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The legacy of Islam in Somnath[1]

Mehrdad Shokoohy
Emeritus Professor, University of Greenwich
mshokoohy@aol.com

Abstract

Since the sack of Somnath by Maḥmūd of Ghazna in 1025–26, Somnath has been a byword for religious orthodoxy, intolerance and conflict between Muslims and Hindus. Yet looking further than Maḥmūd's greed for the temple's gold and later the Delhi sultans' appetite for territory, Somnath and most other towns of Saurashtra had long-established settlements of Muslims engaged in international maritime trade. The settlers, while adhering to their own values, respected their hosts and their traditions and enjoyed the support of the local rajas. It is only in recent years that Hindu nationalist parties have revived the story of Maḥmūd to evoke resentment against the era of Muslim domination, with the aim of inducing communal tensions and gaining political power. The inscriptions and many mosques and Muslim shrines in this Hindu holy city and its vicinity bear witness to the long history of harmonious co-existence between Hindus and Muslims. This paper explores the Muslim culture of Somnath by studying its major mosques. Through an analytic exploration of the typology of the mosques of Saurashtra, the paper demonstrates that while the old centres of power in Gujarat lay outside Saurashtra it is in Somnath and its neighbouring towns that numerous mosques dating from prior to the sultanate of Gujarat still stand. These monuments help illuminate our understanding of early Muslim architecture in Gujarat and its aesthetic evolution from the time of the peaceful maritime settlements to the establishment of the Gujarat Sultanate.

1 This paper is concerned with the study of unreported major mosques and other historical monuments of Somnath. The work is a part of an extensive survey of historical and architectural remains of the minority communities (Muslim, Christian and Zoroastrian, but not Jain) on the west coast of Saurashtra from Junagadh to Diu. For earlier publications concerning some of the sites studied see: Mehrdad and Natalie H. Shokoohy, "The mosque of Abulqāsim b. ʿAli al-Īrajī in Junagadh, Gujarat", in M. Shokoohy, *Bhadreśvar, the Oldest Islamic Monuments in India* (Leiden, New York and Cologne: E. J. Brill, 1988), 42–9, pls. 48–58; M. and N. H. Shokoohy, "The Karao Jamiʿ mosque of Diu in the light of the history of the island", *South Asian Studies* (*SAS*), 16, 2000, 55–72; M. Shokoohy, "The Zoroastrian fire temple in the ex-Portuguese colony of Diu, India", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (*JRAS*), Series 3, 13/1, 2003, 1–20; M. and N. H. Shokoohy, "The Portuguese fort of Diu", *SAS*, 19, 2003, 169–203; M. and N. H. Shokoohy, "The town of Diu, its churches, monasteries and other historic features", *SAS*, 23, 2007, 141–88; M. and N. H. Shokoohy, "The island of Diu, its architecture and historic remains", *SAS*, 26, 2010, 161–90; M. Shokoohy, "The Zoroastrian towers of silence in the ex-Portuguese colony of Diu", *Bulletin of the Asia Institute*, 21, 2012, 61–78. In the present paper all photographs and survey drawings (including the Somnath town plan) are by the author unless otherwise stated.

Keywords: Somnath, Gujarat, Indian architecture, Indian Ocean maritime trade, Indo-Muslim architecture, Islamic Somnath

Almost a thousand years after the Ghaznavid sultan Maḥmūd's sack of Somnath (Skt. *Somanātha*, Pers. *Sūmanāt*), in the Persian-speaking world the name Somnath still evokes mystery, colourful ritual and the bewildering traditions of the people of a distant land. After the fall of the Sasanian Empire and the Arab subjugation of Iran the Persian element struggled for centuries to revive until Maḥmūd – a Turk – provided the opportunity. At the time the Ghaznavid court was crowded with Persian poets and writers, Firdausī composed his immortal Shāhnāma, and the Ghaznavid army once again marched to *hind*, the land of legends. To Persian eyes the sack of Somnath was not just yet another campaign of a medieval sultan confined to histories,[2] but a symbol of the revival of Iranian identity boosted by religious zeal, which was to echo in literature and folklore throughout the millennium.[3] Amongst the literary material one of the best examples is Shaikh Saʿdī's fictional visit to Somnath[4] leading to the poet destroying the "idol" and killing its "infidel" priest with the help of the Almighty in the tale beginning with the verse:

بتـی دیـدم ازعاج در سومنات مرصـع چو در جـاهلیـت منات

2 The detailed accounts of Maḥmūd's campaign on Somnath are not, incidentally, well known. Baihaqī's *Tārīkh-i Maḥmūdī*, which recorded the events of the campaign, is lost, and the other authentic source of Maḥmūd's history, al-ʿUtbī's *al-tārīkh al-yamīnī*, ends before Maḥmūd's venture to Somnath. Later historians have used Baihaqī as their source, and give only summary – and sometimes exaggerated – accounts of the campaign. See Abū ʿUmar Minhāj al-dīn ʿUthmān b. Sirāj al-dīn al-Jauzjānī (Minhāj-i Sirāj), *Ṭabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, ed. Abd al-Hai Habibi (Tehran, 1984) (henceforth Minhāj-i Sirāj), I, 229–30; Muḥammad b. Khāwand Shāh called Mīr Khwand, *Rauḍat al-ṣafā* (Tehran, 1270/1853–54), no page number, but under *dhikr-i fatḥ-i sūmanāt bi dast-i Maḥmūd* (henceforth Mīr Khwand); Ghiyāth al-dīn b. Humām al-dīn al-Ḥusainī known as Khwand Mīr, *Tarīkh-i Ḥabīb al-siyar* (Tehran, 1976), (henceforth Khwand Mīr) II, 382–3; Ḥamd'ullāh Mustaufī's *Ẓafarnāma* (completed in 807/1404–05) in *Ẓafarnāma von Ḥamdallāh Mustaufī und Šāhnāma von Abu'l-Qāsim Firdausī (editorisch bearbeitet von Ḥamdallāh Mustaufī), Faksimile – Ausgabe der Handschrift der British Library (Or. 2833)*, (Iran University Press und Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2 vols, Tehran, 1377/Vienna, 1999), I, 578–9. The Muslim historians of India repeat these accounts, often with some exaggeration. See ʿIsāmī, *Futūḥ al-salāṭīn*, ed. Agha Mahdi Husain (Agra, 1938), 33–40; Muḥammad Qāsim b. Hindū Shāh known as Firishta: *Gulshan-i Ibrāhīmī* known as *Tārīkh-i Firishta* (2 vols with addenda bound together, Lucknow, 1864) (henceforth Firishta), I, 32–4; Khwāja Niẓām al-dīn Aḥmad b. Muḥammad Hirawī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Akbarī* (Persian text, 3 vols, Biblioteca Indica no. 223, Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1927–35), I, 16–7.

3 For a select bibliography of the literary sources see Aliakbar Dehkhodá, *Loghatnáme (Encyclopedic Dictionary)* (14 vols), ed. Mohammad Moʿin and Jaʿfar Shahidi (Tehran, SH, 1372–73/1993–94), under the entry *sūmanāt* (سومنات); Dehkhodá's Dictionary is also available online at http://www.loghatnameh.com.

4 Shaikh Muṣliḥ al-dīn Saʿdī, *Būstān* in *Kulliyāt-i Saʿdī*, ed. Muḥammad ʿAlī Furūqī (Tehran, 1363/1984), 374–7. For another edition see *Būstān-i Saʿdī*, ed. Nur'ullah Iranparast (Tehran, 1977), 334–42. For the translations of this tale see *The Bostan of Shaikh Sadi*, tr. Ziaūddin Gulam Moheiddin Mūnshi, revised Rochfort Davies (Bombay, 1889), 245–51; *Wisdom of the East, the Bustān of Sadi*, tr. A. Hart Edwards (London, 1911), 106–9. A translation of the concluding part of the tale is

> I saw an idol of ivory in Somnath, studded with gold and jewels as *manāt* was in the Age of Ignorance.[5]

Saʿdī's comparison between the deity of Somnath and *manāt*, the pre-Islamic Arab goddess, is not his invention or a poetic device. He recalls the legend which already existed at the time of the Ghaznavids and recurrent in Persian literature. Farrukhī,[6] Maḥmūd's court poet who accompanied him to Somnath, mentions that the "idol" was the same as *manāt* (منا ت), whose worship was forbidden in the Quran (8: 19–25) together with the worship of *lāt* (لات) and *ʿuzzā* (عُزّیٰ). Farrukhī also claims that the name *sūmanāt* (Somnath) was given to the town after the installation of *manāt*. A generation later (c. 442–3/1050–52) a similar account appeared in Gardīzī's *Zain al-akhbār*,[7] noting that *manāt* was taken to Somnath via the port of Aden. An intimate of the Ghaznavid court, Gardīzī had apparently attended Al-Bīrūnī's colloquium as a young man and his work seems to be a gentleman's compilation and summary of earlier histories. The origin of the legend of transporting *manāt* to India, therefore, goes back to the early Muslim era.

The enlightened al-Bīrūnī, on the other hand, using the Sanskrit *Vishṇu Dharma*, offered the Islamic world an accurate and informative description of the temple and the legend of its image:[8]

> وقالوا فی منازل القمر انّها بنات پَرجاپَت وانّ القمر تزوّج بهنّ ثمّ اولع من بینهنّ بروهنی فآثرها علیهنّ و حملت الغیرةُ اخواتِها علی شکایته الی ابیهنّ فاجتهد علیه فی التسویة بینهنّ و وعظه فلم ینجع فیه و حینئذ لعنه حتّی برص وجهُه و ندم القمر علی فعله فجاءه تائبا عن ذنبه فقال له پرجاپت قولی واحد لا رجوع فیه و نلتنی استر فضیحتک من کلّ شهر نصفه قال القمر فالذنب السالف کیف ینمحی عنّی اثرُه قال بنصب صورة لنک مهادیو مخدوما لک ففعل و هو حجرُ سومنات و سوم هوالقمر و نات الصاحب فهو صاحب القمر و قد قلعه الامیر محمود رضی الله عنه فی سنة ستّ عشرة و اربع مائة للهجرة.

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also given by Edward Granville Browne, *A Literary History of Persia* (4 vols, London, 1909–24), II, 1906, 529–30.

5 A reference to pre-Islamic Arabian society, religion and culture which included the worship of the deity *manāt*.

6 Farrukhī, *Dīwān-i Ḥakīm Farrukhī Sīstānī*, ed. M. Dabir-Siyaqi (Tehran, 1335/1956), 69–71 (henceforth Farrukhī). Farrukhī's contemporary, the poet Sanā'ī, also alludes to the story in "Abu'l-majd Majdūd b. Ādam al-Sanā'ī al-Ghaznawī", *Ḥadīqat al-ḥaqīqa wa sharīʿat al-ṭarīqa* (ed. Mudarris Razavi) (Tehran, no date but *c*. 1983), 512:

> هست خالی ز عیب و نقص و فضول ملک محمود و خاندان رسول
> این ز کعبه بتان برون انداخت آن ز بت سومنات را پرداخت
>
> The kingdom of Maḥmūd and the House of the Prophet are clear of blemish, flaw and imperfection One threw the icons out of the Kaʿba, the other cleansed Somnath from the idol.

7 Abū Saʿīd ʿAbd al-Ḥayy b. al-Ḍaḥḥāk b. Maḥmūd Gardīzī, *Zain al-akhbār*, ed. ʿAbdul-Hayy Habibi (Tehran, 1347/1968), 190 (henceforth Gardīzī).

8 *Alberuni's India (Taḥqiq ma li'l-Hind)* (ed. E. C. Sachau) (Arabic text, London, 1887), 252; (English tr. Sachau, London, 1888), II, 102–3. Sachau's translation is given here.

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> The lunar stations they declare to be the daughters of Prajāpati, to whom the moon is married. He was especially attached to Rohiṇī, and preferred her to the others. Now her sisters, urged by jealousy, complained of him to their father Prajāpati. The latter strove to keep peace among them, and admonished him, but without any success. Then he cursed the moon (*Lunus*), in consequence of which his face became leprous. Now the moon repented of his doing, and came penitent to Prajāpati, who spoke to him: "My word is one, and cannot be cancelled; however, I shall cover thy shame for the half of each month". Thereupon the moon spoke to Prajāpati: "But how shall the trace of the sin of the past be wiped off from me?" Prajāpati answered: "By erecting the shape of the *liṅga* of Mahādeva as an object of thy worship". This he did. The *liṅga* he raised was the stone of Somanāth, for *soma* means the moon and *nātha* means master, so that the whole word means master of the moon. The image was destroyed by the Prince Maḥmūd – may God be merciful to him! – AH 416.

Maḥmūd's sack of Somnath in 416/1025–26, thinly disguised under the term *jihād*, was more to satisfy his appetite for the gold of the temple. He had already attacked many towns of north India, set fire to the temples and looted their treasuries.[9] Somnath, on the south-west coast of Saurashtra, was less easy to reach, but its temple was the grandest. His ambitious campaign reaped rewards beyond even his imagination. In one account he is said to have brought back twenty million gold *dīnār*,[10] three times more than the booty from his campaign to Qanūj.[11] Maḥmūd's raids on Somnath and other Indian strongholds had a further significance. They proved that in spite of the massive stone fortifications in India (Persian town-walls were mostly built of pisé and mud-brick), the feudal rajas were disunited and their cities on concentric plans, based on sacred diagrams, could trap them when they ran out of water and provisions under a long siege. The lessons learned from Maḥmūd's raids were put to use by the later sultans of Khurāsān and eventually in 1192 Muḥammad b. Sām's army took over Delhi, establishing Muslim power in India.

Maḥmūd's attack is, surprisingly, not mentioned in the Sanskrit inscriptions of Somnath relating to the temple. The inscriptions record restorations of the temple as well as efforts to protect it from raids by pirates and local rajas. The Jain sources, however, do refer to Maḥmūd's campaign briefly, dismissing it as vandalism which failed in the destruction of the image of their last and most

9 For one of Maḥmūd's ventures to north India plundering cities on his way to Qanūj and sacking the temples see Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Jabbār al-ʿUtbī, *Al-tārīkh al-yamīnī*, in Aḥmad b. ʿAlī Manīnī, *Al-fatḥ al wahabī ʿalā tārīkh Abī Naṣr al-ʿUtbī li'l-Shaikh al-Mutanabbī* (Cairo, 1286/1869–70), II, 270–8; Abū Sharaf Nāṣiḥ b. Ẓafar Jurfādiqānī, *Tarjuma-yi tārīkh-i yamīnī* (Tehran, 1978), 379–86 (henceforth Jurfādiqānī).

10 Khwand Mīr, II, 383.

11 Maḥmūd's booty from the campaign to Qanūj was, according to Gardīzī's account (184), over twenty million *dirham*, 53,000 slaves and over 350 elephants; and according to Jurfādiqānī (386) three million *dīnār* and so many slaves that the market value of slaves fell to between two and ten *dirham*.

celebrated teacher, Mahāvīra.[12] It is only in the recent history of India that Hindu nationalists and right-wing political parties have revived the story of Maḥmūd to evoke resentment against the era of Muslim domination, with the aim of inducing communal tension and gaining political power.

Somnath is the name of the temple, with the town known as Somanātha Pattan (Somnath city) or in the past as Deva Pattan (divine city).[13] It is an ancient town – its foundation obscured in early Hindu legend. The banks of the nearby reservoir, Bhalkeśvara Talāo (or Bhalla or Bhal Kuṇḍ) is the legendary site where Kṛishṇa eventually met his death at the hands of Jara, a hunter who mistook him for a deer. The reservoir (Figures 1–2), several times rebuilt, still exists and is a lake-sized feature known as Bhal ka Talāo (*tālāb*). To its south-east stands the small Bhalkeśvara temple of fairly late origin and a rectangular tank with steps on all four sides.[14] The *talāo* is polygonal in plan, fed by an underground canal at the north via three circular sluice-gates. Stepped washing platforms (*ghaṭ* or *ghaṭṭa*) are provided on all sides of the reservoir as well as a set of steps in the south and two ramps at the east and west for bullock-cart access. Large polygonal reservoirs are common in Gujarat and are usually Muslim in origin, one of the best-known examples is

12 For an extensive historical study of Maḥmūd's campaign to Somnath and its echoes in later sources see Richard H. Davis, *Lives of Indian Images* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 88–112, 209–21; Richard H. Davis, "Memories of broken idols", in Irene A. Bierman (ed.), *The Experience of Islamic Art on the Margins of Islam* (Reading: Garnet, 2005), 133–68. For a thorough study of Somnath's history through Indian sources and the repercussions of Maḥmūd's episode on communal tensions in modern Indian society see Romila Thapar, *Somnatha: The Many Voices of a History* (New Delhi: Penguin Books India, 2004); see also Romila Thapar, "Somanatha and Mahmud", *Frontline* 16/8 (April 23, 1999), 121–7. For a fresh and valuable study of the concept of the "infidel" in Islam and its interpretation and effect in Muslim India see Finbarr Barry Flood, *Objects of Translation: Material Culture and Medieval "Hindu–Muslim" Encounter* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2009). This work also discusses the episode of Maḥmūd's campaign to Somnath, see pp. 77–87.

13 The temples of Somnath and other towns of Saurashtra were studied early in the twentieth century by Henry Cousens, who was not primarily concerned with the Muslim edifices, but reported a few of the major mosques in Saurashtra and briefly noted other remains. See Henry Cousens, *Somanātha and Other Mediaeval Temples in Kāṭhiāwād* (Calcutta: Archaeological Survey of India, Imperial Series, XLV, 1931). Monuments of some of the other towns of Saurashtra are studied by James Burgess, *Report on the Antiquities of Kaṭhiawād and Kachh* (London: Archaeological Survey of India, Western Circle, II, 1876). Many Muslim edifices in Saurashtra (Kathiāwād) – some of considerable age – are omitted from these works, an example is the mosque of Abu'l-Qāsim al-Iḍḥajī, noted below. The present paper considers only the major early sultanate mosques at Somnath, but in Somnath and elsewhere in Saurashtra there are many other Muslim edifices awaiting study.

14 Cousens, *Somanātha*, 33, pl. 22 does not mention the larger reservoir, but notes the temple and the smaller tank as Bhalkeśvara Talāv or Bhalka Tīrth (the tank of the arrows) and remarks: "It is a pool of slimy water surmounted with rough stone steps, which may or may not be very old; certainly the little temple, beside it, is of no great age". It should be noted that in India the term *talāo* or *tālāb* usually refers to large-sized reservoirs and in Gujarat smaller step-wells or stepped tanks – known in north India as *bā'olī* – are referred to as *wav*.

the thirty-four-sided Kānkariyā Talāo built in *c*. 1451 at Ahmadabad.[15] In the vicinity of Somnath there are two other reservoirs of this type: one, slightly smaller than Bhal ka Talāo, to the north-east of the nearby town of Veraval and another, many times larger than our example, to the north of Somnath.

Unlike the rapidly growing Veraval, Somnath preserves its medieval layout (Figure 3) indicating that the ancient town might have been laid on a square or circular plan.[16] In either case, according to the strict rules of Hindu design the original Somnath temple must have been set at the centre of ancient Somnath. The old configuration of two axial streets – shared in both types of plan – crossing in the centre at right angles can still be discerned. No traces of the old temple have survived, but near – though apparently not on – its site now stands the Jāmiʿ. After Maḥmūd's destruction of the temple – and probably in the twelfth century – another temple on a grand scale was constructed, this time in a commanding position on the shore, with many other temples nearby. These temples were later plundered by the Indian sultans, but their ruins have survived; the grand temple was reconstructed in 1951 and expanded in the 1970s to 1990s (Figure 4). The town seems never to have been a port as it is exposed to the turbulent waters of the Indian Ocean. Its port is two miles to the north-west at Veraval – itself a historic town with some sultanate monuments still preserved.

Alexander Kinloch Forbes, who visited Somnath in 1864, describes the town:[17]

> Puttun Somanath, is in its general aspect, gloomy; it is a city of ruins and graves. The plain on the west side is covered with multitudes of Moosulman tombs, that on the east is thickly strown with Hindoo pályas and places of cremation... In the neighbourhood of the old temple there is no motion or sound except in the monotonous rolling of the breakers. The tone of the place impressed me more even than the recollection of its history.

15 James Burgess, *Muhammadan Architecture of Ahmadabad, Part I: AD 1412 to 1520* (London: Archaeological Survey of India (New Imperial Series), XXIV, Western India, VII, 1900), 52–3, pl. 65.

16 Based on the square *sarvatobhadra* or circular *nandiāvarta* diagrams, see M. A. Ananthalwar and Alexander Rea (eds) and A. V. Thiagaraja Iyer (comp.), *Indian Architecture, I, Architectonic or the Silpa Sastras* (Delhi: Indian Book Gallery, 1980), 141–3. Alexander Kinloch Forbes, who visited the town when more of the walls were preserved, reports that "the walls form an irregular four sided figure of which the south side follows the line of the bay for some time, within a few feet of high-water mark". See A. Kinloch Forbes, "Puttun Somnath", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Bombay Branch*, 8, 1864–66 (Bombay and London, 1872), 51. What remains of the walls and their curvature, as well as the built settlement, still circular in form, indicates that an ancient circular plan cannot be ruled out. Indian towns with *nandiāvarta* plan are not usually laid on a perfect circle. See for example the arrangement of the town of Warangal in George Michell, "City as cosmogram: the circular plan of Warangal", *SAS* 8, 1992, 1–18.

17 A. Kinloch Forbes, "Puttun Somnath", 50.

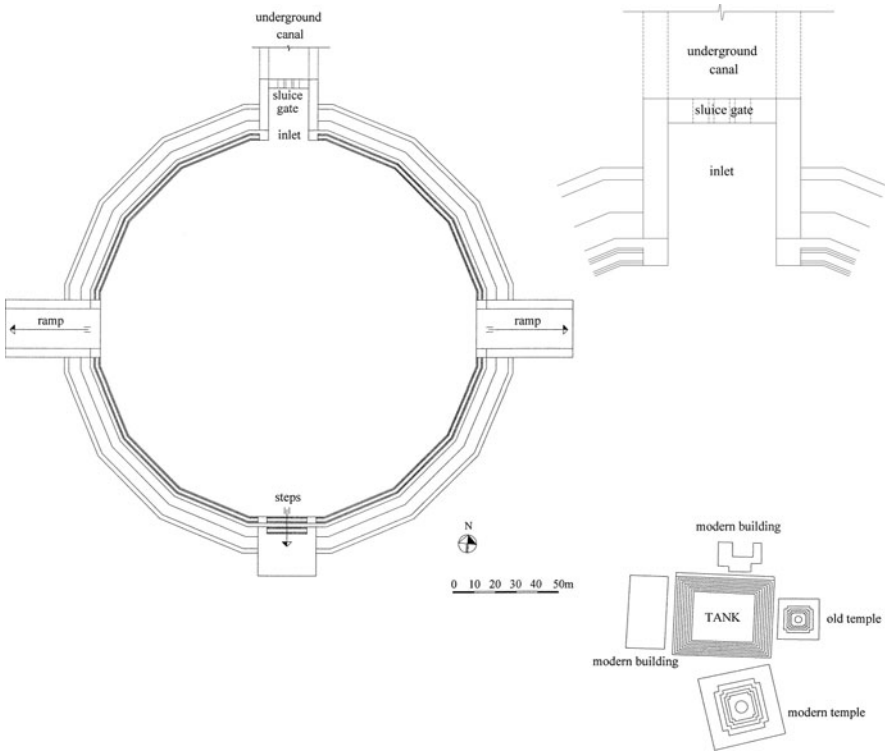

Figure 1. The site of Kṛishṇa's death, with the large polygonal reservoir known as Bhal ka Talão to the north-west of the small Bhalkeśvara temple and tank; top right, details of the Talāo's inlet.

Figure 2. (Colour online) Bhal ka Talão from the south-east, showing the southern steps at the far left and the western ramp, in a ruinous state, to the right. The stepped washing platforms around the reservoir are fairly well preserved and are still in use.

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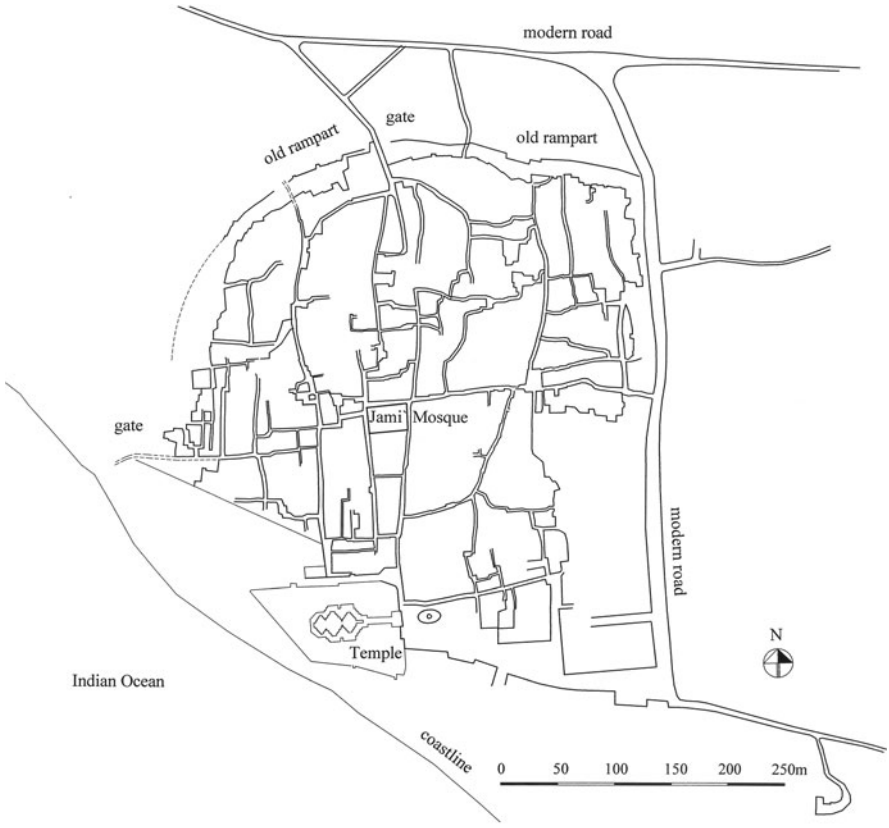

Figure 3. Somnath town plan showing the present built-up area which is still mostly confined within its original boundaries, and the street layout with the two axial streets still partly preserved.

Somnath seems to have changed little. The extensive graveyard to the north-west of the town, stretching to the suburbs of Veraval, preserves many shrines of different periods, some of considerable importance, but few ever studied. The graveyard is a reminder of the continuous Muslim presence in this Hindu holy city. Even today Muslims constitute a large minority in the town, and are well aware of their heritage. Amongst the tombs in the graveyard are some attributed to Maḥmūd's soldiers who are said to have been killed in the battle when bridging the town walls. Maḥmūd did not, of course, stay in the region. On the contrary, after sacking the temple he left the area quickly, choosing a harsh route via the Rann of Kachh (Kutch) to avoid confrontation with Hindu forces.[18] The region did not fall into Muslim hands again until the time of ʿAlā al-dīn Khaljī (695–715/1295–1316), nearly three hundred years later.

At first glance it may appear surprising that the tombs or even the memory of such soldiers could have been sustained during three centuries of Hindu

18 Farrukhī, 71–2; Gardīzī, 191; Mīr Khwand (see note 2); Minhāj-i Sirāj, I, 229.

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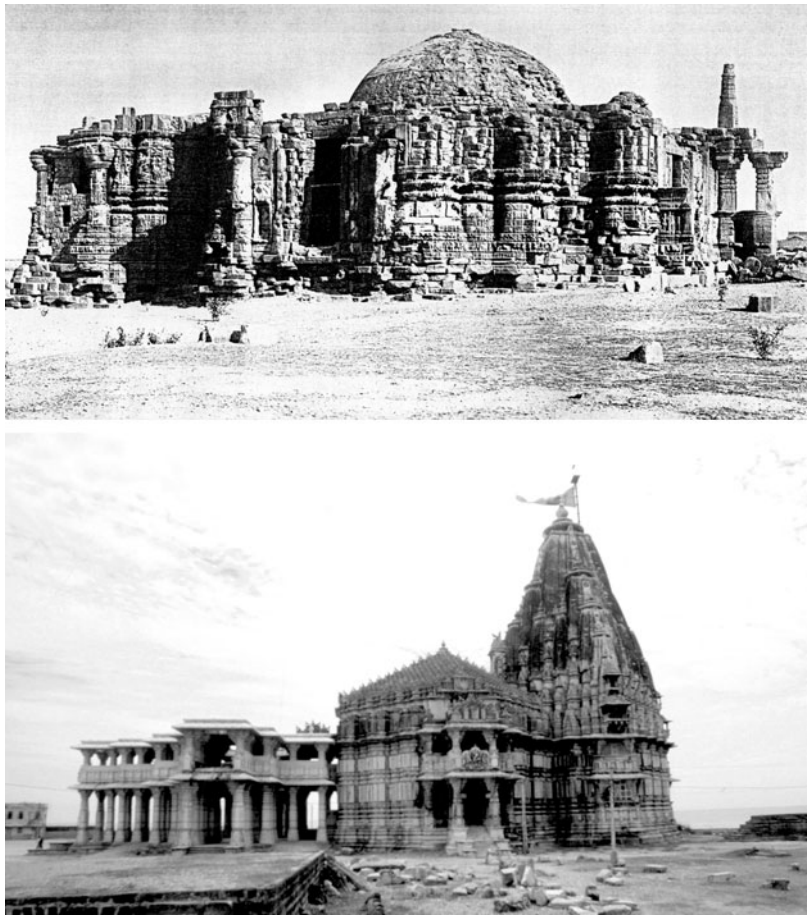

Figure 4. Somnath temple, above, as it stood in the 1920s (from Cousens) and below, still under construction in the 1980s. The building was at one time converted to a mosque and its *gūḍhāmaṇḍapa* re-roofed with a Muslim-style dome, itself in a dilapidated condition in the early twentieth century. The turret over the eastern entrance in Cousens's photograph was one of the two small minarets constructed out of temple spoil. Reconstruction included removal of the dome and other later alterations, but wherever possible original features were preserved. Nevertheless, most of the present temple is new including the rear portion of the *garbhagṛiha*, the western end of its ambulatory, the *śikhara* and all the upper parts of the building.

dominance. However, as with most other coastal towns of the region Somnath must have had a Muslim community well before the arrival of Maḥmūd. Early Muslim geographers[19] record the presence of Muslim maritime

19 Abū Isḥāq Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad al-Iṣṭakhrī, *Masālik wa mamālik* (Persian text, ed. I. Afshar, Tehran, 1961), 147, 151, *Al-masālik wa al-mamālik* (Arabic Text) (Cairo, 1961), 102, 104–5; *Ḥudūd al-ʿālam min al-mashriq il'l-maghrib* (Tehran: ed. M. Sotoodeh, 1962), 66; Abū ʿAbd'ullāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan*

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communities in tenth-century Gujarat, and their vital role in local trade. Through these communities Arabian horses, highly prized in India, were imported and Indian products were exchanged with gold and exported to the rest of the world. Furthermore, the local rajas benefitted from import and export taxes. Early Muslim geographers do not mention Somnath, but al-Idrīsī[20] informs us that apart from the few towns noted in the geographies, other towns also had Muslim settlers. It might be through such a community in Somnath that the memory of the soldiers and the sites of their graves were safeguarded during those three-hundred years. According to local legend, for example, Mangrolī Shāh came from Mecca to Somnath and found that every day the raja was sacrificing a Muslim in the temple. He invited Maḥmūd to come and put an end to the atrocities of the raja.[21]

The legend may have no basis in truth and is likely to have been invented centuries later. The Mangrolī Shāh shrine itself is of considerable age, but seems to have been rebuilt partly at later points in time. There are also two small mosques in the enclosure, one noticeably old and the other datable to the fifteenth- or sixteenth-century Gujarat sultanate.[22] There is other evidence confirming the presence of a Muslim community in Somnath before the time of ʿAlā al-dīn Khaljī. In the shrine a marble tombstone[23] (Figure 5) records

al-taqāsīm fī maʿrifat al-aqālīm (Leiden, 1906), 477, 484, 486; Ibn Ḥauqal, *Ṣurat al-arḍ* (Leiden, 1872), 227–8, 232–3. For a recent study of the historic ports of western India see Elizabeth Lambourn, "India from Aden: Khutba and Muslim urban network in late thirteenth century India", in Kenneth R. Hall (ed), *Secondary Cities and Urban Networking in the Indian Ocean Realm c. 1000–1800* (Lanham MD and London: Lexington Books, 2008), 55–97.

20 Abū ʿAbd'ullāh Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Idrīsī, *Opus Geographicum* (Naples and Rome, 1971), 185.

21 *Indian Antiquary* 8, 153.

22 The shrine is at the north of a sizeable enclosure and consists of three old chambers, but none of architectural merit. The tomb of Mangrolī Shāh is in the west and the chamber to its east was originally a colonnaded portico, which has been walled up. To the west of this chamber is a small mosque with a single *miḥrāb* and two columns with corresponding pilasters on the north and south walls surmounted by lintels supporting the flat roof of the prayer hall. The mosque is of considerable age and has a colonnaded entrance portico much in the style of the buildings of the maritime settlers, but has been many times restored making it difficult to establish if the building originally dates from prior to the Muslim conquest of the region. To the south-east of the complex is another small mosque, which judging from the style of its *miḥrāb* seems to date from the time of the Gujarat sultanate. There are also some modern buildings in the enclosure.

23 The inscription was first reported in *Annual Report of Indian Epigraphy* (1954–55), C. 168, without giving its text. An ink rubbing of the epitaph, with a description of the tombstone, but without mention of the content of the inscription, is also given in B. Ch. Chhabra, D. C. Sircar and Z. A. Desai, "Inscriptions from Mantai Tirukeśwaram, Mannar District and from the tomb of Mangrolī Shāh at Veraval" in Epigraphical research, *Ancient India* 9, 1953, 228–9, pl. 113 b. The lower part of the ink rubbing paper seems to have been folded and the ink smudged, giving the impression that the lower part of the stone was cracked and the three last lines damaged, but as can be seen from our photograph there is no damage to this part of the stone. This ink rubbing has also been reproduced in Elizabeth Lambourn, "Carving and communities: marble carving for Muslim patrons at Khambhāt and around the Indian Ocean rim, late thirteenth–mid-fifteenth century", *Ars Orientalis* 34, 2004, 102, but the content of the

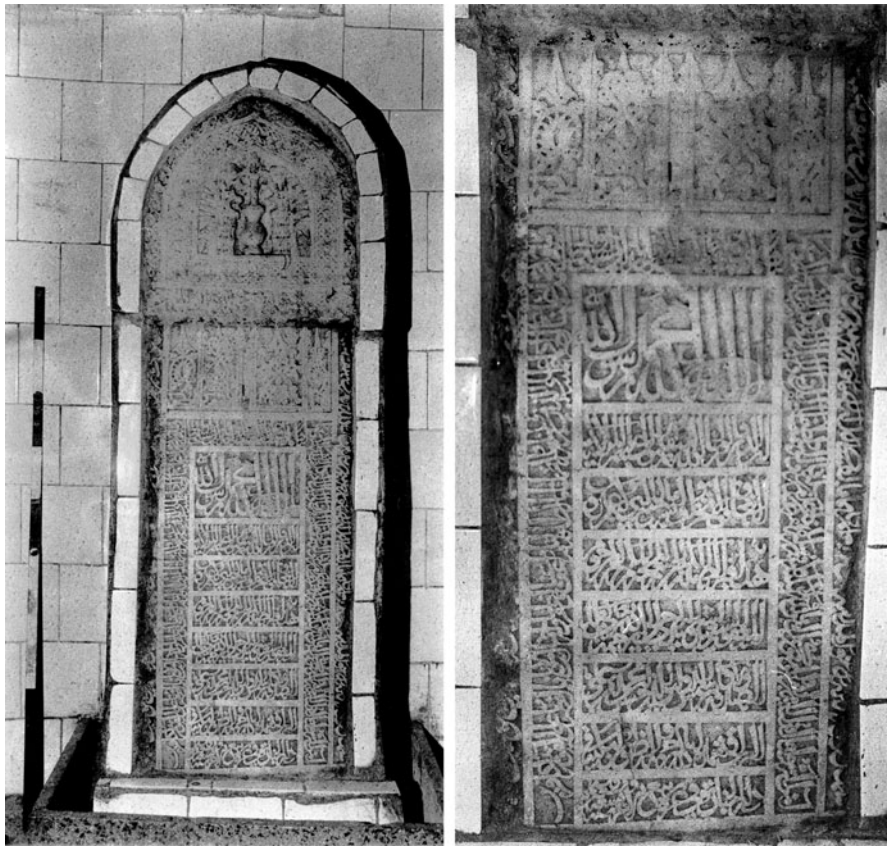

Figure 5. The pre-sultanate tombstone of the chief merchant Ḥasan b. Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-ʿIrāqī preserved in the Dargāh of Mangrolī Shāh in the old graveyard of Somnath. Left, general view; right, details of the historical inscription.

the death of Ḥasan b. Muḥammad b. ʿAlī of Iraq, a chief merchant, on 1 Rabīʿ II, 677/22 August 1278.[24] The tombstone is carved in relief on two slabs with a worn-out border of what appears to be a line of Quranic inscription in *naskhī* running around both slabs. The two slabs may not have originally belonged together, but they are of a type common amongst the tombstones of thirteenth-century Gujarat, and were even exported abroad.[25] The upper slab is in the form

inscription is not given. For a bibliography of the inscription see Z. A. Desai, *Arabic, Persian and Urdu Inscriptions of West India* (New Delhi, 1999), 203, inscription no. 1886. Desai gives the date as 1 Rabiʿ II 699/26 December 1299.

24 The letters of the date are given without any dots and as the words for seven (سبع), nine (تسع), seventy (سبعين) and ninety (تسعين) are similar, other combinations of the date such as 679, 697 and 699 could also be suggested, but judging from the form of the letter *sīn* in other parts of the inscription the reading given above seems more likely.

25 Venetia Porter, "Three Rasulid tombstones from Ẓafār", *JRAS*, 1988, 32–44; Othman Mohd. Yatim and Abdul Halim Nasir, *Epigrafi Islam terawal di nusantara* (Kuala

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of a pointed arch and is decorated with a wide band of interlaced geometric patterns with the bas-relief of a lamp or candlestick in the centre, itself set within a smaller lobed arch. The lower slab contains on the top a line of Kufic script giving the opening verse of the Quran. Below it is the historical record framed in a border of Quranic inscription in highly elaborate interlaced cursive *naskhī* bearing Quran, 2: 285–6 – suitable verses for a tombstone of a Muslim personage buried in the territory of "non-believers":[26]

امَنَ الرٰسولُ بما اُنزلَ اِلَيهِ مِن ر ّبِّهِ ○ وَ المومنون كل امن بالله و ملئكته و كتبه و رسله لا نفرق بين احد من رسله و قالو اسمعنا و اطعنا غفرانک ربنا و اليک المصير ○ لا يكلف الله نفسا الا وسعها لها ما كسبت و عليها ما اكتسبت ربنا لا تواخذ نا ان نسينا او اخطانا ربنا و لا تحمل علينا اصرا كما حملته على الذين من قبلنا ربنا و لا تحملنا ما لا طاقة لنا به و اعف عنا و اغفر لنا و ارحمنا انت مولينا فانصرنا على القوم الكافرين ○

The Messenger believes in what was sent down to him from his Lord, and the believers; each one believes in God and His angels, and in His Books and His Messengers; we make no division between any one of His Messengers. They say, "We hear, and obey. Our Lord, grant us Thy forgiveness; unto Thee is the homecoming" (286) God charges no soul save to its capacity; standing to its account is what it has earned, and against its account what it has merited. Our Lord, take us not to task if we forget, or make mistake. Our Lord, charge us not with a load such as Thou didst lay upon those before us. Our Lord, do Thou not burden us beyond what we have the strength to bear. And pardon us, and forgive us, and have mercy on us; Thou art our Protector. And help us against the people of the unbelievers.

The historical inscription is in eight lines of again *naskhī* script – slightly larger than that on its border – beginning with the Muslim *shahāda* (confession of faith):

لا اله الاالله محمد رسول الله
...عليهم الملک
...
هذه القبر الصدر الكبير المحترم المكرم المرحوم
المغفور السعيد الشهيد الراجى الى رحمة الله تعالى ملک

Lumpur, 1990), 21–3, 32, 36, pls. 4.6–8, 4.18; Annabel Teh Gallop, *Early Views of Indonesia, Drawings from the British Library* (London and Jakarta, 1995), 54–5, fig. 42 and pl. 14; Elizabeth Lambourn, "The decoration of the Fakhr al-dīn mosque in Mogadishu and other pieces of Gujarati marble carving on the East African coast", *Azania* 34, 1999, 61–86, particularly pls. 4–5; M. Shokoohy, *Muslim Architecture of South India, the Sultanate of Maʿbar and the Traditions of the Maritime Settlers on the Malabar and Coromandel Coasts (Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Goa)* (London and New York: Routledge Curzon, 2003), 138–9, 248, pl. 5.2; Elizabeth Lambourn, "Carving and communities", *Ars Orientalis* 34, 2004, 101–35.

26 Translation given from Arthur J. Arberry, *The Koran Interpreted* (2 vols. London and New York, 1955), I, 71–2; for another translation see Maulana Muhammad Ali, *Translation of the Holy Quran* (Lahore, 1938), 52.

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الصدور و الكابر شمس الدولة و الدين حسن ابن محمد بن على
العراقى و تغمدالله له برحمته. . .. و اسكنهم فى
دار الجنان توفى فى غره ربيع الآخر من سنه سبع سبعين و ستمائه

There is no god but God, Muḥammad is His Messenger
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
This is the tomb of the great chief, the venerable, the revered, [who] has returned to His mercy,
the forgiven, the blessed, the martyr [who] has returned to the mercy of God, may He be exalted, the chief of the merchants and nobles, the sun of the dominion and the faith, Ḥasan son of Muḥammad son of ʿAlī of ʿIrāq (*al-ʿIrāqī*), May God cover him with mercy … and place him in the abode of paradise. He died on the first day of Rabīʿ al-ākhar in the year six hundred and seventy seven.

It seems that Ḥasan b. Muḥammad was not only the chief merchant, but also the head of the leaders (*malik al-akābir*) of the Muslim community at Somnath, implying that the community was large and a number of people represented them as community leaders. This tombstone is not the only record from this community. Another – and much better known – bilingual inscription dated Ramaḍān AH 662 and VE 1320/AD 1264 is the record of the construction of a mosque in Somnath by Nākhudā (shipmaster) Fīrūz b. Abī Ibrāhīm, a merchant and the head of the Muslim community (*ṣadr*) of the town. The inscription has been published and discussed many times[27] and while there are still many minor points in the Arabic version of the text which need to be re-examined, the general terms of the inscription are clear. Both Sanskrit and Arabic versions are records of a treaty concerned with the construction of the mosque on a piece of land purchased by Nākhudā Fīrūz. They also mention various endowments that the shipmaster made for the everyday upkeep of the

27 The two inscriptions have been separated. The Sanskrit version is kept in Harasiddha Mātā at Veraval and the Arabic version is now set into a wall of the Qāḍī Masjid, a fairly recent structure at Veraval. For the Sanskrit text see Eugen Hultzsch, "A grant of Arjunadeva of Gujarat dated 1264 AD", *Indian Antiquary* 11, 1882, 241–5; Dinesh Chandra Sircar, "Veraval inscription of Chaulukya-Vaghela Arjuna, 1264 A.D.", *Epigraphia Indica* 34/4, 141–50; see also James Burgess and Henry Cousens, *Revised List of Antiquarian Remains in the Bombay Presidency* (Bombay, 1897), 251–2. For the Arabic version see: Bhavnagar Archaeological Department, *Corpus Inscriptionum Bhavnagari: Being a Selection of Arabic and Persian Inscriptions Collected by the Antiquarian Department Bhavnagar State* (Bombay, 1889), 28–30 (wrongly attributes the inscription to the Gujarat sultan Maḥmūd I); Z. A. Desai, "Arabic inscriptions of the Rajput period from Gujarat", *Epigraphia Indica Arabic and Persian Supplement* (*EIAPS*), 1961, 10–15, pl. 2. For a bibliography of the inscription see Z. A. Desai, *Arabic, Persian and Urdu Inscriptions of West India* (New Delhi, 1999), 203, inscription no. 1885; also see Alka Patel, "Transcending religion; socio-linguistic evidence from Somnatha-Veraval inscription", in Grant Parker and Carla Sinopoli (eds), *Ancient India in Its Wider World* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2008) 143–64; Elizabeth Lambourn, "India from Aden", in Kenneth R. Hall (ed.), *Secondary Cities and Urban Networking in the Indian Ocean Realm c. 1000–1800*, 76–7.

mosque as well as long-term maintenance and repairs. Both versions also record the names of a number of witnesses and acknowledge the sovereignty of Arjunadeva the Vāghela raja of Gujarat as well as giving the name of Rukn al-dīn Maḥmūd b. Aḥmad, the sultan of Hurmuz, as the sovereign of the Muslims indicating that the merchant community of Somnath were predominantly from this small but prosperous independent state of the Persian Gulf. The tone of the two inscriptions, however, varies considerably. While the Sanskrit version remains a matter-of-fact record of the treaty and shows respect and courtesy to the Hindu hosts, the Arabic version is phrased more to the taste of the Muslim community. After the praise of God it begins with the acknowledgement of the sultan of Hurmuz and includes phrases such as "the city of Somnath, may God make it one of the cities of Islam and banish the infidelity and idols" or "Only he shall inhabit God's places of worship who believes in God and the Last Day, and performs the prayer, and pays the alms, and fears none but God alone; it may be that those will be among the guided".[28]

The inscription leaves little doubt that not only did a Muslim trading community exist in Somnath, but that it lived in harmony with the local population and enjoyed the support of the rajas. The discrepancy between the Arabic and Sanskrit texts, on the other hand, reveals the community's view of itself and its values as opposed to the way it presented itself to its hosts – a fine point in the social history of the Indian Ocean trade, which would repay further investigation.

Somnath has also preserved a number of mosques and Muslim shrines, both inside the town and in the neighbouring vicinity. However, little remains of edifices prior to ʿAlā al-dīn Khaljī, except the noted inscriptions, and a few simple graves attributed to pre-Khaljī origin. In 698/1298–99 the Khaljī army under the sultan's brother Ulugh Khān plundered Somnath,[29] and established the authority of the Delhi sultanate over Gujarat, which took almost two generations before it was consolidated entirely. As a mark of conquest the Muslims proceeded to demolish temples and build mosques with the spoil, a practice which continued in Gujarat even at the time of Fīrūz Shāh Tughluq (752–790/1351–88), although by this time in north India the custom had already been abandoned. The mosques of this period are therefore easily distinguishable by their style of construction and their temple stones.

After the fall of the Tughluqs and Tīmūr's invasion of north India in 801/1398–99 the last Tughluq governor of Gujarat Ẓafar Khān founded an independent sultanate in the region, which was to remain in power until 980/1572–73 when Akbar annexed Gujarat to the Mughal Empire.[30] During the Gujarat

28 Quran, IX, 18. Translation from Arberry, I, 209; also see translation from Maulana Muhammad Ali, 193.

29 Ulugh Khān's campaign on Somnath is described by ʿAlā al-dīn Khaljī's court poet Amīr Khusrau Dihlawī, *Khazā'in al-futūḥ* (ed. Syed Moinul Haq. Aligarh: Aligarh Muslim University, no date but *c*. 1927), 50–53; also see Ḍiyā' al-dīn Barnī, *Tārīkh-i Fīrūz Shāhī* (Calcutta: Bibliotheca Indica, no. 33, Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1862) (henceforth Barnī), 251; Yaḥyā b. Aḥmad b. ʿAbd'ullāh al-Sihrindī, *Tārīkh-i Mubārak Shāhī* (Calcutta: Bibliotheca Indica, no. 254, Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1931) (henceforth *Tārīkh-i Mubārak Shāhī*) 76; Firishta, I, 103.

30 In 795/1392–93 and near the end of the Tughluq period Muḥammad b. Fīrūz Shāh's army commander, Ẓafar Khān, took over Gujarat and put an end to what little had

sultanate the region developed a distinctive architectural style, refining the early sultanate forms and using purposely-carved stones. The buildings of this period still employ many of the older patterns, but figurative themes were abandoned and geometric and other non-figurative motifs were simplified and adapted to Muslim taste. The architecture of this period and that of the Mughals in the region is well presented in the monumental works of James Burgess[31] which, in spite of many later studies,[32] still remain a major source of our knowledge. In the study of the Muslim monuments of the region, therefore, in the absence of inscriptions and firm dates the distinct difference between the typology and building materials of the early Muslim buildings and those of the sultanate of Gujarat assists our understanding of their date and origin.

The typology of Gujarati mosques

Gujarat has preserved a few Muslim structures dating from prior to the sultanate period, including two mosques and a shrine at Bhadreśvar[33] in Kachh and the mosque of Abu'l-Qāsim b. ʿAlī al-Īdhajī (Figure 6) in Junagadh,[34] about 70 km (40 miles) north of Somnath. These buildings were constructed by

been left of any resistance. He remained loyal to the Tughluqs to the bitter end, but after their demise claimed independence and established the Gujarat sultanate. See Sikandar b. Muḥammad known as Manjhū b. Akbar, *Mir'āt-i Sikandarī* (ed. S. C. Misra and M. L. Rahman, Baroda, 1961), 6–20; Khwāja Niẓām al-dīn Aḥmad b. Muḥammad Hirawī, *Ṭabaqāt-i Akbarī* (Calcutta: Persian text, 3 vols, Biblioteca Indica no. 223, Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1927–35), III, 1935, 82–5; Firishta, I, 153; II, 178–80.

31 James Burgess, *The Muhammadan Architecture of Ahmadabad, Part I, A.D. 1412 to 1520* (London: ASI, New Imperial Series, XXIV, ASWI, VII, 1900); *The Muhammadan Architecture of Ahmadabad, Part II, with Muslim and Hindu Remains in the Vicinity* (London: ASI, New Imperial Series, XXXIII, ASWI, VIII, 1905); James Burgess and Henry Cousens, *Architectural Antiquities of Northern Gujarat* (London: ASI, New Imperial Series, XXXII, ASWI, IX, 1903).

32 See for example; K. V. Soundara Rajan, *Ahmadabad* (ASI, New Delhi), 1980; George Michell and Snehal Shah (eds), *Mediaeval Ahmadabad* (Bombay: *Marg* 39/3, 1988) particularly John Burton-Page's chapter on mosques and tombs, 30–119; Elizabeth Lambourn, "A collection of merits: architectural influences in the Friday Mosque and the Kazaruni tomb complex at Cambay, Gujarat", *SAS* 17, 2001, 117–49; Alka Patel, *Building Communities in Gujarat: Architecture and Society during the Twelfth through Fourteenth Centuries* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2004). For vernacular and domestic architecture see V. S. Pramar, *A Social History of Indian Architecture* (Delhi and Oxford: OUP, 2005) and for waterworks see Jutta Jain-Neubauer, *The Stepwells of Gujarat in Art-Historical Perspective* (New Delhi, 1981) and Julia A. B. Hegewald, *Water Architecture in South Asia: A Study of Types, Developments and Meaning* (Leiden, Boston and Cologne: Brill, 2002).

33 M. Shokoohy, *Bhadreśvar: The Oldest Islamic Monuments in India* (Leiden and New York: Brill, 1988), 11–33. The shrine is also noted in Flood, *Objects of Translation*, 47–8, but the information on this shrine and some other early Muslim edifices given in chapter 6, including the Ghurid remains in Hansi, the Shahi mosque in Khatu and the Chourasi Khamba mosque in Kaman is based on the present author's primary published reports.

34 Ibid., 42–9. Abu'l-Qāsim was a shipmaster and the chief (*ṣadr*) of the Muslim merchant community in Junagadh.

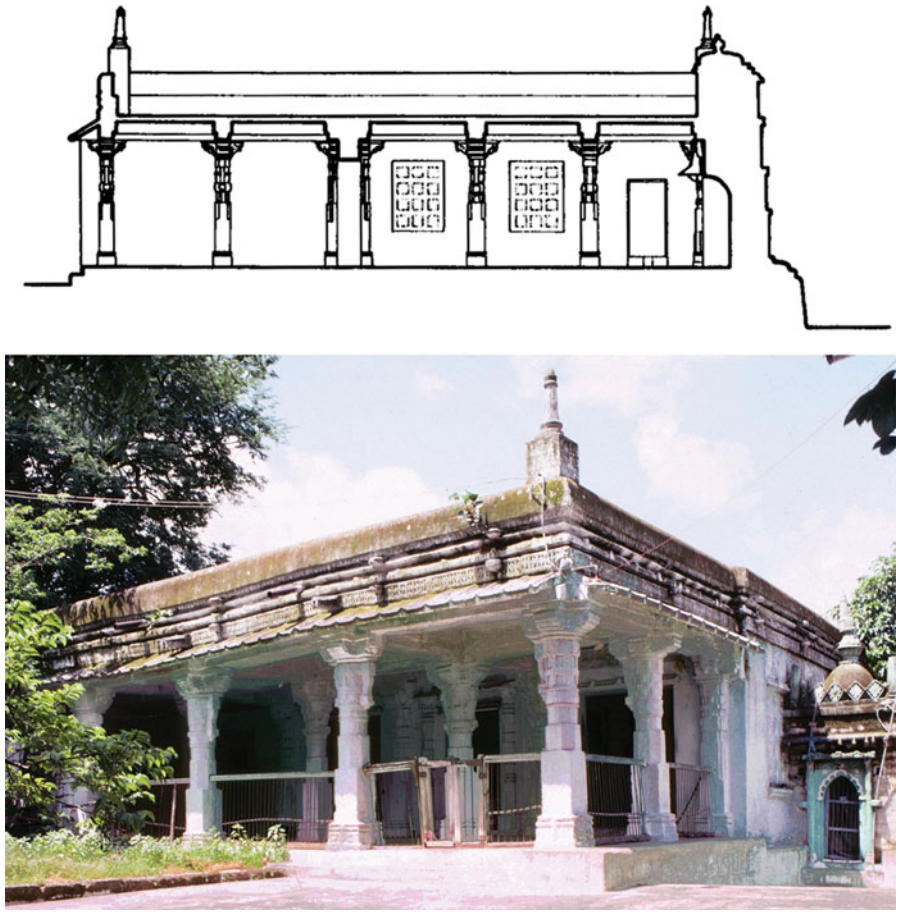

Figure 6. (Colour online) Junagadh, the mosque of Abu'l-Qāsim b. ʿAlī al-Īdhajī built in 685/1286–87, over a decade before the Muslim conquest of Gujarat. Above, transverse section, below, general view from north-east.

Muslim maritime settlers, using local masons and craftsmen. Although the structural elements such as columns, lintels and corbelled domes as well as the carved motifs follow the indigenous patterns, the buildings are distinct from Hindu and Jain temples. Unlike the temples the Muslim edifices are restrained in decoration, omitting any figurative images and applying geometric and abstract cursive motifs modestly. The mosques are also small in size – presumably so as not to overpower the temples of their hosts – and differ in plan from those of the sultanate period, as on their eastern front there is always a colonnaded portico. This feature also appears in the mosques of south India, again associated with the maritime merchant communities, but is not seen in the sultanate mosques of north and west India.

The mosques of the early sultanate can be categorized into two different types. With the Khaljī dominance in Gujarat the earliest buildings tend to conform not with the Delhi architecture of the late thirteenth or early fourteenth

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century, but with the architectural concepts of the time of the conquest – the late twelfth and early thirteenth century – as seen in mosques such as the Quwwat al-Islām in Delhi, Aṛaha'i din kā Jhoṅpṛa in Ajmer, the Shāhī Masjid in Khatu, the Chaurāsī Khamba in Kaman and the Ukhā Masjid in Bayana, all erected soon after the Ghurid takeover of north India. These buildings are built out of temple spoil, but not in a haphazard way. The temples were dismantled in an orderly manner and reassembled with care on a different arrangement. As the height of the temple columns was not perceived to be suitable for the lofty ceilings required for mosques, two – and in the case of Aṛaha'i din kā Jhoṅpṛa, three – column shafts were superimposed to achieve the desired height. The ceilings of these buildings incorporate the corbelled domes of *maṇḍapas*, again carefully reassembled to retain the intricate floral and geometric decoration to advantage. The old material was kept exposed but with images decapitated or chiselled out, leaving the trace of the form. However, when the design necessitated a plain surface, such as for a pier or enclosing wall, the stone blocks were turned round with the decoration hidden in the core of the wall and the plain side facing out. The only parts purposely carved for the mosque were the *miḥrābs* and the religious and historic inscriptions.

In Delhi from the mid-thirteenth century on, when sultanate power was consolidated and secure, the use of temple spoil – an aggressive display of conquest – was abandoned. At the same time the Mongol invasion of Iran and Central Asia forced a large number of urban dwellers including craftsmen, builders and artisans, to take refuge in the relative safety of India. Delhi architecture entered a new phase. The old Indian trabeate structural methods, although not entirely abandoned, were supplanted by Muslim forms: massive masonry piers supporting true domes standing on squinches or pendentives. The surfaces were often plastered and by the fourteenth century cut-stucco decoration had also been introduced. However, the concept of "the architecture of conquest" was not forgotten and in the late thirteenth and fourteenth century it was employed in the mosques of newly conquered territories. Examples are the Jāmiʿ of Daulatabad[35] – the old city of Dīvgīr or Devagiri, a major Hindu stronghold in the Deccan – and the Lāt ki Masjid in Dahār,[36] the capital of Mālwa.

This method of construction was also brought to Gujarat and two examples can be found in Mangrol, both dating from the time of Fīrūz Shāh Tughluq (752–790/1351–88) if not earlier.[37] These are the Jāmiʿ of Mangrol (Figures 7 and 8),

35 John H. Marshall, "The monuments of Muslim India", in Wolseley Haig (ed.), *The Cambridge History of India* (Cambridge, 1928), III, 630; Anthony Welch and Howard Crane, "The Tughluqs: master builders of the Delhi sultanate", *Muqarnas* 1, 1983, 128; George Michell and Mark Zebrowski, *The New Cambridge History of India,* 1/7*, Architecture and Art of the Deccan Sultanates* (Cambridge: CUP, 1999), 63–4;

36 Marshall, *Cambridge History of India* (1928), III, 68. Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture (Islamic Period*) (Bombay, 1942, revised edition, 7th reprint, 1981), 60.

37 The problem with the dated mosques in Mangrol is that the inscribed panels were moved from one building to another in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, sometimes more than once. The attribution of the inscriptions to a building cannot therefore be determined

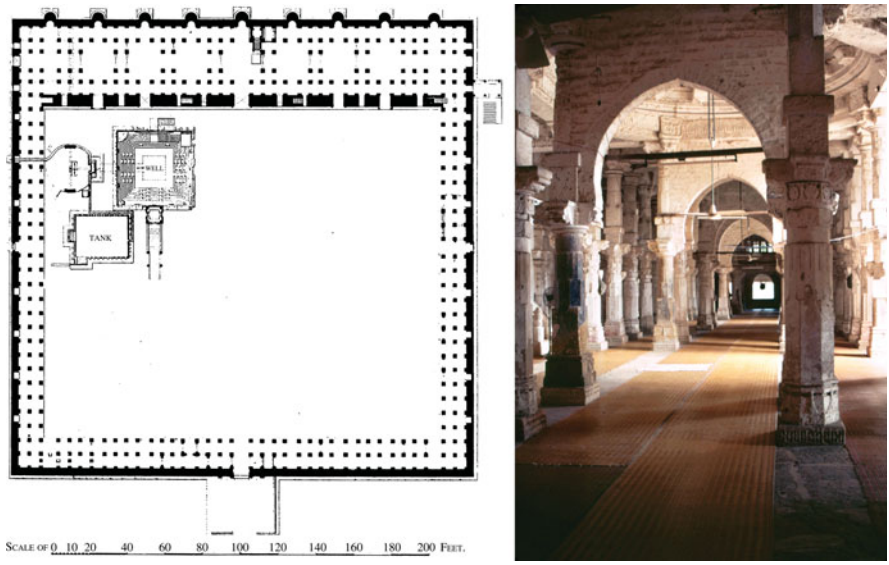

Figure 7. (Colour online) The Jāmiʿ of Mangrol, left, plan; right, interior of the prayer hall looking north towards the *maqṣūra*, which can be seen as a mezzanine at the end of the hall. The arches set between some of the upper shafts are later additions. The *qibla* (west) is shown at the top (plan after Cousens).

probably built in 785/1383–84[38] and the Rāvalī Masjid (Figure 9) which according to an inscription attributed to it was built between 780 and 789 and probably in 788/1386–87.[39] In common with early conquest mosques, the columns are

with certainty. Mosques with columns composed of two superimposed shafts are likely to be earlier than the time of Fīrūz Shāh.

38 Cousens, *Somnāth*, 64–5; Z. A. Desai, "Khalji and Tughluq inscriptions from Gujarat", *EIAPS*, 1962, 24–6. The inscription is now fixed on the *qibla* wall of the Jāmiʿ, but Desai reports that it was once in the Bohra Masjid, and may not have originally belonged to the Jāmiʿ. He also implies that the Jāmiʿ may be earlier than the inscription. Cousens mentions that "the mosque was built by Shams Khān Vazir to Firuz Shāh in 1364" without giving his source. There was no such personage in Fīrūz Shāh's court but there were two personages called Shams al-dīn operating in Gujarat. One was Malik Shams al-dīn Abū Rajā', Deputy Governor of Gujarat who could be the founder of the mosque. According to Shams-i Sirāj, "when Malik Shams al-dīn arrived at the territory of Gujarat he founded many things there" (ملک شمس الدین چون در اقطاع گجرات رفت در گجرات نیز چیز های بسیار بنیاد نهاد). In 877 he was replaced by Shams al-dīn Dāmghānī, who rebelled against Fīrūz Shāh and a year later was killed by his own centurions (*amīrān-i sada*). For the affairs of Gujarat see Shams-i Sirāj ʿAfīf, *Tārīkh-i Fīrūz Shāhī* (Calcutta: Bibliotheca Indica, no. 119, Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1891), 454–5, 500–2 (henceforth Shams-i Sirāj); *Tārīkh-i Mubārak Shāhī*, 132.

39 Cousens, *Somnāth*, 65–6, mentions that "the mosque was built in 1401 by Jāfar Khān, at the time of Muḥammad Tughlak" without giving his source. This account seems to be confused as the two Tughluq sultans by this name were Muḥammad b. Tughluq (725–752/1325–51) and Nāṣir al-dīn Muḥammad (792–5/1390–93). Cousens might have meant the last Tughluq sultan Maḥmūd Shāh (795–816/1392–1414), but no inscription of this sultan has ever been attributed to the Rāvalī Masjid. Z. A. Desai, "Khalji and

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Figure 8. (Colour online) The Jāmiʿ of Mangrol, prayer hall from the courtyard looking north-west.

composed of two superimposed temple columns, sometimes with the upper shaft shorter than the lower one, and again mutilated temple carvings are left exposed to view, but the mosques are often better built and the parts more carefully reassembled than the early examples in north India. The sultan's agents seem to have employed builders with the skill and time to match up components from different temples and in many cases only elements with non-figurative images were used. Most of the mosques are on a central courtyard plan with the façade of the prayer hall open to the courtyard, displaying the columns. However, in the Jāmiʿ of Mangrol the prayer hall is walled and has a large central arch flanked by two smaller ones (Figure 8). This mosque provides an emergent prototype for the grand mosques of the sultanate of Gujarat which were to appear a generation or so later.

A second type, still employing temple spoil but with a less elaborate structure, appears in the mid- to late fourteenth century, ranging from the time of Fīrūz Shāh Tughluq to the early years of the sultanate of Gujarat. In the buildings of this type the columns are made of a single shaft and, as a result, their ceilings are lower. The temple elements seem to have been chosen mainly for their aesthetic qualities rather than to display the authority of the ruler. For the construction of these mosques it is likely that no temples were demolished

Tughluq inscriptions from Gujarat", *EIAPS*, 1962, 30–32, reports another inscription of the time of Fīrūz Shāh with the date quoted above. He notes that the inscription was originally fixed on the wall of a tomb near the Rāvalī Masjid, but was said to have come from the mosque. While the inscription refers to the construction of a mosque, there is no firm evidence that it belonged to the Rāvalī and it is likely that the mosque is earlier than all the suggested dates.

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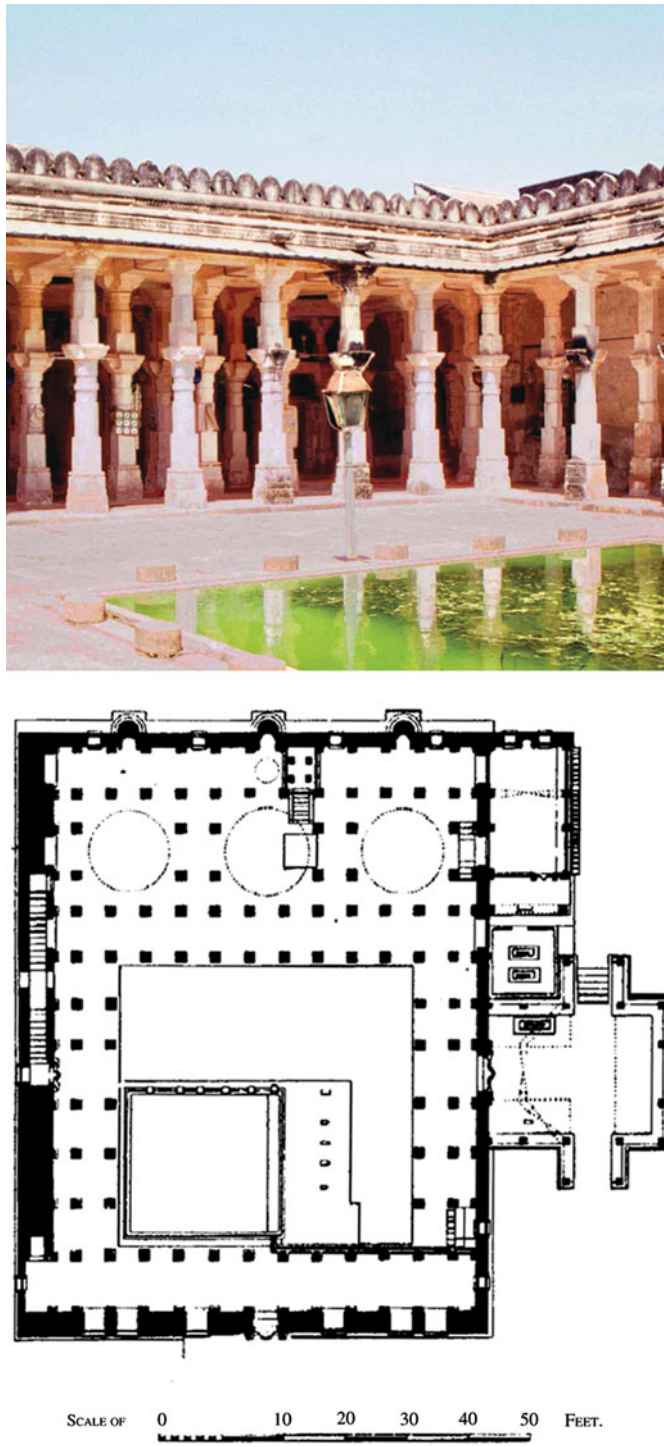

Figure 9. (Colour online) Mangrol, Rāvalī Masjid, above, view of the prayer hall looking north-west towards the mezzanine known as *mulūk khāna* or royal gallery. Below, plan (after Cousens), showing the *qibla* (west) at the top.

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specifically, but spoil from the ruins of earlier attacks was employed. Occasionally some of the old elements have been redressed and true arches are employed. A number of dated specimens of this type have survived, one example is the Raḥimat Masjid[40] (Figure 10) dated 784/1382–83, and another the previously unreported Chishtīwālā Masjid[41] (Figures 11–12) dated 787/1385–86, both erected in Mangrol during the later years of Fīrūz Shāh's long reign. Both of these mosques are fairly small and do not have central courtyard plans: rather, each consists of a prayer hall open towards a court at the east. In the Raḥimat Masjid at each end of the façade of the prayer hall is an arched opening with the arch decorated with a row of rosettes, supported by engaged columns. The form of the arch is similar to those of the Jāmiʿ of Mangrol, but on a smaller scale with finer carvings. The Chishtīwālā Masjid is seven bays wide and five aisles deep with a fairly large corbelled dome in the middle. The feature is carefully reassembled from an earlier Hindu or Jain corbelled dome, decorated with lotus leaf and other motifs, but no images. The mosque has three *miḥrābs*, all similar in size and semi-circular in plan, again employing partly reassembled temple spoil.[42] One of the latest examples of this type is the Aḥmad Shāhī Masjid[43] in Ahmadabad, built in 817/1414–15 in the newly founded Bhadra (citadel) of Ahmadabad, but as the royal mosque of the newly established sultanate of Gujarat it is on a much grander scale than our earlier examples.

Aḥmad Shāh (813–846/1410–43) consolidated the power of his sultanate and developed Ahmadabad as his capital. His grand Jāmiʿ in the town is an early example of a new type of mosque in Gujarat, the style of which soon flourished throughout the state. The use of temple spoil was abandoned and all building materials were purposely carved. The trabeate form and the employment of corbelled domes, however, continued, although by this time in north India and the Deccan true domes were well established and structures in the Middle Eastern and Central Asian style commonplace. In the architecture of the Gujarat sultanate the pre-Islamic structural techniques were employed but were adopted to serve Islamic aesthetic concepts. While the decorative motifs may be traced to temple decoration, only certain motifs were chosen and combined to comply with Muslim taste and codes of ornament. In the larger mosques the idea of one column shaft superimposed on the other was preserved, but as all components were purposely carved for the buildings the elements were combined

40 Cousens, *Somnāth*, 65; Z. A. Desai, "Khalji and Tughluq inscriptions", 23–4.

41 The mosque is first reported here. Z. A. Desai, "Khalji and Tughluq inscriptions", 27–30, calls the mosque Junī Jail kī Masjid, because of its proximity to the town's prison, but the mosque is known as Chishtīwālā, and according to its inscription was built by the efforts of one Khwāja Muḥammad b. ʿAlī for Khwāja Farīd al-dīn Kalān, a disciple of Shaikh Naṣīr al-dīn Chishtī, who is said to have been later buried in the mosque.

42 The Chishtīwālā Masjid is closely similar both in plan and in scale to the Jāmiʿ of Veraval built during the reign of Muḥammad b. Tughluq and dated 1 Ramaḍān 732/27 May 1332. For the Jāmiʿ of Veraval see Cousens, *Somnāth*, 34; Mahdi Husain, "Six inscriptions of Sulṭān Muḥammad bin Tughluq Shāh", *EIAPS*, 1957–58, 38–9.

43 James Burgess, *The Muhammadan Architecture of Ahmadabad, Part I, A.D. 1412 to 1520* (London: ASI, New Imperial Series, XXIV, Western India, VII, 1900), 17–19, pls. 3, 11–18.

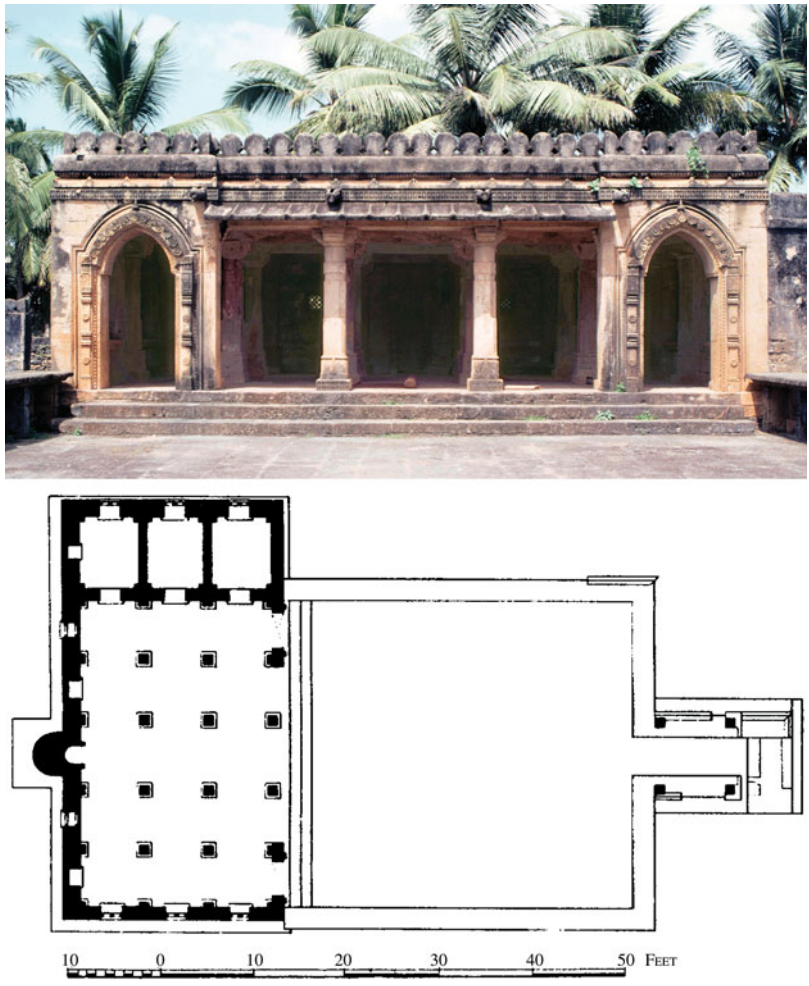

Figure 10. (Colour online) Mangrol, Raḥimat Masjid, above, view of the prayer hall from the courtyard looking west, below, plan (after Cousens) showing the *qibla* (west) at the left. The three chambers adjoining the north side of the prayer hall are later additions.

in tasteful harmony and with a sophistication hardly seen in the early sultanate examples. Another feature of these mosques is the wall on the façade of the prayer hall towards the courtyard, pierced by large arches, allowing the colonnaded structure of the prayer hall to be seen from the courtyard. The central arch was usually flanked by two minarets, highly decorated on the surface, but most of these minarets have now fallen and only their lower tiers engaged to the wall at ground level have remained.

Hardly any building in the style of the sultanate of Gujarat can be found in Somnath and indeed anywhere else on the west coast of Saurashtra. The later buildings of these areas are usually modest in scale, often haphazardly built and usually employing reclaimed material from earlier buildings, Hindu or Muslim.

Figure 11. (Colour online) Mangrol, Chishtīwālā Masjid, view of the prayer hall from the courtyard looking north-west. The canopy attached to the front of the prayer hall was added later and contains a single grave which is said to belong to Khwāja Naṣīr al-dīn Kalān Chishtī. The arches between some columns in the prayer hall and the parapet around the tomb are also later additions.

In the later phases of the Gujarat sultanate and under the Mughals other types developed, which included the employment of true domes and sometimes arabesque decorative elements. The buildings of this period combine the traditional architecture of Gujarat with north Indian forms. Occasionally even stilted domes with high drums of the later Mughal type appear over buildings, which have otherwise delicate stonework in the traditional Gujarati style. An example is the tomb of Wajīḥ al-dīn built in *c*. 998/1589–90 in Ahmadabad.[44] We are not concerned with these types in the present work, but their study could provide a better understanding of the post-Mughal architecture of the region including that of the Hindus and the Jains.

Mosques of Somnath

During our fieldwork in Somnath we noted at least eight old mosques, five shrines, two *ʿīdgāhs* (prayer walls) and, near the Muslim sites, a few small reservoirs probably of Muslim origin. The town also has several modern or recently constructed mosques. Of another old mosque, said to have been demolished some fifty years ago, only an ink rubbing of its inscription has been preserved in the Jāmiʿ of Somnath (now the museum) dating from the time of the Gujarat sultan Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Shāh (846–855/1442–51).[45] The mosque is said to

44 Ibid., 53, pl. 52.
45 Z. A. Desai, "Inscriptions of the Gujarat sultans", *EIAPS*, 1963, 24–6, pl. 8.

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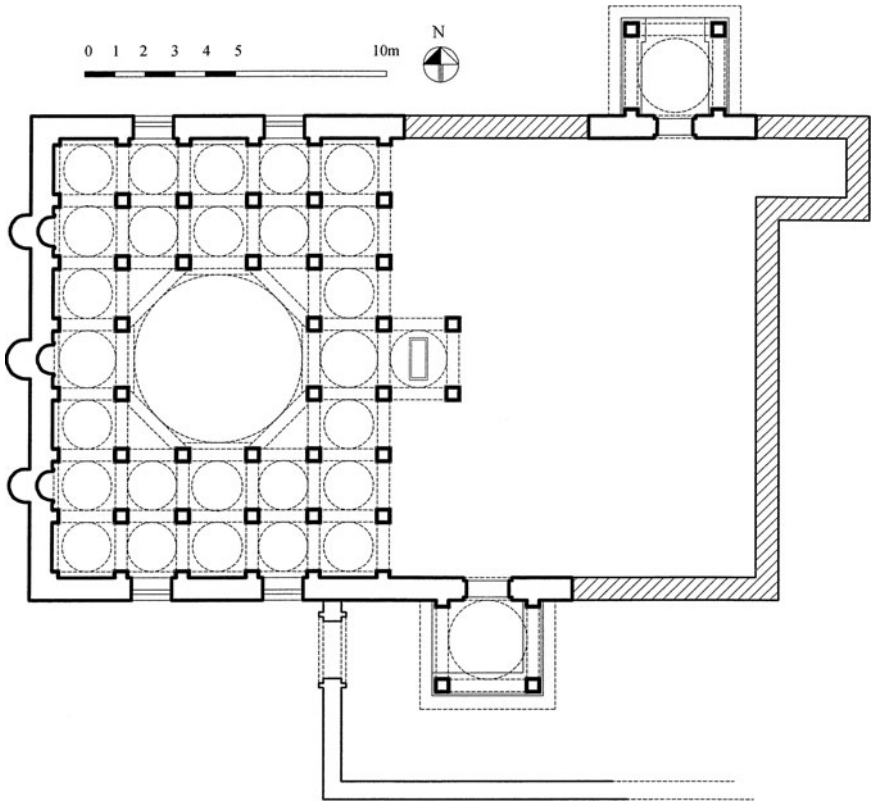

Figure 12. Chishtīwālā Masjid, plan in its original form. There are later additions within the hall, including arches and some partition walls which create two small chambers at the north-west and south-west corners of the prayer hall. These alterations are relatively recent and have not affected the original structure presented in the plan.

have been near the Trivani or Chhota Darwāza (at the south-east of the town), but the area has been mostly rebuilt and nothing of the building is left. Another mosque recorded as Panch Bībī kā Koṭhā is known to have been demolished before 1954, and only the ink rubbing of the inscription dated 19 Rajab 877/20 December 1472 has survived.[46] The location of this building is no longer known.

46 Ibid., 30–32. The name suggests that it may have been a shrine, but the inscription refers to the construction of a mosque. Another inscription from a lost mosque is also known (ibid., 50). The original location of the mosque is unknown and the worn inscription is hardly decipherable, but its Persian text is an indication that it belonged to a sultanate mosque, as the pre-sultanate inscriptions of the maritime communities are all in Arabic, even when set up by Persian-speaking merchants, as we have seen in the case of the inscriptions of Abu'l Qāsim b. ʿAlī at Junagadh and Nākhudā Fīrūz b. Abī Ibrāhīm in Somnath.

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Amongst these edifices three mosques are worthy of particular attention: the Jāmiʿ, the Chaugān Masjid and the Idrīs Masjid. These mosques are larger than the others and their plans and structure are of some merit. The largest and most impressive is the Jāmiʿ, which is also among the few Muslim buildings mentioned by Cousens, who gave a plan and detailed drawings of its entrance porch.[47] His focus was, however, mainly on the pre-Islamic decoration found on the temple spoil used in the building. We shall return to this mosque later, but the Jāmiʿ may not be the earliest mosque of the town. Its foundation inscription, if it ever had one, has not survived, and Cousens suggests that it may be from the time of Muẓaffar Shāh or his successor Aḥmad Shāh – a dating which as we shall see, may be considered, but other dates can also be suggested. The other two mosques may be even earlier.

Chaugān Masjid

Not far from the Jāmiʿ in the heart of the Muslim quarter of Somnath stands the Chaugān Masjid, which consists of a prayer hall at the west of a courtyard. The mosque is built over a high platform which is still visible at the western side below the prayer hall (Figure 13), but is partly buried under later deposits at the eastern end of the courtyard, the walls of which are of later dates. The mosque bears no historical inscription, but in spite of some later restorations the prayer hall has been preserved with all its original features (Figure 14). It measures about 18.85 m wide and 9.60 m deep and has three *miḥrābs* of the same size, semi-circular in plan – a feature of all Gujarati mosques – and projecting on the exterior. The *miḥrābs* are similar in design and each consists of an almost two-centred pointed arch with a fringe, resting on engaged columns, all purposely carved (Figure 15). In the mosques built of temple spoil it was usual both in north India and in Gujarat to carve fresh stones for the *miḥrābs* or redress reused stones on entirely Islamic patterns. The form of the *miḥrābs* of the Chaugān Masjid differs from those of the sultanate of Gujarat and conforms to those of the earlier mosques. In these *miḥrābs* the breadth in relation to the height is often wider than those of the later periods. The *miḥrābs* are also plainer and their decoration is limited to mouldings and religious inscriptions around the arch. Moreover, in the *miḥrābs* of the Chaugān Masjid the almost two-centred profile of the arches is more similar to those of the Khaljīs and early Tughluqs in Delhi, rather than those of the sultanate of Gujarat.

Another indication of the age of the building is its structure (Figure 16). The columns are each composed of two reused columns, the lower ones complete with base, shaft and corbelled bracket. In a temple these brackets would be load-bearing elements supporting the roof lintels, but here, as with other mosques of this type, they are used for aesthetic reasons and have no structural function except as blocks supporting the load of the second shaft. The upper shafts are shorter, but have their own capital brackets, which at this point have their expected function of supporting the roof lintels. This arrangement is a characteristic of early sultanate buildings and indicates a fourteenth-century date.

47 Cousens, *Somnāth*, 28–9, pls. 10–11.

Figure 13. Somnath, Chaugān Masjid, exterior of the *qibla* (western) wall of the prayer hall with its three projecting *miḥrābs* standing over the high platform.

The columns seem to have been taken from a variety of sources, but selected for having little decoration – or they may have been partly redressed. Whatever is left of the original decoration is now obscured by layers of whitewash. Nevertheless, it is clear that careful attention has been given to arranging columns of different types to appear together harmoniously. As a whole three types of column shafts are used. Those of the front row seen from the courtyard are in two registers, square below and octagonal above, while those set inside the hall are in three registers, square below, octagonal in the middle and cylindrical above, except the columns of the central bay, which are in two registers, square below and cylindrical above. The choice of fairly plain columns and their meticulous arrangement demonstrates that the building was not constructed hastily, or as a demonstration of the supremacy of the newly established power, but rather as a utilitarian mosque for everyday worship in the neighbourhood. If this is the case we may assume that the building was constructed a few decades after the conquest of Gujarat, probably during the reign of Muḥammad b. Tughluq or Fīrūz Shāh Tughluq.

The prayer hall has a flat roof, except for three small corbelled domes set over the third units of the bays with *miḥrabs*. The horizontal segments of the domes are carved with lotus leaf motifs, but have no figurative carving. The large

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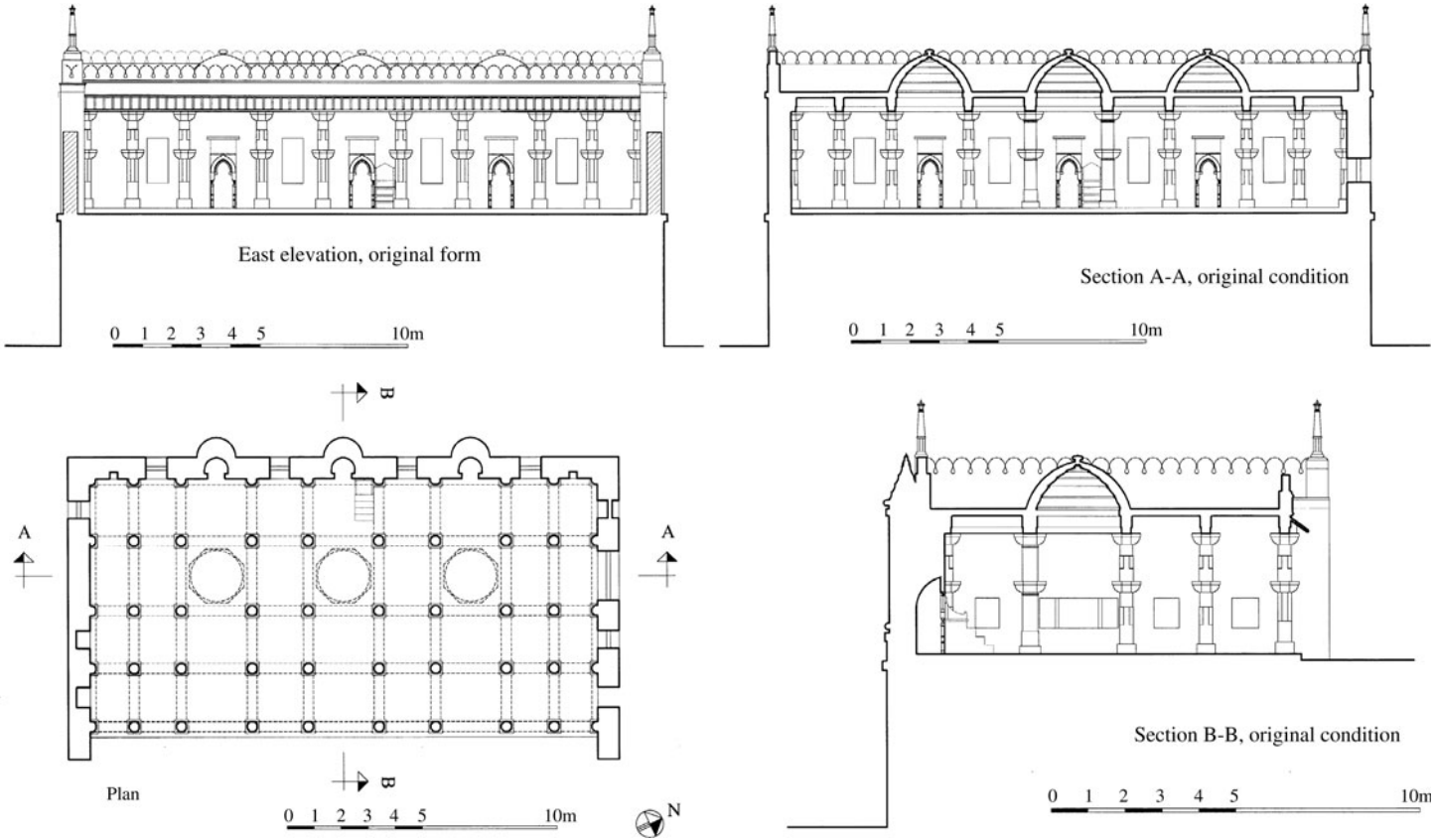

Figure 14. Chaugān Masjid, prayer hall, plan, eastern elevation and sections through and across the hall. The structure is presented in its original condition and later alterations, including arches on the elevation, are omitted.

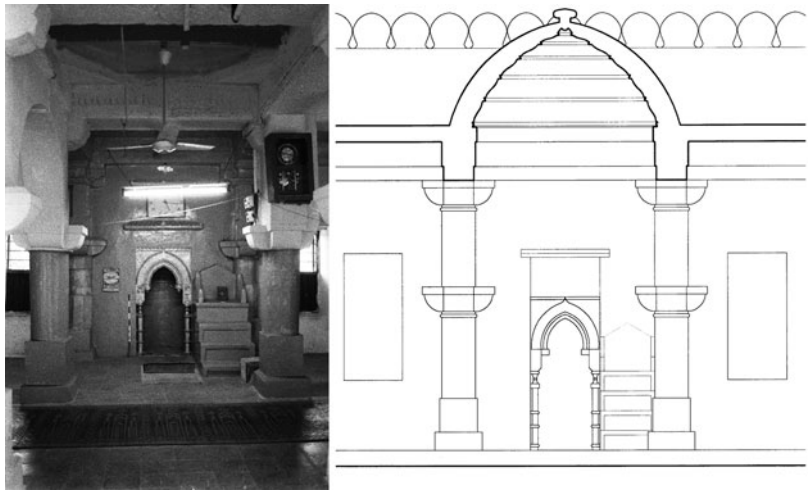

Figure 15. Chaugān Masjid, central bay of the prayer hall looking towards the *miḥrāb*, with a stone *minbar* with three steps to its right (north). In front of the *miḥrāb* one of the three corbelled domes of the hall can also be seen.

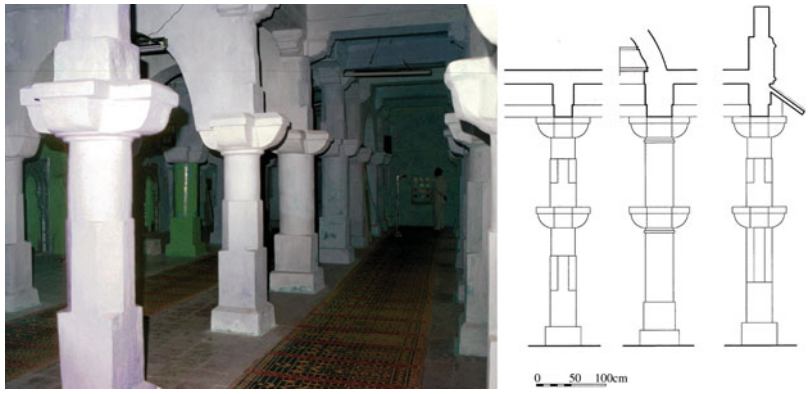

Figure 16. (Colour online) Chaugān Masjid, left: prayer hall showing the structure with the roof supported by lintels resting on the bracket-capitals of columns composed of two older columns, the upper shaft being shorter than the one below and the two separated by another bracket-capital which has no structural function; right: details of the three types of column reassembled in the prayer hall.

windows, particularly those on the *qibla* wall, provide ample light to the colonnade, and their jambs and architraves seem to be reassembled from temple niches. The other windows on the side walls are plain and have been altered at later dates. The main later alteration, however, is the insertion of arches on the courtyard façade of the prayer hall (Figure 17). Inside the prayer hall, too, in a few positions where a stone lintel has cracked an arch has been inserted to stabilize the structure, but the arches of the façade are purely decorative

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Figure 17. (Colour online) Chaugān Masjid, view of the prayer hall from the courtyard looking north-west. Decorative arches on the façade of the prayer hall are later additions, but the original structure, such as the roof lintels and upper shafts of the columns, can still be seen on the surface.

and seem to have been added later to give the mosque an appearance similar to those of the late Gujarat sultanate and Mughal periods. The arches do not obscure the original structural elements and are omitted in our drawings to show the building in its original form.

Idrīs Masjid

The Idrīs mosque is located near the western gate of the town, an impressive Hindu gateway left virtually unaltered under the Muslims except for the insertion of arches (Figure 22) between the highly decorated corbelled brackets on both the outer and inner (town) side.[48] As with the Chaugān Masjid the Idrīs Masjid too consists of a prayer hall at the west of a courtyard, but here the hall is slightly narrower and deeper than the Chaugān Masjid and the courtyard does not seem to be on its original layout. At the southern side of the mosque the courtyard's modern wall is not aligned with that of the prayer hall, but set in by one bay. The southern and northern bays of the prayer hall are also partly walled up to provide four small chambers, altering the original appearance of the prayer hall significantly (Figures 18 and 20). The rooms do not seem to have served a particular function and at present are used simply as stores.

It is not usual to partition off the prayer hall of a mosque but in the Idrīs Masjid a reason for such alterations may be the unusual structure of the prayer hall, which makes its original form somewhat unparallel to any other mosque in the region. The mosque is constructed of temple spoil with the columns again

48 Cousens, *Somnāth*, 13, notes the gate briefly and gives a photograph, but does not mention the Idrīs or the Qalandarī mosque (noted below), both near the gate.

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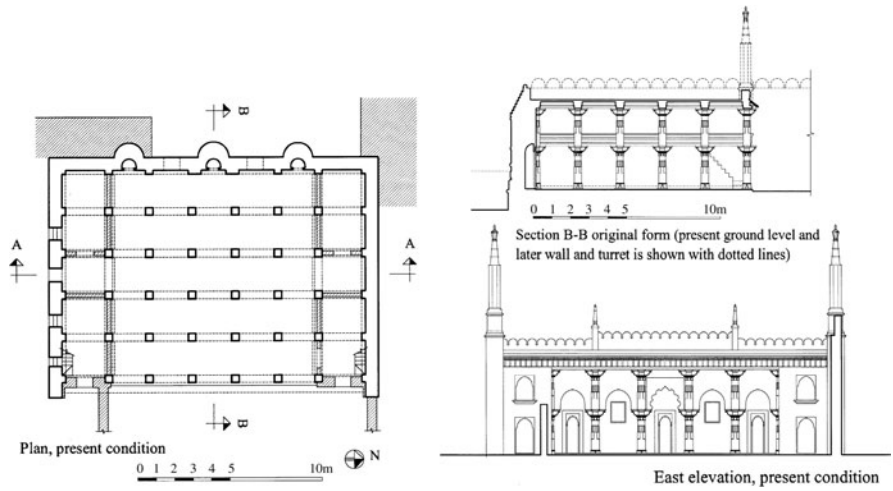

Figure 18. Somnath, Idrīs Masjid, present condition, plan showing later partition walls marked by hatching, section B-B of the prayer hall, and east elevation showing the original form with later additions indicated by dotted lines.

composed of two older columns, but the northern and southern bays are built in two storeys with the upper storey in the form of a gallery running along the depth of the hall (Figures 19–21). The form is not similar to the *maqṣūra* of an Indian Jāmiʿ or that of a royal mosque, a mezzanine commonly known as *zanāna* (women's gallery), but originally for the exclusive use of the ruler and known in north India as *shāh nishīn* and in Gujarat as *mulūk khāna*.[49] As with the example in the Rāvalī Masjid (Figure 9) such galleries were always constructed as a small mezzanine at the north-west corner of the early sultanate mosques. In some later sultanate *jāmi's*, for the sake of symmetry a similar mezzanine was occasionally constructed at the south-western corner, but this was not a norm. In none of these mosques, however, does the *maqṣūra* run along the whole depth of the prayer hall, leaving the arrangement of the galleries of the Idrīs Masjid peculiar to this building.

The structure, however, seems to have been a local neighbourhood mosque, and never intended for a *jāmiʿ*. The prayer hall, 16.40 m wide and 11.40 m deep, is fairly small and has a flat roof. In Saurashtra, a *jāmiʿ* is usually much larger and has large corbelled domes. The galleries in the Idrīs mosque may therefore be considered to have originally been for the use of women, but in spite of the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century attribution of the term *zanāna* to sultanate *maqṣūras*, in north India and Gujarat smaller mosques do not have

49 During the sultanate period these galleries were known as *mulūk khāna*, but the Emperor Jahāngīr notes that the Mughals called them *shāh nishīn* (royal chamber). See Shams-i Sirāj, 80; Sikandar b. Muḥammad Manjhū, b. Akbar, *Mir'āt-i Sikandarī*, ed. S. C. Misra and M. L. Rahman (Baroda, 1961), 38; Muḥammad Jahāngīr Gūrkānī, *Jahāngīr nāma or Tūzuk-i Jahāngīrī*, ed. Muhammad Hashim (Tehran, 1980), 242.

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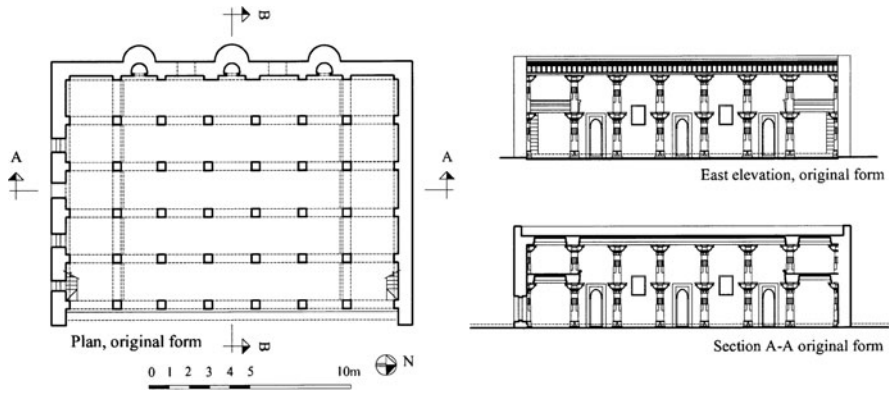

Figure 19. Idrīs Masjid, plan, east elevation and section A-A of the prayer hall showing the building in its original form, with the mezzanines along the northern and southern ends of the prayer hall.

maqṣūras or any specific space dedicated to women. On the occasions when women do gather in mosques they simply sit separately from the men, often behind them or in the southern bays. In south India women are barred from going to the prayer halls of mosques altogether.

The form of the Chaugān and the Idrīs Masjid, as well as the other examples with columns composed of two earlier shafts, seems to have been a genre in fourteenth-century Saurashtra. Another mosque of similar structure, but grander in scale with six fairly large corbelled domes, is the Karao Jāmiʿ of Diu,[50] which was a significant port of Saurashtra until 1534 when the Gujarat sultan Bahādur Shāh gave permission to the Portuguese to build a fort there; over the course of time the town and eventually the island of Diu became a Portuguese colony. Another example, even grander than the Karao Jāmiʿ, is the Jāmiʿ of Una (Figure 23),[51] a town at the southern tip of Saurashtra and not far from Diu. This mosque is laid out on a central courtyard plan with a large *chatrī* in front of the main entrance, reconstructed from the elements of an elegant and sizeable *maṇḍapa*. The columns and the domes also bear extensive decoration, but the re-employment of elements with figurative motifs has, of course, been avoided.

Returning to Somnath, the area around the Idrīs Masjid preserves a number of secular structures built of temple spoil, and it seems that after the destruction of the temples at the beginning of the fourteenth century a large number of building elements were left scattered in the area, later to be employed in new buildings. The Chaugān and Idrīs Masjid may well have used this pool of building elements, rather than employing material from temples demolished specifically for the purpose.

50 Mehrdad Shokoohy and Natalie H. Shokoohy, "The Karao Jāmiʿ Mosque of Diu in the light of the history of the island", *SAS* 16, 2000, 55–72.

51 The mosque is first reported here.

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Figure 20. (Colour online) Idrīs Masjid, view of the southern end of the prayer hall, showing the southern *miḥrāb* and the walled-up mezzanine gallery supported by columns at ground level, also partly walled up. The parapets of the mezzanine can be seen projecting from the secondary walls. Much of the original decoration is covered by whitewash.

Qalandarī Masjid and Chāndanī Masjid

Next to the Idrīs Masjid and just inside the town gate is a small mosque sometimes referred to as the Idrīs Dargāh (Idrīs shrine), but there is no tomb in the structure and it seems certain that the building has always been a mosque and is better known as the Qalandarī Masjid (Figure 24). The mosque is not an outstanding edifice, but is again built of temple spoil with a prayer hall consisting originally of an open colonnade measuring 10.20×4.5 m, but the columns facing the courtyard have been walled up making it an enclosed structure. Not much of the original courtyard has survived but in spite of later alterations the prayer hall is in fair condition. The columns, each made of a single shaft, differ from each other and appear to have been randomly collected for their equal

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Figure 21. (Colour online) Idrīs Masjid, prayer hall looking north-west and showing the central *miḥrāb* and the general structure of the mosque with columns each composed of two shafts of similar size. The lower parts of the bases of the columns are now buried under the modern floor. The northern wall in the background is the walled-up northern gallery, where parts of the original parapet leaning out of the wall can still be seen.

Figure 22. (Colour online) Idrīs Masjid, view of the prayer hall from the south-east of the courtyard showing the arches added later to the façade, but otherwise the original colonnaded structure can be seen.

height rather than their decorative composition. The interesting feature is the single *miḥrāb* which is a tall, narrow and shallow niche, with a rosette in the middle of its curved back wall and high pointed arch supported by slim engaged columns, all purposely carved. The feature is clearly in the style of the regional

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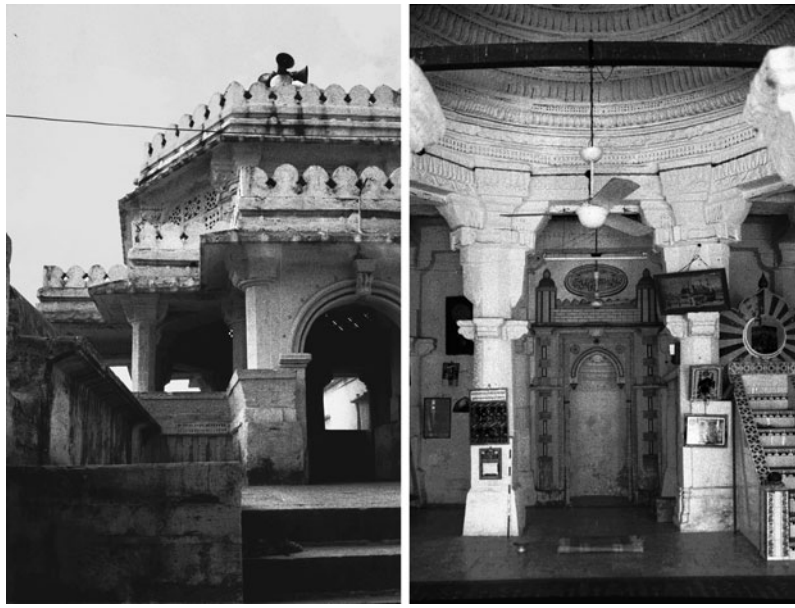

Figure 23. Una, the Jāmiʿ mosque. Left: the entrance *chatrī*; right: the central bay of the prayer hall, showing the main *miḥrāb*, and the domed unit of the central aisle with a finely decorated corbelled dome supported by columns, each composed of a complete shaft below and the upper half of a shaft above. The elements are carefully chosen and matched together.

Figure 24. Somnath, Qalandarī Masjid. Left: general view of the interior looking south-west; right: the *miḥrāb* datable on stylistic grounds to the period of the sultanate of Gujarat.

miḥrābs of the late Gujarat sultanate and early Mughal period, indicating a fifteenth- or sixteenth-century date. Another *miḥrāb* of this type, but more elegantly executed, can be found in a small mosque known as Chāndanī or Chānd kā Masjid, in Somnath. The mosque has been renovated, but the original *miḥrāb*

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Figure 25. Somnath, Chāndanī or Chānd Masjid, the finely carved *miḥrāb* surmounted by a foundation inscription recording that the building was constructed at the time of the Gujarat sultan Quṭb al-dīn Aḥmad Shāh b. Muḥammad Shāh (Aḥmad Shāh II).

(Figure 25) and the foundation inscription[52] of the mosque built at the time of Quṭb al-dīn Aḥmad Shāh and dated 17 Rajab 860/21 June 1456 has remained intact. These tall and slim *miḥrābs* surmounted with relatively small arches exemplify the regional *miḥrābs* of the time of the sultanate of Gujarat in contrast with the form of the pre-Gujarat sultanate *miḥrābs* seen in the Chaugān and the Idrīs mosques as well as others noted in this paper.

The Jāmiʿ of Somnath

The largest mosque in Somnath is, of course, the Jāmiʿ, noted by Cousens for its entrance porch with an elegant corbelled dome, reassembled from the dome of a temple *maṇḍapa*. The mosque is on a central courtyard plan measuring 48 × 35 m (Figure 26). Cousens suggests that the building was built from the spoil of one or more temples and that the courtyard is on the site of the tank of the original temple which must have once stood there. He also suggests that the building might date from the time of the founder of the Gujarat sultanate, Muẓaffar Shāh or his successor Aḥmad Shāh. He does not offer any reasons for his suggestions, which may derive from his observing that in spite of its large size the mosque is constructed with columns each consisting of a single shaft, some shortened to correspond with the height of the others. There are, however, a number of problems with his suggestions. For example, he does not mention his evidence for the prior existence of a reservoir in the courtyard.

52 Z. A. Desai, "Inscriptions of the sultans of Gujarat from Saurashtra", *EIAPS*, 1953, 61–2.

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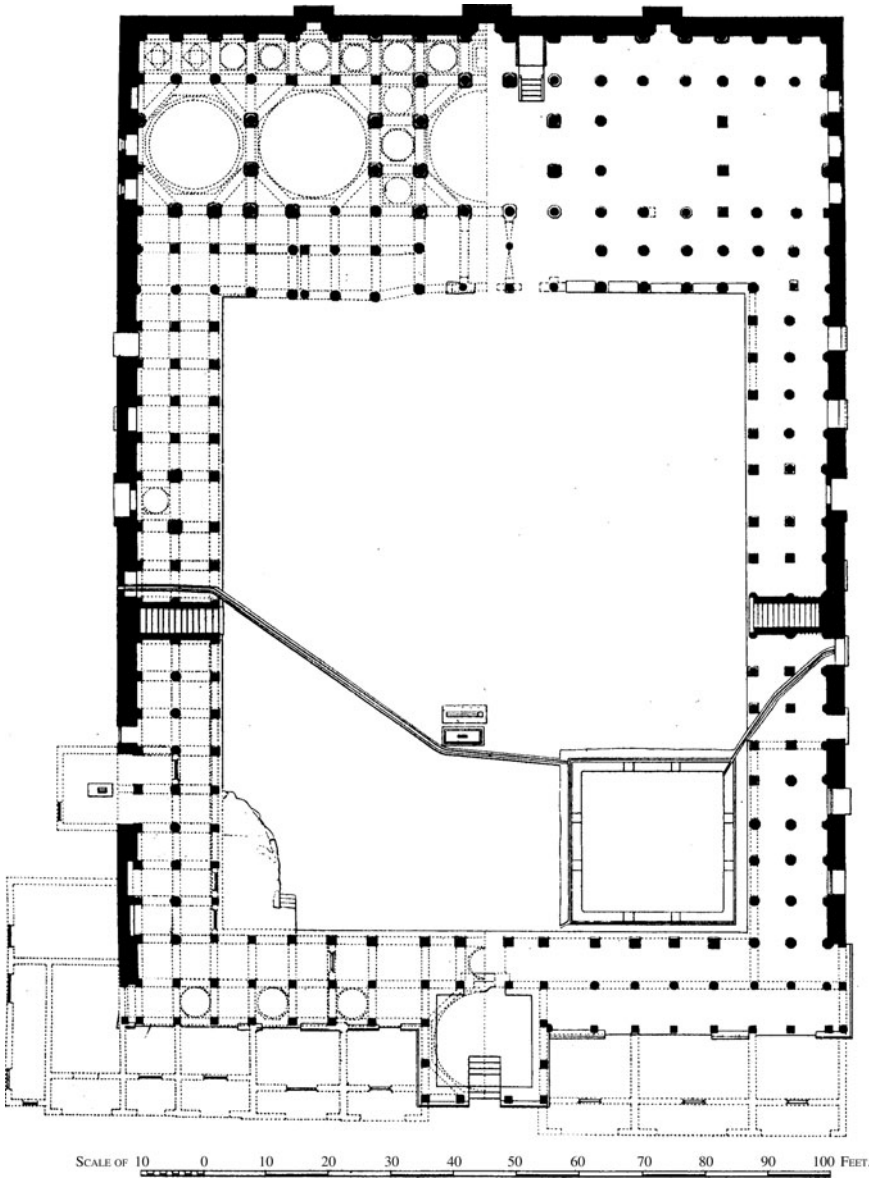

Figure 26. Jāmiʿ of Somnath with the *qibla* (west) at the top (plan after Cousens).

At present there is a reservoir at the north-east corner of the mosque, shown in the plan, but this would be expected to be of Muslim origin, provided for the ablutions before prayer. He also notes: "it was usual custom to arrange the plan of the mosque so that the central *miḥrāb*, or prayer niche, should occupy, as nearly as possible, the site of the shrine of the original temple". This is pure speculation, not supported by any historical evidence, but often used by Hindu extremists for legitimizing their claims on Muslim monuments. In the

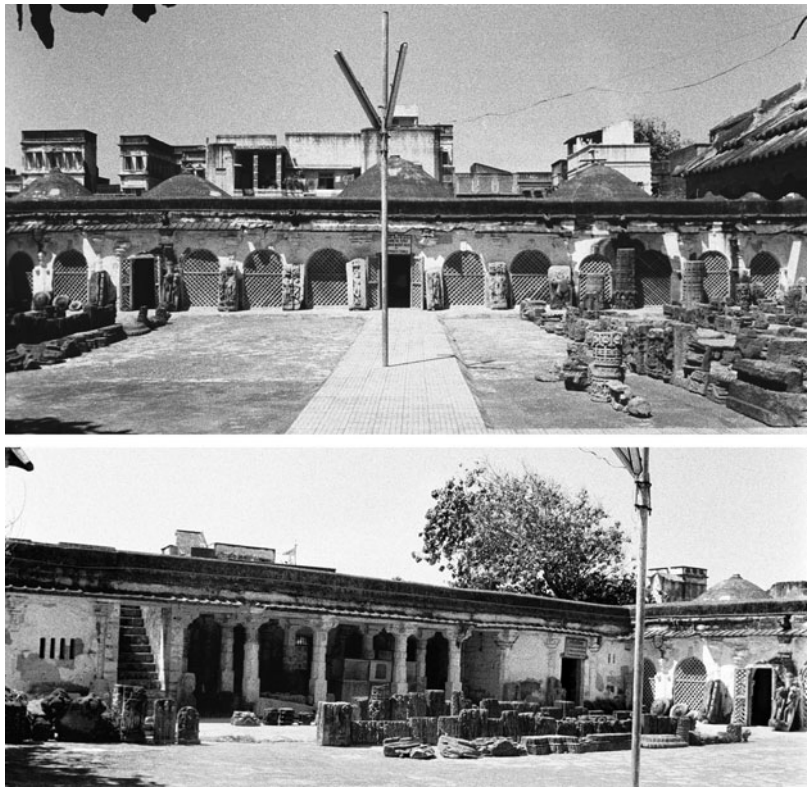

Figure 27. Somnath Jāmiʿ, views from the courtyard. Above, looking west towards the prayer hall; below, looking south-west towards the southern colonnade which is partly walled up. Architectural elements and carved sculpture found in the vicinity are deposited in the courtyard as well as within the surrounding colonnades and the prayer hall.

case of the Jāmiʿ of Somnath we have already noted that it does not occupy the centre of the town – where the original temple would have stood – but is to one side. If the mosque were built from the spoil of the main temple, it is unlikely to have been on the exact site of an existing building. It would have been more practical to have chosen a site near the temple and taken the material from the temple straight to the construction site. The alternative, of clearing the site of the temple, transferring and storing the material elsewhere, laying out the building on the site of the temple and then bringing the blocks back to build the mosque, apart from being illogical from a practical point of view, would also be contrary to the practice of constructing a mosque as a sign of conquest as quickly as possible.

In the case of the Jāmiʿ of Somnath, the number and variety of elements used do indicate that it was constructed of material of more than one temple, as suggested by Cousens, who continues, "the materials of which have been entirely rearranged to suit the usual plan of a Muḥammadan mosque … The

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finest feature is the entrance porch, which abuts upon a temple with its dome. But upon closer inspection it is found that the whole has been rebuilt and cut down to suit the height required".

When Cousens surveyed the mosque it was still in use, but since the mid-twentieth century it has been taken over by the regional government and made into the Prabas-Patan Museum, with local archaeological finds including numerous images[53] housed in the mosque – an insensitive decision, which has created great discontent among the Muslims of Somnath and has inflamed communal friction. The building itself has also been compromised by such a conversion. The open space of the prayer hall is filled with concrete pedestals built to display objects, and the spaces between the columns around the court-yard have been enclosed with blocks or screens (Figure 27). In addition, irreversible damage has been caused by the *miḥrābs* being converted into windows. In the absence of the foundation inscription the *miḥrābs* would have been useful indicators of the date of the building. Nevertheless, Cousens's plan of the mosque shows the *miḥrābs* to be rectangular in plan, rather than the semi-circular form conventional in Gujarat. Angular *miḥrābs* are in the north Indian tradition and hardly appear in Gujarat, and their presence in this mosque indicates that the construction would be related to one of the Delhi advances on the town. Another pointer is that the building appears to have been put up in haste. As Cousens puts it: "The whole work looks mean and paltry, and has more the appearance of a low rambling shed around the court-yard". In spite of the elegant entrance, little attention has been given to the aesthetics of the elements inside the mosque. The columns, brackets and lintels have been randomly chosen and set upon each other. The corbelled domes of the prayer hall are more carefully put together, but this may derive from the technique of reconstructing such domes. They could only be properly reassembled if the segments were marked or numbered, and dismantled carefully, so that the elements could be put back together in the correct alignment. We can therefore suggest that the Jāmiʿ could date from the fourteenth century, constructed by the army of Delhi – probably under Ẓafar Khān, when he was still acting under the Tughluqs. It would be reasonable to assume that as one of his early acts he would have built a Jāmiʿ in Somnath and perhaps in many other towns. However, there are other possibilities. The histories,[54] while silent about Ẓafar Khān building a mosque in Somnath, do record that during the Khaljī conquest of the town in 698/1298–9 Ulugh Khān demolished the temples and built a mosque there. The present Jāmi' could, therefore, date from the dawn of the fourteenth century rather than its closing years.

53 For the illustration of a tenth-century image of Śiva Naṭarāja now housed in the mosque see Richard H. Davis, *Lives of Indian Images* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 92, fig. 14. Davis, who seems to be unfamiliar with the principles of architectural planning of mosques and temples, reiterates, regrettably, the view of Hindu extremists and notes (p. 289, note 27): "The structure housing the museum had also experienced shifts in identity. Built originally during Kumārapāla's time as a temple to the Sun god Sūrya, it served as a Jāmi Masjīd [sic.] in later mediaeval times, before being appropriated and transformed into a secular archaeological site museum".

54 *Tārīkh-i Mubārak Shāhī*, 76. Barnī, 251, describes the destruction of the icon.

During the Muslim history of India, although Naharwāla (Anahilvada), the old capital of Gujarat and later Cambay and Asāwul (rebuilt as Ahmadabad) were the main centres of power, with the epigraphic evidence indicating that many monuments were built under the Delhi sultanate in the region, little of the edifices have actually survived. It is in Somnath and indeed the whole area of western and southern Saurashtra that such monuments are preserved. The mosques of the region not only help illuminate our understanding of early Muslim architectural style in Gujarat and its aesthetic evolution from the time of the maritime settlers to the establishment of the Sultanate of Gujarat, but together with their epigraphic records throw light on the Muslim history of the region. The mosques discussed here are just a few examples of the rich architectural and archaeological heritage of Saurashtra, and it is hoped that their study will lead to further investigation of the many others which still await attention.