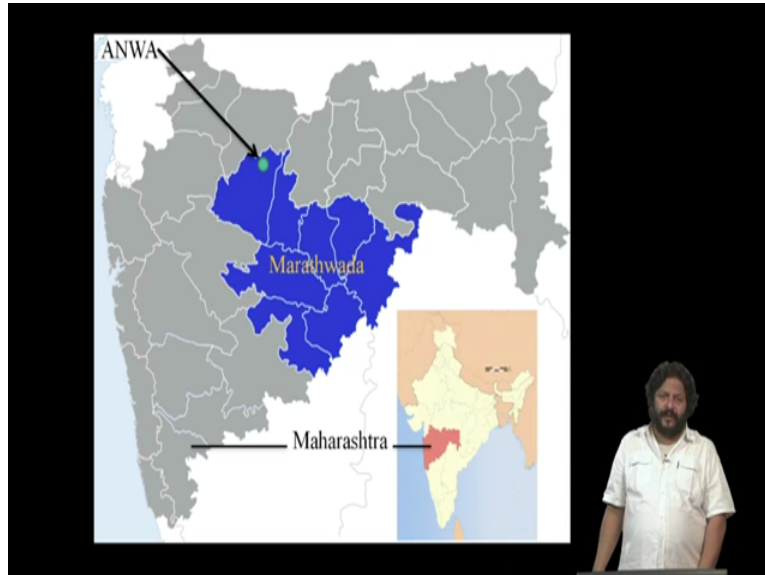
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Today we will look at the Temple at Anwa, a small relatively unknown temple and see how the architecture of temples can tell us more about social processes and methods of building, of design, of the ambitions of kings, of how diplomatic relations between various kingdoms worked. We shall all do this solely on the basis of material evidence because we have no other evidence about this temple.

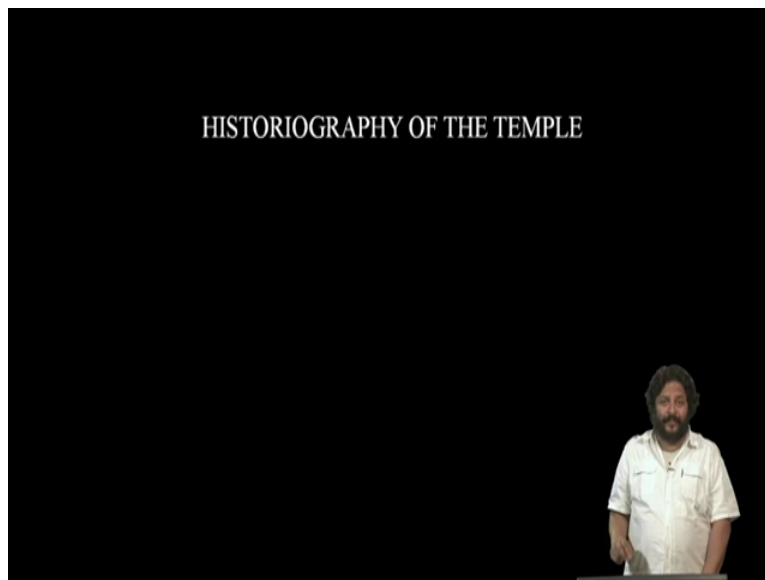
Like a lot of sights in India, this temple has no inscription, no references in any texts, no copper plates. In short, all that we know about the temple is the material itself. And we shall study the material and try and create a narrative, try and create history using methods that are acceptable to scholarship. The temple at Anwa in a slightly ruinous state right now has been well-studied but in superficial ways.

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Anwa is situated in the Aurangabad district of Maharashtra, in a cultural zone called Marathwada. Marathwada has been recognized as its own cultural entity for a long time now. This was also the heartland of a dynasty called the Yadava whom we will encounter soon after.

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But let us first look at the historiography of this temple which is to say let us look at the history, of studying history of this temple.

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This temple has been mentioned by several scholars such as James Fergusson in his epic, *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, written in 1876. There is a description of this temple, a description that will get picked up and copied later in several publications such as the *District Gazetteer*. G. B. Deglurkar, almost 100 years later, mentions this temple in a survey called *Temple Architecture and Sculpture of Maharashtra*.

20 years later, Prabhakar Deo, also does the same where he has a monograph dedicated to temples of Marathwada. What is notable to us are the two publications listed in red, which are publications that deal with temples in this region and period but do not mention the stable temple at all. What this suggests is that this temple was not major enough to be included in every survey of the region.

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ANWA.

Town in Silod taluk, Hyderabad territory, Nizam's Dominions; situated on the river Jua, 5 miles south of Shaoni and about 25 miles from Jalgaon Station on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway. The chief object of interest is a small temple with a stone roof, supported on a number of pillars, covered with small sculptured figures, beautifully carved. Two annual Hindu fairs held here in the months of Chait (March) and Magh (January) are largely attended.


It is a large depôt for cotton, which is exported to Khamgaon and Jalgaon.

Jalgaon is 261 miles from Bombay; third class fare by mail train Rs. 4-1-0 and by ordinary trains Rs. 2-12-0.

There are no *serais* or *dharmshalas* at Anwa and visitors have to make their own arrangements.


The Travellers Companion:
containing a brief description of places of pilgrimage and important towns
in India,

Compiled by Abdur Rasheed, under orders of the Railway Board
(Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, 1907)




The temple first starts appearing significantly with the building of the railways in the Nizam's Dominions. The railways think that sites like this are important in promoting the use of the railways and this use for them will be mostly for tourism.

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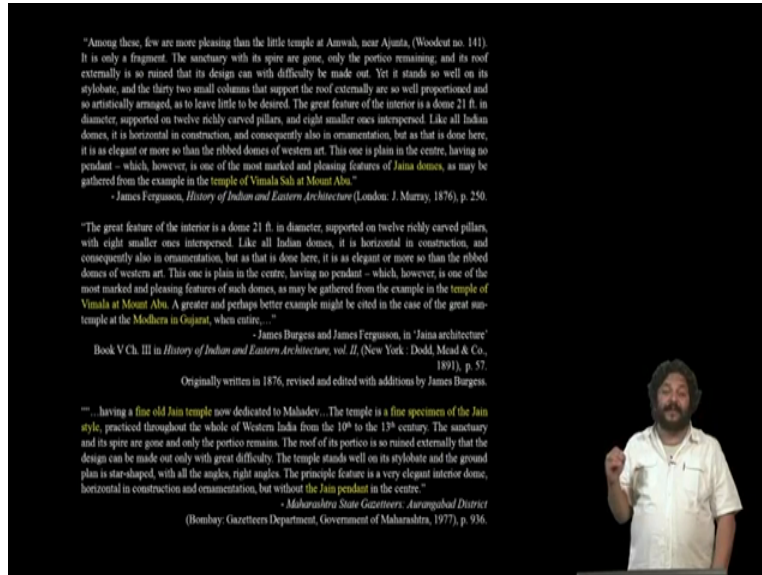
111. Porch of Jain Temple at Anwah, near Ajanta. (From a Photograph by Major Gill.)

James Fergusson, *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*
(New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1891), p. 251.
Originally written in 1876, revised and edited with
additions by James Burgess.



But James Fergusson is the first one to reproduce the temple using drawings of Major Gill. That he has in his book, he talks about this temple as an important temple built in the giant style, a claim that gets repeated by scholar after scholar.

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So if you look at the extracts of what people have to say about this temple, James Fergusson first says this temple is plain in the center and one of the most marked and pleasing features is of giant domes which are similar to those of Vimal Shah in Mount Abu. So he is talking of this temple and saying it resembles temples built in the 11th and 12th century in Mount Abu in Western India.

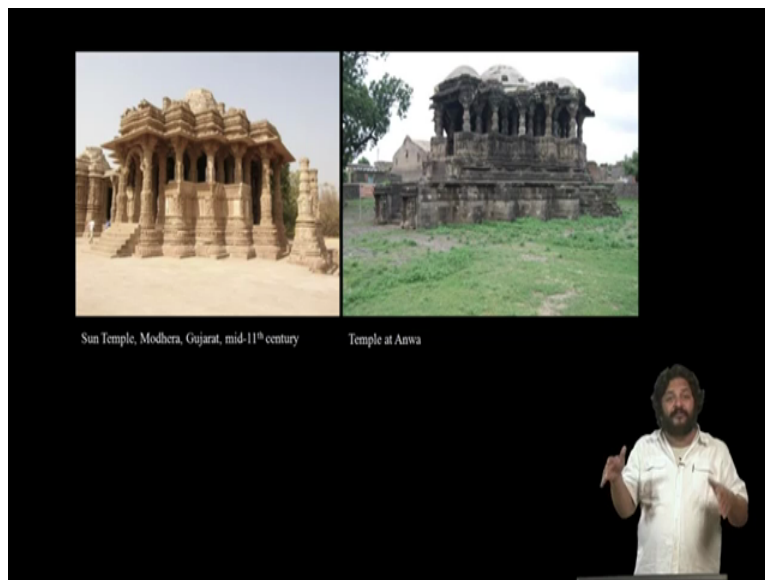
If you look at the revised edition of this book, you still have the same where it is compared to the temple of Vimal at Mount Abu but you also have a statement that says greater and perhaps better example might be cited in the case of The Great Sun Temple of Modhera in Gujarat. And if you look at the Maharashtra state gazetteer, it also repeats the same claim saying that the temple at Anwa is a fine specimen of the giant style.

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If you look at the temple as it stands now, the domes are really crossed by plastering over of the sabhamandapas. But if you look on the inside, there are corbel domes, so the outer profile would not have been much different from this that you see now.

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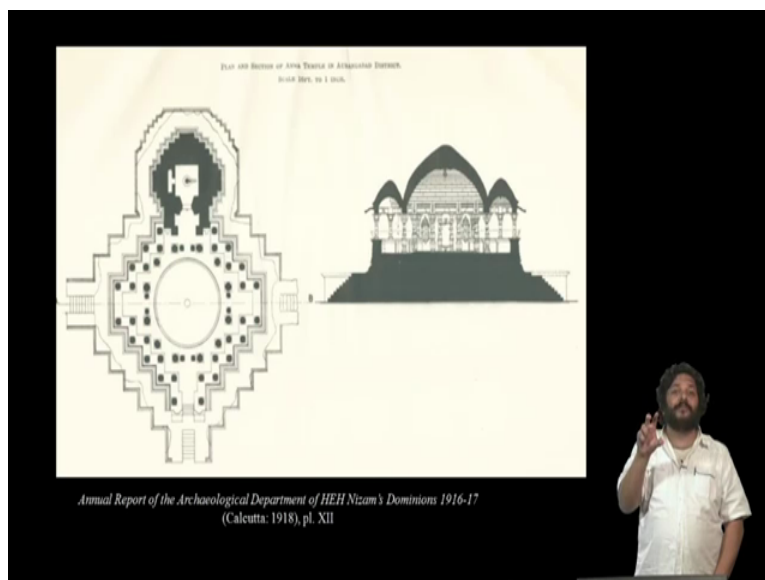


And the plan is semi-open which means you only have walls still about waist height, above which the whole sabhamandapa, the space in front of the sanctum is enclosed by pillars, half pillars above which is the roof in the form of corbel domes.

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If you look at a formal description of the temple and you look at all the sources that we mentioned till now, you will notice that all of them mention that the columns are of different sizes but drawings of the temple have rarely betrayed this. You can see very clearly if you look at the columns surrounding the big dome marked by the circle of the sabhamandapa, there are columns which are small and there are columns which are large.

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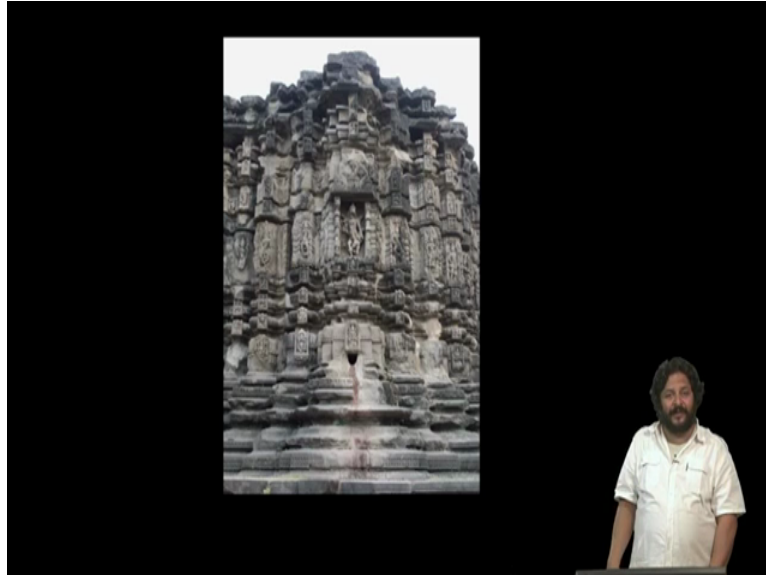
The outside of the temple has all the moldings and bands expected of a medieval temple including kirti-mukhas, bands of hamsa or geese, of elephants and also all the moldings which are named.

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The dome, as we mentioned on the inside of the sabhamandapa, is corbelled, which means it is not built out of true geese bar stones but it is built by successively moving each course of stones slightly further till they meet right at top. This is a technique you find in the sabhamandapas of almost all giant temples in this period.

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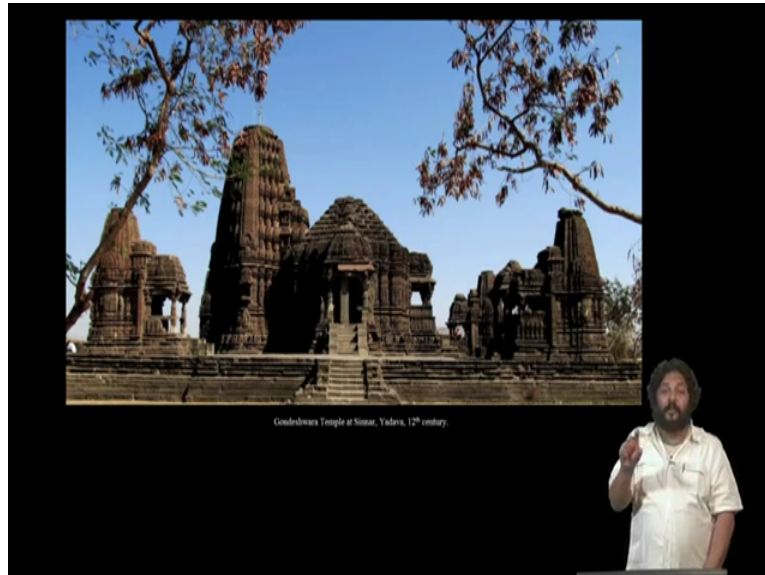


On the outside the four bhadra projections, the four major projections of the temple comprise of one doorway from where you enter from the sabhamandapa. And the three niches on the three bhadra sides of the sanctum have images of Vishnu, clearly suggesting that this was the Vishnu Temple at some point but later was converted into a Shiva Temple.

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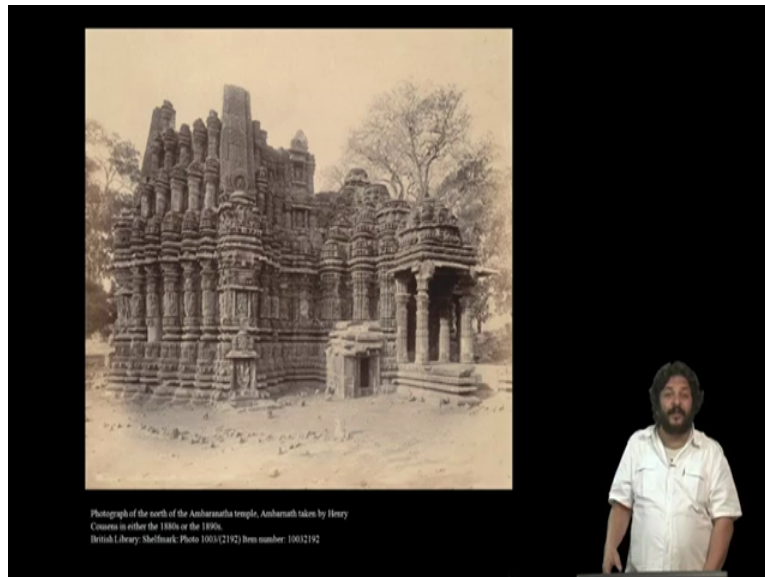
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Now coming back to the comparisons for this temple, the comparanda, like the temple at Modhera you also have Yadava temples which are built in this period. Now let us not forget that Anwa is very close to the Yadava capital at Devagiri, Devagiri being later Daulatabad. And the Yadavas have taken it upon themselves to patronize the style called the bhumija style. The Gondeshwar temple is probably the best known of the Yadava temples built in the bhumija style.

This is an unusual temple and that is built on high plinth with 4 smaller shrines and the big one in between. But if you look at the sabhamandapa in front, it is completely walled, it is not semi-open.

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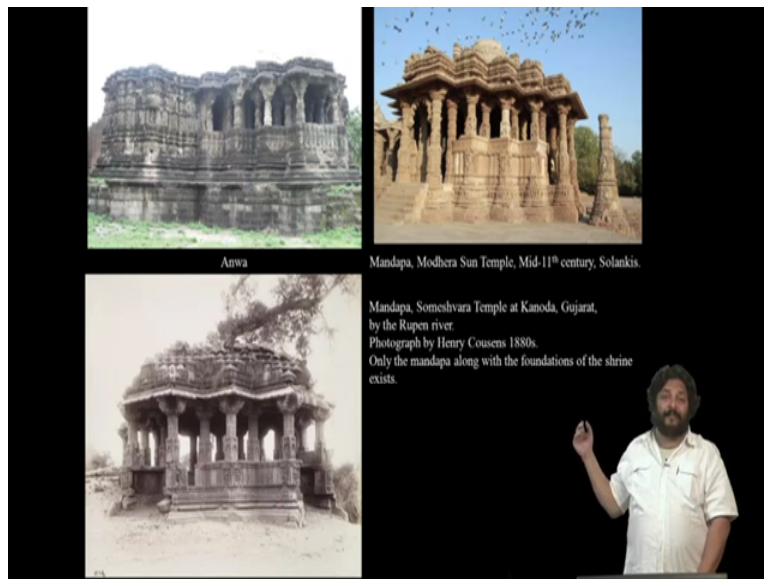
If you look at other Yadava temples, such as the one at Ambarnath, again in ruinous state, you will notice that the sabhamandapa in front does not have the semi-open pillar hall, it is completely enclosed.

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If you look at the temple at Satgaon, that is where you start seeing semi-open pillar halls, but this temple is closer to the lands of Gujarat.

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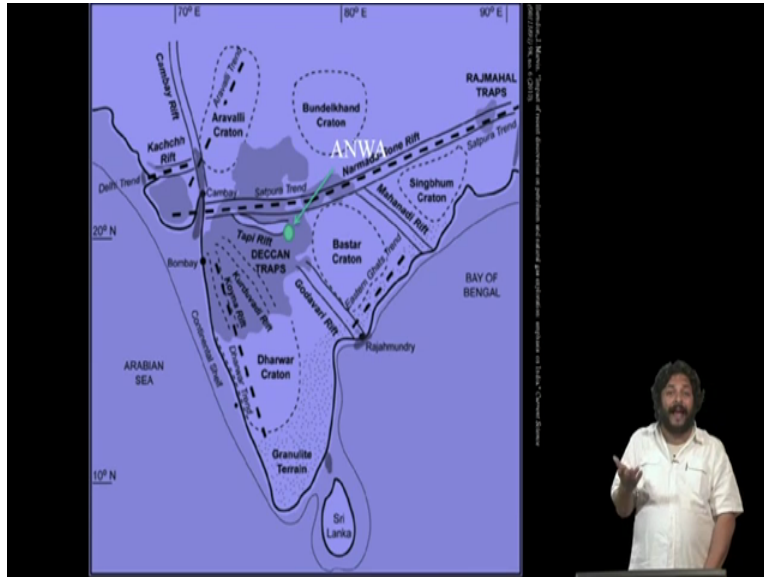
And so, when people like James Fergusson keep comparing this temple to those found in Gujarat, particularly that of Vimal Shah at Mount Abu, it is not surprising because the best comparisons for the sabhamandapa in front with a semi-pillar hall, all seem to come from Gujarat at this period, whether it is at Modhera or the Someshwar Temple at Kanoda.

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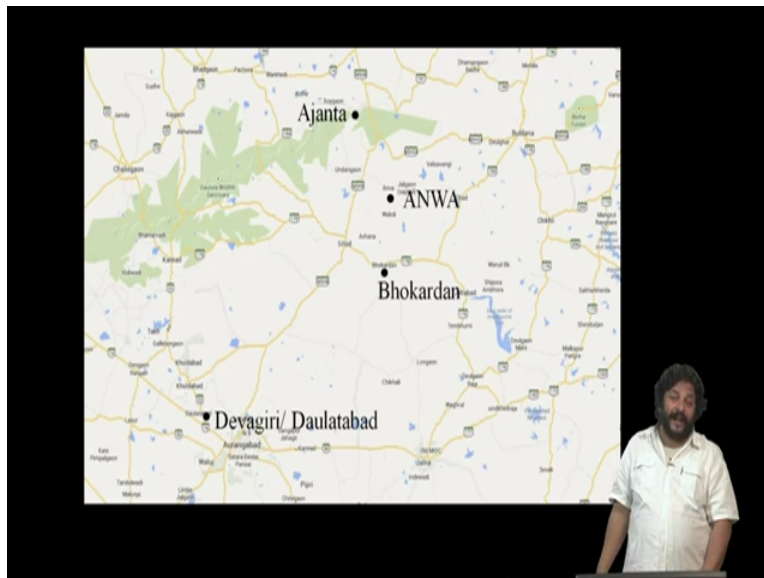
And so there is no doubt that there is some stylistic affinity between temples in Gujarat built in the 12th century and this temple whose date we are unsure of.

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If you look at Anwa, it is built right in the middle of the territory which has trap stone, black basalt.

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If you also look at Anwa, it is on a very major trade route from Ajanta to Bhokardan. In this period, temples are not centers of finance, they are not banks. What they are, are important nodes on trading networks. So if you have two medieval towns that are important centers, Anwa will be an important node between the two of them. Of course, the capital of the Yadavas, Devagiri would connect or be an important part in this network of trade and movement.

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Now the Yadavas, we know who ruled for a fairly long time, are very successful in the 13th century under one particular king, under whom they make the Shilaharas of the Konkan their feudatories but they also carry out massively successful campaigns against the Chalukyas of Gujarat to their north-west, the Kakatiyas to their south-east, the Hoysalas to their south and the Paramaras to the north. We have several Yadava chronicles which talk of how they have beaten all these kings and brought back treasure and loot.

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16	Beta II	1075 1110	Seunachandra II	1088 1085			1070 Kannama
26			Anamadava	1085 1115			1080 1090 Jogama
	Prata II	1110 1158			Enryanga	1088 1102	1100
30			Singhana I	1115 1145	Vishnuvardhana	1108 1152	1120
	Declares Independence						1130 Bijala I Declares Independence
31			Mallugi	1145 1150			1140
34	Rudradeva I	1158 1195	Amarasinghaya Govindaraja	1150 1180	Narasimha I	1152 1173	1150
			Amar Mallugi II	1180 1185			1180 Sovideva Mallugi
			Kalya Ballala	1185 1173			1170 Sankama
33			Bhittama V	1173 1192	Veera Ballala II	1173 1220	1170
			Declares Independence	1192	Declares Independence	1187 1193	1180 Ahavamalla Singhana
30	Mahadeva Ganapathi Deva	1195 1201	Jaitugi I Singhana II	1192 1207			
					Veera Narasimha II	1220 1235	
			Kannara	1247 1261	Veera Somesvara	1235 1261	
	Rudrama Devi	1262 1296	Mahadeva Amara Ramachandra	1261 1271 1271 1312	Narasimha III	1254 1271	

In fact, the greatest of these kings who carries out four expansions, these four campaigns into Gujarat is somebody called Singhana II. Now Singhana's chronicles are well-described and he rules for a long time for over 40 years and carries out major expeditions to Gujarat in which he brings back everything that he can see.

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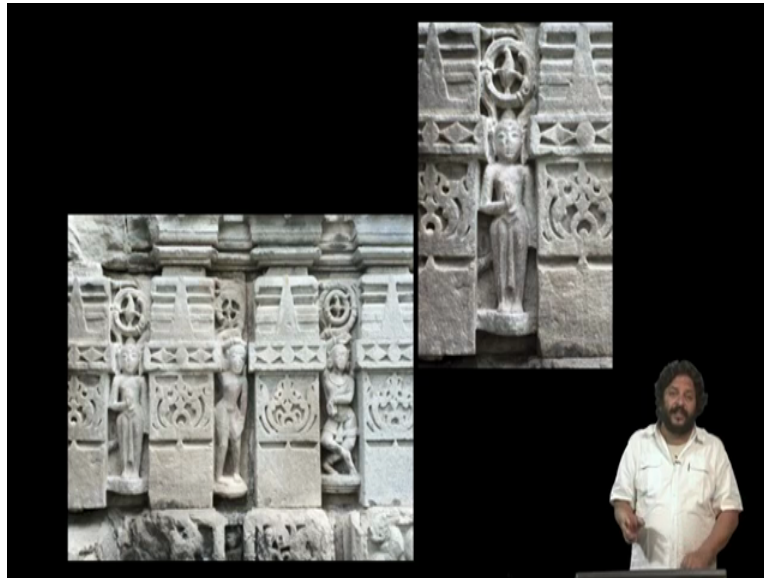
And one of the things we suggest that he brings back is an architectural design of a temple. He sees temples in Gujarat and emulates them, he copies them, not because he feels that he is subservient to the Gujarat Chalukyas but because he feels he has been victorious over them, he has won over them. And one of the things everybody does when they win something is carry it back home. Jain temples in Gujarat are not mobile objects; you cannot carry home a temple.

What you carry back instead is the design of a temple. And so after all these campaigns, he probably comes back and says I want a temple built like the temples that I have seen in Gujarat which I have raided and conquered. Now this kind of circumstantial evidence of this temple being built by the Yadavas in their own heartland resembling Jain temples from the Gujarat Chalukyas reign, coupled with Singhana's campaigns in Gujarat, starts providing a date for this temple.

After all, this temple cannot be older than the Jain temples at Mount Abu because there you see a clear evolution of how they have come up with the design. This obviously copies something that does not belong in this region at all because there are no other temples like it. And so we can say

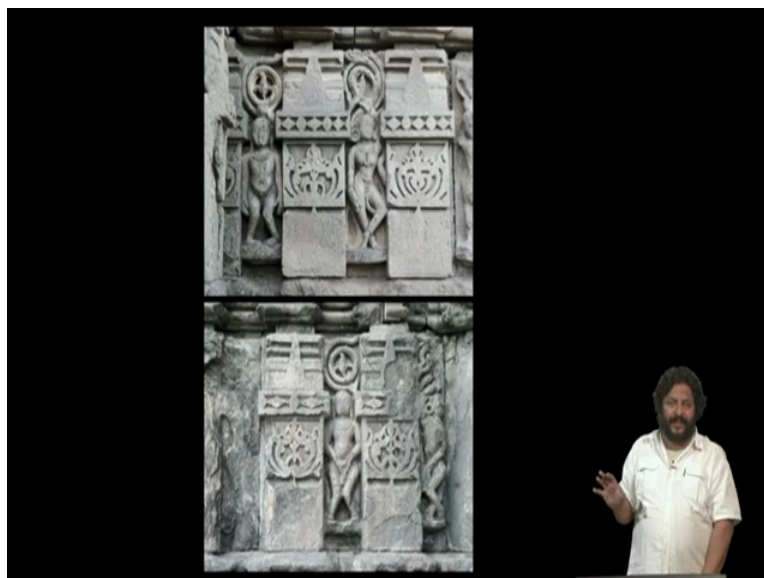
very safely, this temple is probably from the mid-13th century when Singhana has seen a well-established temple type in Gujarat.

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If you look at some of the bands on the outside of the temple, what you see are aesthetics, something that you very much see on Jain temples and other beautiful dancers and apsaras. But this motive together which is found in Jain temples is called the sadhak and the sunderi.

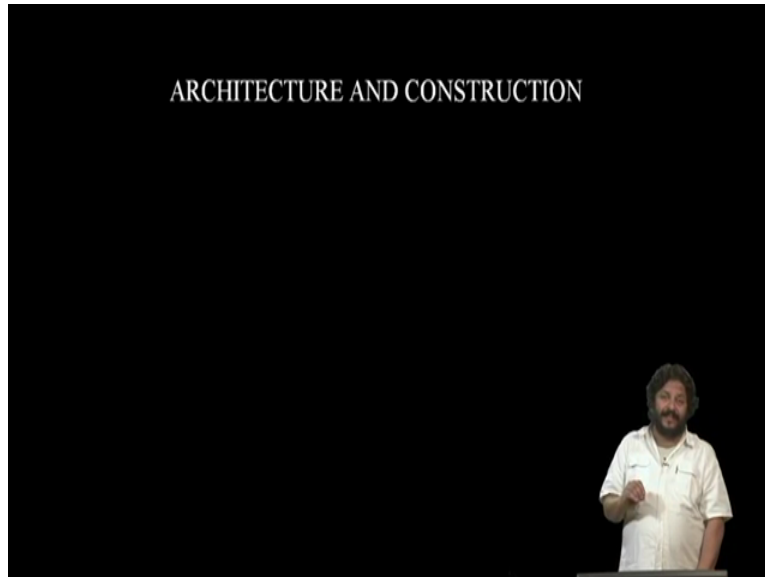
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You have a number of examples of these but what is also very strange is the figure you see on your top left or in the center of the bottom, which are just like aesthetics, which look like

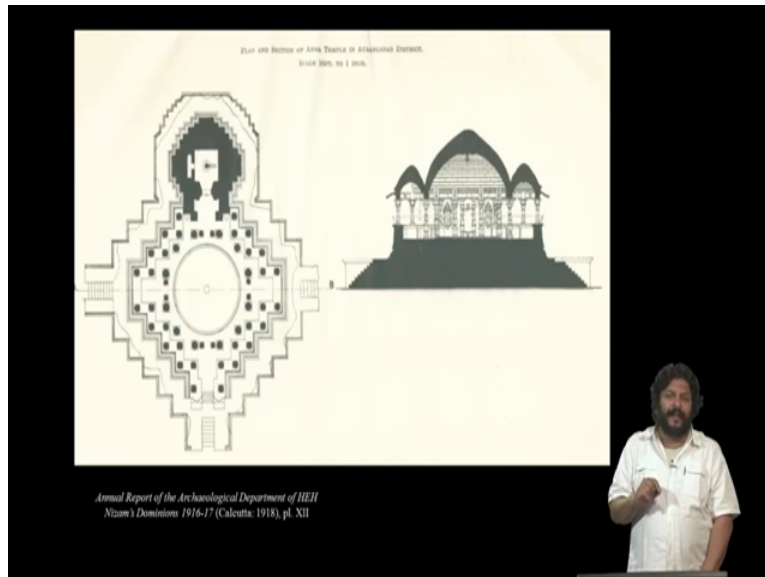
aesthetics but they are in a very strange pose, almost as if to make fun of them, almost as if to lampoon them. And this might be because this was built as Vishnu Temple, as Vaishnava Temple. And when you copy the design of a Jain temple, it does not have the same respect for the same Jain aesthetics that you would find on that temple. But marginalia in Indian temples is yet another topic which deserves a separate discussion.

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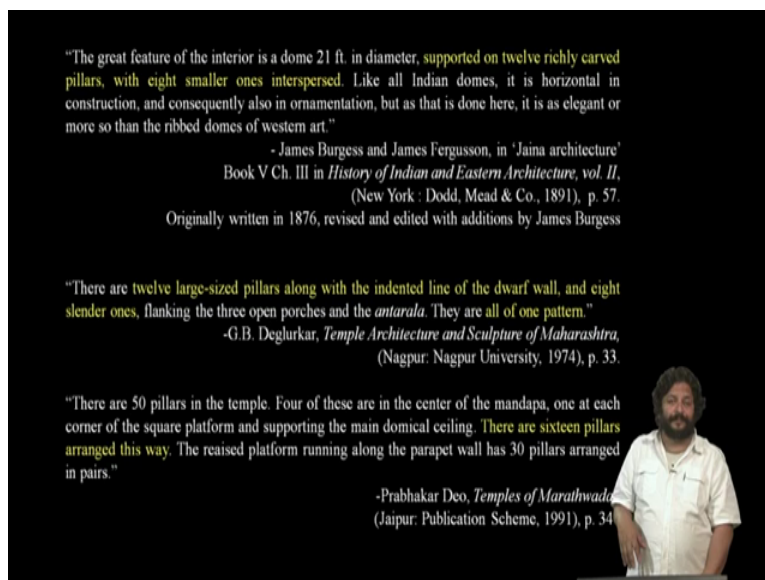
Most importantly, the big circumstantial evidence of why this temple is built on a design that does not belong to this region can be seen in its architecture and construction.

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Except for the archaeological report of the Nizam of Hyderabad which portrayed the columns accurately, everybody draws the columns as though they were of the same size.

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But yet everybody has noted that the columns are of various sizes and nobody has thought that this was an important detail. So yes, they see it, they describe it but when it comes to drawing it, it is not important. They just draw it the way they like.

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But when you go to the temple itself, the smaller size of the middle columns is so obvious. You can see two columns with a beam on top and inside of them are smaller columns.

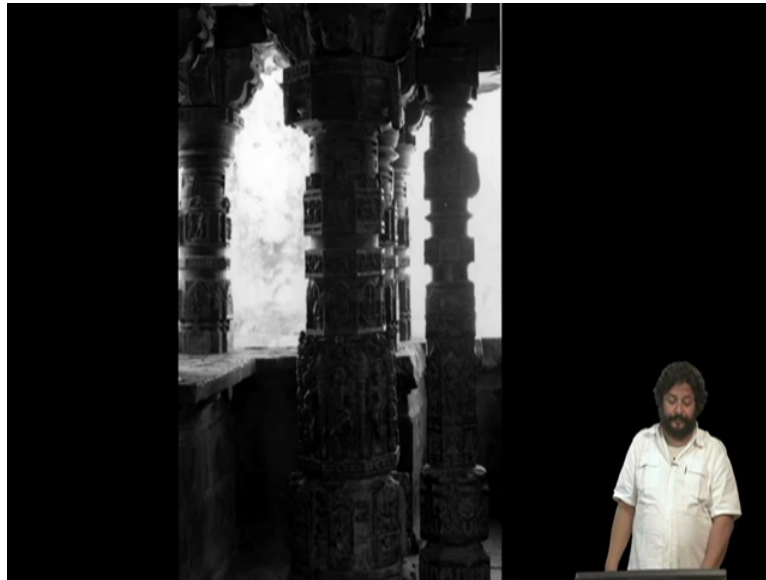
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As though this picture was not enough, here you can really see it. Ignore the concrete block support that was put in by the archaeological survey of India to ensure the structural stability. But what you see here is two wide columns with a beam on top, the beam has very obviously cracked. Because it was cracked, the archaeological survey put in a column of concrete blocks.

But before the archaeological survey perhaps as early as 20 or 30 years after the construction of this temple, those two slender columns were pushed into place to hold up that beam which had failed. And how do we know that the smaller columns have been inserted later? Well, you know because if you look at the base of those small columns, they are rounded.

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And the rounded bases are because the column has to be sliding later and it can only happen when the base is rounded at the bottom.

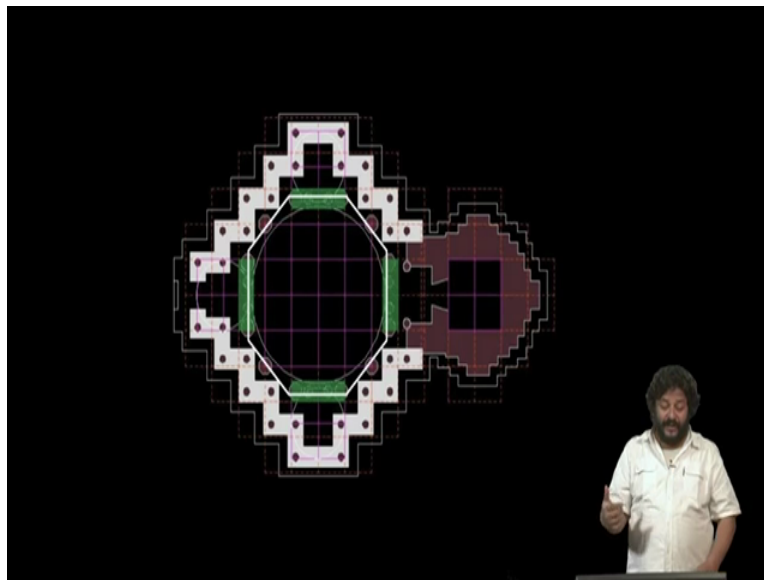
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Now why is it that the temple fails all the four lintels crack and all of them have to be propped up by the stone columns? It is possibly because you have two different types of stone being used in Maharashtra and Gujarat. As we said, Anwa is in the basalt heartland and you have this dark black stone called basalt which has properties different from the sand stone that you find in Gujarat.

So while the design of the temple is copied from Gujarat to Maharashtra, the material is not. But it is not just the material that has made a difference, it is also a difference in how the artisans who actually built the temple understood the design.

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So let us look at a drawing of the temple where you can see the sanctum, the sabhamandapa in front, columns everywhere supporting the corbelled dome on top and in between the big columns you have the small columns. If you look at the grid that the temple is built on, and everybody should remember this grid because we have seen this in the design of temples. The thickness of the walls is the module of the width of the sanctum, and the same kind of module is used for the sabhamandapa.

In fact, the whole temple is built on a grid of exactly the same module. If you look at where the domes are placed, the big corbelled dome is in the center and on three sides over the entrances you have smaller domes. Now those small domes also support the same modular system of the

sanctum, and the corbelled dome is supported on a ring of 8 beams that are placed on the columns.

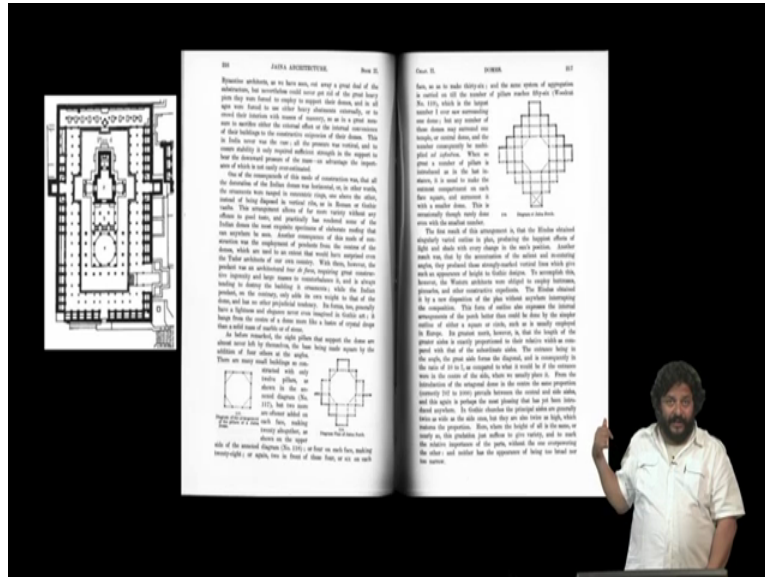
And it is these four green beams that have failed and not the diagonal ones. And they have failed because they support the weight not just of the big corbelled dome but of two domes: the big central dome and also the smaller domes on the sides.

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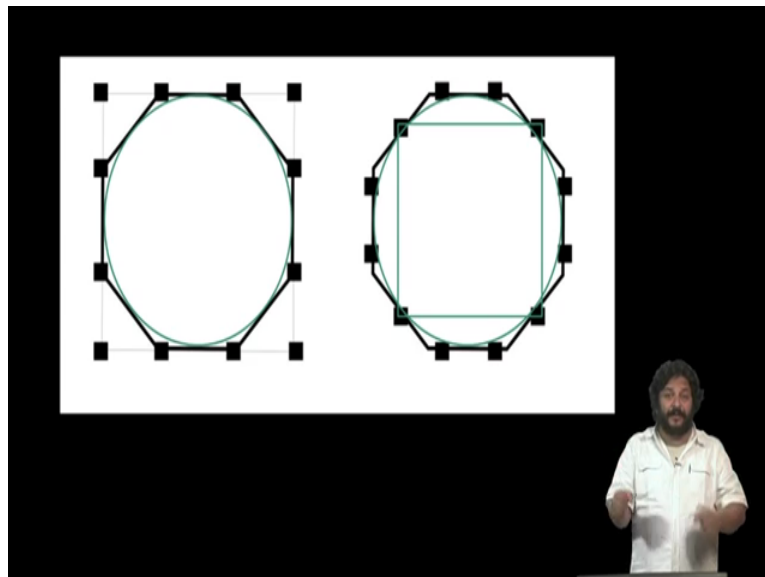
And so, here you have it, circumstantially we think it is built in the mid-13th century. We know it is based on the designs of the Gujarat Chalukyas and we know that the temple has structural flaws.

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The reasons for this we think are material but it is also the technique of local masons and craftsmen. And so if you look at Jain architecture in James Fergusson's book, he gives the variety of ways in which the Jains will build a corbelled dome on top of octagonal set of beams which are supported by columns.

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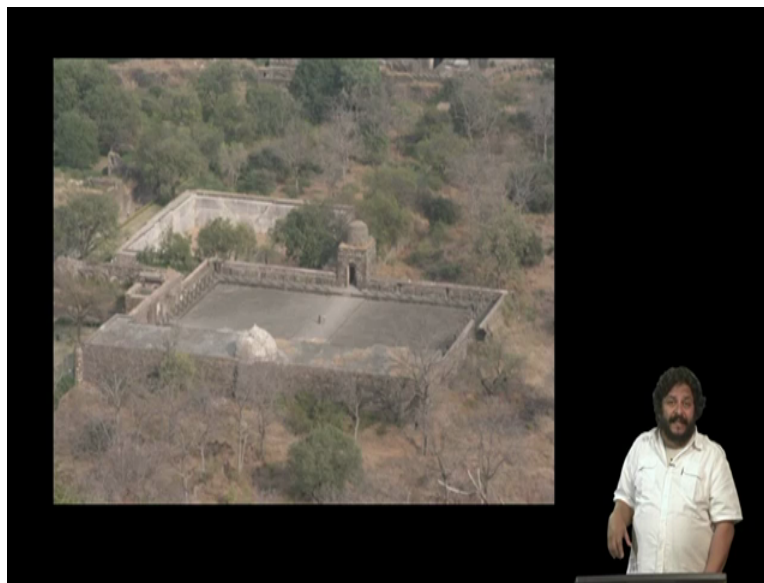


And they give several drawings that you see here. And the drawings that James Fergusson gives are like what you see on your left hand side. You have 12 columns and you have beams placed on certain of those columns and those beams form an octagon and you place a dome on it. Now

artisans in Maharashtra in the Yadava heartland who have been told that they have to build a corbelled dome supported by a grid of columns do not know how it is done. They are just told about it.

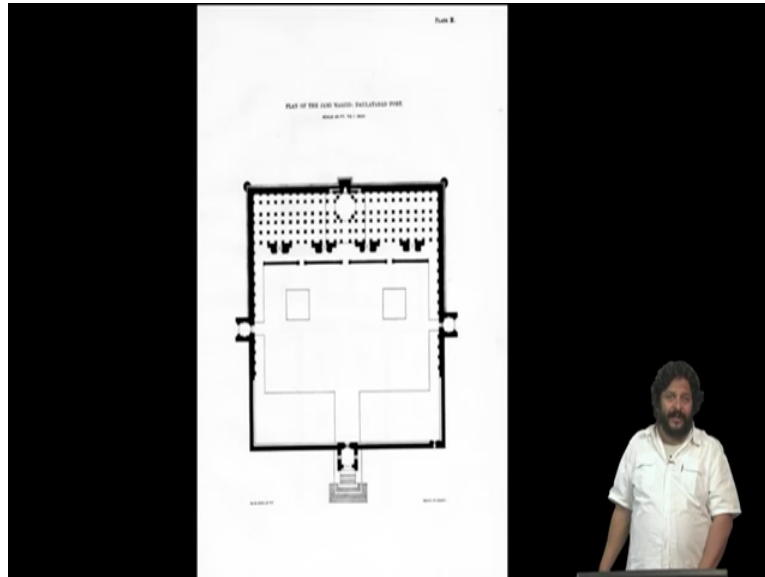
And so what they have done instead, is they have drawn a square of four columns and circumscribed a dome on top of it as opposed to what the Gujarat Chalukya builders did which was to take a square and inscribe a dome within it. And it is this basic difference in artisanal methods and habits that causes such a big gap between what happens in Gujarat and what happens at Anwa. At Anwa because of a faulty understanding of the structure, the four beams on the four sides completely fail. As a result of which you quickly need intervention in the form of small columns.

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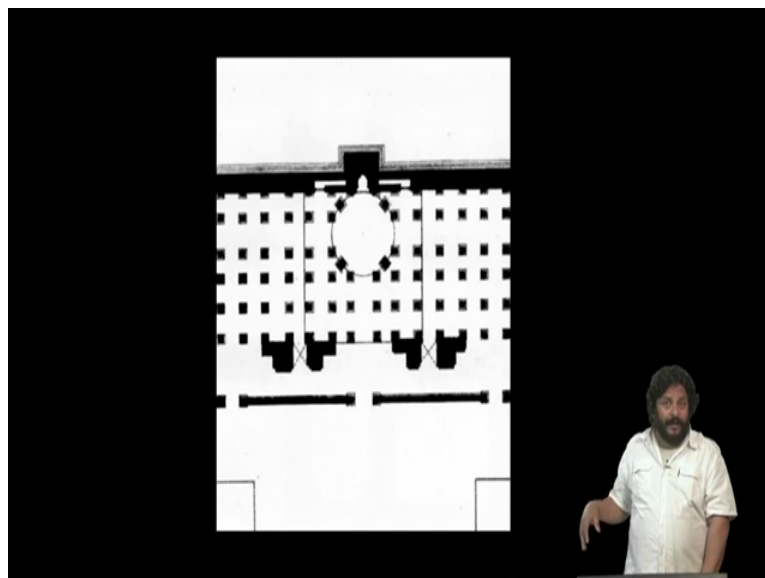


Now barely 70 years after the temple at Anwa, is built at Devagiri, the Yadava capital, an enormous mosque as the Khilji is completely take over. And this mosque uses on its inside for the dome a corbelling technique which is very similar to that of Gujarat.

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And if you look at the plan closely and these are plans from the archaeological reports of the Nizam's Dominions, you will see that the way in which the dome is arranged on those columns is very similar to what you see in the temple at Anwa. This goes to tell you that artisans, craftsmen, builders and architects have fidelity to the region, to the material that they build in and also to the techniques that they use. The fidelity is not towards religion, or the kind of architecture they are asked to build.

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Whether it is the temple at Anwa or whether it is this mosque, now called the Bharatmata Mandir, it does not matter, because they are going to build in ways that they know best. And these ways involve local material and local construction techniques. It does not matter if a design is imported from Gujarat, you build in ways that you know best.

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Design Knowledge	Construction Knowledge
Top Down	Bottom Up
Philosophical, Theorized	Gestural, Action
Literati	Craftsmen/ Builders
Recorded in Texts	Recorded as Objects
Imported	Indigenous
Elite	Sub-altern
Encoded outside the Body	Encoded within the Body

And therefore what they show us is that there is a big difference between what happens at design and what happens as construction. We know that the design for both the mosques and the temple come from Gujarat. But we also know that they are both constructed by local artisans. Because

design is given by people who can read and write, who are literate, who travel. It is a top-down approach to architecture. People who build do not travel as much, they are rooted. They have learned not because they can read and write but because their father has taught them as their grandfather.

And therefore how they learn is through action, through gesture. Whereas people who come with designs are thinking about them, it is theoretical, it is philosophical. And therefore these two traditions come from very different social classes. The designs are recorded in texts but the construction knowledge is recorded within the building itself. We can read so much into this building because the building has a story to tell.

We do not have the texts, we do not have the inscription. There are a number of differences between these binary of design knowledge and construction knowledge. And all this can be seen in the temple at Anwa and the mosque at Daulatabad. But here what is very important is to note that artisans will build for every ruler irrespective of religion, class, creed. Artisans will be true to methods of construction that they have in their own region.

They will learn things from their grandfathers and so if a new design comes in, a lot of times they will not understand how the new design works but yet they will try to build it using their own traditional techniques. Most importantly what this case study should have shown us is that a piece of architecture can reveal a lot more than a text can. If we had a text that said this temple was built in the 9th century by such and such a king, we would believe it because it was written, because we privilege top-down information, we privilege the text.

But here in the absence of any text, we have the material speaking to us and material histories never lie. A temple has been put together by artisans and if you can learn how to read that and take that apart, you can learn everything about that architecture. Thank you.