

IASbaba- Revision-Indian Culture- Part 2- Mauryan Art

Art Form	Tribe	Key features	Place
Chadar Badar	Santhal	Performing Art - Puppetry that tells stories of Santhal way of life and migration	Terai region of himalayas
Saura	Santhal	Painting - Similar to Warli but larger and elongated. Natural colors are used	Odisha
Kalaripayattu		Martial art - One of the oldest fighting systems in existence	Kerala
Silambam		Martial art - Weapon based martial art. Uses animal movements of tiger, snake, eagle forms and foot work patterns plays an important role; Kuttuvarasai - part of silambam - unarmed version	Tamilnadu
Pari-Khanda	Rajputs	Martial art - Sword and shield fighting. Techniques are also used in chau dance	Bihar
Kondapalli dolls		Sculpture - Made from soft Poniki wood - light, flexible and strong. made piece by piece and are stuck together using an adhesive paste made of tamarind seeds, followed with a coating of lime glue.	Andhrapradesh
Channapatna toys		traditional craft that is protected as a geographical indication (GI) under the World Trade Organisation. Natural dyes are used to colour the toys and are blended with lac to	Karnataka

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		make lac sticks which are then applied to the finished wooden objects. This age old traditional art dates back to the reign of Tipu Sultan who is said to have invited Persian artists to teach his artisans the craft.	
Marapachi dolls		A male-female dolls usually gifted to bride in marriage. Made from kongu trees. known for their intricate carvings and the elaborate attires that people dress them in. Made in Tirupati	Andhra Pradesh
Tanjavur dolls		Included in the Government of India Geographical Indications Registry, the dancing dolls made of wood pulp or papier maché or clay. They are called so because of their bobbing head and body, that are made separately and balanced such that the parts oscillate.	Tamilnadu
Matka silk	In towns of Malda and Murshidabad	Matka is an Indian term for rough handloom silk fabric made from very thick yarns spun out of pierced cocoon in the weft and organzine in warp. The yarns are obtained from short ends of silk from Mulberry silkworms (<i>Bombyx mori</i>) and spun by hand without removing the gum (sericin)	West Bengal

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Aari Embroidery		Handicrafts - needle work with beads or muthai and chain stitch; inspired by the floral motifs of Mughal period	Kutch, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Delhi
Baluchari Saree		Weaving - It is a hand woven saree using richly dyed silk, with intricate motifs depicting Indian mythology woven onto its large 'pallu'.	Baluchar, Murshidabad, West Bengal
Lavani / Tamasha	Dhangars or shepherds of Sholapur	Maharashtrian folk including song and dance	Maharashtra and konkan coast.
Kalbelia	Kalbelia tribe	The dance form consists of swirling, graceful movements that make this dance a treat to behold. Women dance while men provide music for the performance. Kalbelia dance and songs are a part of UNESCO's representative list of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.	Rajasthan
Bhavai dance		It involves tricky balancing acts, right from balancing seven to nine brass pots on the head to balancing oneself (along with the pots) on narrow and unstable objects like a glass bottle, brass plate or the edge of a sword. The brass pots can, and are often, substituted by an even greater number of earthen pots.	Rajasthan

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Bhangra		Harvest dance - energetic and rhythmic - performed by both men and women	Punjab
Dandiya		Dance using bright colored bamboo sticks where participants strike the bamboo sticks in rhythmic fashion. Dancers go round a drummer usually at the centre of the stage	Gujarat
Garba		Dance form also originated in Gujarat but uses hand and feet movement; traditionally performed around a holy lamp	Gujarat
Giddha		Performed only by women in Punjab. Female counterpart to Bhangra	Punjab
Ghoomar	Bhil	A traditionally passed folk dance of Mewar of Rajasthan includes rhythmic swirling. Women's dance performed in women gatherings.	Rajasthan
Chari	Gujjar	Women's dance form depicting collecting of water. Women dance by balancing brass pots which are kept ignited with the cotton seeds dipped in oil	Rajasthan
Gawari	Bhil	A dance drama performed by both men and women. Usually performed by troupes which travel from one village to another	Rajasthan
Kath Puthli	Bhati	World famous wooden puppetry of Rajasthan. Wooden puppets are	Rajasthan

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		controlled by metal strings	
Tera tali	Kamar	Worship of baba ramdev. Bhajans are sung during the performance	Rajasthan
Walar	Gharasia	Prototype for ghoomar. Performed by women	Rajasthan
Suta Khandei Nacha		String puppet show from Ganjam	Odisha
Baunsa Rani		Baunsarani literally means "The Bamboo Queen". Mainly little girls exhibit various acrobatic postures on the crossed bamboo bar as well as on the floor with exquisite scintillating movement synchronized with the beat of drums and songs.	Odisha
Kommu Koya	Kommu koya tribe	Dance form of chintoor mandal, east Godavari district	Andhra Pradesh
Daminda	Apatani	Performed by girls during Dree festival	Arunachal Pradesh
Guravayyalu	Kurava	Performed by priests. Famous in Kurnool. Influenced by shaivism	Andhra Pradesh

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Arts of the Mauryan Period

Sixth century BCE marks the beginning of new religious and social movements in the Gangetic valley in the form of Buddhism and Jainism.

Both religions became popular as they opposed the varna and jati systems of the Hindu religion. Magadha emerged as a powerful kingdom and consolidated its control over the other regions.

By the fourth century BCE the Mauryas established their power and by the third century BCE, a large part of India was under Mauryan control.

Ashoka emerged as the most powerful king of the Mauryan dynasty who patronised the shraman tradition in the third century BCE.

Religious practices had many dimensions and were not confined to just one particular mode of worship. Worship of **Yakshas** and **mothergoddesses** were prevalent during that time.

Nevertheless, Buddhism became the most popular social and religious movement.

Yaksha worship was very popular before and after the advent of Buddhism and it was assimilated in Buddhism and Jainism.

Construction of **stupas** and **viharas** as part of monastic establishments became part of the Buddhist tradition.

However, in this period, apart from stupas and viharas, **stone pillars**, **rock-cut caves** and **monumental figure sculptures** were carved at several places.

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Pillars

- The tradition of constructing pillars is very old and it may be observed that erection of pillars was prevalent in the Achaemenian empire as well. But the Mauryan pillars are different from the Achaemenian pillars. The Mauryan pillars are rock-cut pillars thus displaying the carver's skills, whereas the Achaemenian pillars are constructed in pieces by a mason.
- Stone pillars were erected all over the Mauryan Empire with inscriptions engraved on them.
- The top portion of the pillar was carved with capital figures like the bull, the lion, the elephant, etc. All the capital figures are vigorous and carved standing on a square or circular abacus.
- Abacuses are decorated with stylised lotuses.
- Some of the existing pillars with capital figures were found at Basarah-Bakhira, LauriyaNandangarh, Rampurva, Sankisa and Sarnath.
- Sarnath Pillar
 - ❖ The capital originally consisted of five component parts: (i) the **shaft** (which is broken in many parts now), (ii) a **lotus bell base**, (iii) a **drum** on the bell base with **four animals proceeding clockwise**, (iv) the figures of four majestic addorsed **lions**, and (v) the crowning element, **Dharamchakra**, a large wheel, was also a part of this pillar.
 - ❖ However, this wheel is lying in a broken condition and is displayed in the site museum at Sarnath.
 - ❖ The capital without the crowning wheel and the lotus base has been adopted as the National Emblem of Independent India.
 - ❖ The lions appear as if they have held their breath.
 - ❖ The surface of the sculpture is heavily polished which is typical of the Mauryan Period.

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- ❖ The abacus has the depiction of a **chakra** (wheel) having twenty-four spokes in all the four directions and a **bull**, a **horse**, an **elephant** and a **lion** between every chakra is finely carved.
- ❖ The motif of the chakra becomes significant as a representation of the Dharmachakra in the entire Buddhist art.
- ❖ Each animal figure, despite sticking to the surface, is voluminous, its posture creating movement in the circular abacus.
- ❖ The circular abacus is supported by an inverted lotus capital.
- ❖ Being a pillar image, it was conceived to be viewed from all the side, thus there are no boundations of fixed view points.

Sculptural tradition of the Mauryan Period

- Monumental images of **Yaksha**, **Yakhinis** and **animals**, **pillar columns** with **capital figures**, **rock-cut caves** belonging to the third century BCE have been found in different parts of India.
- It shows the popularity of Yaksha worship and how it became part of figure representation in Buddhist and Jaina religious monuments.
- Large statues of Yakshas and Yakhinis are found at many places like **Patna**, **Vidisha** and **Mathura**.
- These monumental images are mostly in the standing position.
- One of the distinguishing elements in all these images is their polished surface.
- The depiction of faces is in full round with pronounced cheeks and physiognomic detail.

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➤ Yakshi figure from Didarganj, Patna

- ❖ It is a tall, well-proportioned, free-standing sculpture in round made in **sandstone** with a polished surface.
- ❖ The chauri is held in the right hand whereas the left hand is broken.
- ❖ The face has round, fleshy cheeks, while the neck is relatively small in proportion; the eyes, nose and lips are sharp. Folds of muscles are properly rendered. The necklace beads are in full round, hanging to the belly.
- ❖ Every fold of the garment on the legs is shown by protruding lines clinging to the legs, which also create a somewhat transparent effect. The middle band of the garment falls till the feet.
- ❖ Thick bell-ornaments adorn the feet. The image stands firmly on its legs.
- ❖ The back is equally impressive. The hair is tied in a knot at the back. The back is bare.
- ❖ Drapery at the back covers both legs.
- ❖ The flywhisk in the right hand is shown with incised lines continued on the back of the image.

Cave Architecture

➤ Lomus Rishi Cave

- ❖ The rock-cut cave carved at **Barabar hills** near Gaya in Bihar is known as the **Lomus Rishi** cave.
- ❖ The facade of the cave is decorated with the semicircular chaitya arch as the entrance.
- ❖ The elephant frieze carved in high relief on the chaitya arch shows considerable movement.

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- ❖ The interior hall of this cave is rectangular with a circular chamber at the back.
- ❖ The entrance is located on the side wall of the hall.
- ❖ The cave was patronised by Ashoka for the Ajivika sect.
- ❖ The Lomus Rishi cave is an isolated example of this period. But many Buddhist caves of the subsequent periods were excavated in eastern and western India.

Stupas and Viharas

- Due to the popularity of Buddhism and Jainism, stupas and viharas were constructed on a large scale. However, there are also examples of a few Brahmanical gods in the sculptural representations.
- It is important to note that the stupas were constructed over the relics of the Buddha at **Rajagraha, Vaishali, Kapilavastu, Allakappa, Ramagrama, Vethadipa, Pava, Kushinagar** and **Pippalvina**.
- The textual tradition also mentions construction of various other stupas on the relics of the Buddha at several places including **Avanti** and **Gandhara** which are outside the Gangetic valley.
- Stupa, vihara and chaitya are part of Buddhist and Jaina monastic complexes but the largest number belongs to the Buddhist religion.
- One of the best examples of the structure of a stupa in the third century BCE is at Bairat in Rajasthan. It is a very grand stupa having a circular mound with a circumambulatory path.
- The great stupa at Sanchi was built with bricks during the time of Ashoka and later it was covered with stone and many new additions were made.
- Subsequently many such stupas were constructed which shows the popularity of Buddhism.
- From the second century BCE onwards, we get many inscriptional evidences

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mentioning donors and, at times, their profession. The pattern of patronage has been a very collective one and there are very few examples of royal patronage.

- Patrons range from lay devotees to gahapatis and kings.
- Donations by the guilds are also mentioned at several sites.
- However, there are very few inscriptions mentioning the names of artisans such as Kanha at Pitalkhora and his disciple Balaka at Kondane caves.
- Artisans' categories like stone carvers, goldsmiths, stone-polishers, carpenters, etc. Are also mentioned in the inscriptions.
- The method of working was collective in nature and at times only a specific portion of the monument is said to have been patronised by a particular patron.
- Traders recorded their donation along with their place of origin.
- In the subsequent century, stupas were elaborately built with certain additions like the enclosing of the circumambulatory path with railings and sculptural decoration.
- There were numerous stupas constructed earlier but expansions or new additions were made in the second century BCE.
- The stupa consists of a cylindrical drum and a circular anda with a harmika and chhatra on the top which remain consistent throughout with minor variations and changes in shape and size.
- Apart from the circumambulatory path, gateways were added.
- Thus, with the elaborations in stupa architecture, there was ample space for the architects and sculptors to plan elaborations and to carve out images.
- During the early phase of Buddhism, Buddha is depicted symbolically through footprints, stupas, lotus throne, chakra, etc.
- This indicates either simple worship, or paying respect, or at times depicts historicisation of life events.

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- Gradually narrative became a part of the Buddhist tradition. Thus events from the life of the Buddha, the Jataka stories, were depicted on the railings and torans of the stupas.
- Mainly synoptic narrative, continuous narrative and episodic narrative are used in the pictorial tradition.
- While events from the life of the Buddha became an important theme in all the Buddhist monuments, the Jataka stories also became equally important for sculptural decorations. The main events associated with the Buddha's life which were frequently depicted were events related to the **birth, renunciation, enlightenment, dhammachakrapravartana, and mahaparinibbana (death)**.
- Among the Jataka stories that are frequently depicted are **Chhadanta Jataka, Vidurpundita Jataka, Ruru Jataka, Sibi Jataka, Vessantara Jataka** and **Shama Jataka**.
- This is one of the finest examples of sculpture from the Mauryan period.
- Built in commemoration of the historical event of the first **sermon** or the **Dhammachakrapravartana** by the Buddha at Sarnath, the capital was built by Ashoka.