

Chapter 2: Mauryan and Post Mauryan Art

CSM 02: History of India and Indian National Movement

Short Answers

Compiled by Prof. Ashok Vishandass

This chapter contains:

- Mauryan Art and Architecture
- Mauryan Pillars
- Mauryan Sculpture
- Mauryan Rock
- Stupas
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- Chaityas
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- Bharhut Stupa
- Schools of Art in Ancient India
- Gandhara School of Art
- Amravati
- Gandhara
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1. Mauryan Art and Architecture

Mauryan art is an art created between the **4th and 2nd Century BC** under the Mauryan Empire, which was the first empire to control much of the Indian subcontinent. It marked a significant shift in Indian art from the use of wood to stone. It was a royal art that Mauryan rulers, particularly Ashoka, supported. The most notable survivors include pillars, stupas, and caverns. Here we will discuss the major features of Mauryan Art and Architecture, which will be useful for the UPSC Civil Service preparation.

1.1 Mauryan Art and Architecture

- Around the 6th century BCE, religions of the Shramana tradition, such as Jainism and Buddhism, arose.
- In the 4th century BCE, the Mauryas had established themselves as a powerful force, and by the 3rd century, they had vast swaths of India under their authority.
- There were various religious activities at the period, including the worship of Yakshas and mother-goddesses. Despite this, Buddhism became the most popular religion.
- Only during the Mauryan period, after the Harappan civilization, did colossal stone sculpture and building development.
- Pillars, sculptures, rock-cut architecture, and structures like stupas, viharas, and chaityas served a variety of purposes. They are superb in terms of aesthetic quality as well as design and execution.

1.2 Mauryan Pillars and Sculptures

- This time saw a creative and stunning leap ahead in Indian stone sculpture; much of the prior work was likely made of wood and has now vanished.
- The best-known and greatest works of Ashoka are the artistically carved animal capitals that survive from several of his Pillars, particularly the **Lion Capital of Sarnath**, which is now India's National Emblem.
- The pillars and capitals reflect court art, while some stone pieces and numerous smaller terracotta works represent surviving popular art.

1.3 Terracottas

- Popular terracotta pieces of all sizes have been discovered at Mauryan sites and abroad, and are the most abundant Mauryan works of art.
- They are more abundant between Pataliputra and Taxila.
- Many have stylized shapes and are technically more proficient, with a well-defined outline and distinct decoration. Although some look to be cast from moulds, there is minimal repetition.
- Deity figurines, votive reliefs with deities, toys, dice, decorations, and beads are among the terracotta from Taxila. Round medallions, comparable to the bullae worn by Roman youths, were among the jewellery.
- The earthy beauty of terracotta representations of folk gods and goddesses is common (some of them are perhaps dolls). Many of the animal figures are most likely children's toys.

1.4 Mauryan Paintings

- Megasthenes indicates that the Mauryans possessed some fine paintings, but no examples have remained.
- The paintings of the Ajanta Caves, the earliest notable corpus of Indian art, reveal that there existed a well-developed tradition that may possibly date back to Mauryan periods several years later.

1.5 Mauryan Pottery

- There are numerous different types of ceramics linked with the Mauryan period. However, the most advanced technique may be observed in a form of pottery called **Northern Black Polished Ware (NBPW)**, which was popular during the previous and early Mauryan eras.
- It features a highly polished glaze coating that ranges in color from jet black to deep grey or metallic steel blue.
- On occasion, there are little red-brown areas visible on the surface. It has a unique sheen and brightness that sets it apart from other polished or graphite-coated red products.

1.6 Mauryan Architecture

- While the time saw a second shift to the use of brick and stone, wood remained the preferred material.
- In the Arthashastra, Kautilya recommends the use of brick and stone because of their endurance. Nonetheless, he devotes a substantial section to precautions to be taken against fires in timber structures, demonstrating their popularity.
- The **capital city of Pataliputra** was encompassed by a large timber-palisade, punctured by holes or slits through which archers might shoot, according to the Greek envoy Megasthenes.
- Spooner and Waddell excavated at **Bulandi Bagh in Pataliputra** and discovered the ruins of massive timber palisades. The ruins of one of the structures, an 80-pillared hall at **Kumrahar**, are especially noteworthy.
- During Ashoka's rule, several stupas, including those at Sanchi, Sarnath, and most likely Amaravati, were created as brick and masonry mounds. Unfortunately, they have been remodeled several times, leaving us with little resemblance to the original constructions.

1.7 Coins

- The Mauryans minted largely silver and a few copper coins in a variety of forms, sizes, and weights, each with one or more symbols punched on them.
- The elephant, the tree in the fence sign, and the mountain are the most popular emblems.
- The metal was cut first, then the device was punched, which was the standard method of making such coins.

1.8 Conclusion

Mauryan Art and Architecture have an important role in the historical development of Ancient India. Since the empire extended to a vast area, the Art of the Mauryan empire traveled long distances and got major recognition.

2. Mauryan Pillars

Mauryan Pillars (4th and 2nd Century BC) are one of the crucial architectural belongings of Ancient India. These pillars give details about the major incidents of those times, rulers, wars, etc. Thus, they are major sources of information for Historians. Here we will discuss the Mauryan Pillars, which will be helpful for UPSC Civil Service Art and Culture preparation.

2.1 Mauryan Pillars

- Despite the fact that creating pillars is an ancient practice, Mauryan pillars vary from pillars in other regions of the globe (such as Achaemenian pillars) in that they are rock-cut pillars, demonstrating the carver's talent.
- Two kinds of stone were used to chisel these pillars. Some are made of **white sandstone** from the Mathura region, while others are made of **buff-colored fine-grained hard sandstone** mined in Chunar near Varanasi.
- The pillar capitals' similarity in style implies that they were carved by workers from the same location.
- Capital is the topmost element of a pillar or column. Figures such as a bull, lion, elephant, and others were carved onto the upper half of the pillar. The capital figures (typically animals) are all carved standing on a square or circular abacus and are all forceful.
- **Abacuses** have stylized lotuses on them.
- The **Lion Capital**, a Mauryan pillar capital unearthed at **Sarnath**, is the best specimen of Mauryan sculpting tradition.
- **King Ashoka** erected many pillars across his territory.

2.2 Pillar Edicts and Inscriptions

The seven pillar edicts of Ashoka have been discovered in Topra (Delhi), Meerut, Kausambhi, Rampurva, Champaran, and Mehrauli:

- Asoka's **idea of people protection** is enshrined in **Pillar Edict I**.
- **Pillar Edict II**: Defines **Dhamma** as having the least sins, the greatest number of virtues, compassion, liberality, honesty, and purity.
- **Pillar Edict III**: Removes sins such as harshness, cruelty, rage, and pride, among others.
- **Pillar Edict IV**: Addresses the responsibilities of Rajukas.
- **Pillar Edict V**: A list of animals and birds that should not be slaughtered on certain days, as well as a separate list of species that should not be killed at all.
- Dhamma policy is the **sixth pillar edict**.
- Asoka's work towards Dhamma policy is documented in **Pillar Edict VII**.

2.3 Minor Pillar Inscriptions

- Inscription on the **Rummindei Pillar**: Asoka's visit to Lumbini and the exemption of Lumbini from taxation.

- Inscription on the **Nigalisagar Pillar in Nepal**: Asoka extended the height of Buddha Konakamana's stupa to twice its original size.

2.4 Major Pillar Inscriptions

- Sarnath Lion Capital was erected by Ashoka in Varanasi to commemorate Dhammachakrapravartana or Buddha's first discourse.
- Single lion on Vaishali Pillar in Bihar, with no inscription.
- Uttar Pradesh's Sankissa Pillar
- Champaran, Bihar: Lauriya-Nandangarth.
- Champaran, Bihar: Lauriya-Araraj
- Uttar Pradesh's Allahabad pillar.

2.5 Lion Capital, Sarnath

- Sarnath Lion Capital is the name given to the lion capital unearthed more than a century ago at Sarnath, near Varanasi.
- It was created by **Ashoka** in memory of '**Dhammachakrapravartana**,' or Buddha's first discourse, and is one of the best specimens of Mauryan sculpture.

It was originally made up of five parts:

1. The **shaft** of the pillar.
 2. The **lotus bell**, also known as the base.
 3. A clockwise rotation of four animals on a drum on the bell base (**abacus**).
 4. Four magnificent addorsed (back to back) lions.
 5. Dharamchakra/Dharmachakra, is the highest crowning element.
- Four Asiatic lions are placed back to back in the capital, with very powerful facial muscularity, symbolizing strength, courage, pride, and confidence.
 - The sculpture's surface is highly polished, as is typical of the Mauryan era.
 - A chakra (wheel) is shown in all four directions on the abacus (drum on the bell base), with a **bull, a horse, an elephant, and a lion** between each chakra. There are 24 spokes in each chakra. The **Indian National Flag** has this 24-spoke chakra.
 - An inverted lotus capital supports the circular abacus. The National Emblem of Independent India is the capital without the shaft, the lotus bell, and the crowning wheel.
 - Only three Lions are visible in Madhav Sawhey's insignia, with the fourth obscured from view.

2.6 Conclusion

Mauryan pillars are remnants of the glorious past of India. These pillars detail key historical events, kings, and conflicts, among other things. As a result, they are important sources of data for historians.

3. Mauryan Sculpture

The Maurya period between the **4th and 2nd Century BC** is highlighted by significant advancements in Indian sculpture. The Lion Capital of Sarnath, Yaksha, and Yakshini figures are famous examples of Mauryan Sculptures. Here we will discuss the Mauryan Sculpture, which is an important part of Art and Culture preparation for the UPSC IAS Exam.

3.1 Mauryan Sculpture

- Local sculptors' work exemplifies the Mauryan Period's popular art. This included sculpture that was most likely not commissioned by the Emperor.
- The local governors were supporters of popular art. Dr. Ananda Coomarswamy divides Mauryan sculptures into two categories: **Court art and Popular art**.
- The pillars and their capitals are considered Court art, while the works of sculptors such as the Yakshas and Yakshinis are considered popular art.
- Popular art includes the Yaksha picture from Parkam and the Yakshini figure from Besnagar.

3.2 Influence of Religions on Mauryan Sculptures

- Religious activities in ancient days had numerous aspects and were not limited to a single method of worship.
- During the Maurya period, Buddhism became the most prominent social and religious movement.
- Yaksha worship was immensely prevalent both before and after Buddhism, and it was extensively incorporated into both Buddhism and Jainism. As a result, throughout the Mauryan Empire, the notion of sacred sculpture was prevalent.

3.3 Influence of Foreign Countries on Maurya Sculpture

- It is generally known that the first three Mauryan emperors, Chandragupta, Bindusara, and Asoka, had cordial connections with the Hellenic West, notably with the court of the great Seleucid rulers, who may be considered heirs of Alexander the Great and the Achaemenids of Iran.
- This might point to the origins of foreign influences, and an adaptation of Achaemenid models has been found in the Edicts of Asoka and the ruins of the Mauryan palace at Pataliputra's imperial capital.
- The Mauryan pillars, on the other hand, are not the same as the Achaemenid pillars. The Mauryan pillars are rock-cut, demonstrating the carver's expertise, but the Achaemenid pillars are pieced together by a mason.

3.4 Mauryan Court Art

- Excellent stone sculpture emerged in its entirety during the Maurya dynasty. The stone was now utilized for sculpture and building throughout the country.

- During the Maurya dynasty, the stone surface was also given a dazzling polish. Mauryan art is known for its dazzling mirror-like gloss and wide range of compositions.
- Stone pillars, railings, parasols, capitals, animal and human sculptures, and a variety of other themes are all examples of this art.
- Throughout the Mauryan Empire, stone pillars were built with inscriptions carved on them.
- The pillar's top was carved with capital figures such as a bull, a lion, an elephant, and so on. A square or circular abacus supports each capital figure. The abacuses are embellished with stylized lotuses.
- Basarah-Bakhira, Lauriya- Nandangarh, Rampurva, Sankisa, and Sarnath are some of the notable sites where the pillars have been discovered.

3.5 Mauryan Popular Art

- **Yakshas and Yakshinis** are depicted in popular art throughout the Maurya period. Yaksha refers to friendly nature spirits, commonly known as fertility spirits.
- The female Yakshini is the male Yaksha's equivalent. Yaksha is also the name of one of Ancient India's Exotic Tribes.
- Natural riches are cared for by Yakshas and Yakshinis. They occupy a major role in Hindu, Jain, and Buddhist literature, as well as being depicted in Buddhist and Jain sacred monuments.
- Large sculptures of Yakshas and Yakhinis have been discovered in India, primarily in standing positions, in areas like Patna, Vidisha, and Mathura.
- The smooth surface and clear physiognomic characteristics are the most prevalent elements in these photographs.

3.6 Yakshini of Didarganj

- The Yakshi figure from Didarganj, Patna, is one of the greatest specimens of popular Maurya art.
- This free-standing sculpture in sandstone with a polished surface is tall, well-built, and balanced, displaying the complexity in the treatment of form and medium.
- Yakshini's right hand is holding a chauri (flywhisk), while her left hand is shattered. The sculptor's sensitivity to the round strong female human form may be seen in this photograph. Muscle folds are represented correctly.
- The illusion of a protruding belly is created by tightening the fabric around the belly. The bottom garment has been meticulously crafted.
- Protruding lines adhere to the legs, creating a slightly translucent impression, exposing every fold of the garment on the legs. The large breasts and impressive back indicate thoracic heaviness.

3.7 Elephant sculpture at Dhauli

- The Elephant Rock Cut Sculpture at Dhauli, Odisha, shows the fore-part of an elephant carved over the **Edicts of Asoka**, including the two expressly intended for Kalinga.

- A tone and sentiment distinct from those expressed in the animal forms surmounting the pillar capitals may be detected in the modeling and execution of this elephant sculpture.
- It depicts a good delineation of bulky volume and live flesh, as is innate to that animal, as well as a dignified movement and linear rhythm that is only matched by the elephant image in relief on the Sarnath capital's abacus.

3.8 Facades of Lomus Rishi Cave

- The Lomus Rishi cave is a rock-cut cave located in the Barabar hills near Gaya, Bihar.
- The cave's front is adorned with a semicircular chaitya arch that serves as the entrance.
- For the Ajivika sect, Ashoka patronized the cave. The cave of Lomus Rishi is a unique specimen of this time period.

3.9 Conclusion

Mauryan art is art created between 322 and 185 BCE under the Mauryan Empire, which was the first empire to control much of the Indian subcontinent. It marked a significant shift in Indian art from the use of wood to stone. It was a royal art that Mauryan rulers, particularly Ashoka, supported.

4. Mauryan Rock - Cut Architecture

A style of Rock Art in which a structure is carved out of solid natural rock is known as rock-cut architecture. Many cave temples and monasteries may be found across India. We will go through the intricacies of Mauryan Rock-Cut Architecture in this article, which will help you prepare for the UPSC IAS Exam.

4.1 Mauryan Rock-Cut Architecture

During their reign, the Mauryans were also patrons of several rock-cut architectures. The majority of these were Buddhist in nature. The rock-cut cave in the **Barabar Hills** is an excellent example of Mauryan rock-cut construction.

The two important features of the caves of the Mauryan period were:

- **Polishing inside the cave**
- **Creation of artistic gateway.**

4.2 Lomus Rishi Cave, Barabar Hills

- It is a rock-cut cave in the Barabar Hills near Gaya, Bihar.
- The semicircular Chaitya (worship place) arch, which serves as the cave's entrance, is carved into the cave's face.
- On the chaitya, there is an elephant frieze carved in great relief. The cave's inner hall is rectangular in shape, with a circular chamber at the back. The entrance is positioned on the hall's sidewall.
- It was patronized by Asoka for the Ajeevika Sect.

4.3 Stupas, Chaityas and Viharas

- **Chaityas were meeting places** for the purpose of debate, whereas **Viharas were for living**. Early Chaityas and Viharas were made of wood, but later stone-cut Chaityas and Viharas were built.
- A stupa is a **Buddhist memorial structure** that generally houses precious relics linked with the Buddha or other saints.
- We have various inscriptional evidence from the second century B.C. onwards naming benefactors for building the Stupas, Chaityas and Viharas and, in some cases, their profession.
- Sponsorship had followed a largely communal structure, with relatively few examples of royal patronage.
- Gahapatis (householders, regular farmers, etc.) and monarchs are among the patrons. The guild's contributions are also acknowledged in various places.
- The names of artists such as Kanha at Pitalkhora and his student Balaka at Kondane caves are only mentioned in a few inscriptions.
- Stone carvers, goldsmiths, carpenters, and other types of artisans are listed in the inscriptions. Traders kept track of their donations and where they came from.

- Stupas were extensively created in the next century (mostly the 2nd century B.C.) with various improvements such as the enclosure of the circulatory route with railings and sculptural ornamentation.
- A cylindrical drum and a circular and with a **harmika and chhatra** on top made up the stupa, which remained stable throughout with minimal alterations in shape and size. Later times saw the addition of gateways.

4.4 Depiction of Buddha in Chaityas

- Buddha is symbolically symbolized in the early era with footprints, stupas, lotus throne, chakra, and other symbols. The narrative gradually became an element of the process.
- On the railings and torans of the stupas, incidents from Buddha's life, the **Jataka tales**, and so on were painted. Birth, renunciation, enlightenment, dharmachakrapravartana (first sermon), and mahaparinirvana were the major episodes in the Buddha's life that were commonly represented (death).
- **Chhadanta Jataka, Ruru Jataka, Sibi Jataka, Vidur Jataka, Vessantara Jataka, and Shama Jataka** are among the Jataka stories that are widely presented.

4.5 Conclusion

In addition to Pillars, Sculptures, etc, the Maurya artists began building tunnels out of rocks for monks to reside in. Later, western and southern India adopted this style of cave building.

5. Stupas

The Sanskrit term stupa refers to a heap. It began as a small semi-circular earthen mound known as Anda. With the passage of time and the inclusion of artwork, it gradually evolved into a more sophisticated structure. Stupas were constructed in sacred locations. These places were considered sacred because they were associated with Buddha's life. The art of writing flourished throughout Ashoka's reign. This article will explain to you the concepts related to the Stupas which will be helpful in Indian Art and Culture preparation for the UPSC Civil service exam.

5.1 What are Stupas?

- A stupa is a relic-filled mound-like or hemispheric structure used for meditation.
- From the **Vedic time** onwards, stupas were used as **burial mounds in India**.
- It's a traditional depiction of a burial cumulus, where the dead's relics and ashes are maintained.
- The art of stupas reached its pinnacle during the **era of Ashoka**. During his reign, around 84000 stupas were built.
- Before the period of Ashoka, the stupa was common throughout India. The stupas became objects of **cult worship** from the moment **Ashoka** broke up the Buddha's existing body relics and created monuments to enshrine them.
- According to **Buddhist tradition**, the nine stupas were originally built following Buddha's death, eight over the relics and one over the vessel in which the relics were first put.
- At **Rajagriha, Vaishali, Kapilvastu, Allakapa, Ramagrama, Vethadipa, Pava, Kushinagar, and Pippalvina**, stupas were built over Buddha relics.
- The stupa is made up of a **cylindrical drum** and a circular anda with a **harmika and chhatra** on top, which are mostly the same with minor variations in shape and size.

5.2 Historical background

- The **Great Stupa** was built by the **Mauryan emperor Ashoka** in the 3rd century BCE and is thought to store the Buddha's remains. During the second century BCE, the modest building was ruined.
- It was eventually repaired and enlarged, with new features added, and it was finally completed in the **first century BCE**. The structure has a width of 120 feet (37 meters) and a height of 54 feet (17 meters).
- Stupas were elaborately created in the early century, with features such as the enclosing of the circumambulatory path with railings and sculptural embellishment.
- Sanchi was abandoned after the **12th century CE**, and its monuments fell into decay. The location was discovered in **1818 by British General Henry Taylor**, who reported his findings.
- Under the supervision of **Sir John Hubert Marshall**, director-general of the Indian Archaeological Survey, restoration work began in 1881 and was finished in 1919.

5.3 Features

- The stupa's core was composed of **unburnt brick**, with a burnt brick outer face covered in a thick coating of plaster.
- The stupa was capped by a wooden railing that encircled a **pradakshina walkway** (circumambulatory path).
- It is a magnificent stupa with a circumambulatory route and a circular mound. During the **time of Ashoka**, the big stupa at **Sanchi** was erected with bricks, then covered with stone and many further additions were made.
- **Gateways** were added in addition to the circumambulatory circuit. With the elaborations in stupa design, architects and sculptors had plenty of room to plan elaborations and carve out images.
- **Wooden sculptures** were used to embellish the **medhi and toran**. As a form of worship, devotees walk around the pradakshina patha, or open ambulatory pathway.
- Sculptures were largely utilized to decorate stupas, the **torana**, and the **medhi**, as well as a form of religious expression.
- The **three chhatra** on the stupas symbolize the **Buddhist triratnas: Buddha** (the enlightened), **Dhamma** (doctrine), and **Sangh** (community).
- Gateways were added in addition to the **circumambulatory circuit**. With the elaborations in stupa design, architects and sculptors had plenty of room to plan elaborations and carve out images.
- **Bairat in Rajasthan** has one of the outstanding examples of a stupa building from the third century BCE.
- **Sanchi Stupa in Madhya Pradesh**, for example, is the most well-known Ashokan stupa. The oldest is the **Piprahwa stupa** in Uttar Pradesh.
- Rajagriha, Vaishali, Kapilavastu, Allakappa, Ramagrama, Vethapida, Pava, Kushinagar, and Pippalivana are the nine stupas built following Buddha's death.

5.4 Some Important stupas

Stupas	Location	Significance
Sanchi stupa	Madhyapradesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was constructed in the 3rd century BCE by Ashoka. • Bricks were used to construct the original construction. It was afterward covered with stone, vedica, and torana (gateway). • The stupa has four entrances, with the southern one being the first to be completed. Others were added subsequently. The gateways are ornately carved and ornamented with statues. • Since 1989, Sanchi Stupa has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Sarnath Dhamek stupa.	Uttar pradesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dhamek Stupa is a huge stupa in Sarnath, Uttar Pradesh, • It was built in 500 CE to replace an earlier structure, together with numerous other monuments, commissioned by Ashoka in 249 BCE to commemorate the Buddha's activities in this region. • The Dhamek Stupa is supposed to be built on the site of Rishipattana, where after obtaining enlightenment, Buddha gave his first sermon to his first five Brahmin students, "revealing his Eightfold Path leading to nirvana."
Amaravati stupa	Andhra Pradesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Amravati Stupa, also known as the Great Stupa of Amravati, is a damaged Buddhist monument. • It was probably built in phases between the third century BCE and about 250 CE. • The Archaeological Survey of India is in charge of safeguarding the site. • The site's notable sculptures are now housed at a number of museums in India and overseas, many of which are severely damaged.
Bharhut Stupa	Madhya Pradesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Sungas adapted the Bharhut stupa, which was originally erected by Asoka. • Unlike the Mauryas' imperial art, the reliefs and figures in Bharhut stupa were provided by laypeople, monks, and nuns, according to inscriptions on the railings. • As a result, it is considered one of the earliest instances of Maurya's popular art.
Nagarjunakonda	Andhra pradesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nagarjunakonda is an ancient town that is now an island at Nagarjuna Sagar, west of the Amaravati Stupa, another notable historic landmark. • Nagarjunakonda is home to the remnants of various Mahayana Buddhist and Hindu sanctuaries. • It is one of India's most important Buddhist sites, but it is currently nearly fully submerged beneath the Nagarjunasagar Dam.
Piprahwa	Uttar Pradesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Piprahwa is most known for its archaeological site and excavations, which imply that it was the site of the Buddha's ashes being handed to his own Sakya clan.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site contains a massive stupa, as well as the ruins of many monasteries and a museum. • At the nearby Ganwaria mound, ancient residential complexes and temples were discovered.
Soneri stupa	Madhyapradesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sonari is the ancient monastic complex of Buddhist stupas' archaeological site. • Sonari, like Sanchi, is a Buddhist stupa complex with two major and five minor stupas. • Alexander Cunningham uncovered two boxes carrying relics while excavating the stupas around 1850.

5.5 Conclusion

During the post-Mauryan period, stupas grew larger and more beautiful. Wood and brick were being phased out in favor of stone. The idea of torans as artistically painted gates to stupas was established by the Shunga dynasty. The torans were carved with elaborate designs and patterns, indicating **Hellenistic influence**.

6. Sanchi Stupa

Early Indian sculpture that adorned the 1st-century BC entrances of the Buddhist relic mound known as the **Great Stupa at Sanchi**, Madhya Pradesh, which is considered one of the most spectacular monuments of its time. From the 3rd century BC to the 11th century AD, the territory of Sanchi, like the great centers of Sarnath and Mathura, had a continuous artistic history. This article will explain to you the concepts related to the **Sanchi Stupa** which will be helpful in Indian Art and Culture preparation for the UPSC Civil service exam.

6.1 Sanchi Stupa

- The **Sanchi Stupa** is one of India's most important **Buddhist landmarks**, and it houses some of the country's earliest stone buildings.
- Also, It is an important monument of Indian architecture and one of India's oldest stone constructions.
- It was commissioned in the third century BCE by **Mauryan ruler Ashoka the Great**. It began with a basic hemispheric brick edifice erected over the **Buddha's relics**.
- Sanchi, a historical city nestled in the Vindhya Range 46 kilometers from Madhya Pradesh's capital Bhopal, also has 50 additional sites, including temples and monasteries.
- The beautiful carvings and inscriptions show Indian architecture from the **Mauryan era** (3rd century BCE) through its downfall in the later medieval age (around 11th century CE).
- The **Mahastupa (Great Stupa)**, the **Ashokan pillar (with its inscriptions)**, and the beautiful torans are all noteworthy features of the Sanchi complex (gateways).
- Since 1989, Sanchi Stupa has been a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**. Madhya Pradesh is home to Sanchi.
- It is possibly India's best-preserved Buddhist monument complex.

6.2 Historical background

- Sanchi's monuments currently consist of a collection of **Buddhist monuments** that date from the **Mauryan Empire (3rd century BCE)**, continue through the **Gupta Empire (5th century CE)**, and conclude around the 12th century CE.
- The Great Stupa, also known as Stupa No. 1, is the oldest and greatest monument.
- It was created under the Mauryans and is ornamented with one of Ashoka's Pillars.
- The **Great Stupa** was enlarged and ornamented with gates and railings in the succeeding centuries, particularly during the **Shungas and Satavahanas**, and minor stupas, including **Stupa No.2 and Stupa No.3**, were also built in the vicinity.
- According to **Ashokavadana**, the stupa was vandalized sometime during the 2nd century BCE, an incident that some have linked to the ascension of the Shunga monarch **Pushyamitra Shunga**, who overthrew the **Mauryan Empire** as an army officer.
- The first stupa may have been demolished by Pushyamitra, and his son **Agnimitra** rebuilt it, according to legend.
- During the Shunga period, the original brick stupa was covered with stone.

- In 1819, British captain **Edward Fell** wrote one of the first accounts of the Sanchi Stupa.
- It took another 93 years for John Marshall to 'rediscover' the site, and another seven years for it to be restored to its current state.

6.3 Features

- The **Mahastupa (Great Stupa)**, the Ashokan pillar (with its inscriptions), and the beautiful torans are all noteworthy features of the Sanchi complex (gateways).
- The **torans and fencing** are reported to be modeled after the bamboo crafts of the surrounding areas.
- The design of the stupa's fencing, as well as the torans' design, are reminiscent of bamboo craft and knotted bamboo.
- Bricks were used to construct the original construction. It was afterward covered with stone, **vedica**, and **torana (gateway)**.
- The stupa has four entrances, with the southern one being the first to be completed. Others were added subsequently.
- The gateways are ornately carved and ornamented with statues. Two vertical pillars and three horizontal bars make up each **torana**. On the front and back of the bars are **magnificent sculptures**.
- They feature depictions of **shalabhanjika**, or women grasping a tree branch.
- Here are carved stories from the **Jataka tales**.
- A lower and upper pradakshina patha, or circumambulatory walk, runs around the structure. This stupa's upper pradakshina patha is unusual.
- The **Ashokan Lion Capital pillar**, which has inscriptions on it, may be seen on the southern side of the stupa.
- The **Anda** refers to the stupa's hemispheric dome. It is where the Buddha's relics are kept.
- On top of the dome/mound lies the **harmika**, which is a square railing.
- On top of the **harmika**, the **chhatra** is an umbrella. The location contains a sandstone pillar inscribed with **Ashoka's Schism Edict**.
- During the rule of the **Shunga dynasty**, the original brick dome was doubled in size, with stone slabs covering the previous dome.

6.4 Connection with Buddhism

- Surprisingly, **Buddha never came to Sanchi**.
- Foreign travelers like **Hiuen Tsang**, who documented the famous Buddhist circuit in India but didn't mention Sanchi in his books, didn't know either.
- Sanchi was not as revered as other Buddhist pilgrimage sites in India, according to Marshall's *The Monuments of Sanchi* (1938).
- The **iconic images of Buddha** (like the Bodhi tree, a riderless horse, an empty throne, etc.) at Sanchi, according to scholars like Alfred A Foucher, are the result of **Graeco-Buddhist architectural** interaction.

6.5 Conclusion

The **Sanchi Stupa's** significance on our national psyche, however, extends beyond the lion capital; it influenced the design of various modern structures, the most notable of which being the current-day **Rashtrapati Bhavan**. Lord Charles Hardinge wanted architect Edwin Lutyens to incorporate emblems of India's architectural past into the building, and the colonnade was designed to carry a Sanchi-style dome and balustrade railing. The dome of Kolkata's Birla Planetarium was built in 1963 to match the one in Sanchi.

7. Chaityas

In Indian religions, a **chaitya**, **chaitya hall**, or **chaitya-griha** is a **shrine**, sanctuary, temple, or **prayer hall**. In Buddhism, the phrase refers to a **space with a stupa** and a **rounded apse** opposite the entrance, as well as a high **roof with a rounded profile**. The chaitya is the stupa itself, and the Indian structures are chaitya halls, but this distinction is sometimes overlooked. This article will explain to you the concepts related to the **Chaityas** which will be helpful in Indian Art and Culture preparation for the UPSC Civil service exam.

7.1 What are Chaityas?

- In Indian religions, a **chaitya**, **chaitya hall**, or **chaitya-griha** is a shrine, sanctuary, temple, or **prayer hall**.
- The term is most commonly used in **Buddhism** to describe a space with a stupa and a rounded apse at the entrance, as well as a high roof with a rounded profile.
- Outside of India, **Buddhists** use the phrase to describe local kinds of miniature stupa-like monuments in **Nepal, Cambodia, Indonesia**, and other countries.
- Chaitya refers to a temple, sanctuary, or any sacred monument in **Jainism** and Hinduism's ancient scriptures, especially those dealing with buildings.
- The eastern parts of Andhra Pradesh are home to the ruins of a considerable number of structural **Buddhist Chaityas**.
- Ruins dating from the **3rd century BC** and later have been discovered in the districts of Srikakulam, Visakhapatnam, West Godavari, Krishna at Vijayawada, Guntur at Nagarjunakonda, and Amaravati. At Guntupalli, the largest brick Chaitya hall was unearthed.

7.2 Historical background

- The first comparable spaces to the chaitya hall date from the third century BCE.
- The rock-cut Barabar Caves (Lomas Rishi Cave and Sudama Cave) were excavated by or for the **Ajivikas**, a non-Buddhist religious and philosophical organization of the time, during **Ashoka's reign**.
- Many academics believe that they became "the pattern for Buddhist caves in the western Deccan," particularly the chaitya halls unearthed during the **2nd century CE**.
- Built in the second century BCE, the chaitya in **Bhaja Caves** is possibly the earliest surviving chaitya hall.
- The columns slant inwards to resemble wooden columns, which would have been structurally necessary to protect the roof from collapsing. The barrel-vaulted ceiling has antique wooden ribs put within it. The walls have a Mauryan gloss to them. It was once surrounded by a massive wooden front that has since vanished.
- India's influence has been felt throughout **Europe** as well. Buddhist Stupas and **Christian Basilicas** have a lot in common. Their mosaics appear to have taken inspiration from Buddhist chaityas.

7.3 Features

- The function of the **Chaitya was to pray**.
- It was a rectangular prayer hall with a stupa in the center. The Chaitya was divided into three sections and featured an **apsidal (semicircular)** back end.
- Two rows of pillars separated the central part of the hall (also known as the nave) from the two aisles.
- The chaityas also had polished inside walls, semicircular roofs, and **Chaitya windows**, which were horse-shoe-shaped windows.
- The eastern parts of Andhra Pradesh are home to the ruins of a considerable number of structural **Buddhist Chaityas**.
- **Wood** was employed in the roofing and entry arches of several of the **Chaityas**.
- **Bhaja's Chaitya** is the oldest remaining **Chaitya hall**. It's a long hall with an apse at the end, measuring 16.75 meters long and 8 meters wide.
- The hall is divided into a central nave and two aisles surrounded by two rows of pillars on either side.
- The ceiling is vaulted. A wooden **harmika crowns** the rock-cut stupa in the apse. The **Chaitya** has a wide arched toran and an arched portico at the entrance.
- The magnificent **Chaitya at Karle** represents the pinnacle of **Hinayana** rock construction. The lower half of this Chaitya has three doors and has a double-story facade. It has an upper gallery with the typical arch above it.
- The **Mahayana Buddhist** creed defines the second era of Buddhist architecture. It may be seen in some of the outstanding rock-cut Chaityas at Ajanta in Maharashtra's Aurangabad area, excavated between the 5th and 9th centuries AD during the **Vakataka, Gupta, and Rashtrakuta dynasties**.
- Ruins dating from the 3rd century BC and later have been discovered in the districts of **Srikakulam, Visakhapatnam, West Godavari, Krishna at Vijayawada**, Guntur at Nagarjunakonda, and Amaravati. At Guntupalli, the largest brick Chaitya hall was unearthed.
- **Ajanta, Ellora, Bhaja, Karle, Bagh, Nasik**, and Kanheri are some of the most spectacular rock-cut caves in the world.
- Some of **Bhaja's rock-cut Chaityas** are made of **chunar sandstone**.
- Early excavations pertaining to the first phase or **Hinayana creed of Buddhism** may be found in Maharashtra at **Kondane, Karle, and Ajanta**.

7.4 Conclusion

A chaitya, chaitya hall, or chaitya-griha is a shrine, sanctuary, temple, or prayer hall in Indian faiths. In Buddhism, the phrase refers to a place that has a stupa and a rounded apse at the entrance, as well as a high roof with a rounded profile. The chaitya is the stupa, and the Indian constructions are chaitya halls, however, this distinction is occasionally lost. Chaitya refers to a temple, sanctuary, or any sacred monument in Jainism and Hinduism's historical scriptures, especially those referring to architecture.

8. Viharas

A monastery for **Buddhist renunciates** is known as a **Vihara**. The concept is ancient, and it denoted any arrangement of space or amenities for habitation in early **Sanskrit and Pali** texts. In Buddhism, the phrase has evolved into an architectural notion that refers to monks' living quarters with an open communal space or courtyard. This article will explain to you the concepts related to the **Viharas** which will be helpful in Indian Art and Culture preparation for the UPSC Civil service exam.

8.1 What are Viharas exactly?

- Vihara is a **Sanskrit word** having context-sensitive meanings that appears in various Vedic texts. It refers to a "**distribution, transposition, separation, or arrangement**" of words, sacred fires, or sacrificial land in general.
- Its post-Vedic connotation is more explicitly a type of rest house, temple, or monastery in Indian ascetic traditions, especially for a community of monks.
- Vihara is the name for a **Buddhist renunciate monastery**. In early Sanskrit and Pali writings, the word meant any arrangement of space or amenities for dwelling.
- In Indian architecture, particularly ancient Indian rock-cut architecture, vihara or vihara hall has a more specific significance.
- It refers to a central hall with little cells connected to it, sometimes with stone-carved beds. Some have a shrine cell set back from the back wall, with a stupa in early specimens or a Buddha-figure later.
- **Ajanta Caves, Aurangabad Caves, Karli Caves, and Kanheri Caves** are examples of huge sites with multiple viharas. An adjacent chaitya or worship hall was mentioned by others.
- The vihara was built to provide a rainy-day **shelter for Monks**.
- The term has become an architectural concept in **Buddhism**, referring to monks' dwelling quarters with an open public space or courtyard.

8.2 Historical background

- The origins of viharas are unknown. For **Ajivikas, Buddhists, and Jainas**, monasteries in the shape of caves date back to centuries before the Common Era.
- The Maurya Empire influenced the rock-cut architecture found in cave viharas from the 2nd century BCE.
- **Ellora's viharas**, which date from 400 AD to the 7th century AD, are the largest of their kind, with three stories. They are both **Hinayana** and **Mahayana Buddhist** in origin and contain sculpted figures.

8.3 Significance

- Viharas were monasteries that were built to house monks.
- Viharas began as temporary shelters for wandering monks during the rainy season, but because of gifts from affluent lay Buddhists, they soon blossomed into centers of scholarship and **Buddhist architecture**.

- Many Viharas, such as **Nalanda**, became globally famous, and their Buddhist teachings were spread throughout Asia, especially China and Tibet, where Buddhism thrived.
- The majority of viharas were built out of **brick or cut out of rock**.
- Viharas usually follow a predetermined layout, with a hall dedicated to communal prayer on three sides and a pillared verandah in front, or an open courtyard encircled by a row of cells and a pillared verandah in front.
- The **Hinayana viharas** located in these locations have several distinguishing characteristics that set them apart from **Mahayana viharas** in the same areas.
- There are one or more entrances to these halls. Each of the little compartments has one or two stone platforms that serve as beds.
- Large rectangular courtyards with **stone-paved central halls** have been discovered during vihara excavations at **Nagarjunakonda**. The row of tiny and large cells that surround the courtyard reflects monks' quarters and dining halls.
- **Viharas** are the greatest of monasteries, and twenty-five of **Ajanta's rock-cut caves** are viharas.
- It features a **well-decorated exterior**. The portico is supported by pillars with intricate carvings. Dwarf figures and ornately carved brackets and capitals adorn the square bases of the columns.
- A square abacus with elaborately carved makara designs sits beneath the capital. The cave's walls and ceilings are covered in **artwork**.
- The monks used these cells as their living quarters. These brick monastery buildings were self-contained entities with a **Chaitya hall or Chaitya mandir** linked to the main object of worship, the stupa.
- **Ajanta and Ellora** are two of the most important Buddhist viharas. Nasik, Karle, Kanheri, Bagh, and Badami are some of the cities in Nasik.

8.4 Conclusion

Local kings constructed monasteries as Buddhism expanded throughout **Southeast Asia**. The name vihara is still used to refer to monasteries/temples, sometimes known as wat, but it has taken on a narrower connotation in Thailand, referring to certain structures within the temple complex. Aside from the main ubosot (ordination hall), the wihan is a structure that houses a Buddha image. The wihan is a lecture hall or an assembly hall in various temples where rites such as the kathina are held. Many of these **Theravada viharas** contain a sacred Buddha image that has been solemnly dedicated by the monks.

9. Post Mauryan Art

India after the Mauryas was not a particularly remarkable time in terms of political unity, but it did see a significant **development of Indian art and culture**. After Ashoka's successors failed to maintain the empire, several tiny kingdoms arose across the Indian subcontinent. The **Sunga dynasty** quickly supplanted the Mauryan Dynasty. **Brahmanical sects** such as the Shaivas and the Vaishnavas arose during this time. This article will explain to you the concepts related to **Post-Mauryan Art** which will be helpful in Indian Art and Culture preparation for the UPSC Civil service exam.

9.1 Post Mauryan Art

- In India, there are various sites that date back to the **second century BCE**.
- Vidisha, Bharhut (Madhya Pradesh), Bodhgaya (Bihar), Jaggayyapeta (Andhra Pradesh), Mathura (Uttar Pradesh), Khandagiri-Udayagiri (Odisha), Bhaja near Pune, and Pavaninear Nagpur are some of the most renowned examples of the greatest sculpture.

9.2 Bharhut

- **Bharhut** stupas are towering, like the Mauryan depictions of **Yaksha and Yakshini**.
- The sculptural volume is modeled in low relief to ensure linearity.
- Narratives depict relief panels, and selecting major events improves the clarity of the narratives.
- Narrative panels begin with fewer characters, but as time goes on, others, in addition to the main character in the story, have begun to appear **in the picture space**.
- At Bharhut, narrative reliefs demonstrate how artists effectively communicated stories using pictorial language.
- One such story is **Queen Mahamaya**/(Siddhartha Mayadevi's Gautama's mother) dream.
- The queen is reclining on the bed, with an elephant on the top of the bed moving towards Mayadevi's womb.
- The portrayal of a **Jataka story**, on the other hand, is quite basic - it is recounted by grouping events according to the geographical area of the story, such as the **Ruru Jataka picture**, which shows a Bodhisattva deer rescuing a man on his back.
- Such **Jataka stories** were used to decorate stupas.
- As the number of stupas built in different sections of the country increased, regional artistic differences emerged.

9.3 Sanchi

- In terms of stylistic advancement, the next phase of cultural growth at Sanchi **stupa-1**, Mathura, and Vengi in Andhra Pradesh is remarkable.
- **Sanchi's Stupa-1** contains both an upper and lower pradakshina patha or circumambulatory walk.

- The sculptures on the entrances of **Stupa-1** make it the best example of stupa building (**torans**).
- It began as a tiny brick structure that grew over time and was eventually covered in stone, **vedika (fence), and torans**.
- It includes four ornately decorated **Torans (Gateways)** portraying scenes from Buddha's life and **Jataka stories**.
- Figure compositions have a lot of relief and take up a lot of room.
- The stance is depicted in a **naturalistic manner**, with no stiffness in the body.
- The story becomes more detailed, and the carving methods appear to be more sophisticated than **Barhut's**.
- Symbols continued to depict Buddhas or Buddhas from the past (according to the textual tradition there are **24 Buddhas**, but only the first one, Dipankar, and the last six are pictorially represented).
- Despite the fact that the **narrative becomes more complex**, the portrayal of the dream episodes stays simple (the dream of **queen Mayadevi**).
- **Stupa-2** houses the relics of ten lesser-known **Arhats** from three generations. (An Arhat is a perfected person who has gained Nirvana in **Theravada Buddhism**.)
- In some **Buddhist traditions**, the phrase refers to persons who have made significant progress on the path to Enlightenment but have not yet attained full Buddhishood.
- The relics of **Sariputta** and **Mahamoggallana/Mahamouglayan** can be found in **Stupa-3** (disciples of Gautama Buddha).
- The top **pradakshina patha** is likewise peculiar to this location (i.e., totally two pradakshina patha).
- The four doorways are adorned with statues in abundance.
- An empty throne, feet, chhatra, stupas, and other symbols are used to represent Buddha.
- **Torans** can be built in any of the four directions.
- Despite the fact that stupa-1 is the earliest stupa, the carvings on stupa-2's vedika are older than those on stupa-1.
- The **Jataka stories** became an important component of the stories as well.
- Sanchi's figures, despite their small size, are extremely realistic.
- On sculptors, there are guardian images, and **salabhanjika sculptures** are notable for their quantity (salabhanjika sculptures are sculptures of ladies holding a branch of a tree/plate, etc.).
- The representations of **salabhanjika** support the elongation of the lowermost horizontal bar from below.

9.4 Mathura, Sarnath, Amaravati, and Gandhara Schools

- **Gandhara** (now Pakistan), **Mathura** in Uttar Pradesh, and **Vengi** in Andhra Pradesh all became prominent centres of art from the first century CE onwards.
- In Mathura and Gandhara, Buddha's symbolic form was transformed into a human form.
- In Gandhara, the sculptural tradition merged Bacteria, Parthia (both **Indo-Greeks**), and the native **Gandhara heritage**.

- Mathura's **indigenous sculptural** culture grew to such prominence that it extended throughout northern India. The stupa sculpture located in Sanghol, Punjab, is the best example.
- The Buddha picture at Mathura is based on earlier **Yaksha images**, whereas it includes Hellenistic characteristics in Gandhara.
- **Vishnu and Shiva** are seen with their respective Ayudhas (weapons).
- The characteristics of the several architectural schools are described here, along with an appropriate example from each.
- **Sultanganj Buddha** is a good illustration of this (7.5ft in height).

9.5 Seated Buddha, Katra mount

- **Mathura** has a vast number of images dating back to the Kushan period.
- The second-century CE figure of Buddha from Katra Mount.seated Buddha sculpture from Katra Mount
- It depicts the **Buddha with two Bodhisattvas** as his companions.
- The Buddha is sitting in **Padmasana** with his right hand in Abhaya Mudra.
- The Buddha's face is round, with chubby cheeks.
- With a vertical elevated projection, the **Ushnisha** (hair knot) is depicted.
- This period's Mathura sculptures are produced with a light volume and a **fleshy form**.
- Only one shoulder is covered by the **sanghati (garment)**.
- The representations of Padmapani and Vajrapani Bodhisattvas, one holding a lotus and the other a Vajra, are recognised as the attendant figures (Thunderbolt).
- The huge **halo** that surrounds Buddha's head is adorned with simple geometric designs.
- Two flying figures are positioned diagonally above the halo.

9.6 Seated Buddha at Sarnath

- The **late fifth-century CE** figure of Buddha from Sarnath is fashioned of chunar sandstone.
- Padmasana depicts the Buddha seated on a throne.
- Sarnath's seated Buddha image
- As the figures on the throne show, it signifies Dharmachakrapravartana (first sermon).
- **A Chakra (wheel)** is depicted in the centre of the panel below the throne, with a deer on either side and his students.
- As a result, it is a portrayal of the historic occurrence of Dharmachakrapravartana, or dhamma preaching.
- It is the best example of sculpture from the **Sarnath School**.
- In comparison to earlier images from the Kushana period at Mathura, the face is round, the eyes are half closed, the lower lip protrudes, and the roundness of the cheeks has decreased.
- **Dhamma Chakra Pravartana Mudra** is presented on the hands.
- The hair on the **Ushnisha** is curled in a round pattern.

- The goal of ancient Indian sculptures was to depict the Buddha as a wonderful human being who had attained **Nibbana** (cessation of anger and hate).

9.7 Buddha Head- Gandhara

- The Buddha head from Taxila in Pakistan's Gandhara region dates from the second century CE and is from the **Kushan period**.
- It demonstrates the development of a hybridised pictorial convention during the Gandhara period.
- It has **Greek and Roman influences**.
- The Buddha Head features aspects that are typical of **Hellenistic art**.
- **Buddha's curly hair** is thick, with a covered layer of shape and linear strokes all over his head.
- The frontal plane is large, with bulging eyeballs, half-closed eyes, and a round face and cheeks, unlike representations from other parts of India.
- The earlobes, in particular, are extended.
- The figures from the Gandhara region have a certain element of heft to them.
- **Head of the Buddha** from Taxila
- The form is treated with linearity, and the contours are sharp.
- The artwork is **highly expressive** and the surface is nice.
- The centre of attraction is the manifestation of tranquility.
- Face modelling improves naturalism and three-dimensionality.
- Gandhara style is characterised by the incorporation of **Acamenian, Parthian, and Bactrian elements** into local tradition.
- The origins of Buddha representations, as well as other imagery, can be traced back to the country's unique **geopolitical circumstances**.
- It's also worth noting that the northwestern section of India, which is now Pakistan, has always been inhabited since prehistoric times. It was also present during the historical period.

9.8 Amaravati stupa

- Many stupas can be found in **Vengi, Andhra Pradesh**, including Jagayyapetta, Amaravati, Bhattiprolu, Nagarjunakonda, and others.
- There is a **Mahachaitya** in Amaravati, as well as several statues.
- Amaravati stupa, like Sanchi stupa, has a pradakshina patha encased within a vedika depicting several narrative sculptures.
- The relief stupa sculpture slab that covers the domical stupa structure is a distinctive feature.
- The **Amaravati stupa's torana** has vanished over time.
- The early phase, like Sanchi, is devoid of Buddha images, but in the later phase (2nd and 3rd CE), Buddha images are carved on the drum slabs and in a variety of other places.
- In this area, the sculptural form is marked by strong emotions.
- The sculpture composition is more intricate than Sanchi, and the bodies are represented with three bends (**Tribanga**).
- **Queen Mayadevi's Dream** is also represented here.

- Amaravati, Nagarjunakonda, and Guntapalle all have their own Buddha images.
- Guntapalle is a rock-cut cave in Andhra Pradesh near Eluru.
- **Sannati is the largest stupa ever dug in Karnataka.**
- Other Buddhist pictures of Bodhisattvas, such as Avalokiteswara, Padmapani, Vajrapani, Amitabha, and Maitreya Buddha, began to be sculpted alongside Buddha statues.

9.9 Cave tradition in western India

- Many Buddhist caves dating back to the second century BCE have been discovered in western India.
- Chaitya hall with the apsidal vaulted roof (found at **Ajanta, Pitalkhora, Bhaja**)
- Apsidal vaulted vaulted vaulted vaulted vaulted vaulted vaulted vaulted vaulted vault (found at **Thana-Nadsur**)
- A quadrangular hall with a circular chamber at the back and a flat roof (found at Kondivite)
- A stupa is found in the back of all **chaitya caves**.
- **Karla**, Maharashtra, has the world's largest rock-cut chaitya hall.
- **Viharas** have been discovered in all of the caverns.
- The vihara's layout consists of a veranda, a hall, and cells surrounding the hall's walls.
- Interior decorative themes such as **chaitya** arches and **vedika** decorations over the cave's cell entrances can be found in many early vihara caves.
- Later on, a stupa was erected to the back of the vihara, and it was renamed **Chaitya-Vihara**.
- **Junnar (Maharashtra)** has the most cave excavations, with more than 200 caves around the town's hills, whereas **Kanheri (Mumbai)** has 138 caves explored.
- The caves were previously thought to belong to the **orthodox Buddhist** faith, Theravadins, due to the lack of Buddha pictures.
- However, the discovery of a **Konkan Maurya** inscription stating the Saka era 322 (400CE) has now proven conclusively that cave activity in western India existed.
- Many caverns have been turned into modern Hindu sanctuaries and have become popular worship locations.

9.10 Ajanta caves

- **Ajanta** is a well-known cave location in western India.
- It is situated in Maharashtra's Aurangabad district.
- There are 29 caverns in total, including four chaitya caves.
- It is home to the enormous **Chaitya-Vihara**, which is adorned with sculptures and paintings (murals).
- Ajanta is the only surviving example of first-century BCE and fifth-century BCE painting.
- Some of the vihara caverns are still under construction.
- Varahadeva, the Prime Minister of **Vakataka king Harisena**; Upendragupta, the native king of the region and Harisena's feudatory; Buddhabadra, and Mathurasena were all prominent patrons of Ajanta.
- Figures in the **paintings** are hefty, reminiscent of western Indian sculpture.

- Cave excavation and painting took place at the same time, and the paintings were dated after the cave excavation.
- The paintings' various skin tones symbolize a **multi-colored civilization**.
- The paintings depict episodes from Buddha's life, as well as the Jatakas and **Avadanas**.
- The locations of events in the bush and events in the palace are distinguishable.
- In Ajanta, images of **Padmapani and Vajrapani** are quite prevalent.

9.11 Ellora caves

- Ellora is another notable cave site in **Aurangabad**.
- It is 100 kilometers from Ajanta.
- There are 32 caves in total, including **Buddhist, Brahmanical, and Jain caves**.
- It is a one-of-a-kind art historic landmark in the country since it contains monasteries affiliated with all three religions that date from the fifth to eleventh centuries CE.
- There are 12 Buddhist caves with several Vajrayana Buddhist pictures.
- Buddhist caves are large, with single, double, and triple stories.
- Pillar patterns originate in Buddhist caves, and when they reach Jain caves (9th century CE), they become exceedingly ornate, with strong protrusion of the decorative elements.
- **Shaivism** is practiced in the majority of Brahmanical caves.
- Vishnu's various avatars are also shown here.
- **Kailas Leni/Kailasa Temple** is the name given to Cave No.16.
- It is a rock-cut temple carved from a single piece of rock.
- It was constructed in the eighth century CE.
- **Ravana striving** to move Mount Kailash with all his power is a masterpiece of Indian sculpture.

9.12 Elephanta caves

- The Elephanta Caves, which are located on **Elephanta Island in Mumbai**, were once a Buddhist site that was eventually taken over by the Shaivite faith.
- It's from the same era as Ellora.
- **Bagh**, near Indore, MP, is another significant cave location.
- The **Bagh cave** also has murals, including one depicting a group of dancers that resembles the North Indian **Garba Dance (originated in Gujarat)**.
- The tradition of **rock-cut caves** continued in the Deccan, with examples finding not only in Maharashtra but also in Karnataka, primarily at **Badami and Aihole**, and in Andhra Pradesh in the Vijayawada area, and in Tamil Nadu, primarily at Mahabalipuram, under the patronage of the Pallavas.
- When the country's early history was based on collective public patronage, the post-sixth-century CE era was based more on political patronage.
- This is where **Maheshmurti's sculpture** (Shiva in the center, Bhairava, and Uma on either side) may be found.

9.13 Cave tradition in Eastern India

- **Buddhist caves** have been discovered in eastern India, primarily in the coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh and Odisha, similar to those found in western India.
- Guntapalle in the Eluru district is one of the most important places in Andhra Pradesh.
- Guntapalle is one of the few locations where structural stupas, viharas, and caverns have all been unearthed in one location.
- **Rampa Yerrampalem**, in addition to **Guntapalle**, is an important location.
- A massive rock-cut stupa was carved out of the **hillock in Anakapalli**, near Visakhapatnam, during the 4th-5th century CE.
- It is a remarkable location since it contains the country's largest rock-cut stupas.
- The **Udayagiri-Khandagiri** caves in Odisha are another notable cave location.
- These caverns are distributed around the area and contain inscriptions from the Kaharvela Kings.
- The caves were intended for Jain monks, according to the inscription.
- Numerous single-cell excavations can be seen here.
- The upper half of the cell is embellished with a succession of **Chaitya arches** and legends that are still told in the region's folklore.

9.14 Early Temples

- While stupa construction continued, **Brahmanical temples** and images of gods began to be built.
- Myths mentioned in the Puranas were incorporated into narrative expression.
- Each temple housed a primary picture of a god.
- The temple's shrines were divided into three types:
 - **Sandhara type:** with pradakshina patha
 - **Nirandara type:** does not have pradakshina patha.
 - **Sarvatobhadra type:** accessible from all sides.
- Some major temple sites from this time period include Deogarh (UP), Eran, Nacha-kuthara, and Udayagiri near Vidisha in MP, among others.
- These temples are basic structures that include a veranda, a hall, and a shrine in the back.

9.15 Deogarh temple

- Deogarh is a notable example, dating from the early **sixth century CE**.
- The main shrine is erected on a **rectangular pedestal**, with four smaller subsidiary shrines at the four corners, in the panchayatana style of architecture (making it a total number of five shrines, hence the name, panchayatana).
- This curving latina or **rekha-prasada** kind of shikhara further indicates that this is an early example of a traditional **nagara temple style**.
- The temple **displays Vishnu** in many forms, it was assumed that the four ancillary shrines must have likewise held Vishnu's avatars, and the temple was identified as a **dashavatara temple**.

9.16 Conclusion

Gandhara, Mathura, Amaravati, and other post-Mauryan schools of art and architecture, as well as cave traditions that flourished at the time. This article also covers some of the most important architectural sites, including Sanchi, Ajanta, and Ellora. Various monarchs established authority over the large Mauryan Empire from the second century BCE onwards. The great Brahmanical sects, such as the Vaishnavas and Shaivas, rose to prominence during this time.

10. Bharhut stupa - Post mauryan Art and Architecture

Bharhut stupas are tall, like the Mauryan depictions of Yaksha and Yakshini, and the sculptural volume is modeled in low relief to ensure linearity. A large stupa was built in **100 B.C. in Bharhut**, which is now part of modern-day Madhya Prade in Satna District). The Sungas adapted the Bharhut stupa, which was originally erected by Asoka. This article will explain to you the concepts related to **Bharhut stupa** which will be helpful in Indian Art and Culture preparation for the UPSC Civil service exam.

10.1 Bharhut stupa

- Bharhut sculptures are tall, like the **Mauryan depictions of Yaksha and Yakshini**, and the sculptural volume is modelled in low relief to ensure linearity.
- The illusion of **three-dimensionality** is conveyed with slanted perspective in the relief panels displaying storytelling. The **narrative's clarity** is improved by focusing on key occurrences.
- At Bharhut, narrative panels are exhibited with fewer characters, but as time passes, other characters begin to appear in the picture area, in addition to the main character in the story.
- Occasionally, more than one event in a single geographic location is shown in the pictorial space, or only one major event is depicted in the pictorial area.
- At Bharhut, narrative reliefs demonstrate how artisans employed **pictorial language** to effectively transmit stories.

10.2 Historical background

- A large stupa was built in **100 B.C. in Bharhut**
- **The Sungas adapted the Bharhut stupa, which was originally erected by Asoka.**

10.3 Architectural Significance

- Unlike the Mauryas' imperial art, the reliefs and figures in **Bharhut stupa** were provided by **lay people, monks, and nuns**, according to inscriptions on the railings. As a result, it is considered one of the earliest instances of Maurya popular art.
- The Buddha's previous incarnations' birth stories, known as **Jataka tales**, are depicted on the railings.
- The **aniconic phase** of Buddhist art is represented by the Bharhut stupa. Buddha has been shown as a series of symbols.
- Except for one foreigner, presumed to be an **Indo-Greek soldier**, who is represented wearing the Indian dhoti with **Buddhist iconography**, the style is mainly flat, with low bass relief, and all figures are depicted wearing the Indian dhoti.
- The Bharhut stupa railings feature several depictions of **yakshas and yakshis**, who have long been a part of Indian society.
- The earliest depictions of the **Yakshas and Yakshis**, which later became part of later art, may be seen at Bharhut. These represent the spirit of nature and help to remind us of the divinity that lurks beneath all we see.

- The **Yakshas and Yakshis** represent nature's protection and plenty, which ensures the continuation of life.
- **Kubera**, whom the Yaksha and Yakshis attend, is depicted on the north gateway of the **Vedika at Bharhut**.
- The photos of Yakshi Chandra and Krishika, who are seen entangled with a tree, can be found. Another Yakshi, Ashok Dohada, holds an Ashoka Tree leaf in her palm as well as a kid in her womb (two hearts) and weaves her way through the tree like a creeper, symbolizing fertility.
- One of the sculptures depicts **Laksmi** on the Bharhut's railing, which is the earliest representation of the goddess.
- The sculptures on the Bharhut railings are in low relief and do not have the depth of later **Indic art**.
- A **Greek warrior** is depicted on a pillar of the vedika. He has short hair and a headband and is dressed in boots and a tunic.
- A **Nagaraja**, the serpent king, is shown on another fence, dressed in human form but wearing a **serpent hood**. **Naga deities**, like yakshas and yakshis, serve to remind us of the power, protection, and fertility of nature.
- The railing of the Bharhut "stupa" depicts **Queen Maya's dream**, which occurred before the Buddha's birth.
- The figure of the Buddha was never depicted in early Buddhist art. Instead, symbols of him were there, including a seat, footprints, the **Bodhi tree**, the wheel, and the "stupa." The railings' sculptural reliefs are a veritable collection of early **Buddhist iconographic elements**.

10.4 Conclusion

As the number of stupas built in different sections of the country increased, regional artistic differences began to appear. The knotted headpiece is a common feature in all-male images from the first to second centuries BCE. It is quite constant in numerous sculptures. The Indian Museum in Kolkata houses some of the sculptures discovered at Bharhut.

11. Schools of Art in Ancient India

Buddhism flourished significantly throughout the early Christian era (1st and 2nd centuries) and sparked a revitalized artistic fervor to represent Buddha's message, resulting in the formation of three primary schools of sculpture in India, each with its styles and characteristics. The **Gandhara, Mathura, and Amaravati** schools of art were named for the cities where they flourished. This article will explain to you the concepts related to the **Mathura, Gandhara, Amaravati Schools** which will be helpful in Indian Art and Culture preparation for the UPSC Civil service exam.

11.1 Mathura School of Art

- Initially, a complicated kind of **symbolism** was prevalent in the **Gandhara style**, but **Mathura style** broke from it by developing the custom of translating Buddhist symbols into human form in accordance with **Kanishka's rule**.
- An indigenous form of sculpture evolved in Mathura, which mostly used **red sandstone**.
- The representations of **Vaishnava and Shaiva faiths**, as well as Buddhist images, are prevalent in the Mathura style, which is known for its **assimilative quality**.
- The pictures of Siva and Vishnu, as well as their consorts Parvathi and Lakshmi, were carved out in the Mathura school, and the female forms of yakshinis and apsaras were also carved out magnificently.
- It's worth noting that the images of Shiva and Vishnu were created by their respective ayudhas (weapons).
- The **Jain Tirthankaras'** records can also be found in **Mathura Style**.
- **Sarnath and Kausambi** arose as key centers of art creation in the Mathura School of art, which is known for its vibrancy and assimilationist nature, although Mathura remained the principal art production location.
- The Mathura Buddha images continue to depict **folds in the drapery** and the **halo around the head is lavishly adorned**.
- More emphasis was placed on **internal beauty** and **face sentiments** in Mathura style than on bodily gestures.
- The big pictures were carved with audacity since the earliest Mathura image-makers never intended to construct an anatomically **realistic human Buddha**.

11.2 Gandhara School of art

- During the rule of **Indo-Greek monarchs** in Northwest India, the Gandhara School of art flourished near Peshawar (now Pakistan), although the **Sakas and Kushanas**, particularly Kanishka, were the true supporters of the Gandhara school of art.
- Following the **Greek invasions**, many painters from West Asia settled in the north-west of India, and they were heavily affected by Graeco-Roman art throughout the Kushana period.
- The Kushana kings, particularly Kanishka, encouraged **Gandhara artisans** to carve themes from Buddha's life and the jatakas, resulting in a huge number of Buddha and Bodhisattva representations.

- The **Gandhara School of Art** is also known as the **Graeco-Buddhist School of Art** because it applied Greek art techniques to Buddhist subjects (beautiful pictures of the Buddha and Bodhisattvas).
- Gandhara style acquired almost all **foreign influences**, including Greek, Roman, Persian, Saka, and Kushan.
- The reliefs of the Gandhara Sculpture show **Buddha's birth, renunciation, and preaching**, with the best examples dating from the first and second centuries A.D.
- The drapery was thick, with **broad and bold fold lines**, and the **human form** was cast in a **realistic manner**, with physical details like a **moustache, muscles, and curly hair** given minute attention.
- The main sites where artworks of the Gandhara School have been found are Jalalabad, Begram, Hadda, Bamaran, and Taxila, with the Bamiyan Buddha of Afghanistan considered an example of the Gandhara School.

11.3 Amaravati school of art

- The **Amaravati School** evolved on the banks of the **Krishna River** in southern India, under the patronage of the **Satavahana monarchs**.
- The **Amaravati School of Art** thrived in the Andhra Pradesh region between the lower basins of the rivers Krishna and Godavari.
- The 'narrative art' is a prominent feature of the **Amaravati school**.
- The medallions were carved in such a way that they depict a natural incidence.
- One medallion, for example, depicts the entire account of the **Buddha's taming of an elephant**.
- The **Amravati stupas** are made of striking white marble.
- In human, animal, and floral forms, Amaravati sculptures have a sense of movement and vitality, as well as profound and serene naturalism.
- **Amravati, Nagarjunikonda, Goli, Ghantasala, and Vengi** are notable locales where this style evolved.
- There is a symbolic picture of **Buddha's life**, but he is also personified in two or three places.
- The **Amaravati Stupa, like the Sanchi Stupa**, contains pradakshina patha encased within a vedika on which various narrative stories from the life of Buddha and bodhisattva prevail, but its structural anatomy is more intricate.
- This style included both **religious and secular images**.
- This style was later influenced by **Pallava and Chola architecture**.

11.4 Major differences between Mathura-Gandhara-Amaravati school of art

Mathura	Gandhara	Amaravati
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Mathura School flourished on the banks of the river Yamuna in the period between 1st and 3rd centuries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between 50 B.C. and 500 A.D., the Gandhara School flourished in two periods. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From 200-100 BCE, a different type of art style arose and flourished at Amaravati for about

B.C.		six centuries.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Patronised by Kushana rulers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Patronised by Kushana rulers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Patronised by Satavahana rulers.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed in the North West Frontier, in the modern-day Kandahar region. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed in and around Mathura, Sonkh, and Kankalitala. Kankalitala was well-known for its Jain sculptures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed in the lower Krishna-Godavari valley, in and around Amaravati and Nagarjunakonda
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was created by indigenous peoples without the influence of outside cultures. The narrative and imagery of all three religions of the time, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Jainism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is also known as Indo-Greek art because of the heavy influence of Greek or Hellenistic sculpture. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was created by indigenous peoples and was not affected by outside cultures.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spotted red sandstone was utilized in the construction of this school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early Gandhara School buildings used bluish-grey sandstone, whereas later used mud and stucco. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> White marbles were used to create the sculptures at Amaravati School.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Mathura Buddha images continue to depict folds in the drapery and the halo around the head is lavishly adorned. More emphasis was placed on internal beauty and face sentiments in Mathura style than on bodily gestures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The reliefs of the Gandhara Sculpture show Buddha's birth, renunciation, and preaching, with the best examples dating from the first and second centuries A.D. The drapery was thick, with broad and bold fold lines, and the human form was cast in a realistic manner, with physical details like a mustache, muscles, and curly hair given minute 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Since the sculptures are often part of narrative art, there is less attention on Buddha's particular traits. The sculptures often depict Buddha's life stories and the Jataka tales, i.e., former lives of Buddha in both human and animal form.

	attention.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At Mathura, pictures of the Vaishnava and Shaiva faiths can also be seen, but Buddhist ones predominate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The main sites where artworks of the Gandhara School have been found are Jalalabad, Begram, Hadda, Bamaran, and Taxila 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amravati, Nagarjunikonda, Goli, Ghantasala, and Vengi are notable locales where this style evolved. There is a symbolic picture of Buddha's life, but he is also personified in two or three places.

11.5 Sarnath school of Art

- The Sarnath School of Sculpture arose around Sarnath.
- It was distinguished by its use of **cream-colored sandstone and metal**. This school's sculptures were meticulously dressed and devoid of any type of nakedness.
- Many Buddha pictures in Sarnath have **plain translucent drapery** covering both shoulders and a sparsely ornamented **halo around the head**, whereas the **Mathura Buddha** images retain the folds of the drapery and the halo around the head is lavishly embellished.
- Sultanganj Buddha** is a notable example (7.5ft in height).

11.6 Conclusion

India's art is a one-of-a-kind chapter in the history of human endeavor. It reveals the human mind's darkest recesses and serves as a mirror for the Indian spirit. In the many beautiful achievements, India's creative brilliance has found complete and perfect expression in its spiritual and religious dimensions.

12. Gandhara School of Art

The Gandhara school of art was one of ancient India's most important schools of art which was evolved during the reign of Kushana emperor Kanishka. The Gandhara School of art arose from the fusion of these Greco-Roman and Indian ideas, as well as the influence of other foreign traditions such as those from China and Iran. The main theme of the Gandhara School of art was Lord Buddha and the Bodhisattvas because it was closely associated with Mahayana Buddhism. As a result, it is possible to speculate that this style was Indian in concept but foreign in execution. The Bamiyan Buddha statues are an example of Gandhara style art. This article will explain to you the concepts related to the **Gandhara School of Art** which will be helpful in Indian Art and Culture preparation for the UPSC Civil service exam.

12.1 Historical background

- The Gandhara school of Art arose in **modern-day Peshawar** and Afghanistan on Punjab's western boundaries.
- The Greek invaders brought the traditions of **Greek and Roman sculptors** with them, which affected the region's native traditions.
- As a result, the Gandhara School became known as the Greco-Indian School of Art.
- Between **50 B.C. and 500 A.D.**, the Gandhara School flourished in two periods. While the former school's sculptures were made of bluish-grey sandstone, the latter school's were made of mud and plaster.
- The **Buddha and Bodhisattvas** iconography was based on the Greco-Roman pantheon and resembled Apollo's.

12.2 Major Centres

Jalalabad, Hadda, Bamaran, Begram & Taxila were the main centers where art pieces of Gandhara School have been found.

12.3 Major Features

- The Gandhara sculptures have been discovered in the **Taxila ruins** as well as other ancient sites in **Afghanistan and Pakistan**.
- They generally consist of **Buddha images** and relief sculptures depicting scenes from **Buddhist literature**.
- Several Bodhisattva figures were cut out of the rock. The first preaching in the deer park and the Buddha's death is depicted in a **Gandhara figure**.
- The predominant focus of this type of painting was Lord Buddha and **Bodhisattvas**, as it was intimately tied with **Mahayana Buddhism**. As a result, it's possible that this style was Indian in thought and conception but alien in execution.
- The **Bamiyan Buddha sculptures** are an example of Gandhara style art.
- It thrived primarily in Afghanistan and present-day **North-Western India**.
- **Taxila, Peshawar, Begram, and Bamiyan** were among the most prominent sites. From the first century BCE through the fourth century CE, the Gandhara School of art flourished.

Themes

- The **Buddhist themes** were largely represented in Gandhara art. The Buddha's mother resembles an **Anthenian matron**.
- A Buddhist scene was created with an **Apollo-like face**. The image of Athena of Rome in Lahore is perhaps one of the most beautiful Gandhara sculptures depicting a western topic.
- It was created in order to express **Buddhist ideas and practices**.
- The specimens do not include any **Greek art motif**, with a few exceptions. The hand of the Gandhara artist was Greek, but his heart was Indian.

Patrons

Gandhara School was fostered by the Shakas and the Kushanas. The first sculptural portrayals of the Buddha in human form are attributed to the Gandhara school.

Features of sculpture

- The human body is sculpted in a **realistic manner** in these sculptures, with considerable attention to realism and physical details, particularly in the depiction of **muscles, mustaches, and other facial features**.
- The portrayal of the broad bold fold lines is a unique trait that sets it apart from what has been discovered elsewhere in India.

The Various Mudras of Buddha in Gandhara Art

In all the Buddha depicted in the Gandhara Art is shown making four types of hand gestures and this is a remarkable feature in this art. The gestures are as follows:

- Abahayamudra : Don't fear
- Dhyanamudra : meditation
- Dharmachakramudra: a preaching mudra
- Bhumisparshamudra: Touching the earth.

Other features

The existence of pictures of Mother Goddess is another telling aspect, as worship of this goddess remains an important religious expression for ordinary people. Buddhism, like other popular religious cults, became intertwined with fertility cults.

Greek influences on Gandhara School of art

- **Greek god as protector:** In many images of Buddha in Gandhara; he is seen under the protection of Greek god Hercules.
- **Vajrapani:** Vajrapani found in the right hand of future Buddha is told as a transformed symbol of Hercules who is seen as the protector of Buddha.
- **Greek architectural influence:** Some images of Buddha in Gandhara are presented in the Greek architectural environment bearing the affinity of Corinthian.

- **Artistic beauty:** The Apollo-like face of Buddha; natural realism; wavy hair as seen in images of Buddha in Gandhara resembles Hellenistic tradition.
- **Intellectual affinity:** The halo and bun of Gandhara Buddha signify intellectual imbibitions of Buddha from Greek.
- Despite the fact that Gandharan sculpture's iconography was predominantly Indian, it also included elements and methods from Classical Roman art.
- Vine scrolls, cherubs with garlands, tritons, and centaurs are examples of Classical Roman art found in Gandharan sculptures.
- Additionally, the Gandharan artists drew on the Roman religion's anthropomorphic traditions.
- Gandharan art depictions of Buddha are evocative of statues of a youthful Apollo.
- The drapery on Buddha's garments was also eerily similar to that on Roman imperial monuments.

12.4 Conclusion

Kanishka was a generous patron of architecture and sculpture in combination. The Gandhara school of painting was popular during this time period. With varying degrees of success, Greek art forms were adapted to Buddhist issues. Images of the Buddha in the shape of **Apollo and Yaksha Kubera** in the likeness of **Zeus** the Greek appeared. The drapery is based on Hellenistic designs. Through Chinese Turkistan, this particular style was later transported to the Far East.

13. Amaravati School of Art

The **Amaravati school of art** developed between the lower valleys of the Krishna and Godavari rivers in Andhra Pradesh. A distinct type of art originated and flourished at Amaravati for around six centuries between 200 and 100 BCE. The '**narrative art**' is a prominent feature of the Amaravati school. One medallion, for example, displays an entire story about the Buddha taming an elephant. This article will explain to you the concepts related to the **Amaravati school of art** which will be helpful in Indian Art and Culture preparation for the UPSC Civil service exam.

13.1 Historical Background

- The Amaravati style of art developed and flourished in India for approximately six centuries, from **200 to 100 BC**, with no outside influences.
- This school of sculpture flourished in the **second century BC**, especially in the second half.
- Images of a more secular nature were also created. These take the shape of female images, trees, animals, and birds, among other things. **Satavahanas were the first patrons of this school.**

13.2 Major Features

- The '**narrative art**' is a prominent feature of the Amaravati school
- The **medallions** were carved in such a way that they depicted a natural occurrence.
- One medallion, for example, displays an entire story about the **Buddha taming an elephant.**
- The Amravati stupas are made of striking **white marble.**
- In human, animal, and floral forms, Amaravati sculptures have a sense of movement and vitality, as well as profound and serene naturalism.
- Amravati, Nagarjunikonda, Goli, Ghantasala, and Vengi are notable locales where this style flourished.
- There is a symbolic picture of Buddha's life, yet he is also personified in two or three places.
- The Amaravati Stupa, like the Sanchi Stupa, has a pradakshina patha contained by a vedika on which various narrative stories from the life of
- Buddha and bodhisattva predominate, but its structural anatomy is more intricate.
- This style included both religious and secular images.
- Pallava and Chola buildings evolved from this style later.

13.3 Significance

- **Influence - Indigenous, with no foreign influence**
- **Patrons** - The **Satavahanas** were the first to patronize it, followed by the **Ikshvakus** and other groups (feudatories, administrators, and merchants).
- The Amaravati school of art developed between the lower valleys of the **Krishna and Godavari rivers in Andhra Pradesh.**

- **Theme** - In human, animal, and floral forms, **Amaravati sculptures** have a sense of movement and vitality, as well as profound and serene naturalism.
- This style included both religious and secular images.
- Pallava and Chola buildings evolved from this style later.
- **Features of the sculpture** - The 'narrative art' is a prominent feature of the Amaravati school.
- The medallions were carved in such a way that they depicted a natural occurrence.
- One medallion, for example, displays an entire story about the **Buddha taming an elephant**.
- **Type of sandstone** - The Amravati stupas are made of striking **white marble**.
- Amravati, Nagarjunikonda, Goli, Ghantasala, and Vengi are notable locales where this style flourished.
- There is a **symbolic picture** of Buddha's life, yet he is also personified in two or three places.
- **Other features** - The Amaravati Stupa, like the Sanchi Stupa, has a **pradakshina patha** contained by a vedika on which various narrative stories from the life of **Buddha and bodhisattva** predominate, but its structural anatomy is more intricate.

13.4 Conclusion

The Amaravati School's artists concentrated on depicting female beauty, creating a huge variety of female representations in diverse postures and moods, such as sitting, dancing, bending, and flying. Amaravati School's **Yaksha and Yakshini** symbolize love, grace, and beauty. In the pictures of the Amaravati School, even birds and animals, men and plants have been portrayed with the utmost grace. Amaravati School's photos were transported to Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Java, and Sumatra, Cambodia.

14. Gandhara and Mathura School of Art

The **Gandhara school** of Art arose in modern-day Peshawar and Afghanistan on Punjab's western boundaries. Between the **1st and 3rd centuries B.C**, the **Mathura School** thrived on the banks of the **Yamuna River**. Despite the fact that both schools of art appear to have emerged under the Kushanas' rule, they are located in distinct places on the Northwest Frontier and in Mathura. This article will explain to you the concepts related to **Gandhara and Mathura School of Art - Major Differences** which will be helpful in Indian Art and Culture preparation for the UPSC Civil service exam.

14.1 Gandhara School of Art

- **Gandhara art flourished in India during the reign of the Kushan Empire.**
- Kanishka, the greatest of the Kushanas, was a well-known patron of the arts and building. During his reign, the **Gandhara School** of painting flourished.
- **Greek techniques** had a big effect on Gandhara School.
- The Greek invaders brought the traditions of Greek and Roman sculptors with them, which affected the region's native traditions.
- As a result, the Gandhara School became known as the **Greco-Indian School of Art.**

14.2 Mathura School of Art

- **Indianism** had a huge influence on the Mathura School of Art. The sculptures **lacked spirituality.**
- Sculptures and statues were typically made out of **spotted red sandstone**. The Buddha and the Bodhisattva are shown in the beginning as joyful, plump creatures with little spirituality.
- The **Mathura School of Arts** was known for its Buddha representations, as well as statues of many gods and goddesses, including Jain Tirthankaras.
- The narrative and imagery of all three religions of the time – **Buddhism, Hinduism, and Jainism** – were impacted by the Mathura School's sculptures.
- The images were based on Yaksha images discovered during the **Mauryan period.**

14.3 Major Differences between Gandhara and Mathura School of Art

Differences	Gandhara school	Mathura school
Time of development	Between 50 B.C. and 500 A.D., the Gandhara School flourished in two periods.	The Mathura School flourished on the banks of the river Yamuna in the period between 1st and 3rd centuries B.C.
Patronage	Kushan dynasty	Kushan dynasty

Area of development	Developed in the modern-day Kandahar region of the northwest Frontier.	Mathura, Sonkh, and Kankalitila were the sites of development. Jain sculptures were famous in Kankalitala.
Influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is also known as Indo- Greek art because of the heavy influence of Greek or Hellenistic sculpture. • The Greek invaders brought the traditions of Greek and Roman sculptors with them, which affected the region's native traditions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was created by indigenous peoples without the influence of outside cultures. • The narrative and imagery of all three religions of the time, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Jainism were impacted by the Mathura School's sculptures. • The images were based on Yaksha images discovered during the Mauryan period.
Religious influence	Buddhist imagery influenced by the Greco-Roman pantheon is the most common.	The three major religions of the time, Hinduism, Jainism, and Buddhism, all had an impact.
Materials used	Early Gandhara School buildings used bluish-grey sandstone, whereas later used mud and stucco.	Mathura School's sculptures used spotted red sandstone.
Features of Buddha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With flowing hair, the Buddha is depicted in a spiritual mood. • He has fewer jewelry on and is reclining in the yogi stance. • As in meditation, the eyes are partially closed. • The Buddha's omniscience is symbolized by a protuberance on his head. • The halo is not generally decorated in Gandhara Style, and the pictures are much more expressive. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buddha is depicted with a happy expression on his face. • Wearing a tight dress on the body symbolizes muscularity. • The head and face have been shaved. • Buddha is seated in padmasana with many mudras and a serene expression on his face. • On the head, a similar protuberance can be seen.
Other features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The existence of pictures of the Mother Goddess is another telling aspect, as worship of this goddess remains an important religious expression for ordinary people. • Buddhism, like other popular 	The woman was at the center of the painting, and there are few works of Indian art that can match the gorgeous feminine figures created by the Mathura artists in terms of beauty, delicacy, and appeal.

	religious cults, became intertwined with fertility cults.	
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14.4 Conclusion

Some believe that the earliest iconographers were Hellenistic artists of Gandhara, while others trace it to Mathura's sculptures. Sculptures created by the former are typically regarded as belonging to the Gandhara school, while those created by the latter are regarded as belonging to the Mathura school. Because the sculptural and iconographic elements of their works differ in crucial details, it is likely that images were created roughly simultaneously by both schools.

15. Mathura school of art

Mathura school of art is a Buddhist visual art form that flourished in Mathura, Uttar Pradesh, as a commercial and pilgrimage centre. During the reign of **Kushan emperor Kanishka** in the first century AD, the Mathura School of Art flourished. During the **Gupta period** (6th or 7th century), this art achieved its pinnacle. This article will explain to you the concepts related to the **Mathura school of art** which will be helpful in Indian Art and Culture preparation for the UPSC Civil service exam.

15.1 Mathura school of art

- The **Mathura School of Art** flourished mostly during the reign of Kushana ruler Kanishka in the first century AD. Mathura School grew up on its own.
- Mathura was the traditional centre of output for this school, with Sarnath and Kosambi also playing key roles. **Spotted red sandstone** was utilised in the construction of this school. During the **Gupta period**, in the **6th or 7th century**, this art achieved its pinnacle.
- The representations of Buddha, Bodhisattvas, Vishnu, Shiva, Yakshas, Yakshinis, Jinas, and others found in the Mathura school depict the **city's life** and assimilation character as a result of **Brahmanism, Jainism, and Buddhism's religious fervour**.
- Mathura art was notable for its Jina image and indigenous style of Buddha's image.
- In the artwork, the Mathura School used a lot of **symbolism**. **Avayudhas** were used to depict the Hindu gods. Shiva, for example, is represented by linga and mukhalinga.
- Similarly, the halo around Buddha's **head is bigger** and adorned with geometrical patterns than in the Gandhara School. **Padmapani holds** a lotus and **Vajrapani holds a thunderbolt**, and Buddha is encircled by two **Bodhisattvas**.

15.2 Salient features of Mathura Art

- **Buddha image - Buddha was never represented in a human form at any of Sanchi, Bharhut, or Gaya prior to the founding of this school.**
- **Themes** - Only symbols, such as two footprints or a wheel, were used to represent Buddha. Mathura artists continued to depict symbols at first, but the human figure of Buddha gradually emerged as a separate school of art.
- This depiction of the human Buddha was based on **Yaksha representations**.
- Early depictions of the Buddha and Bodhisattva are plump, joyful beings with no spirituality. They have a blocky appearance and a smooth, close-fitting robe that is virtually entirely free of wrinkles.
- **Patrons** - The Mathura statues are related to earlier **yaksa** (male nature deity) figures, with a strong resemblance to the early Kushn period's massive standing Buddha representations.
- **Features of sculpture** - The overall impact of them, as well as the more traditional seated Buddhas, is one of great force. The **shoulders are broad**, the **chest expands**, and the legs are planted firmly with feet split apart.
- Images were more sensuous and flashier in the second century AD, with increasing rotundness. By the third century AD, the extreme **fleshiness** had subsided, and the surface features had become more **polished**.

- The **shaved head**, the protuberance on the top of the head indicated by a tiered spiral, a round smiling face, the right arm raised in **abhaya-mudra** (reassurance gesture), the left arm akimbo or resting on the thigh, the drapery closely moulding the body and arranged in folds over the left arm, leaving the right shoulder bare, and the presence of the lion throne rather than the lotus throne are
- **The halo around Buddha's head was lavishly adorned.**
- The Mathura school etched out both the sitting and standing postures of **Buddha and Bodhisattvas**. The Sravasti Sarnath and Kaushambi Standing Buddhas are the best examples of Buddha images under this style.
- The later evolution of Buddha's Human form was linked to human beauty and heroic values.
- **Type of sandstone - Spotted red sandstone** was utilized in the construction of this school.
- **Vaishnava and Shiva images** - At Mathura, pictures of the Vaishnava and Shaiva faiths can also be seen, but Buddhist ones predominate.
- **Women's position in Mathura's art** - The woman was at the center of the painting, and there are few works of Indian art that can match the gorgeous feminine figures created by the Mathura artists in terms of beauty, delicacy, and appeal.

15.3 Conclusion

In many aspects, the Mathura school of art was a formative art that influenced later styles of art. Mathura is a significant turning point in Indian art history. It is here that the move from symbolism to iconographic forms, which were later embraced, can be clearly seen. In addition, Mathura was the first place where the forms of Brahmanical deities crystallised. The influence of the Mathura school's Buddha image expanded throughout India and Central Asia.

16. Sarnath school of art

Sarnath school of art arose near **Sarnath, Bihar**, as its name suggests. The figures are displayed in a plain, transparent drapery that covers the shoulders and has an ornamented halo behind the head. This article will explain to you the concepts related to the **Sarnath school of art** which will be helpful in Indian Art and Culture preparation for the UPSC Civil service exam.

16.1 Sarnath school of art

- The mix of **cream-colored sandstone** and **aluminum** made it stand out. The sculptures at this school were impeccably adorned and devoid of any form of nakedness.
- Many **Buddha images** in Sarnath have basic translucent drapery covering both shoulders and a minimally adorned halo around the head, but the drapery folds and the halo around the head are elaborately embellished in Mathura Buddha figures.
- **Sultanganj Buddha** is a good illustration of this (7.5ft in height).

16.2 Historical background

- The Sarnath style primarily produced Buddhist art.
- "Sarnath Buddhas are probably the greatest single achievement of the Indian sculptor," largely establishing the representation of the Buddha that was followed in eastern India and Southeast Asia for many centuries, as well as the general **representation of the human body in India**.
- The mature style did not emerge until 450–475, according to a number of dated samples.
- Buddha images in Siam, Cambodia, and Java were created in the Sarnath style.

16.3 Significance

- **Influence** - indigenous, it is devoid of outside influences.
- **Themes** - Mostly Buddhist art was made in the Sarnath style.
- **Features of sculpture** - In contrast to the **columnar rigidity** of previous Mathura works, Sarnath brings not only a **delicacy and refinement of form**, but also a **relaxed attitude** by bending the body slightly on its own axis in the case of the standing figure, thereby adding to it a certain liveness and movement.
- The **slim physiognomy** creates an impression of mobility, the body closely following the modelling in all its minute subtleties, even in the case of the seated figure.
- The folds have all almost vanished; the only remnants of the draperies are the faint lines on the torso that suggest the garment's boundaries.
- The folds that come apart are given a muslin-like texture once more. The body, in all its **smooth, gleaming plasticity**, is the main focus of the Sarnath artists.
- The drapery folds and the **halo** around the head are lavishly embellished in Mathura Buddha figures, whereas many Buddha statues in Sarnath have basic translucent drapery covering both shoulders and a lightly ornate halo around the head.

- **Type of sandstone** - It stood out because of the combination of cream-colored sandstone and aluminium.
- **Other features** - From Sarnath, the image of the standing Buddha is a magnificent example of Gupta art at its peak.
- The gently sculpted figure's right hand is raised in a protective posture. Unlike the **Mathura Buddha's** beautifully carved **drapery folds**, just the diaphanous robe's fringe is represented here.
- **The sublime being is genuinely deserving of the exquisite execution of the figure matched by its tranquil spiritual expression.**

16.4 Conclusion

As the name implies, this school emerged near Sarnath, Bihar. The figures are dressed in a plain, transparent drapery with an ornate halo behind the head that covers the shoulders. This painting style is characterised by its beauty, simplicity, and sublimity of form.
