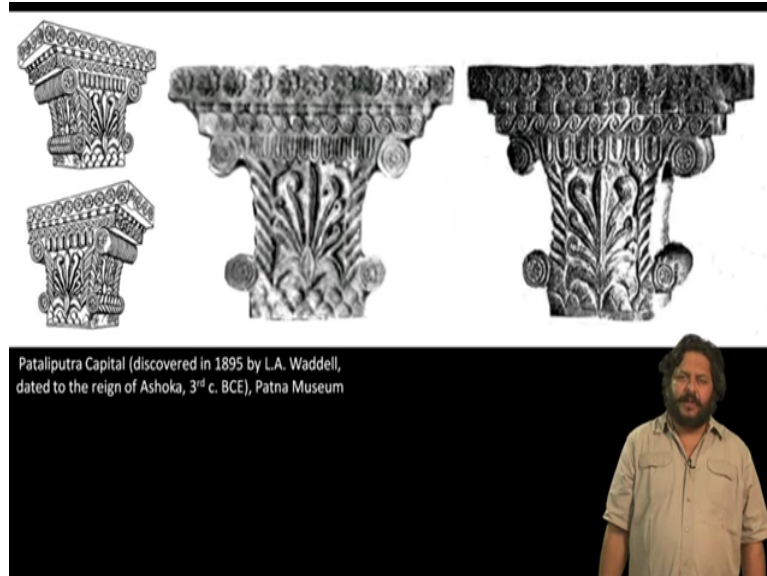


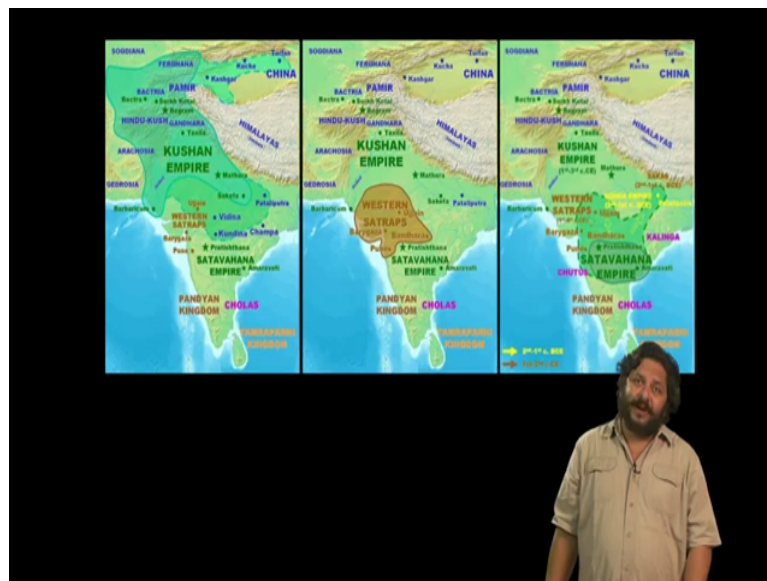
Introduction to History of Architecture in India
Professor Dr Pushkar Sohoni
Indian Institute of Science Education & Research, Pune
National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning
Humanities and Social Sciences, IISER Pune
Buddhist and Early Temple Architecture

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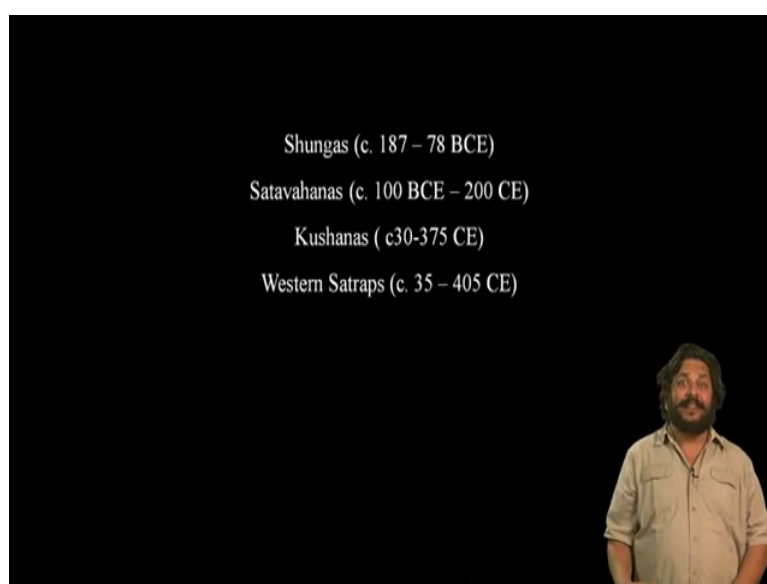
The Mauryas were responsible for patronizing Jainism as under Chandragupta Maurya and also Buddhism as under the emperor Ashoka. They patronized architecture in the form of big cave complexes monastic orders stayed in the escape complexes through the rainy season. They also sponsored the construction of stupas all across the country also extending to Sri Lanka south east Asia and into Afghanistan where the mauryas had many kinds of contacts.

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But after the Mauryas in the second first century BCE there arose a whole set of new kingdoms including that of the saat vahanas or the shalivahanas who are based in the Deccan the Western satraps who were based in western India and the Kushans who appeared late on scene in the first century CE who are a tribe from Central Asia with their headquarters somewhere around the Fargana Valley in Afghanistan who then become an expensive empire covering a lot of the gangetic plain there are four major dynasties which arise in the wake of the Mauryas.

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These four dynasties were the shungas who are mostly in Northern India in the Eastern gangetic plain the saat vahanas were in the Deccan the Kushanas who were in the north E or the North west and the Western satraps who were in western India in present day Rajasthan, Gujarat and northern Maharashtra. All these dynasties patronized Buddhism at some point and also help in the construction of large Buddhist architectural monuments.

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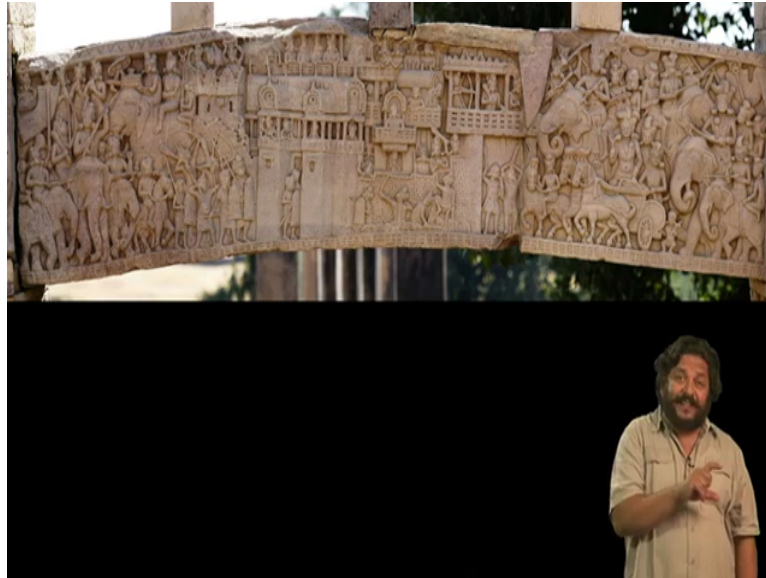
It is in this period that you start having huge renovations of stupas at places like Sanchi and Bharhut and also Amravati from where you find large scale release that show the architecture of the period. This architecture is largely composed or constructed in the wood but over here in these release it is replicated in stone and what we shall see with the cave sites of the Buddhist period is at the case sites will mimic wooden architecture.

And construct in stone what was constructed as freestanding buildings in wood and here you have an example of release from Sanchi in which you see a number of huts with these dormar windows with wooden rafters sticking out and all these huts symbolise places where holy man would have stayed most likely in this case the Buddha.

Now this is the great anionic period in Buddhism both Buddha and Mahavira are not depicted in any kind of anthropomorphic or human form till sometime around the first century BC first century A.D. and there is a wonderful essay on the early forms of Buddhist sculpture by the famous artist or Anand Kumar Swami. In any case still these representation of the Buddha and of Mahavira become popular the only way in which both is depicted by using symbols of his life notably an architectural symbols that of a hut which will house a holy man and

therefore you see here people worshipping what would be the Buddha except you don't see the presence of the Buddha its felt through these huts in which he would have stayed.

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You also find then this period on the great toranas are the gateways of these stupas entire scenes that depict the cityscape of this period, this shows you that though we don't have the material evidence for architecture of this scale anywhere extent we know that cities are being built on a large scale in wood and sometimes in brick and this is most likely what they look like and it is the stop wooden parts of cities that you see constructed in wood represented in stones that will form the basis of architectural expression in stone cut architecture most notably the cave complexes the most famous once of which are at places like Ajanta.

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The Buddha is represented through a variety of means sometimes only through a throne which signifies his royal birth sometimes the footstool which is under the throne and sometimes the tree which is suppose to be the tree under which he revived enlightenment.

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And therefore very often to indicate worship of the Buddha you will find relief at all these sites of nothing more than a tree on a platform and the tree is being worshipped the tree standing in for the presence of the Buddha and his enlightenment note in this relief the railing on top and bottom which are used to divide the frieze into multiple registers these railings would have originally been wooden railing.

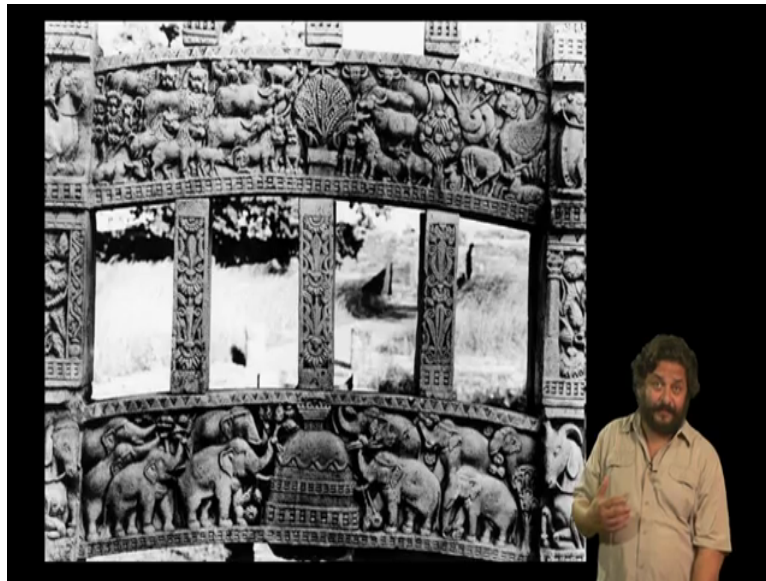
But by the time we get to the second first second century CE these railings are being constructed in stone trying to mimic this wood.

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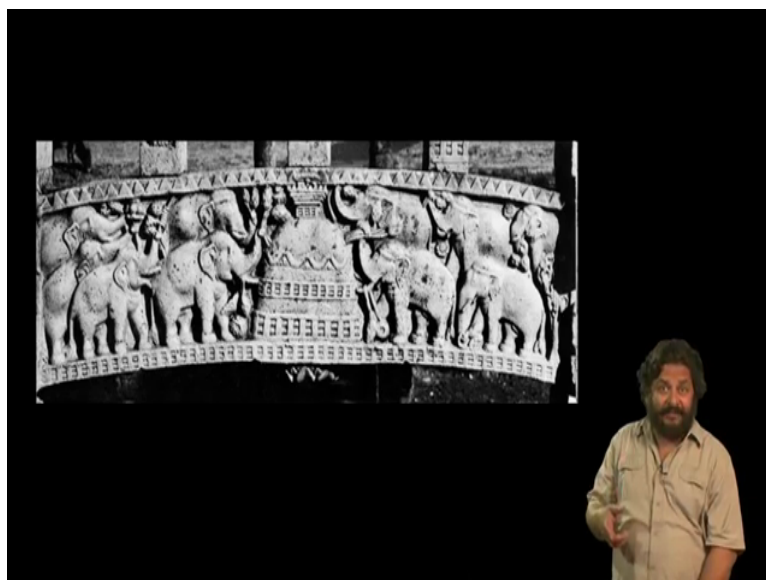
These are the toranas outside the Sanchi Stupa on which these released subsidy steps can be seen this door ways are rich in representation of life in this period but what you do not have at all is any kind of form of the Buddha himself.

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What you do start finding early on in the second century BC representations of these stupas. Stupa is nothing but a funerally mount in which sometimes you have a rally query a small container in which relics of the Buddha which might be body parts of the Buddha would have been kept here you see in the forest elephants worshipping a stupa straight on access on the same torana on top you see buffaloes worshipping the tree on a platform.

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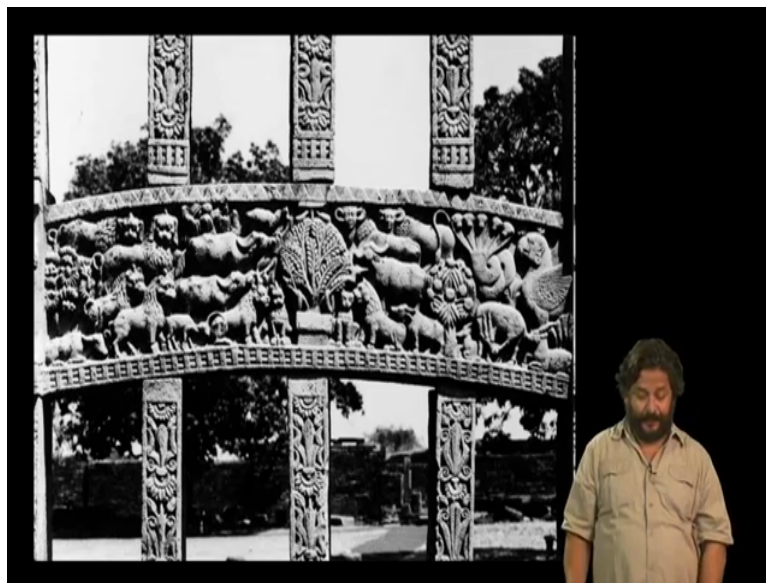


This is a close up of exactly the same relief and here you can clearly see the Stupa which is one of the first extend freestanding architectural remains we have from this period we have seen a number of cave sites that try to mimic wooden architecture on the inside of the cave

but it is from the 2nd century BCE to the first century CE that we find remittance of the earliest stupas which are freestanding structures.

And by this time the stupa has become completely articulated in terms of the elements that make it up and so the big rounded Mount is called an Anda the whole railing around it is well defined with a number of freeze bands you have staircases that run up staircases called sopana and right on top you have an alter like set of umbrellas call the hermica.

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You also have a tree set on a platform which is being worshipped by a number of wild animals here and this is indicative of the presence of the Buddha again the tree remains an important icon of the Buddha for a long time to come.

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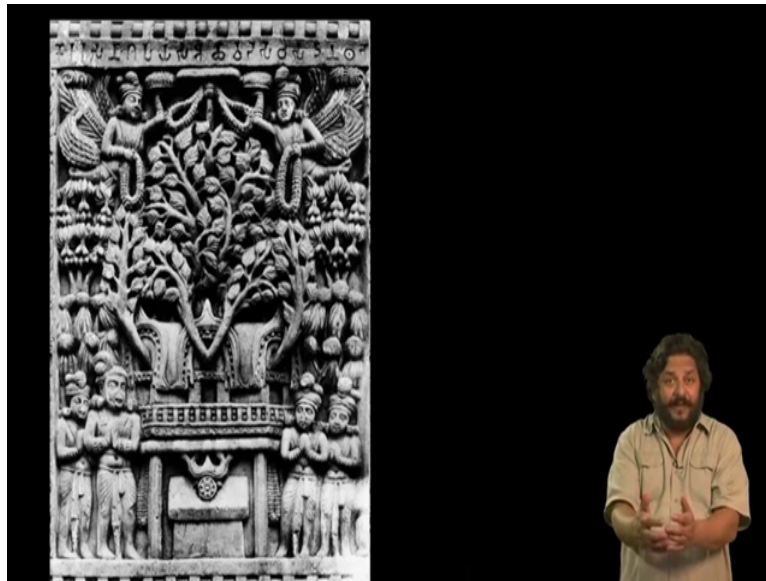


Here again you see one of the most famous relief from Sanchi in which you have a cityscape on your left from where a procession goes out with the Buddha and the Buddha is not shown figuratively but only signified through an umbrella that you see at various points including a horse on which there is an umbrella and right at the end as the horse drops of the Buddha and turns around.

And goes back you have a pair of footprints which show that the buddha is now in the forest noticed that the mauryan pillars with their capitals that we have seen earlier are being represented on this small vertical mountains of the torna so right in the middle you have a Lion capital with a dharma chakra on top flanking which instead of columns.

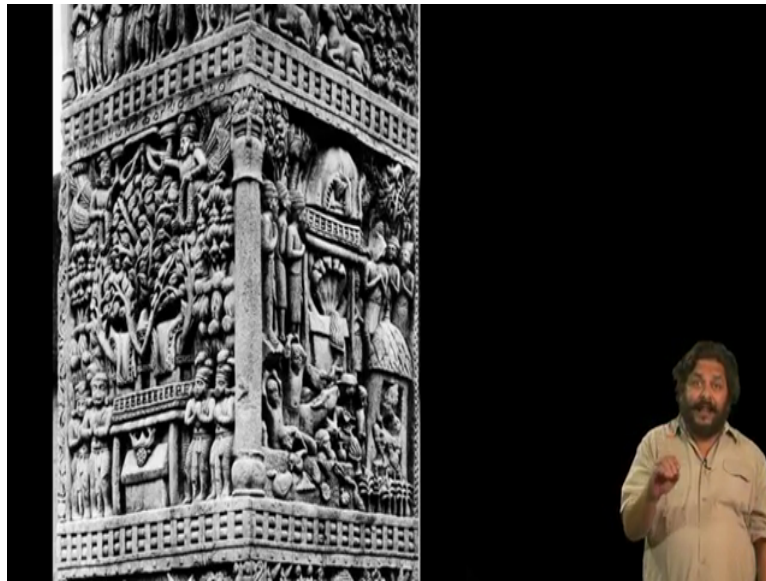
You have trees with a set of umbrellas not unlike those that you will see on a stupa you start having a more refined elaboration on the same theme where a number of these capital bearing columns become part of an architectural ensemble you start having a series of these columns supporting what looks like a palace structure and it is exactly this architecture that you will see repeated in the Buddhist caves of the first second third century CE.

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Again there is a conflation of all these motifs that stand for various things so here you have at the bottom of platform on which is a crown which is then covered by lot through which through the centre of which grows a tree and on top of this tree is an umbrella all these elements the platform the throne I mean sorry the crown the railing the lot the tree and the umbrella are all symbols that represent the Buddha who is being worshipped by worshippers on either side in the anjali mudra.

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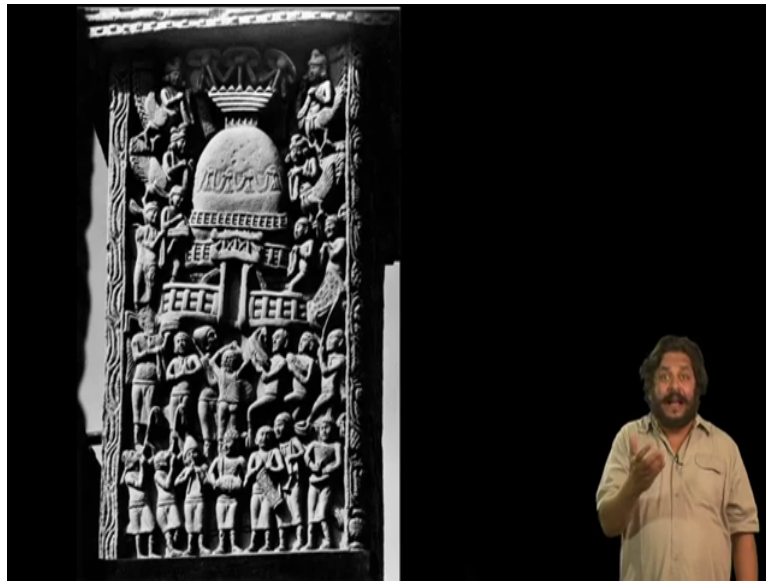
And yet while this relieve that we saw which you see on your left hand side umm is an important way of typicting the Buddha what you see on the right hand side is a holy mans sitting inside a hut and also a hut covering what seems to be a pre buddhis naga dat so the idea that some kind of architectural hut shelter covers and closes. And represents a holy presents is a pre Buddhist idea that is taken up with great wager by the early Buddhist.

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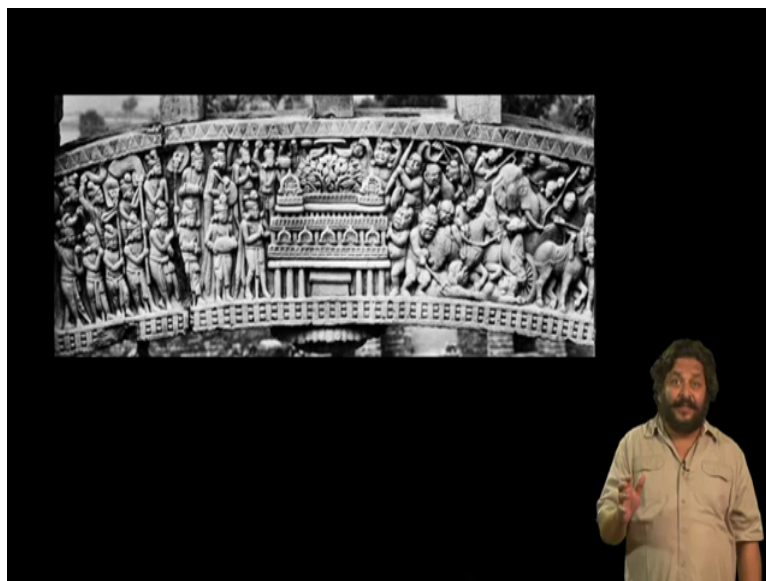
Again what you see is the tree on top is represented through a set of huts at the bottom.

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The stupa is an architectural expression that will become ever more important as the imaginary of the tree slowly disappear.

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But the hut which so far had been a simple hut start transforming into a mansion into a palace because here you have a very important holy personage for whom a mear hut is not enough particularly if you have imperial patronage for the sculpt of the Buddha the buildings that represent the presence of the Buddha have to go beyond a simple hut they have to be palatial now.

And so you see a slow transformation of a simple hut into a multi storied mansion and eventually into a large palace but here you can still see the platform and the tree being and closed by this kind of building.

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There are no of carved examples of all this hybrid where all these symbols have brought together in a way that has multiple valances.

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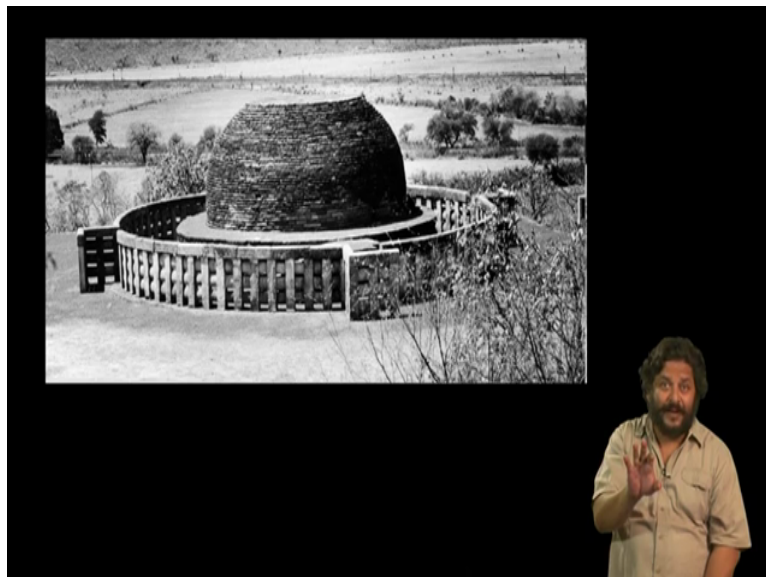
And so every time you see any of these elements you know exactly which holy man is being represented.

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When you see a cluster of them together on a vertical axis right from a mansion a hut a platform a tree and umbrella you know what is being represented and who is being worshipped.

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But perhaps the most tenning monuments of this age are the free standing stupas which we have seen represented relief structure off which a number survived particularly the once at sanchi and in parted bharhood at Amravati which is largely dismantle and newly discovered stupa at a place called kangan halli close to sanati in north Karnataka. This last stupa was discovered only in the past two decade.

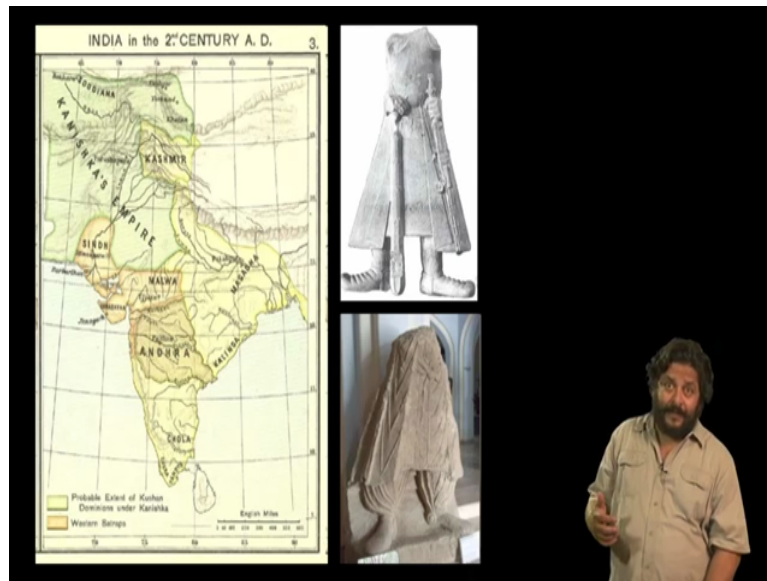
And still being explored and excavated by the archaeological survey of India what you see here however is the stupas at sanchi very clearly articulated as a big mound domical inform surrounded by a railing which is a stone railing make to look like a wooden railing with four entrances at the four carved direction beyond which would be this tornas or gateways worshippers would go around circum ambulate the stupa. And inside it would have been a small chamber which house the reliquary a small chamber or a box hat would have content relix of the buddhas.

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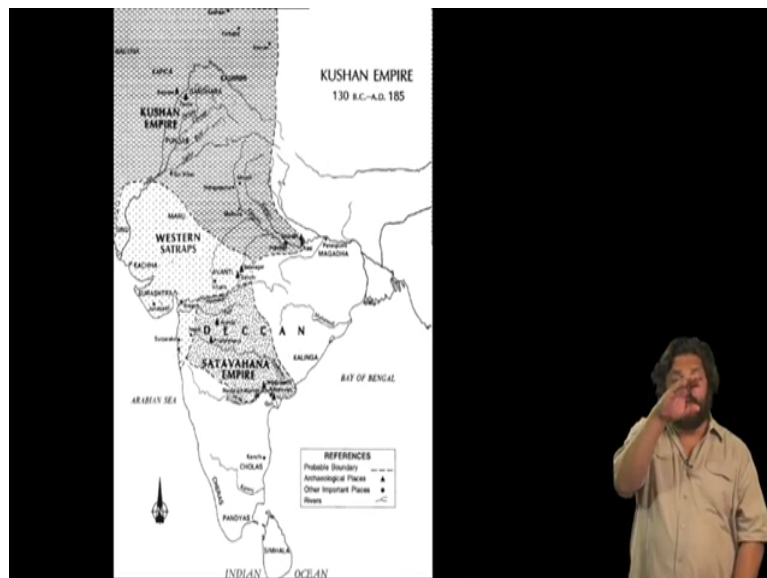
The kushanas who have contemporary with and will follow the sathvahanas though they have their routes in central asia word a dynasty pragmatic in a to patronize almost every religion and every cult that was in the lands and domains they controlled and therefore when the kushanas come to northern India they worshipped a number of or at least have anthropomorphic representation of a number of date is that one might consider (15:06) to Hindu. But also Buddhist they will issue coins with Buddha with Vasudeva with early forms of Shiva such as (15:17).

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The kushanas we know are actually a group from central asia called the (Greeks-Bactrians)(15:24) and we know of their central Asian regions also from the statues of the great kushanas king kanishka who is always depicted with this long tunic and big boots. Dress that is very typical of a non indic region.

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The kushanas move in and while they established themselves in gandhara in the north west frontier of the Indian subcontinent they slowly spread along the gangiatic base in all the way into Mathura and you have two very important schools of sculpture and also schools of architecture both these places patronized by the same dynasty the sath vahanas in the mean

time have defeated to a large degree the western chatrps who were in Maharashtra and Gujarat and they have been cornered into the western part of the country where they will eventually disappear.

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The kushanas have a no of free standing stupas but they also do leave behind large no of reliefs in which these stupas are represented and also the modes of worshipped in which the stupas are used are represented.

And here you have a represented chin of a kushanas stupa in which you have raised platform approach by a staircase on which you have a stupa a very prominent set of umbrellas on top and in the four corners of this platform you have these four magnificent columns on top of which our animal capital not unlike those you see in the mauryan period if you look at the dress of the worshippers the kushans have taken over bacterial land. And the Greek influences in the clothing and the drapery are really quite noticeable.

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The Kushanas will also patronized 2 very important schools of sculpture one is the Gandharan school which has a number of innovations apart from using Hellenistic forms.

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And here you have more of the Kushanas school of sculpture in the Gandhara.

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But they also patronized another school called the Mathura school which as a post to the Gandharan school which use a shishu for its sculpture this will use red mottled sand stone and this school of sculpture that you see in the eastern part of the Kushanas domain this sculpture will be the early sculpture of Jainism Buddhism and Hinduism which significant over lapsed.

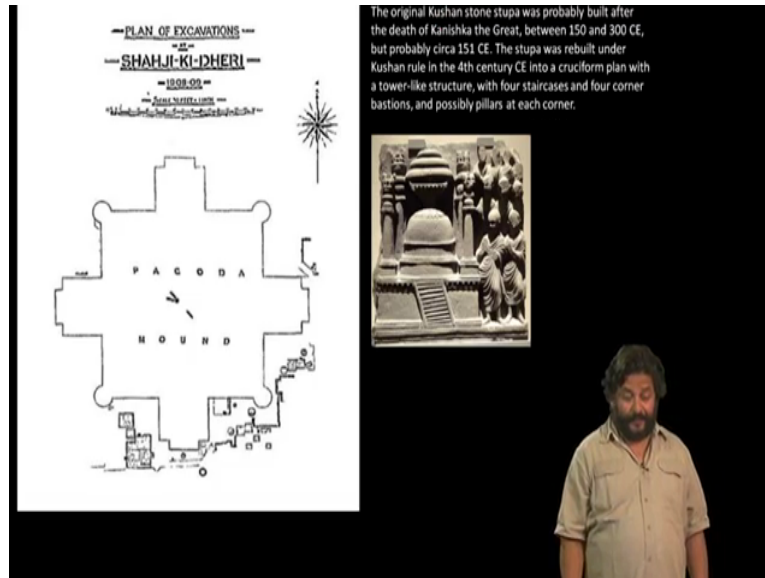
Between the three in fact a number of forms such as the falic linga that we see associated exclusively with Hinduism later on one will also find associated with Buddhism and Jainism similarly these toranas these stupas and these railings are also associated with all three index phase in this period this is a period in which puran are being composed and the mythological richness of Jainism Buddhism.

And Hinduism is coming into being at the same time they share a large mythological canvas many of the characters are the same Indra will feature for example is the god of heavens in all three mythologies and will be depicted in similar ways in all three and the Kushan period is really a most formative period for the representation of the shared (())(19:11) mythologies across Buddhism Hinduism and Jainism.

It is also in this period that you have iconic representation of the Buddha and of Mahaveera and of a number of Hindu cult DAT for the first time in fact Buddhism Jainism and Hinduism will start picking up attributes of the early yaksha and naga worshipped in eastern India so for example yakshas yakshis and nagas are common to representations of Buddhist jain and

hindu (0)(19:52). Just as these railings and lingers and toranas are after all it is a shared mythological canvas with shared (0)(20:02) and with shared visual representations of worlds other than the once that we inhabit.

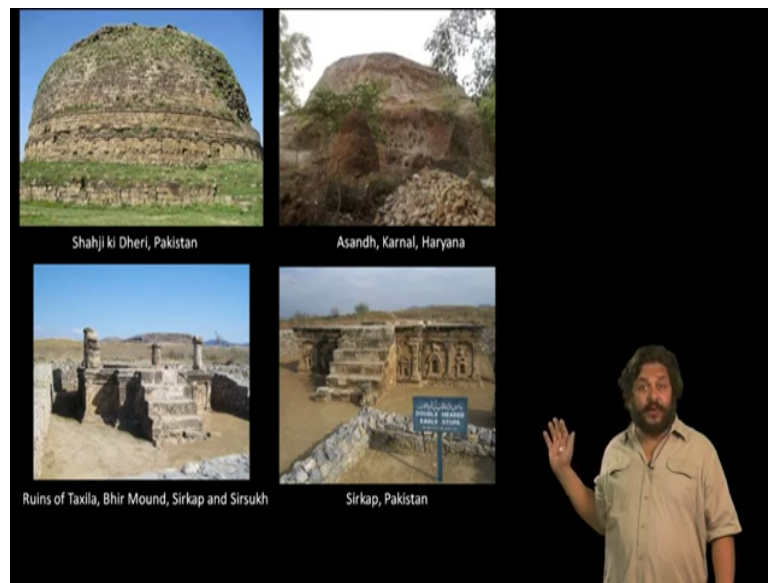
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The kushanas leave behind a number of real stupas that don't survive in quite this good shape that you see in this relief but a number of these stupas have been excavated and they have the same characteristics as the one you see in this relief a high platform on the four corners of which you have columns with capitals on top and big stupa in the middle unfortunately the umbrellas on top do not survive.

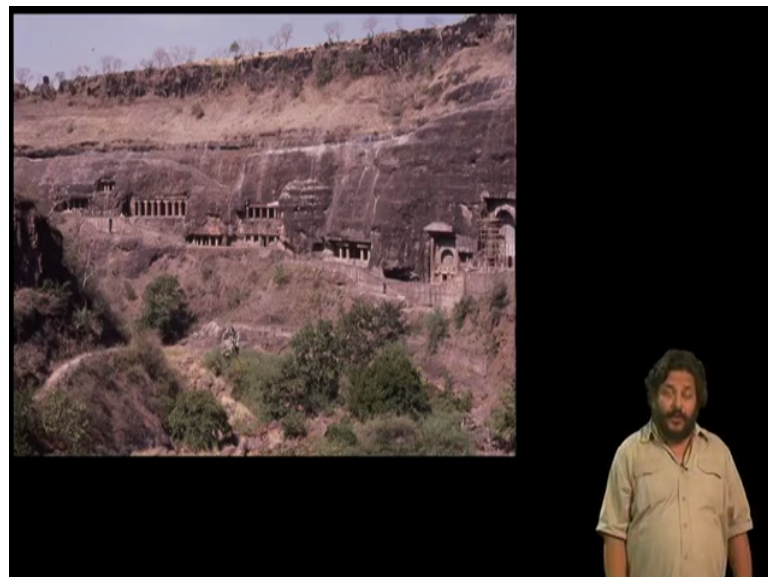
But it is these umbrellas the stupas with the umbrellas that as they travel through in the first millennium CE as they travel through central Asia and into china will become the grand pagodas that you find in china and japan later on.

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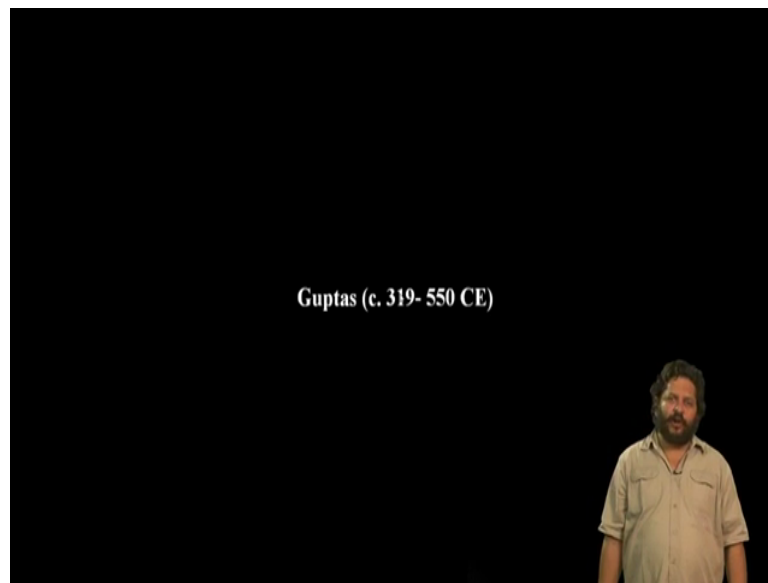
Here are examples of the excavated ruins of kushanas stupas that you have across north India and Pakistan in many ways these stupas also share a number of features with early temples in this region.

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The kushanas eventually will be followed by the guptas and number of dynasties in the decants such as the waka takas who will follow the sath vahanas and what you see here are the caves at Ajanta built under a patronage of the waka takas who then become fuditeries or equals or marital allies of the guptas and we shall take a close look at the caves at Ajanta as this represents a very different high point of Buddhism in the decant.

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Probably one of the most important and formative periods of architecture in India is the reign of the guptas and imperial dynasty that rules for over 2 centuries mostly across northern India but it was under their reign that you had a number of stable dynasties in south India and the decant most notably the waka takas who were related to the guptas by marriage and who are known for having excavated the magnificent caves of Ajanta the guptas are important not just in the formation of architecture.

But also for sculpture and also for giving a boost to classical Sanskrit poems like Kalidasa are from the period of the guptas enormous strides in the science and in mathematics and in a number of sense of learning the guptas promote all religions including Buddhism Hinduism and Jainism but it is under them that we see a further efflorescence of what was started as the Mathura school under the Kushanas.

And here you have in Sarnath in Varanasi in Mathura in eastern India in the present day of the Uttar Pradesh a number of magnificent examples of sculpture most notably.

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Those of the Buddha the guptas have set up a number of important cities including the complex of videsha sanchi and udaygiri what you see on this map is at the bottom left the site of Sanchi the big urban cluster you see on the right hand side is the modern city of vidhisha and up towards the north where you see 2 differently colour patches is the site of udaygiri well three sides were almost continuously inhabited a geographically under the guptas.

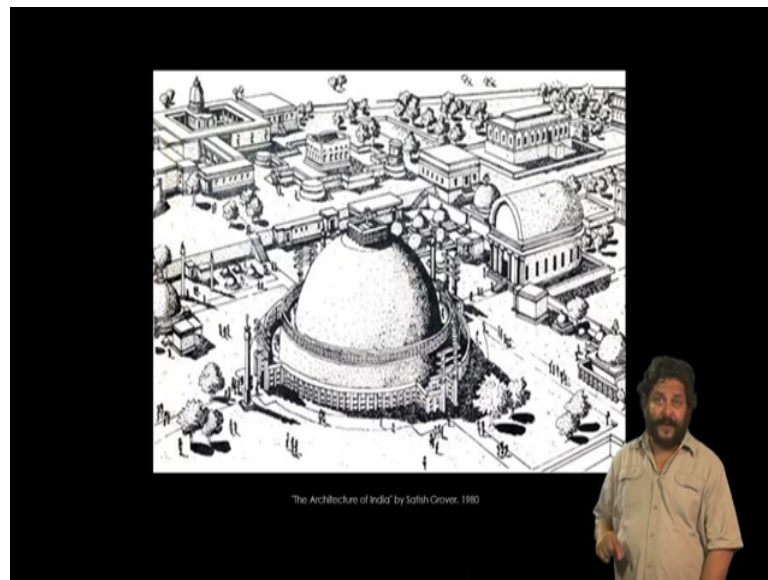
And then there are architectural and archaeological mound that connects all three of them. all three sides are important for a variety of reasons and we shall quickly look at a couple of them sanchi and udaygiri.

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The site of Sanchi is possibly best known for the grand stupa that survives there a stupa that was originally built in the second century BC but which was heavily repaired in the first century AD. The site contains a lot more than just that stupa; it contains a number of platforms, a number of free-standing buildings, and a number of what might be the earliest temples and temple halls that survive in India.

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A conjecture and reconstruction of what the site might have looked like in its AD is given here where you see buildings that look like timber architecture built in stone such as the longitudinal hut you see on the right-hand side of the stupa.

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The site now is in ruins and quiet idealic but the (())(25:22) archaeological survey and archaeological important things have been maintain there.

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Some part of the site has been reconstructed but large parts exist as they were found the number of the structure are given very unromantic names such as temples 17 and temple 40 which you see here but these are very important buildings because they represent the first free standing manifestation of timber buildings of this period.

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The railings of Sanchi stupa mimic timber construction and right on the same site is a temple called temple 17 which you see in front of the palm tree and it is this temple that is of great

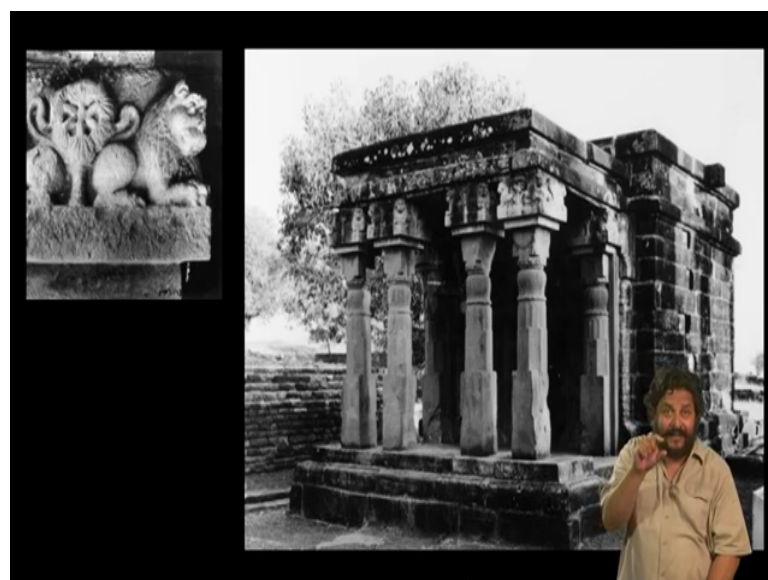
importance because this might be a Hindu temple and possibly the very first it is a simple cubical building with a porch in front and the porch is supported on four pillars.

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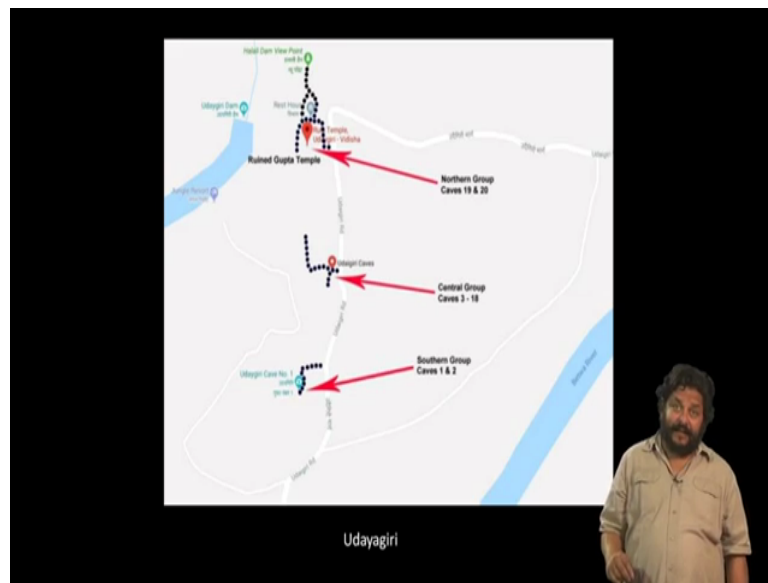
In plan nothing complicated about it in section nothing complicated about it if you look at the pillars in front they are like the Ashok pillars with these inverted lotus capitals and animals on top.

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If you look at the capitals and details you see lions temple 17 represents A Hindu temple in its most primordial forms much before the great temples that will evolve out of this over the next 4,5,6 hundred years.

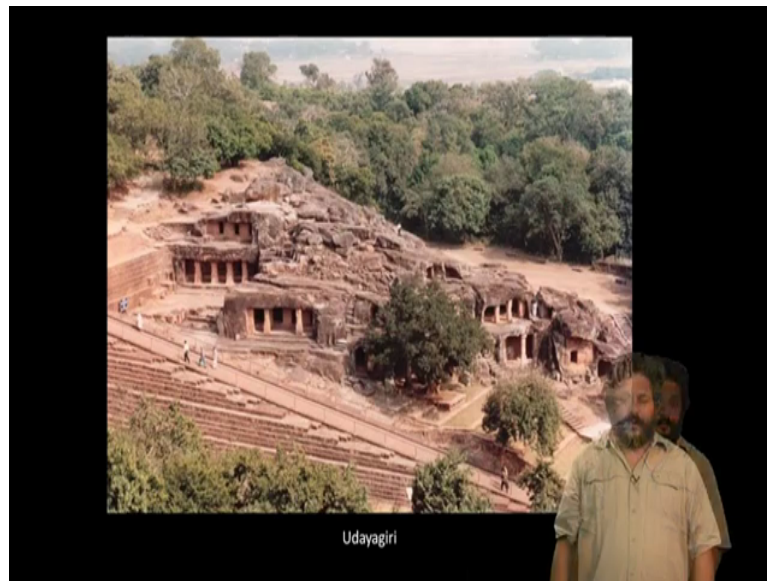
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Similarly at udaygiri close to sanchi is a set of caves built by the guptas who also patronized temple 17 and these caves are of extra ordinary significance because you see for the first time certain kinds of puranic (27:42) being sculpted on the inside of this caves to be worshipped and to be ritually used remember this is also period when text like the Vishnu dharmotara purana have been composed.

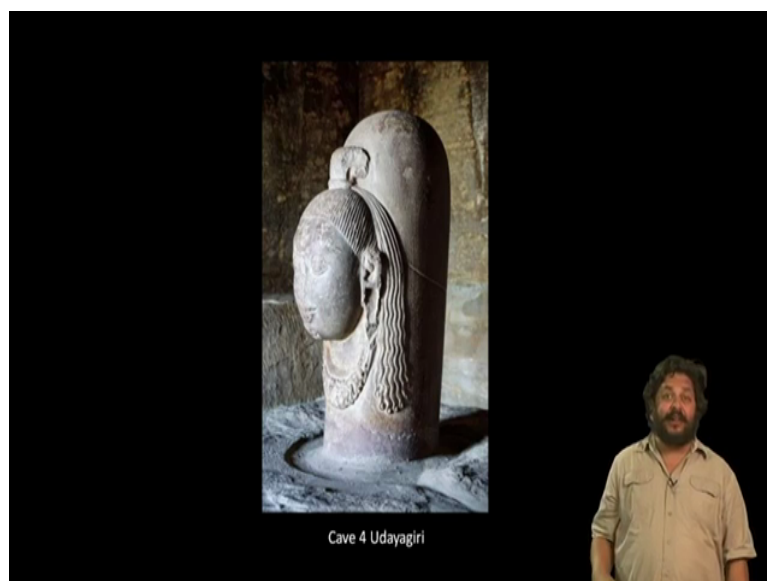
And these are text that talk of duties of the king of king shape of the king being identified with (28:08) like Vishnu and what you find at udaygiri is an attempt to re consign theories of king shiva and the worshipped of Vishnu into one integrated site. The scholar Michael H. Williams has written a superb book about the sighted udaygiri called the archaeology of the Hindu ritual.

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This site at udaygiri consist of a number of groups of caves some of which are simple and some of which are complex.

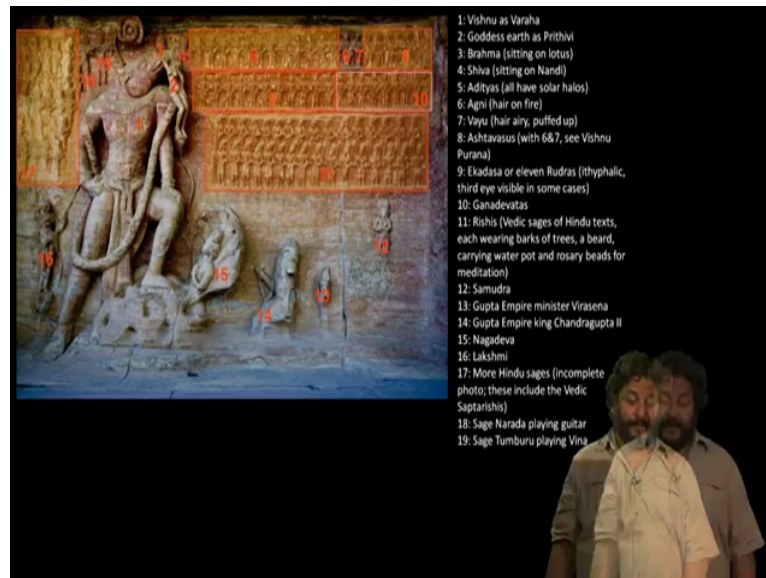
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Inside a number of these caves you have iconic representation of (())(28:49) Hinduism and puranic gods here you have a linga which is slowly being manifest as a human face that of Shiva but possibly the most magnificent cave is what is called K5 which shows the narrative of the varaha avatar of Vishnu going down into the murky depth of the cosmic ocean and rescuing the earth whose hanging by his task as he stands triumphantly.

And in front of him are a number of worshippers on the ground and then the heavens are a numbers of heavenly beings who are also in aww of this magnificent feet.

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All these figures have been identified Vishnu as Varaha, the earth goddess hanging on to his snout, bramha sitting on a lotus, in front but what is very important under 2 lifesize figures number 14 and 13 who are in front who actually are the gupta king Chandragupta the second and his minister Veer sena identified by inscription it is this interaction between the human world.

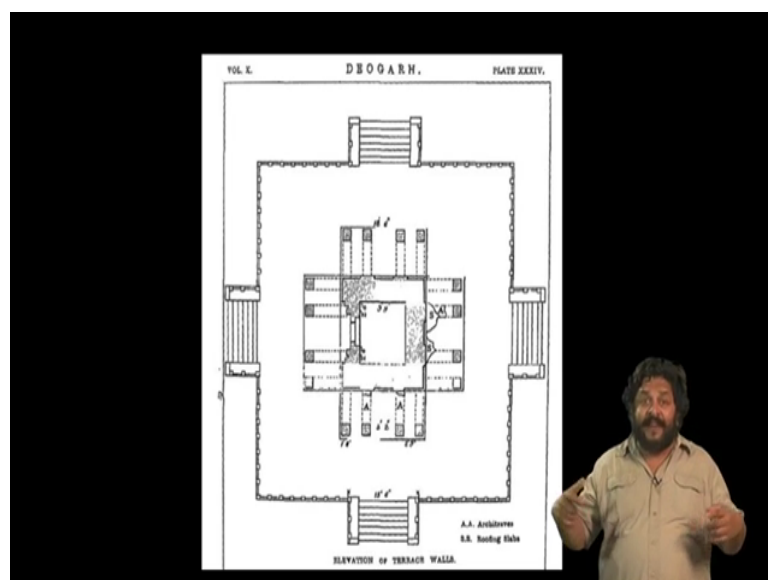
And the divine world that is made so explicit in this cave that this cave becomes a place of crossing over a thirth as its called and therefore while strictly not a temple it becomes a site in which to inact rituals and rights that connects with a world beyond much like a temple does. It is in the gupta period that you have small cubical building like temple 17 which probably houses (()))(30:46) image on the inside you have this valorisation of Vishnu identification of Vishnu with the ruler.

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And then also very early temples such as what is called the dashavatara temple at a place called deogarh also in present day Madhya Pradesh the super structure does not survive in very good shape but the cubical santom which is very important and in many ways a further evolution of temple 17 survive and what you have in this cubical santom is on the outside.

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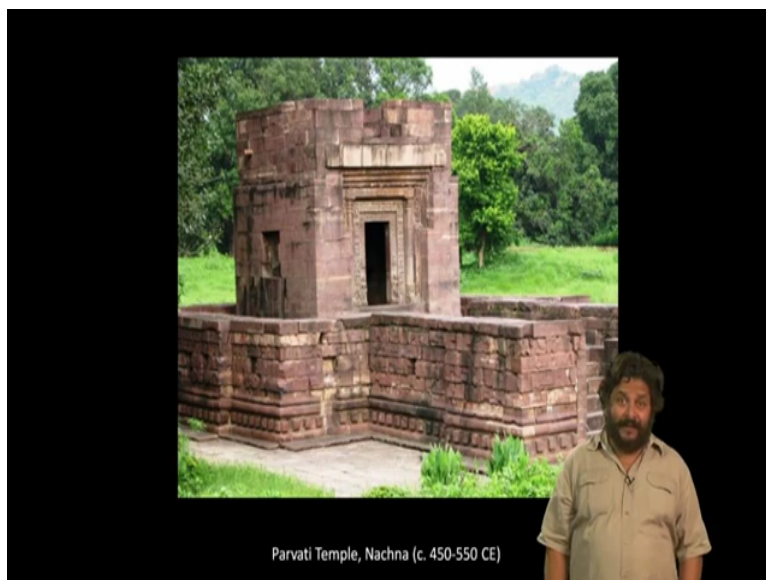
On three sides you would have had porches like the one you have seen in temple 17 the whole temple was set on a high platform approachable by stairs like we have seen with kushan stupas.

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And three sides where you do not have door way a relief sculptures that show different manifestation different avatars or different forms of the DT that is in shinned within so the walls of the temples themselves become manifestation of the DAT that is inside the temple itself while housing the DAT also is a manifestation of the DAT.

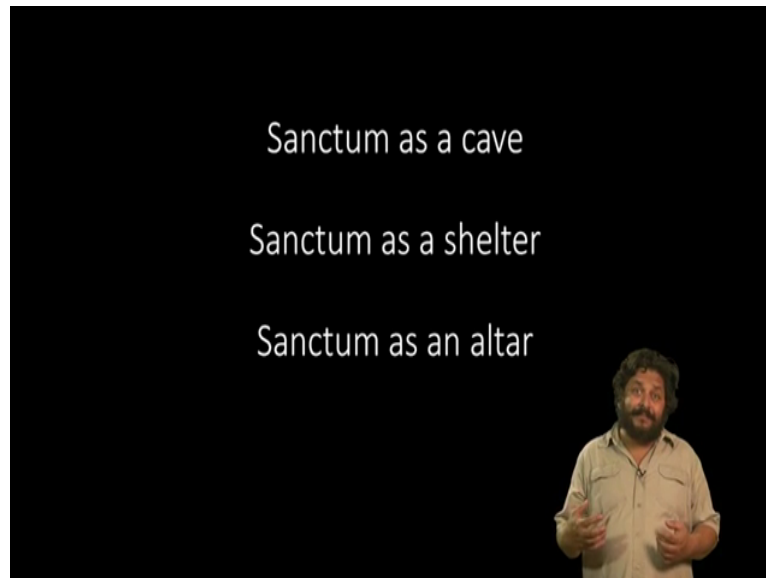
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Another temple build around the same time is what is called the parvati temple at a place called nachana again not far away the same kind of cubical sanctum set on a high platform approachable by stairs but in this case the small wall that encloses the platform is built with restricted mesentery which means if you look at it carefully it resembles natural stones as one

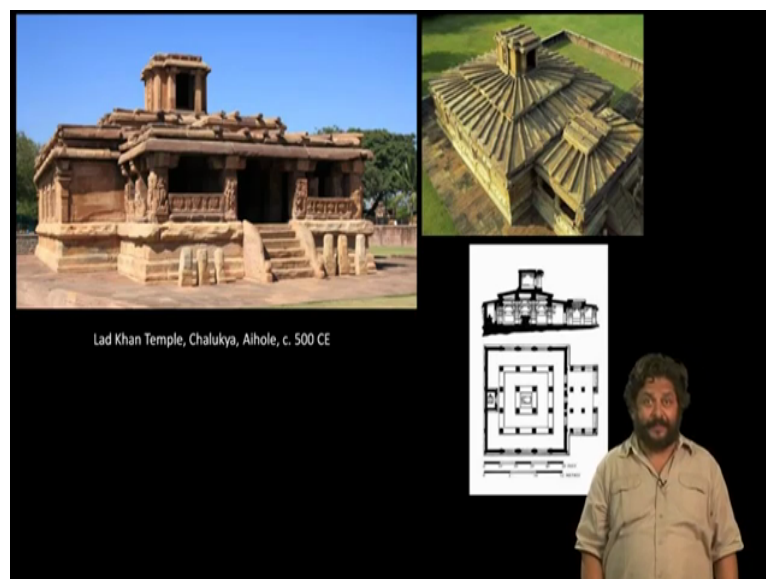
would find in mountains and in many ways it is bend to depict a small cubical sanctum on top of a mountain.

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Just like a cave would have been and therefore a sanctum in the fifth sixth centuries assume all these meanings a sanctum is like a cave like a natural shelter like an alter a sanctum means all these things it is also ultimately a house for a god eventually these sanctum will form into big mansions in palaces for the gods not a simple shelter model along hut.

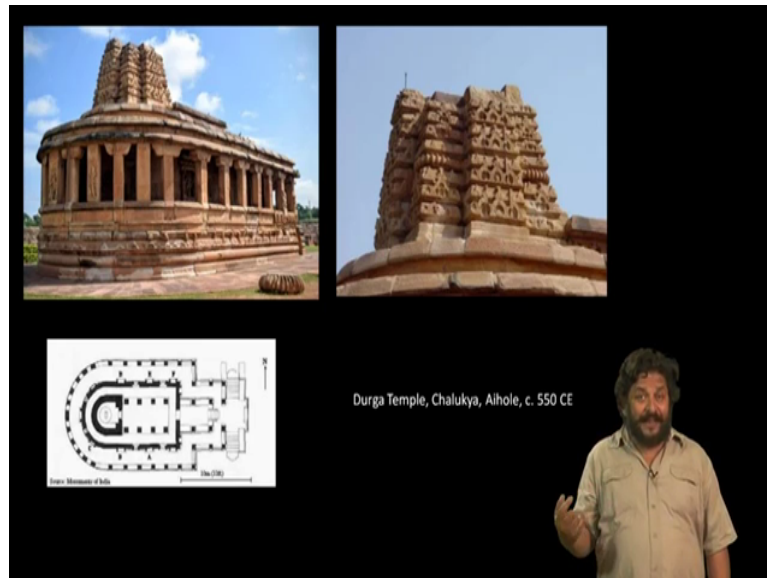
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If you look in south India around the same time if you look at the early chalukyas they do experimenting with various forms of temples famously the erroneously name lad khan temple

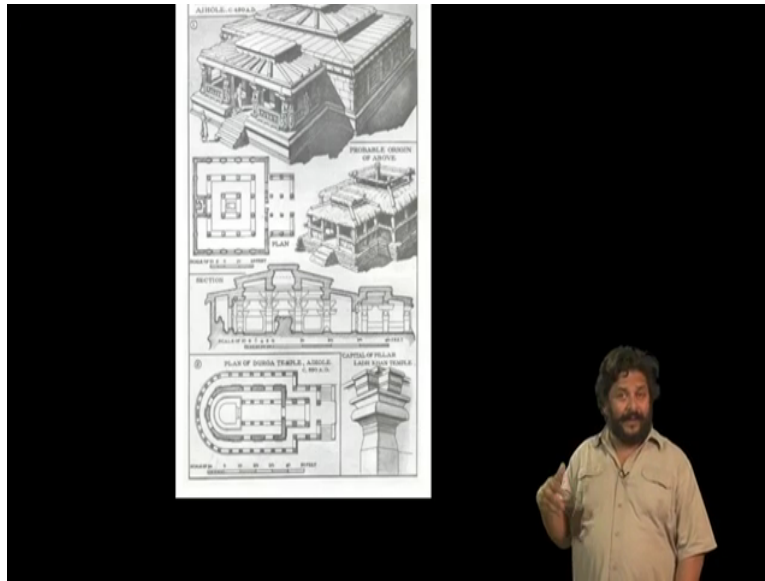
which is completely built as though it was built in timber it is a vernacular architectural form in wood but of course built in stone completely and the sanctum is not where you would expect it right in the middle it's right at the end. This is an early temple which is not quite resolved one might have expected a central DAT with ambulatory passages but that is not the composition of this temple.

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Another temple that you see is the Durga temple at Aihole not too far away again built under the Chalukyas where the apsidal form of the chaitya grottoes of the Buddhist stupa chambers is replicated to house a DAT again these are abortive attempts these are architectural forms that do not really take off in the end anywhere but what you see here is a super structure that will be elaborated upon through time.

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Here again from our old friend percy brown are detailed drawings of these 2 temples built under the chalukyas in the 6th century in Karnataka.