

INDIAN ART AND ARCHITECTURE

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Sl.No	Unit	Content	Page No
1	I	Pre-Historic Art - Harappan Art: Seals, Sculptures: Stone and Metal - Harappan Architecture: Fortification, Town Plan, Public Buildings – Mauryan Art: Chaityas – Viharas Stupas-Asokan Pillars	1 - 21
2	II	Hinayana Phase of Buddhist Art – Mahayana Phase of Art: Gandhara School of Art – Mathura School of Art- Amaravathi School of Art- Gupta Art and Architecture – Ajanta and Ellora – Jaina Art: Jaina beds – Shravanabelagola	22 - 34
3	III	Pallava Art: Rock CutCave Temples, MonolithicTemples - Structural Temples – Mahabalipuram - Nagara Style of Architecture: Lingaraja Temple (Bhubaneshwar), Sun Temple (Konarak) - Dravida Style of Architecture: Brihadeeswara Temple, Thanjavur– Gangaikondacholapuram – Airavatesvara Temple, Darasuram - Vesara Style of Architecture: Chennakesava Temple (Belur), Hoysaleswara Temple(Halebid).	35 – 51
4	IV	Islamic Art: Five Pillars of Islam, Mosques, Mausoleums, Palace complexes, Gardens - Quawwat-ul-Islam Mosque - QutubMinar - Mughal Art and Architecture: Humayun’s Tomb - FatehpurSikri, -Red Fort- Taj Mahal - Mughal Paintings.	52 - 73
5	V	Colonial Architecture: Forts: St. George Fort, Chennai – Indo-Saracenic Architecture: ChatrapatiShivaji Terminal, Mumbai – Victoria Memorial, Kolkata – Amir Mahal and Senate House, University of Madras, Chennai.	74 - 82
6		References	83

Indian Art and Architecture

UNIT - I

Learning Objectives

1. To understand the nature of Prehistoric art.
2. To study the features of Harappan art.
3. To examine Harappan seals and sculptures in stone and metal.
4. To understand the characteristics of Harappan architecture.
5. To study the town planning and fortifications of the Harappan civilization.
6. To examine public buildings of the Harappan period.
7. To understand the features of Mauryan art including chaityas, viharas and stupas.
8. To study the significance of Asokan pillars in Indian art and architecture.

Course Outcomes

1. Students will understand the development of prehistoric art in India.
2. Students will explain the important features of Harappan art.
3. Students will identify Harappan seals and sculptures made of stone and metal.
4. Students will analyze the characteristics of Harappan architecture and town planning.
5. Students will understand the role of fortifications and public buildings in the Harappan cities.
6. Students will examine the development of Mauryan art and architecture.
7. Students will explain the structure and importance of chaityas, viharas and stupas.
8. Students will assess the historical significance of Asokan pillars.

Introduction

This chapter on Indian art and architecture will take you to Introduction the journey of one of the world's oldest and richest civilizations prevalent since the earliest times when human beings were engaged with their creative pursuits for one reason or the other. This is a journey of thousands of years of tangible and intangible heritage of the Indian sub-continent starting from the cave habitats to the oral tradition of Vedas to the writing of Shastras - the text on all possible topics where the wisdom of our ancestors has poured in! Through this chapter, you will have glimpses of different traditions of painting, sculpture and architecture - how these evolved over the years. Some of the traditional knowledge has remained with the people, communities and is still being practiced specially in the pockets of modern India. Some of these timeless traditions are the oral traditions, ironsmiths, potters, weavers, painting on walls, floors and ceilings, bronze cast, etc. which you can even find being practiced in your region.

Early Indian literary texts such as the epics *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*, Kalidasa's *Abhijnānaśakuntalam*, *Daśakumaracarita*, and later works like Vatsyayana's *Kamasutra* make reference to art galleries or *citrasalas* within palaces, indicating the cultural importance of visual arts in royal settings. Among these texts, the *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa* stands out as the most comprehensive guide, emphasizing the interdependence of dance, music, and the visual arts. As one of the eighteen Upa-purāṇas, it dedicates entire chapters to painting, detailing the methods, ideals, and aesthetics of the craft. These texts served as vital repositories of traditional knowledge, passing down the fundamentals of painting techniques and artistic appreciation from one generation and region to another. They also played a crucial role in the technical evolution of art, guiding artists in the transition from painting on rough, untreated cave walls to preparing surfaces for fresco work, thereby enhancing both durability and visual refinement.

Vastuvidya or Silpasastra, or the science of architecture, is one of the technical subjects studied in ancient India. In the earliest texts, the word *vastu* is used for building, which included temple construction, town planning, public and private buildings, and later on forts. Atharvaveda too has references to different parts of a building.

Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra* deals with town planning, fortifications and other civil structures. *Samarāṅgaṇasutradhara*, authored by King Bhoja (1010–55 C.E.), discusses the methods of examination of a site, analysis of the soil, systems of measurement, qualifications of the *sthapati* (architect) and his assistants, building materials, consecration of the plan followed by the construction of foundation, basal mouldings and technical details for each part of the plan, design and elevation. *Mayamata* (1000 C.E.) and *Mānasāra* (1300 C.E.) are the two texts having common understanding of the architectural plans and design of the southern style of temple architecture known as Draviḍa.

Pre-Historic Art

In the history of art, prehistoric art is all art produced in preliterate, prehistoric cultures beginning somewhere in very late geological history, and generally continuing until that culture either develops writing or other methods of record-keeping, or makes significant contact with another culture that has, and that makes some record of major historical events. At this point ancient art begins for the older literate cultures. The end date for what is covered by the term thus varies greatly between different parts of the world.

The earliest human art effects showing evidence of workmanship with an artistic purpose are the subject of some debate. It is clear that such workmanship existed by 40,000 years ago in the Upper Paleolithic era, although it is quite possible that it began earlier. In September 2018, scientists reported the discovery of the earliest known drawing by *Homo sapiens*, which is estimated to be 73,000 years old, much earlier than the 43,000-year-old artifacts understood to be the earliest known modern human drawings found previously. In 2008, an ochre processing workshop consisting of two toolkits was uncovered in the 100,000-year-old levels at Blombos Cave, South Africa. Arguably, the engraved pieces of ochre found there represent, together with the engraved ostrich eggshells from Diepkloof Rock Shelter, Western Cape, South Africa, the earliest forms of abstract representation and conventional design tradition hitherto recorded.

The art of the Upper Paleolithic represents the oldest form of prehistoric art. Figurative art is present in Europe and Southeast Asia, beginning between about 40,000 to 35,000 years ago. Non-figurative cave paintings, consisting of hand stencils made by blowing pigment over hands pressed against the cave surface, and simple geometric shapes, are somewhat older, at least 40,000 years old, and possibly as old as 64,000 years. The emergence of figurative art has been interpreted as reflecting the emergence of full behavioral modernity and is part of the defining characteristics separating the Upper Paleolithic from the Middle Paleolithic.

Seals

The stamp seals of the Harappans, carved in intaglio, are masterpieces of art noted for pragmatism. Most of the urban Harappan sites have reported seals and, in fact, they constitute one of the distinctive traits of the mature phase. Seals and sealings are already in thousands and more are pouring in with every new excavation. Although there are variations in shape, size and implementation, the most common are square in shape, each side measuring around 2 to 3 centimeters with an average thickness of about 5 to 6 millimeters. However, some of the seals were rectangular, circular and even cylindrical.

Few circular and cylindrical seals found in Harappan contexts are unusual. The presence of these seals, especially the cylindrical ones often with Harappan motifs, suggests a cultural interaction with the Mesopotamian and Persian world, whereas the circular ones are diagnostic of the Gulf area. Despite the fact that the mainstream of the seals are made of steatite, there are instances of copper, silver, calcite and even faience also. The process of manufacturing in the case of steatite normally involved cutting of steatite (soft soapstone, with a hardness of 1 on Moh's scale, easy to saw, carve and smoothen) into the required size and shape, and then the surface was smoothened with some sort of abrasive.

The finest surface was then carved with the help of a sharp instrument like a burin or chisel and finally a coating of alkaline solution was applied before firing to harden it and also to get a white shining look. The majority of the seals, irrespective of their material, had a convex perforated boss on the reverse, through which a thread could be passed for suspension. Amongst the variety of subjects depicted on seals, it was the so-called 'Unicorn' (one-horned mythical animal) that outnumbers the rest. In every case of this category, in front of the animal is shown a standard-like object, variously interpreted as a manger, brazier, incense burner or sacred filter (Mahadevan 1984).

The other animals incorporated are the short-horned bull (bison), Brahmani bull with its characteristic dewlap and hump, buffalo, rhinoceros, tiger, elephant, crocodile, antelope, goat, hare, etc. Then there were composite animals and even human and animal combinations. Some seals contain more complex monographic scenes representing mythological or religious depictions (Joshi and Parpola 1987).

The signs of the Harappan script on the seals, which were carved either inversely or in intaglio since they were stamped, presumably stand for the name of the owner, the name of an affiliated organization or the name of the deity. These seals were probably used for trade as an administrative instrument as well as for other functions too. Recent analysis suggests that the number of actual seal impressions (sealings) is much less than that of seals. As the majority of them are found abraded only at the edges and retain the crisp edge of the carving more or less intact, scholars speculate that they were used more as protective amulets and/or identification marks than in administrative and economic life.

The existence of one or two examples of 'amulets' reported from Mohenjodaro and even Bagasra, where the interior of the seal had been carefully hollowed out to form a compartment, which was formerly closed by a sliding cover that

fitted with grooves cut into the opening of the socket so that something, most probably a magic charm, could be safely kept inside, supports this view. It also appears that square stamped seals with animal motifs carried messages understandable to different citizens. As totemic symbols, additional traits such as power, cunning, agility, strength, etc., may have been associated with each animal depicted on the seals. It is also surprising that the animals depicted are usually male and have some specific connotation.

Thus, Harappan seals are now treated more in the nature of tokens of power and prestige rather than mere badges bearing their owners' names. If the function of these seals was simply restricted to vouching for a merchant's right over the goods they were stamped on, such as lumps of clay sealing containers, there is no reason why so much artistic skill would have gone into their manufacture.

Sculptures

The degree of works of art in a broad spectrum, and sculptures in particular, add greatly to our comprehension of ancient cultures and present an insight into the minds of the artists, reflecting not only the spirit and atmosphere of a culture but also giving an indication of social values and religious beliefs in such a pronounced way which is nearly impossible with other material remains. The same applies to the Harappan culture also. Although very few sculptures are known so far in the vast corpus of Harappan material remains, no doubt these sculptures speak of the high standard of craftsmanship achieved by the Harappans in this sphere of human activity as well. Regrettably, in contrast to other aspects of Harappan studies, sculptural art as an important area of research is yet to attract scholars.

In comparison with Mesopotamian and Egyptian civilizations, the Harappan civilization has reported a very limited number of stone and bronze sculptures depicting basically human and animal forms. Nevertheless, there is some justification for maintaining a multiplicity of art styles and postulating the roots of the much later historic art of the Indian subcontinent in them. Amid the limited collection, the major specimens are reported from Mohenjo-daro and a few from Harappa, Chanhudaro, Dholavira and Daimabad. Of these, except the statue of the "Dancing Girl" from Mohenjo-daro and the Daimabad hoard representing various animals cast in bronze, the rest were carved in stone, dominated by male figures.

Among these, the most famous one from Mohenjo-daro is the steatite sculpture popularly known as the "Priest-King." It probably represents a person of very high rank, judging from the elaborate clothing and ornaments. Even though the body below the chest is missing, it is 17.5 centimeters in height and 11 centimeters in width. It has well-combed hair, parted in the middle and dropping behind the neck. Parallel lines in relief show a well-groomed beard. In contrast, however, the upper lip is clean-shaven.

Around the forehead goes a band, which is tied behind and falls further down from the neck. A circular piece attached to this band on the forehead may probably have some special significance. The eyes are half-closed, as if the priest is in a meditative pose. The figure wears a shawl-like garment, which passes

underneath the right arm but goes over the left shoulder. It has a design of trefoils, which were originally filled with red pigment. It has also been noted that when discovered, one of the eyes had shell inlay. The right upper arm is also decked with an ornament similar to that of the fillet headband. The back of the head is flattened, possibly in order to affix a horned headdress as a symbol of sacred authority. Parpola attempts to demonstrate that the garment of the Priest-King is something called the "Tardy," found in Vedic ritual. The most famous stone sculpture in the Harappan context after the "Priest-King" is the small male torso found at Harappa.

This masterpiece is carved from fine-grained red sandstone (jasper), a material that was rarely used by later sculptors. It is 9.5 cm high, with arms and head missing and broken at the legs. The nude figure of this youth, with a well-built yet supple and sensuous body, bears holes for the attachment of the head and arms, but none are apparent for the legs. Prominent circular indentations, probably made by a tube drill, are located on the front of each shoulder, possibly to affix a garment or for the inlay of ornaments. The holes for the breast nipples are apparently intended for inlay.

Another interesting sculpture reported from Harappa is made of dark grey stone representing a male dancer, confirming the technique of manufacture and general modeling of the Harappan style. Again, this 10 cm high torso's head and arms are missing while the legs are partly broken. Its individuality lies in its somewhat twisted body with a lifted leg, posed as a dancer. Holes on the back of the neck were probably intended to hold hair in place, suggesting that the figure was almost certainly shown looking downward. Marshall's reconstruction of the pose may not be far off the mark and does show life and movement, placing it in the high rank of Harappan art.

Among the Harappan sculptures, the most beguiling piece of art is probably the bronze statue of the nude Dancing Girl from Mohenjo-daro. Nearly 11 centimeters in height, the figure is shown standing upright in a relaxed pose with the head slightly tilted back. The right leg is somewhat straight whereas the left one is bent at the knee. The right hand is posed against the right hip, while the left hand, heavily adorned with bangles, rests on the left knee. From the back of the neck descends a necklace with a pendant dangling between the breasts. Her hair is tied in a bun hanging low on the back of the neck.

The ankles and feet are missing in this sculpture, but there is one more bronze sculpture from Mohenjo-daro itself in which the limbs are adorned with anklets. Almost every archaeologist considers it one of the masterpieces of Harappan art because of the vivacious depiction of various features in this small figurine. Apart from these, a few more sculptures survive in the form of human heads resembling in their facial features that of the Priest-King. Most of these human heads are reported from Mohenjo-daro. Another sculpture reported from Mohenjo-daro is a seated male figure, of which the head is missing. This statue is a little over 29 centimeters in height and is made of grey alabaster. In this context, it is quite striking that none of the Harappan sites found in India revealed such

sculptures except Dholavira, from where recently a seated male figure carved in stone has been reported. However, this sculpture is also broken and not much is known in detail.

It is quite puzzling not to have sculptural remains of animals in the real sense, despite the fact that a variety of them, both in form and kind, are represented in Harappan seals, terracotta and pottery drawings. Though a few animals depicted in copper or bronze, gold or silver, and stone or faience are found in the form of miniature figurines, mostly as ornaments forming part of necklaces representing sheep, rabbit, monkey, buffalo, squirrel, bull, etc., these representations cannot be treated as full-fledged sculptures.

However, the hoard from Daimabad, which was discovered accidentally, consists of four animal sculptures. Although these sculptures belong to the Late Harappan period, they considerably fill the gap. It includes a pair of bulls, an elephant, a rhinoceros and a buffalo. All of them are still in an excellent state of preservation and have not lost their pristine features. All four sculptures are solid cast and are reported to weigh over 60 kg. Of these, the chariot and bulls are remarkable so far as workmanship is concerned. It consists of an elaborate chariot yoked to two bulls and driven by a man standing in the chariot. Though the chariot has some Harappan features, this vehicle has no parallel in the Harappan civilization and stands unique. The elephant is the largest of the animals in the hoard and stands on a platform with four brackets beneath, pierced to take axles.

The treatment of the rhinoceros inevitably recalls that of the Harappan seals and provides comparative examples. The same is true of the buffalo and reminds one of the figures of buffaloes in terracotta and cast copper or bronze from Mohenjo-daro. All these are provided with wheels. Because of their size, it gives the impression that they must have been used in processions. They are in fact the finest of their kind in the whole range of Indian protohistoric art and might have been created by an extremely skilled sculptor.

In terms of quantity or quality, the Harappan sculptural remains cannot be compared with the repertoire of either Mesopotamia or Egypt. Neither do we find a wide variety of expression nor the range of exploitation of media which both these cultures witnessed. However, an assortment of Harappan sculptures reflects their own developed art concept. Moreover, if we look carefully at the total assemblage of Harappan sculptures, it reveals that their stylistic tradition was not homogeneous and uniform. One can see a difference in composition, form and technique between the "Priest-King" and the "Dancing Girl" found at Mohenjo-daro.

On the whole, although examples of Harappan sculptures are rare, the art tradition of the later Indian subcontinent apparently owes a great deal to them. This can be inferred precisely from the modeling of the Harappan torsos, which are reminiscent of the sculptures of the historic period. Apparently, though the Harappans could not produce large works of art on a grand scale, they excelled in works of small compass. Their most notable artistic achievement was perhaps in their seal engravings, especially the animals, which they delineated with powerful

realism.

The cult scenes show a refreshing originality, but because of subject matter depiction there was limited scope for detailed artistic expression. Though the meaning and use of inscribed seals are still shrouded in mystery, partly because the script remains undeciphered, certainly these were used to stamp bales of traded goods and perhaps more as tokens of power and prestige besides amulets.

Until recently, it was believed that the Harappan civilization, along with its spectacular achievements, evolved quite mysteriously and then disappeared suddenly, leaving little or no legacy for later cultures. However, as new sites have been discovered and previously excavated ones restudied, it became apparent that it disintegrated gradually, leaving the field open for the development of subsequent protohistoric cultures and the second urbanization during the first millennium B.C. In fact, there are significant continuities in subsistence activities, art and architecture, technologies, economic setup, urban organization and possibly socio-ritual as well as political structures. Even today, in the modern cities, towns and villages of the subcontinent, one can see the legacy of the Harappan culture reflected in traditional arts and crafts as well as in the layout of houses and settlements.

Arts and Crafts

Many of the sites of the Harappan domain were engaged in craft production activities. They produced tools, beads, bangles, inlay objects, ceramics, seals, toy objects, household utensils, etc., using various raw materials. The diversity of stones and other raw materials used by the Harappans includes steatite, alabaster, shell, carnelian, agate, jasper, lapis lazuli, copper/bronze, gold, silver, amazonite, crystal, chrysoprase, bloodstone, milky quartz, opal, onyx, plasma, sandstone, chert, granite, chalcedony, feldspar, hornblende, schist and dolerite. Harappan art is reflected in the form of pottery paintings, decoration in beads, engravings on seals and sculptural art forms. Due to the uniqueness of Harappan seals and sculptures—especially figurines—special emphasis is given to them.

Stone Statues

Statues, whether in stone, bronze or terracotta, found at Harappan sites are not abundant, but they are refined. The stone statuaries found at Harappa and Mohenjo-daro are excellent examples of handling three-dimensional volumes. In stone, there are two male figures—one is a torso in red sandstone and the other is a bust of a bearded man in soapstone—which have been extensively discussed. The figure of the bearded man, interpreted as a priest, is draped in a shawl coming under the right arm and covering the left shoulder. This shawl is decorated with trefoil patterns. The eyes are slightly elongated and half-closed, as in meditative concentration. The nose is well-formed and of medium size; the mouth is of average size with a close-cut moustache and a short beard and whiskers. The ears resemble double shells with a hole in the middle. The hair is parted in the middle, and a plain woven fillet is passed round the head. An armlet is worn on the right arm, and holes around the neck suggest that a necklace was once attached.

Bronze Casting

The art of bronze-casting was practiced on a wide scale by the Harappans. Their bronze statues were made using the 'lost wax' technique, in which the wax figures were first covered with a coating of clay and allowed to dry. Then the wax was heated and the molten wax was drained out through a tiny hole made in the clay cover. The hollow mould thus created was filled with molten metal, which took the original shape of the object. Once the metal cooled, the clay cover was completely removed. In bronze, we find human as well as animal figures, the best example of the former being the statue of a girl popularly titled the "Dancing Girl." Among animal figures in bronze, the buffalo with its uplifted head, arched back and sweeping horns, and the goat are of artistic merit. Bronze casting was popular at all the major centers of the Indus Valley Civilization. The copper dog and bird of Lothal and the bronze figure of a bull from Kalibangan are in no way inferior to the human figures of copper and bronze from Harappa and Mohenjo-daro. Metal casting appears to have been a continuous tradition. The Late Harappan and Chalcolithic sites like Daimabad in Maharashtra yielded excellent examples of metal-cast sculptures. They mainly consist of human and animal figures. This shows how the tradition of figure sculpture continued down the ages.

The Architecture of the Harappa

The manifestation of towns and cities is an urban phenomenon and thus, the first towns and cities were linked with the first urbanization that took place in the fertile valleys of the rivers Indus, Saraswati and their several tributaries, and even in the far-off regions dominated by the Harappan civilization. However, on the basis of excavations at many Harappan sites, it has been confirmed that these towns and cities grew out of earlier villages that existed in the same locality prior to the Pre/Early Harappan period. Before 2600 B.C., sites like Harappa, Dholavira, Rakhigarhi, Banawali, Kalibangan, Rehman Dheri, Nausharo, Kot Diji and many more existed in the form of rural Harappan settlements.

Their initial occupational setups were at a formative stage, which eventually led to urbanization. Beginning with quite a small population, they grew in size and density to become larger settlements of the region along the major trade routes. Population growth, a strong agricultural base, developed trade and the growth of specialized skilled craftsmen favored the rise of towns and cities throughout the Harappan domain. These towns and cities amply fulfilled many of the criteria suggested by Gordon Childe while defining urbanization.

Before going into the details of Harappan town planning and the layout of settlements—fortifications, gates, streets, drainage networks, houses and buildings, and water reservoirs—it is relevant to understand the nature of its settlements. More than 1500 sites (including Pre-Harappan, Early Harappan, Mature Harappan and Late Harappan phases) covering the Harappan realm have been classified into three categories: (1) villages or hamlets occupying an area sometimes even less than one hectare and up to a maximum of ten hectares; (2) towns between ten to fifty hectares; and (3) cities extending over an area of more than fifty hectares. Of these, the maximum number of sites are represented by villages or hamlets, followed by a considerable number of towns, while

metropolitan cities are only five in number. Their ratio is somewhat similar to the distribution pattern of villages, towns and cities, comparable to the configuration of modern districts within a provincial state.

In the entire Harappan domain, five large cities have been identified as major urban centers or metropolises. Among these, Mohenjo-daro, being the largest, covers an area of more than 200 hectares. Second on the list is Harappa, covering an area of more than 150 hectares, whereas Dholavira covers an area close to 100 hectares. Ganweriwala and Rakhigarhi, measuring almost equal in dimensions, each occupy an area of more than 80 hectares. According to Kenoyer (1998), Jansen (2002) and Sonawane (2005), Mohenjo-daro, Harappa, Ganweriwala and Rakhigarhi are inland centers located far apart from each other, approximately 400 km apart in a zigzag pattern that covers the Indus and Saraswati plains. The fifth, Dholavira, is situated on a small island called Khadir in the Greater Rann of Kutch in Gujarat, connecting Lothal further southeast on one side and Balakot further northwest on the other, located approximately 300 km away on either side.

A considerable amount of archaeological data for a proper understanding of Harappan town planning is now available as a result of extensive excavations. Key sites like Dholavira, Lothal and Surkotada in Gujarat; Kalibangan in Rajasthan; Banawali and Rakhigarhi in Haryana; and Harappa and Mohenjo-daro in Pakistan, all located in diverse environmental and geographical settings, have shown slight variations in the planning of Harappan settlements within the known Harappan norms.

Fortification,

One of the important aspects of Harappan town planning is the provision of forts. Archaeological evidence has brought to notice the concept of the development of fortification during the Pre and Early Harappan phases; it became more pronounced and standardized during the Mature phase with the emergence of the earliest towns and cities, as a measure to safeguard their settlements. The massive fortification walls were, in fact, solid structures made of proportionately molded bricks set in mud mortar. Successive courses of bricks were laid in a recessed manner; as a result, both faces registered a marked taper, which led to a raised wall from a broad base to a lofty narrow top, forming a trapezoidal cross-section and often indicating evidence of clay plastering. On the other hand, in areas where the availability of stone was easy, such as Dholavira and Surkotada, both inner and outer faces were provided with stone facing to strengthen the more vulnerable portions. It appears that special care was taken in the construction of the corners, gates and bastions of the fortifications.

At Harappa, one of the walls around Mound AB was 14 meters wide at the base and the exterior face of the wall was of baked bricks. At Kalibangan, the width of the fort wall of the citadel complex varies from 9 to 11 meters. At Dholavira, the basal width of the fort wall of the castle is 11 meters, whereas at Banawali, the basal width of the fort walls of the citadel ranges from 5.4 to 7 meters. At Surkotada, the width of the fortification wall of the citadel is 7 meters,

whereas the residential annexe is 4.25 meters. At Lothal, despite the fact that it was a relatively small settlement covering an area of only twelve hectares, it was protected against floods by raising a 13-meter-thick wall of mud bricks. However, the northern side of the wall, facing the ancient river bed, was armored with baked bricks.

Moreover, some of the smaller settlements like Bagasra demonstrate more or less the same layout, where square bastions were provided on the curves of the inner face instead of the outer ones. However, most scholars are of the view that the massive fortifications were meant for military confrontation, but the nonexistence of sudden turns in the walls and the absence of moats to lead enemies into an ambush would have been ill-suited for defense. For that reason, it appears that they were rather created to control the flow of goods in and out of the city. Whatever the precise function of the fort walls and gates may have been, they demonstrate the high level of architectural skills of the Harappans.

Town Planning

The most noteworthy feature, unheard of elsewhere during the second half of the third millennium B.C., is the remarkable town planning of the Harappan civilization, with a probable margin on either side. Dholavira, being the exception with a middle town as an extra feature of the settlement, every other small city and town of the Harappan civilization consists of the basic layout of a citadel and a lower town. Recent excavations have proved that Harappan town planning does not represent a uniform pattern. The evidence from Lothal, Surkotada, Dholavira and Banawali has shown different settlement patterns from those of Mohenjo-daro, Harappa and Kalibangan.

With the excavation of Mohenjo-daro, Harappa and Kalibangan, archaeologists earlier had the conception of twin mounds: the higher one located on the west acted as the citadel, and the lower town occupied a relatively less elevated area situated towards the east. In the absence of large-scale excavation at Rakhigarhi covering the entire site, the precise plan of the settlement is yet to be fully understood. Based on excavation evidence, the majority of Harappan cities and towns are composed of a series of walled mounds or sectors oriented in different directions.

Harappa and Mohenjo-daro both have a rectangular mound on the west and extensive mounds to the north, south and east, whereas the settlement of Kalibangan is confined to two separate mounds, with the citadel on the west represented by a smaller mound and the lower city towards the east marked by a fairly extensive mound. The citadel was situated over the remains of the preceding occupation to gain eminence over the lower town. On the other hand, Rakhigarhi, though not fully exposed, shows signs of possessing more than two walled residential sectors.

However, Dholavira stands apart and shows three divisions within the general enclosing wall, consisting of a bipartite citadel (Castle and Bailey), middle town and lower town, which temptingly sound analogous respectively to three different categories of settlements or buildings. An open space between the

citadel and the middle town served as a stadium. Most amazing, however, is the layout of gates and the provision of larger reservoirs in the drought-prone area of Kutch, integrating the use of two local streams into the overall civic planning. Despite variations in detail, all settlements were well integrated to suit the landscape under a unified plan. Unlike the haphazard arrangement of Mesopotamian cities, Harappan settlements followed the same basic planning principles throughout the region.

Mauryan Art

The sixth century BCE marks the beginning of new religious and social movements in the Gangetic valley in the form of Buddhism and Jainism, which were part of the Śramaṇa tradition. 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 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 patronized the Buddhist Śramaṇa tradition in the third century BCE. Religious practices had many dimensions and were not confined to just one particular mode of worship. The worship of Yakshas and mother-goddesses was prevalent during that time, indicating that multiple forms of worship existed. Nevertheless, Buddhism became the most popular social and religious movement. Yaksha worship was very popular both before and after the advent of Buddhism, and it was assimilated into Buddhism and Jainism.

Sculptures and Rock-cut Architecture

Construction of **stupas** and **viharas** as part of monastic establishments became an integral feature of the Buddhist tradition. However, during this period, apart from stupas and viharas, stone pillars, rock-cut caves, and monumental sculptures were also created at several places. The tradition of erecting pillars was very old and can also be observed in the Achaemenid Empire. However, Mauryan pillars differ significantly from Achaemenid pillars. The Mauryan pillars are monolithic (rock-cut) pillars, showcasing the exceptional skill of carvers, whereas Achaemenid pillars were constructed in separate pieces by masons. Stone pillars erected by Ashoka have been found ¹⁵ across the northern part of the Mauryan Empire, bearing inscriptions engraved upon them. The top portion of these pillars was carved with capital figures such as bulls, lions, elephants, etc. These capital figures are vigorous and stand upon square or circular abacuses decorated with stylized lotus motifs. Pillars with capital figures have been discovered at Basarah-Bakhira, Lauriya Nandangarh, and Rampurva in Bihar, as well as Sankisa and Sarnath in Uttar Pradesh.

The Mauryan pillar capital at Sarnath, popularly known as the Lion Capital, is the finest example of Mauryan sculptural tradition and is also India's national emblem. It features four majestic lions standing back to back on a circular abacus carved with figures of a horse, bull, lion, and elephant in dynamic movement. The

execution displays great precision and mastery of sculptural technique. This capital symbolizes *Dhammachakrapravartana*—the first sermon of the Buddha—and has become an enduring symbol of that historic event. Monumental images of Yakshas, Yakshinis, animals, pillar capitals, and rock-cut caves dating to the third century BCE have been found in various parts of India. These demonstrate the popularity of Yaksha worship and its assimilation into Buddhist and Jaina religious monuments. Large statues of Yakshas and Yakshinis have been discovered at places such as Patna, Vidisha, and Mathura.

These monumental images are generally depicted in a standing posture and are distinguished by their highly polished surfaces. The faces are rendered in full round with pronounced cheeks and detailed physiognomic features. One of the finest examples is the Didarganj Yakshi from Patna, which is tall, well-built, and displays remarkable sensitivity in portraying the human form. A monumental rock-cut elephant at Dhauli in Odisha, associated with Ashokan rock edicts, demonstrates modeling in the round with rhythmic linear treatment.

The rock-cut cave at the Barabar Hills near Gaya in Bihar, known as the Lomas Rishi Cave, is another important example of this period. The façade of the cave is decorated with a semicircular chaitya arch forming the entrance, carved with an elephant frieze in high relief showing dynamic movement. The interior consists of a rectangular hall with a circular chamber at the back. This cave was donated by Ashoka to the Ajivika sect. While Lomas Rishi represents the early phase, many Buddhist caves of later periods were excavated in eastern and western India. Due to the growing popularity of Buddhism and Jainism, stupas and viharas were constructed on a large scale. Although primarily Buddhist, some sculptural representations also depict Brahmanical deities. According to tradition, stupas were built over the relics of the Buddha at places such as Rajagraha, Vaishali, Vethadipa, and Pava (in Bihar); Kapilavastu, Allakappa, and Ramagrama (in Nepal); and Kushinagar and Pippalvina (in Uttar Pradesh). Textual traditions also mention stupas at Avanti and Gandhara, beyond the Gangetic valley.

Stupa, vihara, and chaitya formed essential parts of Buddhist and Jaina monastic complexes, though the largest number belonged to Buddhism. An early example of a third-century BCE stupa is found at Bairat in Rajasthan. The Great Stupa at Sanchi Stupa was originally constructed of bricks during Ashoka's reign and later encased in stone with additional structural embellishments. From the second century BCE onward, numerous inscriptions mention donors, sometimes including their professions. The pattern of patronage was largely collective, with relatively few examples of exclusive royal patronage. Patrons included lay devotees, gahapatis (householders), kings, and guilds. Inscriptions occasionally record the names of artisans, such as Kanha at Pitalkhora and his disciple Balaka at Kondane caves in Maharashtra. Categories of artisans mentioned include stone carvers, goldsmiths, stone polishers, and carpenters, reflecting the organized and skilled craftsmanship of the period.

Chaityas

The rise of two prominent sects, **Buddhism** and **Jainism**, in northern India in the sixth century BCE marks a crucial point in the history of ancient India. Both nearly contemporary sects followed anti-Brahmanical, anti-Vedic, anti-ritualistic, anti-caste, and ascetic traditions. They emphasized moral conduct rather than the lengthy and expensive Vedic sacrifices of the time. Both originated and were initially confined to the regions of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh—the Gangetic valley. The founders of these sects, Gautama Buddha and Mahavira, were Kshatriyas belonging to powerful *gana-sangha* clans. The sects received significant patronage from the Vaishya (trading) community.

Buddha promulgated a doctrine that outlined the main features of the Śramaṇa movement. He rejected all authority except personal experience. According to Buddhist doctrine, human life is full of suffering (*dukkha*). This suffering is caused by desire, and therefore desire is the root cause of suffering. The path to overcoming suffering lies in conquering desire and attaining a state free from craving. These ideas are summarized in the **Four Noble Truths**:

The world is full of suffering.

Suffering is caused by human desires.

Renunciation of desire is the path to liberation.

Liberation is attainable through the **Eightfold Path**, which consists of eight guiding principles of conduct and wisdom.

Buddhism was essentially congregational. Monastic orders were established, and people from all sections of society were admitted. Although Buddha was initially reluctant to allow women into the monastic order, an order of nuns was eventually formed. Monks traveled from place to place, preaching and seeking alms, giving Buddhism a strong missionary character.

Important cities such as Sravasti, Kapilavastu, Lumbini, Kusinagara, Pava, Vaishali, and Rajagriha emerged as major centers of Buddhism. In the early phase, monks and lay followers were discouraged from traveling beyond the *Majjhimadesa* (Middle Country) into the *paccantima janapadas*, which were considered frontier regions inhabited by *milakkhas* (non-Aryan or tribal groups). These areas likely included the forested Vindhyan regions. Some scholars suggest monks were discouraged from mixing with tribal groups due to differences in livelihood and customs. After the death of Buddha, Buddhism gradually expanded both numerically and geographically.¹⁵ However, differences in doctrine and practice led to divisions within the order. The **First Buddhist Council** was convened by King Ajatashatru at Rajagriha under the presidency of Mahakassapa to compile the teachings. About a century later, the **Second Buddhist Council** was held at Vaishali to resolve disputes over monastic practices. This council marked the first major schism, eventually leading to the formation of eighteen sub-sects.

Although initially confined to its original region, Buddhism gradually spread further. Communities existed as far south as Ujjain, and invitations were sent to distant places such as Avanti and Patheya. The most significant expansion occurred under the Mauryan emperor Ashoka. After the Kalinga War in the eighth

year of his reign, Ashoka was deeply moved by the loss of life and embraced Buddhism. He propagated the moral teachings of *Dhamma* through inscriptions engraved on pillars and rocks throughout his empire. He appointed *dhammamahamatras* (religious officers) to promote ethical conduct.

Although some scholars argue that Ashoka's *Dhamma* was a general ethical code rather than strictly Buddhist doctrine, similarities between his edicts and Pali Buddhist texts, as well as Buddhist literary traditions, strongly indicate his Buddhist leanings. He visited sacred sites associated with Buddha, including Bodh Gaya (place of enlightenment), Lumbini (birthplace), and Sarnath (site of the first sermon). The presence of his pillars at Lumbini and Sarnath further supports this connection.

Ashoka is credited with constructing numerous stupas and monasteries, though few survive in their original form. The early phases of famous stupas at Bodh Gaya, Sarnath, Sanchi Stupa, and Bharhut likely date back to the Mauryan period. He also convened the **Third Buddhist Council** at Pataliputra under the presidency of Moggaliputta Tissa to purify the Buddhist canon and address sectarian divisions. Following this council, missionaries were dispatched to various regions:

- Yavana lands, Gandhara, Kashmir, and the Himalayan regions (North)
- Aparantaka and Maharattha (West)
- Vanavasi and Mysore (South)
- Ceylon and Suvarnabhumi (Malay Peninsula and Sumatra)

Ashoka sent his son Mahendra and daughter Sanghamitra to Ceylon (Sri Lanka), playing a decisive role in establishing Buddhism there. Thus, Ashoka's patronage was largely responsible for the widespread expansion of Buddhism both within India and beyond its borders.

Viharas

- 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 enunciate 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 viharas were 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.

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.
- Viharas-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 circled 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.

Stupas

The word Stupa is mentioned in early Vedic literature such as the Rigveda, Atharvaveda, Vajasaneyi Samhita, Taittiriya Samhita and the Panchavimsha Brahmana. According to the Monier-Williams Sanskrit-English Dictionary, *stupa* means a “knot or tuft of hair, the upper part of the head, crest, top, summit, a heap or pile of earth or bricks.”

In the *Rigveda*, a stupa is described as being raised by King Varuna above a forest in a place without foundation. The word *estuka* is also used in a similar sense. In early usage, therefore, anything raised on the ground like a heap or mound may have been called a stupa. The Pali equivalent, *thupa*, closely resembles the Sanskrit term and refers to a conical heap, mound, or bell-shaped shrine containing a relic.

The stupa became deeply associated with Buddhist life. Not only were actual monuments erected, but sculptors also frequently represented stupas in reliefs. They appear abundantly on panels of stupa monuments themselves, on railings and balustrades surrounding them, on cave walls, and in structural as well as monolithic forms. Stupas were constructed from a variety of materials including clay, stone, wood, ivory, metal, and terracotta.

Texts such as the Mahavastu, Divyavadana and Kriyasamgraha have helped scholars establish a chronology of the figurative representation of stupas in India from the second century BCE to the fourth century CE. According to the art historian M. S. Sivarammurti, the stupa is regarded as a monument for veneration.

However, the stupa also had votive and commemorative functions. It was associated with ritual practices and sectarian affiliations and was connected with the broader socio-economic life of the community. Buddhist texts such as the Avadana Satakam, Mahavadana and Stupavadana mention its commemorative aspects. Even Jaina literature, such as the Raya Pasenaiya Sutta, refers to it. Over time, as the common people developed a deep desire to worship for the sake of salvation, the stupa acquired a strong votive character. Early stupas were relatively plain and devoid of elaborate artistic embellishment. However, from the time of Ashoka onward, stupa architecture gained prominence in the socio-cultural life of the country, and artistic development flourished around the stupa structure, making it one of the most significant monuments of Buddhism.

Ashoka pillars

Ashokan pillars have been discovered across northern India, extending from Allahabad (modern Prayagraj) in Uttar Pradesh to Topra in Haryana. These pillars were erected during the third century BCE by Ashoka as part of his effort to propagate *Dhamma* through inscriptions engraved on them. A large number of Ashokan pillars were erected during this period. They were generally monolithic (carved from a single block of stone) and display remarkable polish and craftsmanship, often referred to as the “Mauryan polish.”

The pillars were made from two main types of stone:

Some were made of spotted red and white sandstone.

Others were made of buff or plain sandstone.

The variation in color and quality of the pillars depended largely on the geographical location and the availability of raw materials. Much of the sandstone is believed to have been quarried from the Chunar region near Varanasi, which was a major source of fine-grained sandstone during the Mauryan period. Despite regional variations in material, the pillars share common features such as a smooth, tapering shaft, highly polished surface, and finely carved animal capitals (like lions, bulls, elephants, and horses), demonstrating uniformity in design and high standards of craftsmanship across the Mauryan Empire.

About Ashoka pillar

The pillars of Ashoka exhibit a uniform style across northern India, suggesting that highly skilled craftsmen, possibly from a single artistic tradition, were responsible for carving and finishing them. These pillars are monolithic, perfectly round, and highly polished, demonstrating remarkable technical expertise. Although it is often believed that all Ashokan pillars have four lions at the top, this feature is specific to certain examples, most notably the famous pillar at Sarnath. The four lions, seated back to back and facing the four cardinal directions—north, south, east, and west—symbolize the universal sovereignty of Ashoka and the spread of the Buddha's teachings in all directions. The pillars were erected or inscribed with edicts during the third century BCE and were distributed throughout the northern Indian subcontinent. Originally, many pillars were constructed, but only about nineteen survive today, several in fragmentary condition. They generally measure between forty and fifty feet in height and weigh up to fifty tons. Most were quarried from Chunar, near Varanasi, and transported over long distances to their installation sites, reflecting advanced engineering skills of the Mauryan period. The most renowned pillar at Sarnath is believed to mark the site where the Buddha delivered his first sermon. Its inscription emphasizes Ashoka's policy of Dhamma and explicitly warns against causing divisions within the monastic order, stating that no one should create dissension among monks. These pillars thus combine artistic excellence with moral and political messaging, representing one of the greatest achievements of Mauryan art and administration.

Self Assesment Questions

S.N.	Questions (5 Marks)	LOCF Mapping		
1	Write a short note on the seals of the Harappan civilization.	CO1	PO2	K2
2	Describe the materials used for Harappan sculptures	CO2	PO2	K2
3	Mention any two features of Harappan town planning.	CO3	PO3	K2
4	State the importance of Ashokan pillars.	CO5	PO6	K2
5	List the types of Mauryan Stupas.	CO4	PO4	K1
6	Name two important public buildings in Harappan cities.	CO3	PO3	K1
7	Identify the stone and metal sculptures found in Harappan sites.	CO2	PO2	K1

S.N.	Questions (8 Marks)	LOCF Mapping		
1	Explain the significance of Harappan seals in trade and religious practices.	CO1	PO6	K3
2	Discuss the architectural features of Harappan fortifications.	CO3	PO3	K2
3	Describe the planning and layout of a typical Harappan city.	CO3	PO5	K3
4	Explain the structure and importance of Mauryan Chaityas and Viharas.	CO4	PO4	K3
5	Analyze the artistic and political significance of Ashokan pillars.	CO5	PO6	K4
6	Compare Harappan sculptures in stone and metal with Mauryan sculptures.	CO4	PO4	K4
7	Explain the religious and cultural symbolism of Mauryan Stupas.	CO4	PO4	K3
8	Examine the contribution of Pre-Historic and Harappan art to Indian cultural history.	CO3	PO6	K5

UNIT– II

Learning Objectives

1. To understand the features of Hinayana Phase of Buddhist Art.
2. To examine the development of Mahayana Phase of Buddhist Art.
3. To study the characteristics of Gandhara School of Art.
4. To analyse the artistic features of Mathura School of Art.
5. To understand the importance of Amaravathi School of Art.
6. To examine the contributions of Gupta Art and Architecture.
7. To study the artistic significance of Ajanta and Ellora caves.
8. To understand the development of Jaina Art including Jaina beds and Shravanabelagola.

Course Outcomes

1. Explain the basic features of Hinayana Buddhist Art.
2. Describe the development of Mahayana Buddhist Art traditions.
3. Identify the characteristics of Gandhara School of Art.
4. Explain the stylistic features of Mathura School of Art.
5. Describe the artistic importance of Amaravathi School.
6. Summarize the contributions of Gupta Art and Architecture.
7. Explain the significance of Ajanta and Ellora in Indian art history.
8. Describe the features of Jaina Art including Jaina beds and Shravanabelagola.

There was a split in Buddhism in the fourth council during King Kanishka's reign, and two factions emerged: Hinayana and Mahayana Buddhism. Hinayana Buddhism adheres to Buddha's original teachings or the Doctrine of the elders rejects idol worship and seeks individual redemption by self-discipline and meditation. Here we will discuss Hinayana Buddhism

Hinayana Buddhism

Gautama Buddha is regarded by the followers of Hinayana Buddhism as a historical human being who attained Nirvana through his own efforts. The term “Hinayana” literally means the “Lesser Vehicle,” though this label was later applied by Mahayana scholars; the tradition itself is more accurately associated with early Buddhist schools. Around the third century BCE, particularly during the reign of Ashoka, this early form of Buddhism flourished and received royal patronage. Hinayana adherents follow what they consider the original teachings of the Buddha and maintain a conservative doctrinal outlook. They traditionally did not emphasize the worship of Buddha images and instead focused on individual spiritual effort. The primary aim is personal liberation (Nirvana), achieved through self-discipline, ethical conduct, and meditation. An important ethical value in this tradition is rejoicing in the happiness of others without envy or expectation of reward. One of its major surviving sub-sects is Theravada (also known as Sthaviravada), which preserves the teachings in the Pali language to communicate with the wider public. Today, this tradition is widely practiced in countries such as Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos.

In Hinayana, the **ten-far-reaching attitude** is as follows:

Generosity, Self-Discipline, Patience, Perseverance, Being True to one's words, Wisdom, Renunciation, Resolution, Love, Equanimity.

Hinayana Buddhism

Gautama Buddha is regarded in Hinayana Buddhism as a human teacher who attained Nirvana through his own effort. The term “Hinayana,” meaning “Lesser Vehicle,” was later used by Mahayana traditions, but it broadly refers to

the early conservative schools that adhered closely to the Buddha's original teachings. Around 250 BCE, particularly during the reign of Ashoka, this tradition flourished with royal patronage. It emphasized individual salvation through self-discipline, ethical living, and meditation, with Nirvana as the ultimate goal. Early followers generally did not promote idol or image worship and focused instead on personal spiritual practice. A key ethical ideal in this tradition is rejoicing in the happiness of others without envy or expectation of reward. One of its principal sub-sects is Theravada (also known as Sthaviravada), which preserved its teachings in the Pali language to reach the common people. Today, this tradition is widely practiced in Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos.

Andhar School of Art

Since the Macedonian conquest of the north-western regions of the Indian subcontinent by Alexander the Great, the area comprising parts of modern Afghanistan and Pakistan became an important cultural and commercial corridor. It functioned as a meeting ground of diverse political powers and cultural traditions, emerging as a vibrant center of interaction between the Indian subcontinent, Central Asia, and the Mediterranean world.

After the decline of the Mauryan Empire, the region came under the control of several Indo-Greek rulers. Literary and numismatic evidence provides the names of prominent Indo-Greek kings such as Diodotus I, Euthydemus I, Demetrius I, Eucratides I, Menander I, Heliocles I, Antialcidas, Amyntas Nikator, and Hermaeus. These rulers maintained active trade and cultural exchanges, contributing to the fusion of Hellenistic and Indian traditions. Political instability in Central Asia led to successive waves of nomadic tribes entering the Indian subcontinent. The first major group among them was the Sakas (Scythians). The Sakas gradually extended their political authority from the north-west into the interior regions of India, including Mathura and surrounding areas. The earliest known Saka ruler was Maues. Other important Saka rulers of the north-west included Azes I, Azilises, and Azes II.

Toward the end of the pre-Christian era, during the reign of Azes II, the region came under the suzerainty of the Parthians. Notable Parthian rulers included Vonones I and Gondophares.

Following the decline of Parthian power, the Kushanas rose to prominence and established a vast empire in the region, marking the beginning of a new political and cultural phase in north-western India.

Ancient Geo- political Units

The geo-political units that were the mainstay of the Saka-Parthian rule in the northwest are generally clubbed under the name Gandhara. However, this is a wrong nomenclature, for the term Gandhara can be applied to a small geographical area corresponding to modern Taxila in Pakistan only. The more proper terminology will be the Bactro-Gandhara region corresponding to the regions of Bactria (modern Balkh in Afghanistan) with its capital of the same name, Kapisa (modern Begram in Afghanistan) with the similarly named capital, and Gandhara. Another important region within this gamut was the Swat valley

(Pakistan), analogous with the ancient kingdom of Uddiyana. This small geopolitical region, having been the playing field of numerous West Asian, Central Asian, and South Asian population groups, left its indelible mark in the form of the art tradition of the region, which cumulatively gave rise to the famed Gandhara Art. Gandhara Art as we know it today is an amalgamation of a number of diverse traits drawn from Hellenistic, Indian, West Asiatic (Iranian), and Central Asian tribal elements. For ideological inspiration, it drew from Buddhism, Brahmanical traditions, and Greek/Roman pantheons.

Excavations at the site of Begram, the ancient capital city of Kapisa, yielded a hoard of art objects having diverse affiliations—Hellenistic, Chinese, West Asian, Roman, Alexandrian, and Indian. The hoard, predominantly consisting of secular luxury goods, was found in a room of a ruined building. It comprised plaster casts of metal works datable to the late Hellenistic period, Syrian glass, Roman and Alexandrian sculptures, lacquer ware from China, and ivory objects of Indian origin. The building from which the hoard was recovered was destroyed during a raid of Shahpur I, a Sassanid ruler. The date of this event is placed around 241 AD, thus providing a termination date for the objects of the hoard. The extant broken pieces of ivories were originally part of a larger narrative panel, apparently of Buddhist association. The surviving pieces show architectural features such as the torana, similar to the one known from the Great Stupa at Sanchi. Two lavishly ornamented women are depicted standing side by side within the torana pillars. Another broken ivory piece depicts a lady dressed in Indian drapery standing on a crocodile, possibly representing the river goddess Ganga standing on her vahana, the makara. Another notable antiquity from the Kapisa region is the gold reliquary found at Bimaran, Afghanistan, discovered by Charles Masson. This reliquary was found in association with four copper coins of Azes II in mint condition and an inscribed steatite casket within which the reliquary was placed. The ruby-studded reliquary depicts two sets of three standing figures. The central figure is the Buddha, flanked by the bearded Brahma in the outfit of an ascetic and Indra in princely garb. The Buddha is draped in a monastic robe covering both shoulders, and his right hand displays the abhaya mudra. Apart from these six figures in two groups, the reliquary also depicts two other individual figures—a man appearing to walk forward and displaying the anjali mudra. All the figures are shown within pillared arched niches.

Architecture in the Bactro - Gandhara Region

Buddhism entered the north-west region of the subcontinent under the missionary zeal of the Mauryan emperor Ashoka. By the time of the ascendancy of the Kushan Empire, the region had become a fertile ground for the proliferation of Buddhist art and architecture. Although the surviving evidence mainly highlights the sculptural tradition in the service of Buddhism, little remains to explain the architectural features of the period. Among the still-standing remains is the ruined stupa and vihara at Guldara Stupa, datable to the second century CE. The structure consists of a high square base surmounted by a stupa, with an eastern stairway indicating the entrance. The base walls are decorated with niches

framed by pilasters and arches, and sockets in the niches suggest that wooden brackets once supported stucco sculptures, though none survive today. The upper portion of the stupa continues similar decorative motifs. The structure represents a harmonious blend of Indian and Hellenistic elements, while its masonry technique reflects the Parthian diaper-masonry style, characterized by horizontal stone slabs with slightly projecting decorative features. The outer facing uses symmetrically sized stone blocks, whereas the interior core contains irregular stones for structural strength. Another important Kushana-period monastic site is Takht-i-Bahi in Pakistan, where excavations have revealed a massive complex of open courtyards, cells, stupas, and dwelling units. The site contains three principal courtyards, including a vihara court and a stupa court connected by steps, with sculptural niches lining the surrounding walls. Today, only the basal remains of the central stupa survive.

According to the Anguttara Nikaya, during the sixth century BCE Aryavarta was divided into sixteen great states known as the Solasamahajanapadas. Among them, Mathura was the capital of the Surasena mahajanapada. Located on the banks of the Yamuna, Mathura (or Madhura) was referred to by ancient Greek writers as Methora, and its people as Sourasenoi. Avantiputra, a king of Surasena, is said to have been among the chief disciples of the Gautama Buddha, and through him Buddhism spread to the region, later influencing the development of the Mathura School of Art. The grammarian Panini, in his *Ashtadhyayi*, refers to the Andhakas and Vrishnis of Mathura. The *Arthashastra* of Kautilya mentions that the Vrishnis were organized as a sangha or republican polity. Megasthenes, ambassador to the court of Chandragupta Maurya at Pataliputra, recorded that Mathura was a center of Krishna worship. The Surasena territory formed part of the Mauryan Empire and played a vital role in shaping diverse religious ideologies that later influenced the development of Mathura Art. The discovery of life-size Yaksha and Yakshi images indicates the strong presence of folk deities, while the Naga cult was also prevalent. From the second century BCE onward, Mathura became an important center of the Bhagavata religion centered on Vasudeva Krishna and the Vrishni heroes such as Samkarshana (Balarama), Pradyumna, Samba, and Aniruddha. The region was also a significant center of Jaina religion, as evidenced by the ruins of a Jaina stupa at Kankali Tila and other sacred objects. In early phases, Buddha was worshipped symbolically in forms such as the Bodhi Tree and the Chakra, before the emergence of anthropomorphic representations.

Development of Mathura School of Art

The earliest art objects recovered from Mathura are datable to the second century BCE. Although these specimens do not strictly belong to the atelier of the later Mathura School, they throw considerable light on the antecedent artistic traditions of the region. These early works reflect the stylistic influence of the Bharhut Stupa, suggesting that the craftsmen of Mathura were familiar with artistic conventions prevalent in distant parts of the subcontinent. Understanding this formative phase is essential for interpreting the mature stylistic idioms of the Mathura School that developed and flourished under the Kushan Empire. The

growth and widespread popularity of the Mathura style are evident from the discovery of its sculptures in far-flung regions such as Central Asia and Taxila, as well as in Sanghol, Sanchi, Sarnath, and Sravasti. Further evidence of its influence is found in the establishment of workshops at Kausambi, Ahichchhatra, Mahasthangarh, and Sarnath, all of which drew inspiration from this premier artistic tradition, thereby attesting to the wide reach and enduring impact of the Mathura School of Art.

Mathura School of Art during the Gupta period

The Mathura School continued to flourish during the Gupta Empire and absorbed the refined classical elegance that came to characterize Gupta art. During this period, Mathura produced colossal images of the standing Buddha, one of which is preserved in the Government Museum Mathura, while another is housed in the Rashtrapati Bhavan. These statues are distinguished by their large, elaborately carved halos, a feature closely associated with the Gupta artistic tradition of Sarnath. The sanghati covering both shoulders of the Buddha appears diaphanous, with delicate schematic lines indicating the folds of the drapery; this treatment shows reminiscence of the drapery style of the Gandhara School of Art. Compared to the robust physiques of the Kushana period, the body becomes more slender, though the face retains a certain fullness. The head and usnisa are adorned with tight curls, while the facial features include bow-shaped eyebrows, half-closed meditative eyes, thick lips, and elongated earlobes. The sanghati itself is rendered in two parts—the upper shawl and the lower dhoti—with the left hand hanging gracefully downward, holding the edge of the robe, thereby conveying serenity, balance, and spiritual calm characteristic of Gupta classicism.

Sarnath School of Art

The Sarnath School was a flourishing art centre that marked the high watershed of Indian artistic achievement during the Gupta Empire, often regarded as the Classical Age of Indian art and architecture. This period witnessed the culmination and refinement of earlier artistic traditions that had evolved across various centres over time, synthesizing them into a harmonious and elevated style. Significant innovations were introduced in multiple spheres of art and architecture: structurally, it paved the way for the construction of free-standing stone temples, while in the domain of rock-cut architecture there was a notable proliferation of sculptural embellishment as a principal decorative medium. In stone sculpture, divinity was imbued with profound spirituality, and the figures reflected a perfect equilibrium between idealized physical beauty and sublime spiritual expression. The Sarnath images of the Buddha, in particular, exemplify serenity, grace, and refined modelling. In terracotta art, the Gupta period introduced remarkable innovations, including hollow life-size figures and large narrative panels, demonstrating both technical advancement and aesthetic maturity in artistic production.

Gupta Style – Sarnath

The Gupta style, as noted earlier, was a pan-Indian phenomenon and was not confined to any single artistic centre. The art centre at Sarnath was one of the

foremost sites where the Gupta artistic tradition was employed in the service of Buddhism during the Gupta Empire. The sculptures discovered at Sarnath were carved from fine buff-coloured sandstone obtained from Chunar, which contributed to their smooth finish and refined appearance. The zenith of the Sarnath School is generally placed in the early second half of the fifth century CE. The Buddha images of this school are distinguished by their elongated, slender, and graceful bodies, embodying an idealized spiritual elegance. A striking characteristic of these images is the treatment of the diaphanous drapery, which clings so closely to the body that the underlying physiognomy is subtly yet clearly revealed, thereby enhancing both the naturalism and the spiritual serenity of the figure.

The Site

Modern-day Sarnath, known in ancient times as Migadaya, Rishipattana, Isipatana, and Sarangnath, is situated about 13 km north-east of Varanasi. The site gained immense religious significance during the lifetime of the Buddha. After attaining enlightenment at Bodh Gaya, the Buddha proceeded to the Deer Park at Isipatana, where he delivered his first sermon to the five ascetics who had earlier accompanied him in his quest for truth. This sermon, known in Buddhist theology as the Dharmachakrapravartana Sutra (the “Setting in Motion of the Wheel of Law”), expounded the core doctrines of the Four Noble Truths and the Eight-fold Path. A Deer Park still exists at Sarnath today, commemorating this sacred event.

The delivery of the first sermon also marked the foundation of the Buddhist Sangha, as the five ascetics became the earliest members of the monastic order. This moment immortalized Sarnath as one of the foremost pilgrimage centres in the Buddhist world. From modest beginnings, the site expanded significantly, and by the time of the Ashoka of the Maurya Empire, it had developed into a major monastic establishment. Ashoka constructed the Dharmarajika Stupa and erected a Mauryan pillar crowned with four adorsed lions; the lion capital, now preserved in the Sarnath Archaeological Museum, was later adopted as the national emblem of the Republic of India. Another monument, the Dhamek Stupa, at least in its core structure, is also attributed to the Ashokan period. When the Chinese pilgrim Faxian visited Sarnath in the fifth century CE, he recorded the presence of two stupas and two sangharamas, testifying to the continued prosperity and sanctity of the site.

Amravati School of Art

The Buddhist establishment at Amaravati was situated near Dharanikota (ancient Dhanyakataka), the capital of the later Satavahana dynasty. According to inscriptional evidence, the rule of the later Satavahanas began in the first quarter of the second century CE, marking the most flourishing phase of the Amaravati School of Art. The central monument of the monastic complex was the Great Stupa, referred to in inscriptions as the Mahachaitya. Like many stupas north of the Vindhya Range, its original foundation is believed to date back to the time of Ashoka of the Maurya Empire, an assumption strengthened by the discovery of a polished pillar fragment bearing an inscription in Mauryan Brahmi script. The

Amaravati stupa was the largest among contemporary Buddhist establishments in the region and was originally enclosed by a stone railing devoid of surface decoration, comparable to the Sanchi Stupa 1. Over time, successive phases of construction enhanced its architectural and artistic grandeur.

South of the Narmada River, numerous sites in the Andhra region reveal the spread of Buddhism, with monastic complexes centred around stupas as primary objects of veneration during the early period. Early sculptural panels executed in low relief display affinities with the styles prevalent in central India during the Sunga period. However, many of these centres flourished for centuries, gradually evolving a distinctive regional idiom. This mature and dynamic artistic tradition, dedicated to the service of Buddhism and exemplified by the pre-eminent establishment at Amaravati, came to be known among art historians as the Amaravati School of Art.

Gupta Arts

Are you willing to understand Gupta Arts? Then this article is for you. Learn about more such concepts like arts of the Gupta Empire, historical background of Gupta arts, notable examples of Gupta arts, paintings of the Gupta Kingdom, etc.

Gupta Arts belong to the Gupta Empire. The Gupta Empire ruled most of Northern India. The phase of the Gupta Empire was between 300 and 480 CE. Generally, the Gupta period is considered the golden age of India. The Gupta period witnessed the arrival of the iconic Hindu carved deity of stone.

Historical background of Gupta arts

- The establishment of the Gupta Empire took place in the 4th century A.D. During the Gupta Empire, art, science, culture, and literature touched greater heights
- India witnessed the classical stage of sculpture in the Gupta Empire. Multiple efforts were exerted to establish different art techniques
- Some examples of the famous Gupta arts include Standing Buddha located in Sarnath
- Standing Buddha in Sarnath is also one of the most notable examples of Gupta Art in Sarnath
- The right hand of Buddha is shown in such a way that it ensures protection
- There are a few thin lines on the body. The setlines portray the edges of the outfit

Head of the Shiva

- The head of the Shiva constructed with Terracotta is one of the most popular terracotta sculptures of the Gupta Empire.
- The sculpture displays matted locks that are tied within a graceful top knot. Along with the head of the Shiva, the head of Parvati is also eminent
- Ganga and Yamuna
- The Ganga and Yamuna are two religious rivers of India
- Gupta Empire introduced the terracotta sculptures of Ganga and Yamuna
- These sculptures are installed on the main steps that head towards the Shiva

temple situated in Ahichhatra

Ajanta and Ellora

The Ajanta Caves and Ellora Caves are located near Aurangabad in Maharashtra and represent some of the finest surviving examples of ancient Indian rock-cut architecture. These cave complexes comprise Buddhist monasteries (viharas), prayer halls (chaityas), as well as Hindu and Jain temples, adorned with exquisite sculptures, paintings, and murals. Ajanta is especially renowned for its classical Buddhist frescoes depicting Jataka tales and the life of the Buddha, while Ellora is notable for its multi-religious monuments, including the magnificent Kailasa temple. Recognized as UNESCO World Heritage Sites, Ajanta and Ellora attract visitors, scholars, and pilgrims from across the globe and stand as enduring symbols of India's rich artistic, architectural, and religious heritage.

Ellora Caves

Another famous cave architecture site is Ellora Caves.

Location - It is almost 100 kilometers from the Ajanta caves in Maharashtra's Sahyadri hills. It consists of 34 caverns, 17 of which are Brahmanical, 12 Buddhist, and 5 Jain.

Time of development - These caves were built by numerous guilds from Vidarbha, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu between the **5th and 11th centuries A.D.** (they are newer than the Ajanta Caves).

It is a **UNESCO World Heritage Site** with cave temples dedicated to Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism.

Features of Ellora Caves

In terms of topic and architectural styles, the caverns present natural diversity.

The **17 Hindu caves** (caves 13, 29, 14, and 15 are famous and are known as **Ravan Ki Khai** and **Dashavatar caves**, respectively), **12 Buddhist caves** (caves 1-12), and **5 Jain caves** (caves 30-34, Jain caves include Indra Sabha and Jagannath Sabha) built in close proximity demonstrate the religious harmony prevalent during this period of Indian history.

Ellora has a number of well-known caverns, including:

Ellora Caves is one of the finest examples of ancient Indian rock-cut architecture. The Vishwakarma Cave, also known as the Carpenter's Cave (Cave No. 10), is a Buddhist Chaitya cave. In this cave, Buddha is seated in Vyakhyana Mudra, with a Bodhi tree etched behind him.

Ravan ki Khai is the theme of Cave No. 14. The Dashavatar Temple is located in Cave No. 15. The Kailash Temple, dedicated to Lord Shiva, is located in Cave No. 16. It was carved out of a monolith and even contains a courtyard; it was built under the patronage of the Rashtrakuta monarch Krishna I.

A sculpture representing Ravana shaking Mount Kailash may also be found on the wall of Cave No. 16 in the Kailash Temple. It is regarded as one of India's greatest sculptures.

Ajanta Caves

Ajanta is a group of rock-cut caves located near Aurangabad, Maharashtra, amidst the Sahyadri ranges on the Waghora River. There are 29 caves in total, of which 25 were used as Viharas (residential monasteries) and 4 were used as Chaityas (prayer halls). The caves were constructed between 200 B.C. and 650 A.D

Features of Ajanta Caves

The Buddhist monks excavated the Ajanta Caves under the patronage of the Vakataka rulers, one of whom was Harishena. The figures in these caves were painted in fresco style and exhibit a high level of naturalism. The colors were prepared from local plants and minerals. The outlines of the paintings were first drawn in red, and then the interiors were filled with colors. The absence of blue in the paintings is one of their most remarkable features.

The paintings mainly depict themes related to Buddhism, including the life of the Buddha and various Jataka stories. Five of the caves were excavated during the Hinayana period of Buddhism, while the remaining twenty-four belong to the Mahayana period.

The Ajanta Caves are also mentioned in the travel accounts of the Chinese Buddhist pilgrims Fa Hien and Xuanzang (Hiuen Tsang). Among the most famous sculptures are the Mahaparinirvana of Buddha in Cave No. 26 and the sculpture of the Naga King and his consort in Cave No. 19.

Jain Architecture

Jains, like Hindus, were prolific temple builders, and their sacred shrines and pilgrimage sites are found across India, including in hilly regions. Bihar is home to some of the oldest Jain pilgrimage centres. Ellora Caves and Aihole in the Deccan have some of the most architecturally significant Jain sites. Deogarh, Khajuraho, Chanderi, and Gwalior are among the best examples of Jain temples in central India. Karnataka has a long history of Jain sanctuaries, including the famed Gomateshwara statue at Shravanabelagola. The granite statue of Lord Bahubali, also known as Gomateshwara, measures about eighteen metres (57 feet) in height and is regarded as one of the world's tallest monolithic free-standing statues. Vimal Shah was the patron associated with the construction of the famous Jain temples on Mount Abu. The temple is renowned for its intricate ceiling patterns and delicate bracket motifs that adorn the domed ceilings.

Shravanabelagola

29

Shravanabelagola is an important Jain pilgrimage centre in South Karnataka. It is home to the 18-metre-high statue of Lord Gomateshwara (Bahubali), considered one of the world's tallest free-standing monolithic statues. Constructed in 981 A.D. by Chamundaraya, a Ganga warrior and minister, the statue was carved out of a single block of granite and stands majestically atop Vindhyagiri Hill. The statue is visible from nearly 30 kilometres away. About 700 steps, hewn into the rock face, must be climbed to obtain a close view of this colossal masterpiece. It is remarkable to witness such grace and poise expressed in a sculpture of such monumental scale. The statue beautifully reflects the idea of immense strength free from rage and anger. This massive monolithic image of

Lord Gomateshwara leaves visitors in awe, and the surrounding enclosures contain images of all the Jain Tirthankaras.

Mahamasthaka

Perhaps the most thrilling act of worship at Shravanabelagola can be witnessed during the renowned Mahamasthakabhisheka ceremony. Once every twelve years, Jain pilgrims gather here to participate in the colourful Mahamasthakabhisheka of Lord Gomateshwara, the grand head-anointing ritual. From specially erected scaffolding, priests and devotees pour hundreds of pots of curd, milk, honey, vermilion, coconut water, turmeric paste, and even offerings of gold and precious jewels over the statue's head. The entire structure becomes awash in vibrant colours, creating a magnificent and unforgettable sight.

Self Assesment Questions

S.N.	Questions (5 Marks)	LOCF Mapping		
1	Write a short note on the Hinayana phase of Buddhist art.	CO1	PO1	K2
2	Describe the Mahayana phase of Buddhist art.	CO2	PO2	K2
3	Mention the key features of the Gandhara school of art.	CO2	PO1	K1
4	State the features of the Mathura school of art.	CO2	PO2	K1
5	List the main characteristics of the Amaravathi school of art.	CO3	PO1	K1
6	Mention two achievements of Gupta art and architecture.	CO4	PO4	K2
7	Name two famous caves at Ajanta or Ellora and their art forms.	CO5	PO6	K1

S.N.	Questions (8 Marks)	LOCF Mapping		
1	Explain the Hinayana and Mahayana phases of Buddhist art.	CO1	PO1	K3
2	Discuss the Gandhara school of art and its Greco-Roman influences.	CO2	PO1	K4
3	Describe the Mathura school of art and its religious significance.	CO2	PO1	K3
4	Explain the Amaravathi school of art and its sculptures.	CO3	PO4	K3
5	Describe the major features of Gupta art and architecture.	CO4	PO4	K3
6	Analyze the murals and sculptures of Ajanta and Ellora caves.	CO5	PO6	K4
7	Compare Gandhara and Mathura schools of art.	CO2	PO4	K4
8	Explain the religious and cultural symbolism in Jaina beds.	CO6	PO4	K3
9	Discuss the significance of Shravanabelagola in Jaina art and religion.	CO6	PO5	K4
10	Examine the contribution of Buddhist and Jaina art to Indian cultural history.	CO3	PO6	K5

UNIT– III

Learning Objectives

1. To understand the main features of Pallava Art.
2. To study the characteristics of Pallava Rock Cut Cave Temples and Monolithic Temples.
3. To examine the development of Structural Temples at Mahabalipuram.
4. To understand the features of Nagara Style of Architecture.
5. To study the architectural importance of Lingaraja Temple and Sun Temple at Konarak.
6. To examine the characteristics of Dravida Style of Architecture.
7. To study the significance of Brihadeeswara Temple, Gangaikondacholapuram and Airavatesvara Temple.
8. To understand the features of Vesara Style of Architecture through Belur and Halebid temples.

Course Outcomes

1. Explain the important features of Pallava Art.
2. Describe the structure of Pallava Rock Cut and Monolithic temples.
3. Identify the architectural significance of Mahabalipuram temples.
4. Explain the main characteristics of the Nagara style of temple architecture.
5. Describe the importance of Lingaraja Temple and Sun Temple of Konarak.
6. Explain the features of Dravida style temples in South India.
7. Describe the architectural significance of Brihadeeswara, Gangaikondacholapuram and Airavatesvara temples.
8. Identify the features of Vesara style architecture in Belur and Halebid temples.

Pallava

The Pallava dynasty ruled a significant part of southern India from about 275 CE to 897 CE. After the decline of the Satavahana dynasty, under whom they had served as feudatories, the Pallavas rose to prominence. Their power reached its height during the reigns of Mahendravarman I (571–630 CE) and Narasimhavarman I (630–668 CE). They ruled the Telugu regions and the northern parts of the Tamil country for nearly six centuries, until the end of the ninth century.

The Pallavas laid the foundation for South Indian medieval architecture and left behind magnificent temples and sculptures. They developed two important architectural styles—rock-cut and structural temples—which later became the basis of Dravidian temple architecture. They also promoted art and learning extensively. The best example of Pallava architectural patronage is the Shore Temple at Mahabalipuram, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. In addition to structural temples, the Pallavas built cave temples and monolithic rathas, along with stone carvings depicting legendary themes at Mahabalipuram. Some of the finest specimens of Pallava art and architecture include the Kailasanathar Temple, the Shore Temple, and the Pancha Rathas. The best sculptor of this period was Akshara.

Pallava Art and Architecture: Background

The religious resurgence of the Pallava period stimulated a deep interest in temple architecture and art. The Pallava dynasty made remarkable contributions to Indian architecture and laid the foundation for the Dravidian architectural style of South India. During their rule, temple architecture evolved progressively from rock-cut cave temples to monolithic rathas and finally to fully developed structural temples.

The Pancha Rathas, also known as the Five Rathas at Mamallapuram, are excellent examples of rock-cut monolithic temples, each displaying a distinct architectural style. Among the finest structural temples of the Pallavas are the Kailasanathar Temple at Kanchipuram and the Shore Temple at Mamallapuram. The Kailasanatha Temple is regarded as the greatest architectural achievement of Pallava art.

The Pallavas also greatly contributed to the development of sculpture. The walls of the mandapas are adorned with exquisite carvings. A masterpiece of classical art is the famous bas-relief at Mamallapuram depicting the “Descent of the Ganges” or the “Penance of Arjuna.” Under Pallava patronage, the arts of music, dance, and painting flourished. The paintings of the Sittanavasal Cave also trace their origin to this broader artistic tradition of the period.

Pallava Architecture

Pallava architecture can be sub-divided into two phases:

The Rock Cut Phase

The Mahendra group and the Mamalla group were the two groups of monuments that made up the rock cut phase, which lasted from 610 to 668 AD.

During the reign of Mahendravarman I (610–630 AD), a distinctive group of monuments known as the Mahendra Group was developed under the Pallava dynasty. These structures were mainly rock-cut cave temples, consisting of pillared halls (mandapas) carved into mountain faces. The mandapas were influenced in style by contemporary Jain temples. Notable examples of the Mahendra Group include the cave temples at Mamandur, Pallavaram, and Mandagapattu.

The second phase of Pallava rock-cut architecture, known as the Mamalla Group (630–668 AD), flourished during the reign of Narasimhavarman I, who was also called Mamalla. In addition to pillared halls, this period witnessed the creation of free-standing monolithic shrines known as rathas. Outstanding examples of this style include the Pancha Rathas and the great bas-relief “Arjuna’s Penance” at Mahabalipuram.

The Structural Phase

During the structural phase of Pallava architecture, free-standing stone shrines were constructed using dressed stone blocks and mortar. This phase is broadly classified into the Rajasimha Group (690–800 AD) and the Nandivarman Group (800–900 AD) under the Pallava dynasty. The Pallavas undertook extensive architectural experiments in their early structural temples, particularly during the Rajasimha phase. The finest examples of this period are the Shore Temple at Mahabalipuram and the Kailasanathar Temple at Kanchipuram, both built by Narasimhavarman II, also known as Rajasimha. These temples represent the maturity of early Dravidian structural architecture.

The Vaikunta Perumal Temple at Kanchipuram is the best example of the Nandivarman group of monuments. The later Chola temples, especially the Brihadeeswarar Temple at Thanjavur and the temple at Gangaikonda Cholapuram, were inspired by and built upon the architectural foundations laid by the Pallavas,

whose style had reached its peak during this period.

Rock Cut Architecture Under Pallava Dynasty

The Pallava dynasty marked the apex of early rock-cut architecture in South India. Massive rocks were carved into different sizes and forms to create temples. In these cave temples, the front portion was shaped into a pillared mandapa, while the rear portion was excavated to form the sanctum (garbhagriha) for the deity.

Mahendravarman I was a great patron of art and architecture and constructed many elegant cave temples. He was also a scholar and authored a Sanskrit drama titled *Mattavilasa Prahasana*. During his period, the earliest rock-cut temples were excavated entirely out of living rock without the use of bricks, mortar, metal, or other building materials.

After the reign of Mahendravarman I, temple architecture gradually evolved from rock-cut caves to structural stone temples. Another notable feature introduced during this period was the carving of Dwarapalakas (royal gatekeepers) at the entrances of temples, a tradition that later became a regular feature in most South Indian temples.

Pallava Art

The Pallava dynasty were great patrons of art and culture. Their deep interest in music is evident from the musical inscriptions found at Kudumiyanmalai Temple and Thirumayam Fort. Musical instruments commonly used during the Pallava period included the Yaazhi (Yazh), Mridangam, and Murasu. Both Mahendravarman I and Narasimhavarman I were known for their musical accomplishments.

Temple sculptures of the Pallava age reflect the popularity of dance during that time. Mahendravarman I, who was also called “Chittirakkarapuli” (the tiger among painters), contributed significantly to painting. The paintings at Sittanavasal Cave are fine examples of the artistic style associated with the period. He authored works such as *Thatchina Chitram* and the satirical Sanskrit play *Mattavilasa Prahasana*. Thus, drama, music, dance, and painting flourished under Pallava patronage, and the dynasty made a lasting contribution to the cultural development of South India.

Mahapalipuram Shoretemple

Narasimhavarman II, commonly known as Rajasimha, constructed the magnificent Shore Temple complex at Mahabalipuram. This structural (masonry) temple represents the mature phase of Pallava architecture. In the courtyard of the temple, a continuous row of Nandi sculptures can be seen. The temple faces east, overlooking the Bay of Bengal, and from its premises the ocean is clearly visible, enhancing its grandeur and scenic beauty.

This complex contains three temples, and these are

At Mahabalipuram, the Shore Temple complex consists of three important shrines. One of them is the Vishnu temple, known as the Narapathi Simha Pallava Vishnu shrine, which houses the image of Seshasayi Vishnu (Vishnu reclining on Adishesha). While the image of Vishnu and the base of the shrine are carved out of the living bedrock, much of the Shore Temple is constructed using masonry made

from quarried stone blocks. Therefore, the Shore Temple is considered to be partly rock-cut and partly structural in nature.

The Kshatriyasimha Pallavesvara Temple, also part of the Shore Temple complex, is dedicated to Lord Siva. It faces east toward the sea and features a slender, elongated vimana. Inside, it enshrines a fluted granite Siva linga known as the “Dhara Lingam.” The Rajasimha Pallavesvara Temple, another shrine in the complex, faces west. It is also dedicated to Lord Siva and is distinguished by its comparatively lower spire (vimana).

Pancha Rathas

The Pancha Rathas at Mahabalipuram are monolithic, free-standing structures carved out of single blocks of solid rock. They are commonly referred to as “Rathas,” meaning chariots or temple cars, although they do not have wheels and were never meant to function as actual chariots. These monuments were built during the reign of Narasimhavarman I in the 7th century AD and are considered the earliest examples of their kind in India. They are named after the Pandava brothers and their common wife from the Mahabharata—Yudhishtira, Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula, Sahadeva, and Draupadi—hence the name “Pancha Pandava Rathas.” However, these names are traditional and symbolic; the rathas were not actually associated with the Pandavas.

Originally, the rathas were intended to house images of deities, but regular worship was never conducted there. From south to north, the size of the temples gradually decreases. Within the complex, finely carved sculptures of Airavata (the elephant) and Nandi (the bull vehicle of Lord Shiva) enhance the beauty of the site. An interesting architectural feature is that the crown or stupi (pot-finial), which is usually placed at the top of the temple tower (vimana), is found placed separately on the ground in these rathas. It is believed that the complex was intended to become a full-fledged temple site; however, construction was left incomplete due to the death of King Narasimhavarman I. As a result, despite their temple-like appearance, the Pancha Rathas are not considered fully functional temples.

Nagara Style

The Nagara style of temple architecture, which became popular in northern India, is known as the Nagara style. In North India, it is common for the entire temple to be constructed on a raised stone platform with steps leading up to it. Another distinctive feature of this style is the general absence of elaborate boundary walls and monumental gateways.

In Nagara temples, the garbhagriha (sanctum) is located directly beneath the tallest tower, known as the shikhara. There are several subdivisions within the Nagara style, mainly based on the shape and design of the shikhara. A prominent feature of this architectural form is the presence of the amalaka (a ribbed circular stone disc) and the kalasha (finial pot) installed at the top of the shikhara.

The Kandariya Mahadeva Temple in Madhya Pradesh is a classic example of the Nagara style of temple architecture. Other notable examples include the Konark Sun Temple, the Sun Temple Modhera, and the temple complex at Osian.

Temple Style Architecture of India– Nagara

The Nagara style is associated with the region between the Himalayas and the Vindhyas and is therefore classified as the North Indian style of temple architecture. It developed geographically in the northern parts of India and represents a distinct architectural tradition. In the Nagara style, both planning and elevation are significant aspects. The temple complex is generally open and not enclosed by massive boundary walls. A typical Nagara temple consists of four main chambers: the Garbhagriha (sanctum), Jagamohana (assembly hall), Natyamandira (dance hall), and Bhogamandira (offering hall), though not all temples contain all four components.

The basic structure usually includes two principal parts: the main shrine, which is taller, and a shorter mandapa attached to it. The Garbhagriha is crowned by a curvilinear shikhara, which is the most distinctive feature of the Nagara style. The shikhara rises in a convex curve and gives the main shrine a lofty and imposing appearance. At the top of the temple stands the amalaka, a ribbed circular stone disc, and above it is the kalasha, the highest finial of the shikhara and the entire temple.

Between the Garbhagriha and the mandapa lies a vestibule known as the antarala. The mandapa itself may be of different types, such as the ardhmandapa (entrance porch), mandapa (assembly hall), and mahamandapa (great hall). The walls and pillars of Nagara temples are richly adorned with sculpted images of river goddesses, mithuna (celestial couples), and various deities. In the earliest phase, however, pillars were not prominently used.

Another important feature of Nagara architecture is the system of projections on the exterior walls, known as rathas. Based on the number of projections, temples are classified as Triratha (one projection on each side), Pancharatha (two projections), Saptaratha (three projections), and Navaratha (four projections). These projections add complexity and rhythm to the temple's external design. Classification of Nagara Temple Style Architecture of India based on the Shikhara Rekha-Prasad or Latina

The Latina (or Rekha-Prasada) type is the most basic and common variety of shikhara in the Nagara style of temple architecture. In this form, the base is square in plan, and the walls gradually curve inward as they rise, culminating in a pointed top. The garbhagriha (sanctum) is most commonly associated with the Latina type of shikhara. Over time, the simple Latina structure evolved into a more complex form. Instead of appearing as a single tower, the temple began to feature clusters of smaller subsidiary towers grouped around the central and tallest shikhara, resembling a range of rising mountains. The largest tower is always positioned directly above the garbhagriha. The Jagannath Temple in Odisha is constructed in the Rekha-Prasada (Latina) shikhara style. Another example is the Sun Temple Markhera in Madhya Pradesh, which also reflects this architectural tradition.

Valabhi

Temples of this style are rectangular in plan and are distinguished by their

barrel-vaulted roofs. Such structures are often described as wagon-vaulted buildings because their vaulted ceilings resemble the shape of a wagon's curved top. A well-known example of this architectural type is the Teli Ka Mandir, a 9th-century temple at Gwalior, which was constructed in this manner.

Phamsana

In this style, the roofs are composed of multiple horizontal slabs that gradually ascend in a straight incline, forming a pyramid-like structure that converges at a single point above the centre of the building. These structures are generally shorter and broader in proportion when compared to the curvilinear shikhara types. The Phamsana method of construction is used for the Jagamohana (assembly hall) of the Konark Sun Temple, where the pyramidal roof form is clearly visible.

Sun temple

As the waters of the Bay of Bengal shimmer in the sunlight, the Konark Sun Temple rises majestically as a colossal representation of Surya's celestial chariot. The temple is designed in the form of a grand stone chariot, complete with 24 elaborately carved wheels and a team of six powerful horses drawing it forward. Built in the 13th century, it was one of the most renowned Brahmanical temples of India and stands as a masterpiece of temple architecture. The surviving structures within the complex, their spatial arrangement, and the close integration of sculpture with architecture help preserve the temple's original design concept. The sculptural details are not merely decorative but form an essential part of the architectural scheme. Despite the passage of time, many of the temple's original features, design elements, and materials continue to reflect the grandeur and artistic excellence envisioned in its initial construction.

Konark Sun Temple

The Konark Sun Temple, also known as the Konark Surya Temple, is situated in the village of Konark, about 35 km from Puri in Odisha. It was constructed in the 13th century and is attributed to King Narasimhadeva I of the Eastern Ganga dynasty around 1250 CE. The temple is dedicated to Surya, the Sun God.

The Konark Sun Temple is designed as a monumental stone chariot of Surya, featuring twelve pairs (24) of intricately carved wheels and a team of horses pulling it. The entire structure, including the massive wheels and horses, is carved from stone and reflects extraordinary craftsmanship. The name "Konark" is derived from two Sanskrit words: *Kona*, meaning "angle," and *Arka*, meaning "Sun." The Sun Temple at Konark, the Jagannath Temple in Puri, and the Lingaraj Temple in Bhubaneswar are said to form a sacred triangle. Konark occupies one corner (*kona*) of this symbolic geometric alignment.

Histological significance

The Konark Sun Temple derives its name from two Sanskrit words: *Kona* meaning "corner" and *Arka* meaning "Sun." The town of Konark received this name because of its geographical position, where the rising sun appears at a striking angle along the coast of the Bay of Bengal. The tradition of Sun worship

in this region is believed to be very ancient, and references to the sanctity of Konark are found in several Hindu texts. The present temple, however, was constructed in the 13th century. During this period, Konark formed part of the historical region of Kalinga, which included much of present-day Odisha and parts of Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, and West Bengal. This region was ruled by the Eastern Ganga dynasty from the 5th to the 15th century AD. Under their powerful rule, the magnificent Sun Temple of Konark was erected, symbolizing the political strength and cultural prosperity of the kingdom.

The temple is attributed to King Narasimhadeva I, who commissioned it as a grand monument to Surya, the Sun God. Many Hindu manuscripts refer to Konark as an important centre of Sun worship. In ancient Indian texts, the place is also mentioned by the name “Kainapara,” and it functioned as an important trading port during the early centuries of the Common Era.

Lingaraja Temple

The Lingaraj Temple is located in Bhubaneswar, popularly known as the “City of Temples.” It represents the finest example of the temple architecture of Odisha and is regarded as one of the most beautiful temples in India. The Lingaraja Temple is the largest temple in Bhubaneswar and stands as a magnificent specimen of the Kalinga style of architecture. It is dedicated to Harihara, a combined form of Lord Shiva and Lord Vishnu, though the presiding deity is primarily worshipped as a form of Shiva. The temple is also one of the oldest and most prominent sacred structures in Bhubaneswar.

Lingaraja Temple—An Overview

The Lingaraj Temple is located in Ekamra Kshetra in the Old Town area of Bhubaneswar, the capital of Odisha. It is one of the most prominent tourist attractions of the state and is also among the oldest temples of Odisha. The temple was built in the Kalinga architectural style, specifically in the Deula style. It is believed that the kings of the Somavamsi dynasty were the primary builders of the Lingaraja Temple. Later, the rulers of the Eastern Ganga dynasty also contributed to its expansion and development. The same Ganga rulers are known for constructing the Jagannath Temple at Puri in the 12th century.

Architecturally, the Lingaraja Temple consists of four main components: the bhoga-mandapa (hall of offerings), the nata-mandira (festival or dance hall), the jagamohana (assembly hall), and the ³⁷vimana (sanctum tower). The presiding deity is worshipped in the combined form of Shiva and Vishnu, known as Harihara. This unique feature reflects the harmonious coexistence of Shaivism and Vaishnavism, two major sects of Hinduism. The temple is presently maintained and administered by the temple trust board.

Dravidian Style of Architecture

The Dravida style of temple architecture, which flourished in South India, is characterized by distinctive structural features. Temples are generally enclosed within a high compound wall. The main entrance gateway, known as the gopuram, is located at the centre of the front wall and serves as a monumental entry point to the complex.

The vimana refers to the main temple tower built directly above the sanctum. Unlike the curvilinear shikhara of the Nagara style, the Dravida vimana is pyramidal in form, rising in progressively smaller tiers in a geometric pattern. In the Dravida style, the term shikhara denotes the crowning element placed at the top of the vimana, usually shaped like a stupika or an octagonal cupola. At the entrance to the garbhagriha, sculptures of fierce dvarapalas (guardian figures) are commonly installed to guard the sanctum.

Most Dravida temples include a temple tank within the compound. Subsidiary shrines may be located either within the main tower or alongside it. In many large temple complexes, the garbhagriha is situated in the smallest and oldest tower. As temple towns expanded over time, additional concentric boundary walls were constructed. The outermost and most recent enclosure often features the tallest and most elaborate gopuram.

A classic example is the Ranganathaswamy Temple at Srirangam in Tiruchirappalli, which has seven concentric rectangular enclosure walls, each with its own gopuram. The central tower houses the garbhagriha. Famous temple towns of Tamil Nadu include Kanchipuram, Thanjavur, Madurai, and Kumbakonam. Between the 8th and 12th centuries, temples in South India were not merely religious centres but also functioned as major administrative and economic institutions, controlling vast areas of land and playing a central role in the socio-political life of the region.

- Dravidian Architecture—Sub divisions of Dravida Style
- Kutaor Caturasra: square-shaped
- Shalaor Ayatasra: rectangular-shaped
- Gaja-prishtaor vrittayataor elephant - backed: elliptical
- Vritta: circular
- Ashtasra: octagonal
- Dravidian Temple Architecture – Shore Temple – Mahabalipuram



The Shore Temple was built during the reign of Narasimhavarman II (700–728 AD), also known as Rajasimha of the Pallava dynasty. It represents one of the earliest structural stone temples in South India.

The complex is unique in having three shrines: one Shiva shrine facing east, another Shiva shrine facing west, and a central shrine dedicated to Vishnu in the Anantashayana (reclining on Adishesha) pose. The presence of three principal shrines within a single complex is a distinctive feature. It is believed that all the shrines may not have been constructed simultaneously, and some could have been

later additions. Archaeological evidence suggests the existence of a water reservoir and a gopuram within the complex. The outer walls of the temple are lined with sculptures of Nandi, the bull mount of Lord Shiva, along with several intricate carvings that enhance the artistic beauty of the monument.

Dravidian Temple Architecture –Brihadiswara Temple–Tanjore

The Brihadeeswarar Temple, also known as the Rajarajeswara Temple, was completed around 1009 AD. It was built by Rajaraja I of the Chola dynasty. This magnificent temple is regarded as the largest and tallest of all Indian temples of its time, surpassing the earlier architectural achievements of the Pallavas, Chalukyas, and Pandyas. More than 100 temples of the Chola period are still preserved, reflecting the intense temple-building activity of that era. The Brihadeeswarar Temple stands out with its grand pyramidal, multi-storeyed vimana, which rises to a height of nearly 70 metres. Atop the vimana is a massive monolithic shikhara in the form of a dome-shaped octagonal stupika. The temple complex also features two large and elaborately sculptured gopurams. Large Nandi images are placed prominently, enhancing the Shaivite character of the monument.

The kalasha at the top of the shikhara measures about 3 metres and 8 centimetres in height. The vimana is adorned with hundreds of stucco figures, many of which are believed to have been added during the later Maratha period. The main deity, Lord Shiva, is represented as a huge lingam housed within a double-storeyed sanctum. The surrounding inner walls of the sanctum are decorated with exquisite murals and sculptures depicting various mythological narratives, showcasing the artistic excellence of the Chola age.

Gangaikonda Cholapuram Temple

Thanjavur, the beautiful city in the state of Tamil nadu is an important place for art, culture and architecture. The city was the capital city during the 250 years rule of Chola dynasty. There is so much to see and explore in this city that you will learn something new in every corner of the city. Gangaikonda Cholapuram Temple in Thanjavur is a place where you can see the beauty and skills of Cholas' architecture.

History of Gangaikonda Cholapuram Temple

The Gangaikonda Cholapuram Temple was built in the 11th century by the Chola king Rajendra Chola I, the son and successor of Rajaraja I. This magnificent temple stands as one of the greatest achievements of Chola architecture and is often compared with the famous Brihadeeswarar Temple at Thanjavur, built by his father. During the expansion of the Chola Empire into North India, Rajendra Chola led victorious campaigns up to the River Ganges. To commemorate his triumph, he brought sacred water from the Ganges in a golden pot and consecrated a vast reservoir known as the Cholaganga. After this achievement, he assumed the title "Gangaikondan," meaning "the one who brought the Ganga."

Inspired by his success and wishing to surpass the architectural glory of his father's Brihadeeswarar Temple, Rajendra Chola planned and constructed the Gangaikonda Cholapuram Temple. The construction took place between 1020 and

1029 AD and required nearly nine years of dedicated work by skilled architects and artisans. The temple reflects the maturity of Chola architecture, with a majestic vimana, refined sculptures, and intricate carvings. Though slightly shorter than the Thanjavur temple, it is noted for its graceful proportions, elaborate iconography, and artistic excellence, making it one of the finest examples of South Indian temple architecture.

Architecture of Gangaikonda Cholapuram Temple

The Gangaikonda Cholapuram Temple houses one of the largest Shiva lingams in South India. The sanctum sanctorum enshrines a massive lingam that rises to nearly four metres in height, symbolizing the supreme power of Lord Shiva. The sanctum is surrounded by two concentric walls, which were designed to provide privacy for the royal family during worship.

The main entrance of the temple is beautifully adorned with sculptures, including images of Goddess Saraswati. The architecture of the temple shows noticeable influence from the Chalukyas. Sculptures representing Surya (Sun worship) and the Navagrahas (the nine planetary deities) reflect this artistic interaction. The achievements and history of the Chola kings are recorded in inscriptions engraved on copper plates and on the temple walls. The temple's vimana rises in nine storeys to a height of about 185 feet (approximately 54.86 metres). Though slightly shorter than the Brihadeeswarar Temple, its structure is more graceful and refined in proportion. The temple is constructed entirely of granite stones and is richly decorated with intricate carvings that are characteristic of the mature Chola style.

The eastern side of the temple displays particularly fine carvings and sculptural details. The vimana also shows certain stylistic features believed to have been inspired by North Indian temple architecture. The walls and ceilings are adorned with remarkable sculptures, demonstrating the creativity and refined artistic taste of the Chola sculptors. Among the most beautiful sculptures in the temple are those of Lord Ganesha, Nataraja (the cosmic dancer form of Shiva), Goddess Saraswati, Shiva-Parvati, and Ardhanareeswara (the combined form of Shiva and Parvati), all of which highlight the spiritual depth and artistic brilliance of the Chola period.

History of the Airavatesvara Temple in Darasuram

The Airavatesvara Temple at Darasuram is associated with a beautiful mythological legend. According to tradition, the hot-tempered sage Durvasa cursed Airavata, the white elephant of Indra, for showing disrespect. As a result of the curse, Airavata lost his radiant white colour. Filled with remorse, he prayed to Lord Shiva at the present temple site. Shiva instructed him to bathe in the temple tank, and upon doing so, Airavata regained his original white complexion. In memory of this event, the Shiva Lingam at Darasuram came to be known as Airavatesvara.

Historically, the temple was constructed in 1166 CE by the Chola king Rajaraja Chola II. It was the last of the celebrated Great Living Chola Temples. The first was the Brihadeeswarar Temple (11th century), built by Rajaraja I,

followed by the Gangaikonda Cholapuram Temple, constructed by Rajendra Chola I in the 11th century at the Chola capital. Later, Rajaraja Chola II chose to embellish his second capital, Rajarajapuri (also known as Palaiyarai or Ayiratti), with a magnificent architectural monument — the Airavatesvara Temple.

Architecture of the Airavatesvara Temple

The temple follows the classical Dravidian style of architecture, similar to the temples at Thanjavur and Gangaikonda Cholapuram. However, unlike the earlier Chola temples that emphasized massive scale, the Airavatesvara Temple is celebrated for its intricate detailing and refined ornamentation. The temple stands about 80 feet tall and features a five-storeyed vimana. Built entirely of stone, it employs a traditional interlocking construction technique, enabling it to withstand natural forces over centuries. The structure is often described as “poetry in stone,” as every inch of its surface is richly carved with sculptural panels depicting mythological stories, divine figures, dancers, musicians, and scenes from daily life.

One of the most striking features is the mandapa designed in the form of a stone chariot, complete with exquisitely carved wheels and horses. The temple’s facade, pillars, and ceilings are adorned with delicate and elaborate sculptures that demonstrate the artistic maturity of the later Chola period. Thus, the Airavatesvara Temple stands as a masterpiece of Chola art, combining mythology, devotion, and architectural brilliance into a harmonious whole.

The Nandi Mandapa of Airavateshwara temple

The Nandi Mandapam at the Airavateshwara Temple, Darasuram



Like any other temple that is dedicated to Lord Shiva, this one too, had a small shrine for his gatekeeper and vehicle – Nandi. The shrine requires you to descend down a few steps. Quite unlike the one in Thanjavur, this Nandishrine is much simpler and smaller. I expected it to be as elaborate as the Tanjore ones in terms of carved pillars and painted ceilings. However, that difference might have been owing to the fact that the Tanjore one was built by the succeeding Nayaka kings in the 16th century.

Vesara style of architecture

Vesara style of architecture flourished in the Deccan part of India. Also called the Hybridised style, it combines features of Nagara and Dravida styles. Chalukya’s rulers and Hoysala rulers promoted this style. The topographical location of Karnataka, the widespread actions of the significant royal rules and a boldness that is not unduly determined might have encouraged this merger of styles.

Main Features of Vesara style of Architecture

The Vesara style places special emphasis on the Vimana (tower above the sanctum) and the Mandapa (pillared hall).

The ground plan is generally designed in a star-shaped (stellate) pattern, which gives the temple a distinctive geometric appearance.

One of the unique architectural features of the Vesara style is the presence of an open ambulatory passageway around the sanctum for circumambulation.

Unlike some other temple styles, Vesara temples often have an unraised platform (Jagati) as their base.

The pillars, doorways, and ceilings are richly decorated with intricate carvings, displaying refined craftsmanship and artistic excellence.

Famous Temples of Vesara Style

Kailasa Temple – A magnificent rock-cut temple at Ellora, showcasing a blend of Dravidian and Nagara elements.

Chennakesava Temple – Built by the Hoysala rulers, famous for its star-shaped plan and detailed sculptures.

Virupaksha Temple – Located at Pattadakal, representing early experimentation with the Vesara style.

Lad Khan Temple – One of the earliest temples of the Chalukya period, reflecting transitional architectural features.

The Vesara style, mainly developed in the Deccan region under the Chalukyas and later the Hoysalas, represents a harmonious blend of the North Indian Nagara and South Indian Dravidian architectural traditions.

Historical Background

Later Chalukyas

The hybrid Vesara style of temple architecture was developed under the patronage of the Later Chalukya rulers around the mid-7th century A.D. This style represents a synthesis of the North Indian Nagara and South Indian Dravidian architectural traditions.

The Chalukya rulers placed special emphasis on the Vimana (tower above the sanctum) and the Mandapa (pillared hall). Initially, they adopted a stellate (star-shaped) ground plan, which became a distinctive feature of this architectural form. Over time, the walls, pillars, and doorways were elaborately decorated with intricate carvings, reflecting growing artistic sophistication.

Among the important temples built during this period in Karnataka are:

Dodda Basappa Temple – Known for its unique star-shaped (24-pointed) plan and rich sculptural ornamentation.

Lad Khan Temple – One of the earliest Chalukyan temples, displaying transitional features and experimentation in temple design.

Thus, under the Later Chalukyas, the Vesara style matured into a refined and decorative architectural tradition, particularly in the Deccan region of Karnataka.

Rashtrakuta Architecture

The Rashtrakuta dynasty, who were initially subordinates of the Chalukyas,

developed their own architectural tradition during the mid-8th century in Karnataka and the Deccan region. While they were greatly influenced by Chalukyan architectural forms, they also introduced innovations that gave their monuments a distinct identity. One of their most remarkable achievements was the construction of the Kailasa Temple at Ellora, built during the reign of Krishna I (8th century). This monolithic rock-cut temple is one of the grandest architectural creations in India and represents the Dravidian style carved out of a single rock.

During their rule, they also constructed the Navalinga Temple at Kukkanur in Karnataka. These temples follow the Dravidian style and reflect the continuation of southern architectural traditions under Rashtrakuta patronage. Thus, although the Rashtrakutas borrowed heavily from Chalukyan architectural models, they elevated temple construction to monumental levels, especially in rock-cut architecture, leaving a lasting legacy in Indian temple history.

Hoysala Art

The Hoysala dynasty rulers further developed the Vesara style of architecture between 1050 and 1300 A.D., leaving a rich legacy of intricate temple art in Karnataka. Their architectural works are concentrated in Belur, Halebid, and Sringeri, among other locations.

Key features of Hoysala architecture include:

Multiple Shrines and Central Hall: Temples often have multiple shrines arranged around a central pillared hall, allowing for complex ritual and devotional activities.

Stellate (Star-Shaped) Plan: The ground plan commonly follows a stellate pattern, producing intricate geometrical designs for walls and sanctums.

Material: The primary building material was soft soapstone (Chlorite Schist), which allowed for fine, detailed carvings.

Zigzag Pattern: Walls and staircases often follow a zigzag pattern, enhancing visual depth and allowing elaborate sculptural work.

Famous temples from this period include:

Hoysaleswara Temple – Noted for its detailed reliefs depicting epics and intricate iconography.

Chennakesava Temple – Celebrated for its sculptural excellence, star-shaped plan, and elaborately carved pillars.

The Hoysala temples demonstrate a masterful combination of Vesara architectural style, sculptural richness, and meticulous planning, making them some of the finest examples of medieval South Indian temple architecture.

Hoysalas Temple Architecture



The Hoysalas rose to prominence in South India after the decline of Chola and Pandya power, with their political and cultural centre at Mysore. Their chief temples are located at Belur, Somnathapuram, and Halebidu. A distinctive feature of Hoysala architecture is the stellate plan, in which the temple layout evolved from a simple square to a complex star-like shape with multiple projecting angles. This style, classified as Vesara, is primarily constructed from soapstone, a relatively soft material that allowed artisans to carve highly intricate details, including elaborate representations of jewellery and ornamentation. The Hoysaleswara Temple at Halebidu, built around 1150, is made of dark schiststone and is dedicated to Nataraja (Shiva). It is a double structure with a large hall serving as the mandapa, and a Nandi pavilion placed in front of each building. Although the temple's tower collapsed long ago, its original form is suggested by the detailed miniature towers at the entrance. The temple is renowned for its extremely intricate and detailed carvings, which exemplify the artistic and architectural excellence of the Hoysala period.

The Chennakesava Temple at Belur:

Chennakesava Temple, Belur, is situated on the river Yagachi. It is a monument of exquisite architecture built by the Hoysala king Vishnuvardhana in A.D. 1117. The Hoysalas ruled over the southern part of Karnataka, from the river Tungabhadra in the north up to the river Kaveri in the south, between A.D. 1000 and A.D. 1346. During their reign, this region flourished with rich art and culture, and many temples were erected. This grand temple is of star-shape design with intricate carving on the exterior walls and interiors, featuring marvelous sculptures and lathe-turned pillars. The major attractions of this temple are the rail parapet running around the temple, large images of gods and goddesses, the bracket figures in various attitudes, the car-like niches, the gravity pillar, the ceiling, and the stone screen.

History of Belur Chennakeshava Temple

Chennakeshava Temple, the most prominent monument of the Hoysala dynasty, is said to be connected to the military successes of King Vishnuvardhana, who ruled the country from 1117 to 1152 A.D. The monarch had fought against the Western Chalukyas and the Cholas, both of whom he had vanquished in combat. Following a gathering of the best architects and artists in the country, it was decided to establish new designs and styles that would become the trademark of the temple complex.

The Architecture of Chennakesava Temple, Somanathapura

The Chennakesava Temple, made of soapstone and based on Hoysala architecture, has a highly detailed finish that is characteristic of the Hoysala period. Because of its vast grandeur, this temple is considered one of the earliest masterpieces of the Hoysala dynasty's reign. At its tallest point, the temple towers 37 metres above the ground. On the exterior walls, there are intricate depictions of dancers in various stances.

Art of Chennakesava Temple, Somanathapura

There are some of the finest examples of sculpture and art in the entire complex on the temple's pillars. One of the most well-known temple pillars is the Narasimha pillar. There are 48 pillars in total, each adorned with unique carvings and decorations. Madanikas, or celestial damsels, are depicted on the four central pillars. Tourists and art enthusiasts alike are drawn to the Lady with a Parrot and the Huntress, two of the most popular madanikas in the world. Several references to the *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* can be found if one pays attention to the intricate details of the temple's wall carvings. Hints of sensuality are subtly embedded within these fine details. Horses, elephants, and lions are frequently depicted in the wall sculptures. The mantapa doorways show the Hoysala king slaying what scholars believe to be either a tiger or a lion, symbolising the king's valor. The tiger, the regal emblem of the Cholas, is also said to represent their defeat. The temple's enormous complex houses a number of other significant works of art, including the *Gajasura Samhara* (a sculpture of Lord Shiva), a sculpture of Ravana, and a depiction of Durga defeating Mahishasura, among several others. There are also a number of smaller shrines at the temple's entrance, adding to the overall grandeur and artistic richness of the complex.

Self Assessment Questions

S.N.	Questions (5 Marks)	LOCF Mapping		
1	Write a short note on Pallava rock-cut cave temples.	CO1	PO2	K2
2	Describe Pallava structural temples at Mahabalipuram.	CO1	PO2	K2
3	Mention two features of Nagara style architecture	CO2	PO3	K1
4	State the key features of Dravida style architecture	CO3	PO4	K2
5	List the important Vesara style temples	CO4	PO4	K1
6	Name two monolithic temples built by the Pallavas.	CO1	PO3	K1
7	Identify key sculptural elements in Dravida and Vesara style temples.	CO3	PO4	K2
S.N.	Questions (8 Marks)	Levels LOCF Mapping		
1	Explain the Pallava rock-cut and monolithic temples and their significance.	CO1	PO6	K3
2	Discuss the architectural features of Mahabalipuram structural temples.	CO1	PO4	K3
3	Describe the Nagara style of temple architecture with reference to Lingaraja and Sun Temple.	CO2	PO4	K2
4	Explain the Dravida style architecture in Brihadeeswara and Gangaikondacholapuram temples.	CO3	PO4	K3
5	Analyze the Airavatesvara temple at Darasuram with respect to Dravida style.	CO3	PO4	K4
6	Discuss the features of Vesara style architecture in Chennakesava and Hoysaleswara temples.	CO4	PO4	K3
7	Compare Nagara and Dravida styles of architecture.	CO3	PO4	K3
8	Examine the cultural and religious significance of Pallava temples at Mahabalipuram.	CO1	PO5	K5
9	Explain the sculptural and artistic contributions of Chola and Hoysala temples.	CO4	PO4	K4
10	Evaluate the overall impact of Pallava, Chola, Hoysala, Nagara, Dravida, styles on Indian temple architecture.	CO4	PO6	K5

Unit – IV

Learning Objectives

1. To understand the basic principles of Islamic Art.
2. To study the significance of the Five Pillars of Islam in Islamic culture.
3. To examine the architectural features of mosques, mausoleums, palace complexes and gardens.
4. To understand the importance of Quwwat-ul-Islam Mosque.
5. To study the architectural features of Qutub Minar.
6. To analyse the development of Mughal Art and Architecture.
7. To examine the architectural significance of Humayun's Tomb, Fatehpur Sikri, Red Fort and Taj Mahal.
8. To understand the characteristics of Mughal Paintings.

Course Outcomes

1. Explain the basic features of Islamic Art and architecture.
2. Describe the significance of the Five Pillars of Islam in Islamic tradition.
3. Identify the important elements of mosques, mausoleums, palace complexes and gardens.
4. Explain the architectural importance of Quwwat-ul-Islam Mosque and Qutub Minar.
5. Describe the development of Mughal architecture in India.
6. Explain the historical significance of Humayun's Tomb and Fatehpur Sikri.
7. Analyse the architectural features of the Red Fort and Taj Mahal.
8. Describe the characteristics and themes of Mughal paintings.

Islamic art

Islamic Art is a modern concept, developed by art historians in the nineteenth century to categorize and study the material first produced by the Islamic peoples who emerged from Arabia in the seventh century. Today, Islamic Art encompasses all the arts produced in lands where Islam was the dominant religion or where rulers followed Islam. Unlike terms such as Christian, Jewish, and Buddhist art, which refer only to religious art of those faiths, Islamic Art is not limited to religious works or architecture; it applies to all art forms produced in the Islamic world.

Thus, Islamic Art includes works created by Muslim artists, artisans, and architects for patrons of any faith, including Christians, Jews, or Hindus. It also encompasses works produced by Jews, Christians, and others living in Islamic lands, whether for Muslim patrons or others.

One of the most famous monuments of Islamic Art is the Taj Mahal, a royal mausoleum located in Agra, India. Although Hinduism is the majority religion in India, Muslim rulers—most notably the Mughals—dominated large areas of modern-day India for centuries, leaving behind a rich and diverse legacy of Islamic art and architecture.

Early Islamic Art and Architecture

Islamic art encompasses visual arts produced from the seventh century onwards by culturally Islamic populations.

Islam

Islam is a monotheistic and Abrahamic religion articulated by the Qur'an, a book considered by its adherents to be the verbatim word of God (Allah), and the teachings of Muhammad, who is regarded as the last prophet of God. An adherent of Islam is called a Muslim. Most Muslims belong to one of two major denominations: Sunni (75–90%) or Shia (10–20%). The essential religious

concepts and practices include the Five Pillars of Islam, which are fundamental acts of worship, and adherence to Islamic law, which guides every aspect of life and society. The Five Pillars are:

Shahadah – the belief or confession of faith

Salat – worship in the form of prayer

Sawm – fasting during the month of Ramadan

Zakat – alms or charitable giving

Hajj – the pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in a lifetime

Muhammad, the prophet of Islam, is said to have been born in Mecca, the holiest religious site for Muslims. He was a charismatic preacher who was eventually driven from Mecca to Medina, where he continued to spread his teachings. His home in Medina, with a walled courtyard and a porch supported by columns of palm trunks, is considered the model for traditional mosque architecture.

Earlier structures are also sacred in Islam. The **Kaaba**—meaning “cube” in Arabic—is a square structure in Mecca, draped in an ornamental covering. It is believed to have been built by Abraham (Ibrahim in Islamic tradition) and his son Ismail as a sanctuary. When Muhammad returned to Mecca in 629–630 CE, he re-sanctified the Black Stone Kaaba, which has since become the central site of the modern Hajj pilgrimage, which every Muslim aims to undertake at least once in their lifetime. The Kaaba, originally a pre-Islamic monument, was rededicated by Muhammad in 631–632 CE, underwent multiple renovations, and is constructed of granite masonry, covered with a silk curtain adorned with gold and silver thread calligraphy (Mecca, Saudi Arabia).



Islamic Art

Islamic art encompasses the visual arts produced from the seventh century onward by both Muslims and non-Muslims who lived within territories inhabited or ruled by culturally Islamic populations. It is difficult to define precisely because it spans over 1,400 years, covering many lands, cultures, and peoples. Islamic art is not limited to a specific religion, period, place, or medium. Instead, it includes a wide range of artistic fields such as architecture, calligraphy, painting, glass, ceramics, and textiles, among others.

Islamic art is not restricted to religious expression; it includes the full spectrum of art in Islamic societies, often incorporating secular elements as well as motifs that some Islamic theologians may have considered forbidden. Religious Islamic art differs significantly from Christian religious art traditions. Because figural representations are generally discouraged in Islam, the word itself takes on profound religious significance in art, particularly in the tradition of calligraphy. Calligraphy and the decoration of manuscript Qur'ans are central to Islamic art, reflecting both spiritual and artistic meaning.

Islamic architecture, such as mosques and palatial gardens symbolizing paradise, is similarly imbued with religious significance. While examples of Islamic figurative painting exist, these are usually found in secular contexts, such as palace walls or illuminated poetry books. Other religious artworks—including glass mosque lamps, Girih tiles, woodwork, and carpets—often share the same styles and motifs as secular art, but feature more prominent religious inscriptions. For example, a calligraphic panel by Mustafa Râkim (late 18th–early 19th century) emphasizes patterns and Arabic calligraphy over human figures. The panel reads: “God, there is no god but He, the Lord of His prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and the Lord of all that has been created.”

Islamic art was influenced by Greek, Roman, early Christian, and Byzantine art styles, as well as the Sassanian art of pre-Islamic Persia. Central Asian styles were introduced through nomadic incursions, while Chinese influences played a formative role in Islamic painting, pottery, and textiles.



Themes of Islamic Art

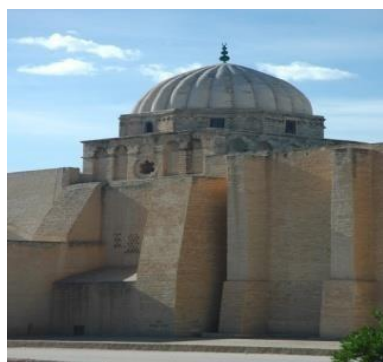
There are repeating elements in Islamic art, such as the use of stylized geometric, floral, or vegetal designs in a pattern known as the arabesque. The arabesque often symbolizes the transcendent, indivisible, and infinite nature of God. Some scholars suggest that intentional mistakes in these repetitive patterns may be introduced by artists as a sign of humility, acknowledging that only God can achieve perfection. Typically, Islamic art emphasizes patterns and Arabic calligraphy rather than human or animal figures, because many Muslims believe that depicting the human form constitutes idolatry and is therefore forbidden by the Qur'an. However, depictions of humans and animals do appear in secular Islamic art across various periods.

Islamic Architecture

Islamic architecture encompasses a wide range of styles, both secular and religious, with the mosque being the principal example. A distinctly recognizable Islamic architectural style emerged soon after Muhammad's time, combining Roman building traditions with localized adaptations of earlier Sassanid and Byzantine models.

Early Mosques

The Islamic mosque has historically served both as a place of prayer and as a community meeting space. Early mosques are believed to have been inspired by Muhammad's home in Medina, which functioned as the first mosque. The Great Mosque of Kairouan in Tunisia is one of the best-preserved and most significant examples of early mosques. Founded in 670, it incorporates all the architectural features that define early mosque design: a minaret, a large courtyard surrounded by porticos, and a hypostyle prayer hall. The dome of the mihrab, built in the 9th century, in the Great Mosque of Kairouan—also known as the Mosque of Uqba—is considered the prototype for mosques in the western Islamic world.



Great Mosque of Cordoba



In 748–750, the Umayyad dynasty in Damascus, Syria, was overthrown by the Abbasids. Members of the dynasty fled across the Middle East and eventually settled on the Iberian Peninsula, where they established a new dynasty. Caliph Abd al-Rahman began construction of the Great Mosque of Córdoba around 786. The horseshoe-shaped arches, now closely associated with Islamic architecture, were actually adopted from earlier structures on the site built by the Visigoths, such as the Puerta del Batisterio (Door of the Baptistry), renamed after the Christian takeover. The mosque also included a mihrab in the qibla wall, with a great dome above it decorated with thousands of tesserae imported from the Byzantine Empire in Constantinople, along with skilled craftsmen to install them.

During this period, Christians, Jews, and Muslims lived in relative harmony. However, Christianity under Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand ultimately expelled Islam from Spanish territories in 1492. The minaret of the Great Mosque of Córdoba is a tall tower rising from the enclosing wall. The courtyard is filled with orange trees, said to have been brought by Caliph Abd al-Rahman to remind him of his lost homeland of Damascus.

Ottoman Mosques

Ottoman mosques and other architectural works first emerged in the cities of Bursa and Edirne in the 14th and 15th centuries, evolving from earlier Seljuk Turk architecture and incorporating influences from Byzantine, Persian, and Islamic Mamluk traditions. Later, Sultan Mehmed II integrated European architectural elements in his rebuilding programs in Istanbul during the 19th century. Byzantine styles, particularly those seen in the Hagia Sophia, served as important models for Ottoman mosques, including those designed by the renowned architect Sinan.

Ottoman architecture reached its peak in the 16th century, when architects perfected the construction of vast interior spaces surmounted by seemingly weightless yet massive domes, achieving a harmonious balance between interior and exterior spaces, as well as masterful use of light and shadow. Mosques incorporated vaults, domes, square dome plans, slender corner minarets, and columns, creating sanctuaries of extraordinary aesthetic and technical sophistication, as exemplified by the Blue Mosque in Istanbul, Turkey.

Architecture also flourished under the Safavid dynasty, reaching a high point during the reign of Shah Abbas in Isfahan. His building program included numerous gardens, palaces such as Ali Qapu, an immense bazaar, and a grand imperial mosque. Isfahan, which served as the capital under both the Seljuk and Safavid dynasties, houses some of the most prominent examples of Safavid architecture, including the Imperial Mosque, constructed after Shah Abbas I permanently moved the capital there.

Islamic Glass

For most of the Middle Ages, Islamic luxury glass was the most sophisticated in Eurasia, exported widely to both Europe and China. Islamic rule encompassed much of the traditional glass-producing territories of the Sassanian and Ancient Roman worlds. Since figurative decoration had played only a minor role in pre-Islamic glass, the transition in style was gradual. However, because the

region initially formed a political whole, innovations—such as Persian techniques—were quickly adopted in other areas, including Egypt.

Between the 8th and early 11th centuries, luxury glass emphasized surface effects, initially achieved by incising designs into the glass using a wheel, and later by cutting away the background to create raised relief patterns. The massive Hedwig glasses, found only in Europe but generally considered Islamic—or possibly made by Muslim craftsmen in Norman Sicily—exemplify this style, though they appear puzzlingly late in date. These glass pieces were likely less expensive alternatives to carved rock crystal (clear quartz) vessels.

From the 12th century onward, luxury glass production in Persia and Mesopotamia declined, with Egypt and Syria becoming the main centers for fine glass. During this period, local workshops continued producing simpler wares, such as Hebron glass in Palestine.

Lustre painting

Lustre painting, by techniques similar to lustreware in pottery, dates back to the 8th century in Egypt, and involves the application of metallic pigments during the glass-making process. Another technique used by artisans was decoration with threads of glass of a different color, worked into the main surface, and sometimes manipulated by combing and other effects. Gilded, painted, and enameled glass were added to the repertoire, as were shapes and motifs borrowed from other media, such as pottery and metalwork. Some of the finest work was in mosque lamps donated by a ruler or wealthy man.

Islamic Book Painting

Manuscript painting in the late medieval Islamic world reached its peak in Persia, Syria, Iraq, and the Ottoman Empire. This art form flourished across these regions, drawing inspiration from a wide range of cultural sources.

The evolution of book painting began in the 13th century, during the Mongol invasions led by Genghis Khan, which swept across the Islamic world. After Genghis Khan's death, his empire was divided among his sons, giving rise to several dynasties: the Yuan in China, the Ilkhanids in Iran, and the Golden Horde in northern Iran and southern Russia. These political changes greatly influenced the development and spread of manuscript painting throughout the Islamic world.

Miniatures

51

The tradition of the Persian miniature—a small painting on paper—developed during this period and had a profound influence on the Ottoman miniature in Turkey and the Mughal miniature in India. Because illuminated manuscripts were primarily courtly art and not displayed publicly, restrictions on depicting the human figure were relaxed, allowing frequent and detailed representations of people.

Persian miniatures combined influences from multiple cultures. Byzantine visual vocabulary contributed elements such as blue and gold coloring, angelic and victorious motifs, and symbolic drapery. Mongol facial types, seen in 12th-century book frontispieces, were also incorporated. Chinese influence appeared in

the vertical format suited to books and motifs such as peonies, clouds, dragons, and phoenixes, which were adapted into manuscript illumination.

The largest commissions for illustrated books were often classical works of Persian poetry, such as the *Shahnameh*. Under Safavid rule in Iran (1501–1786), manuscript illumination reached new heights. The most notable example is the *Shahnameh of Shah Tahmasp*, an immense copy of Ferdowsi's epic poem containing more than 250 miniature paintings.

Islam and the Textile Arts

The textile arts refer to the production of objects using plant, animal, or synthetic fibers. These objects could serve everyday practical purposes or function as decorative and luxury items. The production and trade of textiles predated Islam and had long been a vital part of Middle Eastern cultures and cities, many of which prospered through the Silk Road. As Islamic dynasties emerged and grew more powerful, they gained control over textile production, which became one of the most important crafts of the era. Among the various textiles produced in medieval and early modern Islamic empires, the carpet was the most significant and highly valued.

The Ottoman Empire and Carpet Production

The art of carpet weaving was particularly important in the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman state, founded by Turkish tribes in northwestern Anatolia in 1299, became an empire in 1453 following the momentous conquest of Constantinople. Stretching across Asia, Europe, and Africa, the empire endured until 1922, when the monarchy was abolished in Turkey. Within the Ottoman Empire, carpets were highly valued both as decorative furnishings and for their practical uses. They were placed not only on floors but also as wall and door hangings, providing additional insulation.

These intricately knotted carpets were made of silk or a combination of silk and cotton and were often rich in religious and symbolic motifs. Among them, Hereke silk carpets, produced in the coastal town of Hereke, were the most prized due to their exceptionally fine weave. These carpets were typically used to furnish royal palaces, reflecting both luxury and craftsmanship.

Persian Carpets

The Iranian Safavid Empire (1501–1786) is distinguished from the Mughal and Ottoman dynasties by the Shia faith of its shahs, which was the majority Islamic denomination in Persia. Safavid art made significant contributions to several aesthetic traditions, particularly the textile arts. In the sixteenth century, carpet weaving evolved from a nomadic and peasant craft into a highly developed industry, employing specialized design and manufacturing techniques on quality fibers such as silk. The carpets of Ardabil, for example, were commissioned to commemorate the Safavid dynasty and are now considered among the finest examples of classical Persian weaving, especially noted for their use of graphical perspective.

Textiles became a major export, and Persian weaving emerged as one of the most sought-after luxury goods in Europe. Islamic carpets were highly prized, and

numerous European Renaissance paintings document the presence of these textiles in European homes during the period.

Quwwat-ul-Islam Mosque (built 1192-1316)

Quwwat-ul-Islam was sponsored by Qutb-ud-din Aibak, the founder of the Mamluk dynasty. Born a slave in Turkey, Qutb rose to prominence as a general during Muhammad Ghori's invasion of India in the 1180s. After Muhammad Ghori's assassination in 1206, Qutb seized the throne and crowned himself Sultan of the Mamluk dynasty, often disparagingly called the "Slave Dynasty" due to his origins. Although the dynasty lasted only a few centuries, Muslim rule in India continued until the British occupation in 1858.

Qutb was a devout Muslim. When his garrison occupied Delhi under Muhammad Ghori in 1192, he ordered the destruction of twenty-seven Hindu and Jain temples to repurpose their materials for the construction of Delhi's first mosque. Quwwat-ul-Islam, meaning "Glory of Islam," was hastily erected by Qutb, who conscripted an army of local craftsmen, presumably Hindus, to assemble the structure. The Hindu stone masons reused columns from the destroyed temples, but adapting them for use in a mosque proved challenging due to Islam's prohibition against images. The masons plastered over the highly sculpted Hindu columns, presumably covering them with geometric designs. After centuries of neglect, much of the plaster has fallen away, revealing the original Hindu carvings.

Quwwat-ul-Islam is best known for its Tower of Victory, celebrating the Muslim conquest of India. It is built of red sandstone, gray quartz, and white marble, and is likely inspired by the iron "Pillar of the Law" on the site. Constructed during the Mauryan dynasty in the 6th century, the pillar is the only original piece of the temple to remain in place and has resisted rust for over 1,500 years, demonstrating the Mauryans' advanced metallurgical skills.

Expansion of the mosque continued after Qutb's death. His son-in-law, Altamash (also known as Iltutmish), extended the original prayer hall screen by adding three more arches. By this time, the Mamluk empire had stabilized enough that Altamash could replace most of the conscripted Hindu masons with Islamic craftsmen, resulting in arches that are stylistically more Islamic than those constructed under Qutb.

Just west of the expanded mosque, Altamash built his own tomb—the first tomb of the Delhi Sultanate. Despite employing Muslim craftsmen, the tomb's design is largely Hindu, though most of the superstructure and walls were built with repurposed materials. Altamash's body was laid to rest in a subterranean chamber beneath the tomb.

The decline of Quwwat-ul-Islam began during the rule of Ala-ud-din Khalji (1296–1316), known in the West as "Alladin." Initially, Ala-ud-din appeared inclined to patronize the mosque, adding a large new courtyard wall and beginning the base of a massive new minaret. However, his ambitious plans led him to abandon the Lal Kot (Delhi) capital in favor of the nearby city of Siri, causing Quwwat-ul-Islam to lose its pre-eminence.

Quwwatul Islam Mosque Architectural

The architectural features and techniques of the Quwwat-ul-Islam mosque resemble those of other monuments built by the same ruler, such as the Ajmer Mosque and Adhai Din Ka Jhopra. It is widely believed that the entire Qutub Minar complex was established after demolishing existing Sanskrit schools and temples at the site. To construct Quwwat-ul-Islam, twenty-seven Hindu and Jain temples were destroyed, and the mosque was built using grey quartz, red sandstone, and white marble.

The mosque features enormous stone screens that stand directly in front of the prayer hall. The structure includes two smaller arches alongside a central dome, arranged in an S-shaped configuration. A large stone screen was later constructed ahead of the prayer hall, accompanied by arches, also forming an S-shape. Another example of the fusion between Islamic and Hindu styles is the prayer hall, which is co-shaped and features a central arch approximately 6.15 meters in height. The hall is further ornamented with intricate decorative work, reflecting the skill and artistry of the architects.

Quwwat-ul-Islam mosque is an outstanding example of Indo-Islamic architecture. Its layout includes a grand prayer hall and a central courtyard situated on the west side of the mosque. Large arcades made of grey stone surround the courtyard, forming multiple bays that enhance the grandeur of the complex.

The Five Pillars of Islam

The Five Pillars are the core beliefs and practices of Islam:

□ **Profession of Faith (Shahada)** – Central to Islam is the belief that “There is no god but God, and Muhammad is the Messenger of God.” This phrase, written in Arabic, is often prominently displayed in architecture, manuscripts, and objects, including the Qur’an, Islam’s holy book of divine revelations. A person becomes a Muslim by sincerely reciting this phrase with conviction.

Prayer (Salat) – Muslims pray facing Mecca five times a day: at dawn, noon, mid-afternoon, sunset, and after dark. Each prayer includes the recitation of the opening chapter (sura) of the Qur’an and is often performed on a small rug or mat. Prayer can be conducted individually anywhere or collectively in a mosque, where an imam leads the congregation.⁵⁴ Men traditionally gather in the mosque for the Friday noon prayer, while women may attend but are not obliged. After the prayer, a sermon focuses on a passage from the Qur’an, followed by additional prayers and discussion of religious topics.

Alms (Zakat) – In accordance with Islamic law, Muslims donate a fixed portion of their income to help those in need. Wealthy individuals and rulers also support the community by building mosques, drinking fountains, hospitals, schools, and other institutions, both as an act of religious duty and to gain blessings through charity.

Fasting (Sawm) – During the daylight hours of Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, healthy adult Muslims abstain from food and drink. This

period of self-restraint heightens awareness and gratitude for God's blessings, including the Qur'an, which was first revealed during Ramadan. Fasting also encourages empathy by allowing Muslims to experience the hunger and thirst of the needy, reinforcing the religious duty to support those less fortunate.



Pilgrimage (Hajj) – Every Muslim whose health and finances allow is required to make at least one pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca in present-day Saudi Arabia. At the center of the Haram Mosque in Mecca stands the Ka'ba, a cubical structure draped in black embroidered coverings. Muslims believe it was built by Abraham (Ibrahim in Arabic) as a house for God, and they face its direction (qibla) during prayer. Since the time of the Prophet Muhammad, believers from around the world have gathered at the Ka'ba between the eighth and twelfth days of the final month of the Islamic calendar to perform the Hajj rituals.

Qutub Minar

Qutubuddin Aibak, the first sultan of Delhi, started construction on Qutub Minar as a tower of victory after defeating the Hindu rulers. The minaret could also have been where the muezzin would call Muslims to prayer or a military watchtower to track enemy movement.

Qutub Minar famous

The Qutub Minar is an important symbol of Islamic rule and architecture in India. This victory tower commemorates the Islamic conquest of India and honors the Sufi saint Qutubuddin Bakhtiar. Its design reflects the influence of southwestern Asian architecture on traditional Islamic structures.

Mughal Architecture – Mughal architecture refers to the Indo-Islamic architectural style developed by the Mughal emperors during the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries as their empire expanded across the Indian subcontinent. It drew inspiration from the architectural styles of earlier Muslim rulers in India, as well as Iranian and Central Asian traditions, particularly Timurid architecture. During the reign of Akbar (1556–1605), Mughal architecture also incorporated and synthesized elements from broader Indian architectural practices. Key features of Mughal architecture include large bulbous domes, slender corner minarets, vast halls, expansive arched doorways, and intricate ornamentation. Examples of this style can be seen today across modern-day Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan.

About Mughal Architecture

The Mughal Empire was established after Babur's victory at Panipat in 1526. During his five-year rule, Babur was an enthusiastic builder, though few of

his structures have survived. His grandson Akbar significantly expanded Mughal architecture, under whose reign the style flourished. Notable achievements of Akbar include the Agra Fort, Fatehpur Sikri Fort City, and the Buland Darwaza. **Akbar's** son, Jahangir, commissioned the Shalimar Gardens in Kashmir. Under Emperor Shah Jahan, Mughal architecture reached its pinnacle, with iconic constructions such as the Taj Mahal, Jama Masjid in Delhi, the Shalimar Gardens of Lahore, the Wazir Khan Mosque, and the reconstruction of the Lahore Fort. Aurangzeb, the last of the great Mughal architects, contributed notable structures including the Badshahi Mosque, Bibi Ka Maqbara, **and** Moti Masjid, further cementing the legacy of Mughal architectural excellence.

Features of Mughal Architecture

Mughal architecture represents a synthesis of Hindu, Persian, and Islamic influences. Its characteristic features include:

Large bulbous onion-shaped domes, often flanked by four smaller domes.

Materials: Extensive use of white marble and red sandstone.

Ornamentation: Exquisite decorative techniques such as Pachin Kari (inlay work) and **jali** (latticed screens).

Gardens: Magnificent buildings are frequently surrounded by gardens on all four sides.

Mosques: Large courtyards are a common feature in Mughal mosques.

Calligraphy: Inscriptions in Persian and Arabic, often featuring Qur'anic verses.

Gateways: The main structures are approached through a series of grand gateways.

Iwans: Arched recesses on two or four sides of buildings.

Chhatris: Decorative domed kiosks used as ornamental features.

Jharokhas and Jalis: Elaborate latticed windows and balconies.

Mughal architecture strongly influenced later Indian architectural styles, including the **Indo-Saracenic style** during the British Raj, as well as **Rajput** and **Sikh** styles.

Mughal Monuments Akbar Agra Fort

In Agra, Uttar Pradesh, the Agra Fort is a World Heritage site. Between 1565 and 1574, Akbar constructed the majority of the Agra fort. The fort's architecture demonstrates the liberal use of Rajput designing and building techniques. The Jahangiri Mahal, constructed for Jahangir plus his family, the Moti Masjid, as well as the Mena Bazaars, are among the fort's most prominent structures. The Jahangiri Mahal is a magnificent edifice with a courtyard and double storeyed halls and rooms surrounding it.

Great White Mosque Islamia College Peshawar

A magnificent white mosque, surrounded by beautiful green grass, stands in the centre of historic Islamia College Peshawar, reminding us of its more than a century of architectural splendour and spiritual glory. The mosque's design, which combines Mughal and British elements, acts as a reminder of Muslim architecture. After the Mughal-era Mahabat Khan Mosque, this magnificent mosque has now

become Peshawar's second most major tourist attraction.

Humayun's Tomb

Humayun's mausoleum is a tomb in Delhi, India, of the Mughal Emperor Humayun. Empress Begum (also referred to as Haji Begum), Humayun's first wife and primary consort, commissioned the monument in 1569-70 and had it planned by Persian architects Mirak Mirza Ghiyas and his son, Sayyid Muhammad. This was the Indian subcontinent's earliest gardentomb. It is frequently regarded as the first fully developed specimen of Mughal architecture.

Fatehpur Sikri

The building of **Fatehpur Sikri**, Akbar's capital near Agra, at a commercial and Jain pilgrimage center, is considered his finest architectural achievement. The fortified city was constructed between 1569 and 1574 and included several exquisite religious and secular structures, reflecting the Emperor's aim for social, political, and religious unity. Among its most important religious buildings were the **large Jama Masjid** and the **Tomb of Salim Chisti**.

In 1576, Akbar constructed the **Buland Darwaza**, or "Gate of Magnificence," to commemorate his victory over Gujarat and the Deccan. The gate rises 40 metres from the ground, with a total height of approximately 54 metres above ground level.

The **Haramsara**, Fatehpur Sikri's royal seraglio, housed the Emperor's women. A row of cloisters separated the Haramsara entrance from the Khwabgah (royal apartments). According to Abul Fazl in the *Ain-i-Akbari*, the harem was secured internally by older and active women, externally by eunuchs, with loyal Rajput soldiers stationed at a distance. The largest palace in the seraglio, **Jodha Bai's Palace**, connects to the minor haramsara districts. Its main entrance is two stories high, projecting outward to form a porch leading to a recessed entry with a balcony. The palace quadrangle is surrounded by rooms, and the columns of these chambers are adorned with Hindu sculptural designs.

The **Tomb of Salim Chisti**, built between 1580 and 1581, is one of India's finest examples of Mughal architecture. The square marble tomb, with a verandah built in 1571 at the corner of the mosque compound, houses a cenotaph enclosed by an intricately carved lattice screen. Salim Chisti (1478–1572), a descendant of Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti of Ajmer, was buried in a grotto on the ridge near Sikri. Akbar commissioned the mausoleum as a tribute to the Sufi saint who had predicted the birth of his son.

Jahangir Begum Shahi Mosque

The Begum Shahi Mosque is a mosque in the fortified City of Lahore, Pakistan, dating from the early seventeenth century. The mosque was erected in tribute to Mughal Emperor Jahangir's mother during 1611 and 1614, and it is Lahore's oldest surviving instance of a Mughal-era mosque. The mosque would subsequently influence the bigger Wazir Khan Mosque, which was built a few decades later.

Tomb of I'timād-ud-Daulah

The mausoleum of Itimud-ud-Daulah is a tomb in Agra, Uttar Pradesh, India.

The mausoleum of I'timud-Daulah is commonly said to as a “jewel box” and is often referred to as the “Bachcha Taj.” It is thought to be a precursor of the Taj Mahal.

Shah Jahan Taj Mahal

The **Taj Mahal**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, was built by **Shah Jahan** in memory of his favorite wife, **Mumtaz Mahal**, between 1630 and 1649. Construction took **22 years**, employed **22,000 workers and 1,000 elephants**, and cost **32 million rupees**. The monument is a massive **white marble structure** featuring symmetrical architecture, including an **iwan** (arch-shaped gateway) topped by a large dome and finial, all set on a square base.

The Taj Mahal is part of a larger **integrated complex**, with the white-domed mausoleum as its centerpiece. The construction was overseen by a board of architects appointed by Shah Jahan, beginning around 1631 AD. The main mausoleum was completed in 1648 AD, while the surrounding buildings and gardens were finished five years later in 1653 AD.

The monument exemplifies the artistic finesse and architectural mastery of the Mughal era. Herringbone inlays are used to define the spaces between adjoining elements. White inlays adorn sandstone structures, while black or dark inlays accent the white marble. Mortared areas of marble are stained or painted in contrasting colors to create intricate geometric patterns, and floors and walkways feature tessellated tiles or blocks. Inlay materials include yellow marble, jasper, and jade, polished to align seamlessly with the wall surfaces, highlighting the monument's extraordinary craftsmanship.

Hindu Precedents

The Indo-Islamic architecture had incorporated and reinterpreted many of the traditions, forms and symbolism of both the indigenous Hindu architecture with the predominant Islamic architecture ever since the era of the Delhi Sultantate (1192 AD - 1451AD).

During the Mughal Empire, the extent varied according to the prevailing political climate; scant with Babur, extensively with Akbar, but they ruled a land dominated by non- muslims and most buildings were built with Hindu craftsmen and labour under the direction of Muslim artists and architects. The vegetative tracery, inlay work and most obviously the lotus dome and finial of the Taj Mahal are all testament to this synthesis. 58

Architects and Craftsmen

The exquisite and highly skilled Inlay work was developed by Mughal lapidarists from techniques taught to them by Italian craftsmen employed at court. The look of European herbals, books illustrating botanical species was adapted and refined in Mughal Inlay work.

History obscures precisely who designed the Taj Mahal. In the Islamic world at that time, the credit for a building design was usually given to its patron rather than its architects. From the evidence of contemporary sources, it is clear that a team of architects were responsible for the design and supervision of the works, but they are mentioned infrequently.

A labour force of about twenty thousand workers was recruited from across the Northern India. Sculptors from Bukhara, calligraphers from Syria and Persia, inlayers from southern India, stone cutters from Baluchistan, a specialist in building turrets, another who carved only marble flowers were part of the thirty-seven men who formed the creative unit. Some of the builders involved in construction of Taj Mahal under the master supervision of the Emperor Shah Jahan himself are:

Wazir Khan Mosque

The Wazir Khan Masjid was constructed between 1634 and 1642 during the reign of Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan. The mosque is renowned for its intricate faience tile work, known as kashi-kari, and its interior panels, which are almost entirely covered with elaborate Mughal-era murals. It is considered one of the most ornately decorated mosques of the Mughal period. Since 2009, the Aga Khan Trust for Culture has been collaborating with the Government of Punjab to restore and preserve this historic monument.

Shalimar Gardens

It is a Mughal garden compound in Lahore, the Pakistani region of Punjab's capital. The gardens were built during the height of the Mughal Empire's architectural and aesthetic splendour. The gardens were started in 1641 and finished in 1642, under the reign of Emperor Shah Jahan. The Shalimar Gardens were designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1981 because they exemplify Mughal garden design at its pinnacle.

Shah Jahan Mosque

The Shah Jahan Masjid is the main mosque in the Pakistani city of Thatta, which is located in the Sindh province. Shah Jahan commissioned the mosque and presented it to the city as a gesture of his thanks. Its design is primarily influenced by Central Asian Timurid architecture, which was popularised during Shah Jahan's wars in Balkh and Samarkand. The mosque is known for having the most magnificent exhibition of tile work in South Asia, as well as geometrical brick work, a stylistic element uncommon in Mughal-period mosques.

Shahi Hammam

The Shahi Hammam is just a Persian-style bathhouse that was constructed in Lahore, Pakistan, under Emperor Shah Jahan's reign in 1635 C.E. It was constructed by Ilam-ud-din Ansari, the Mughal Court's top physician, also known as Wazir Khan. The baths were constructed as a waqf, or endowment, for the Wazir Khan Mosque's upkeep.

Aurangzeb Badshahi Mosque

The Badshahi Masjid, built by the 6th Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb in Lahore, Pakistan, was constructed between 1671 and 1673. At the time of its completion, it was the largest mosque in the world. Today, it is Pakistan's third

largest mosque and the world's seventh largest.

The mosque, part of a sequence of red sandstone congregational mosques near the Lahore Fort, features red sandstone walls contrasted with white marble domes and delicate intarsia ornamentation. Its architectural plan mirrors that of Shah Jahan's Jama Masjid in Delhi, but on a much larger scale. The mosque also serves as an idgah. Its courtyard can accommodate 100,000 worshippers, while the interior space can hold 10,000. The four minarets rise to a height of 196 feet (60 metres).

Though one of the most famous Mughal monuments, the mosque suffered damage during Maharaja Ranjit Singh's rule. The Badshahi Mosque was added to the provisional list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites in 1993 by the Pakistani government.

Bibika Maqbara

King Aurangzeb constructed Bibi Ka Maqbara in Aurangabad, Maharashtra, in the late 1700s as a loving monument to his first spouse, Dilras Bano Begum. According to other stories, it was afterwards taken care of by Azam Shah, Aurangzeb's son. It was conceived by Ata-Ullah, the son of Ahmed Lahori, the Taj Mahal's chief designer, and is a duplicate of the Taj Mahal.

Mughal Gardens

Mughal gardens are Islamic-style gardens established by the Mughal emperors, inspired by Persian garden designs. They are typically constructed in the char bagh layout, a quadrilateral plan based on the four gardens of Paradise described in the Qur'an. This design symbolizes an earthly paradise, where humans live in harmony with nature. The quadrilateral garden is divided into four smaller sections by walkways or flowing water, and rectilinear layouts are extensively used within the fortified enclosures. Gardens often include ponds, fountains, and canals to enhance the sense of tranquility and symmetry.

Notable examples of Mughal gardens include Bagh-e-Babur in Kabul, Mehtab Bagh near the Taj Mahal, gardens at Humayun's Tomb, Shalimar Gardens in Lahore, Wah Gardens in Wah, Khusro Bagh in Prayagraj, and Pinjore Gardens in Haryana. **In** Jammu and Kashmir, **gardens such as** Pari Mahal, Nishat Bagh, Shalimar Bagh, Chashme Shahi, Verinag Garden, and Achabal Gardens **are included in the** provisional list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites in India.

Taj Mahal

60

The Taj Mahal is situated on the banks of the Yamuna River and is surrounded by a magnificent garden. It was commissioned by Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan in memory of his wife, Mumtaz Mahal. Construction began in **1631**, and the main mausoleum was completed in 1643, while the entire complex was finished by 1653. Mumtaz Mahal is interred within the Taj Mahal.

Historical records indicate that more **than** 22,000 workers from India and Central **Asia** contributed to the construction. The artisans included **masons**, stonecutters, dome builders, painters, and carvers, all collaborating to create this iconic monument of Mughal architecture.

Mumtaz Mahal

Mumtaz Mahal, born Arjumand Banu Begum, was the beloved wife of Shah Jahan. She received the title Mumtaz Mahal from Shah Jahan in recognition of her beauty and character. She was the daughter of Abdul Hasan Asaf Khan and married Shah Jahan in 1612, following an engagement arranged in 1607. The palace assigned to her, Khas Mahal, was elaborately decorated and far more sophisticated than those of Shah Jahan's other wives.

Mumtaz Mahal was deeply trusted by Shah Jahan and accompanied him on military campaigns, enjoying activities like elephant fights and royal entertainments. She bore fourteen children and passed away in Burhanpur while giving birth to her last child. Shah Jahan mourned her deeply for a year, during which his hair turned white and his back bent. Initially buried in Burhanpur, her body was later moved in 1631 to Agra, where she was temporarily interred in a small structure before the construction of the Taj Mahal.

Taj Mahal–Architecture

The Taj Mahal is constructed on the banks of the River Yamuna, and it is estimated that more than 22,000 workers were involved in its construction. Artisans and materials were brought from all over India and Central Asia. The monument is a remarkable combination of Islamic, Persian, and Indian architectural styles. The Taj Mahal complex includes the main tomb, a mosque, a guest house (naqqar khana), a grand gateway, and gardens.

Dimensions and Features:

The Taj Mahal is built on a 42-acre site.

The main building stands on a platform 50 meters high.

The four minarets are each 137 feet (42 meters) tall.

The tomb rises to a height of 58 meters.

The mosque is located on the west, and the guest house (naqqar khana) is on the east; both are made of red sandstone.

The garden measures 580 meters by 300 meters and is designed in the Islamic charbagh style, well-watered and lush green.

Gateway of Taj

The main gateway of Taj Mahal is 30 meters high and its construction was completed in 1648. The topmost part of the gateway includes chhatris. The gateway is decorated with the verses of the Holy Quran. The door of the gateway is made up of silver with letters engraved on it. After entering the gateway, there is a courtyard. In Mughal period, during and after the reign of Shah Jahan, a huge amount of charity was given on the death anniversary of Mumtaz Mahal. The poor were also given food on that day.

Mosque

The mosque on the west side of the Taj Mahal, which faces the holy city of Mecca, is believed to have been constructed by Isa Muhammad. Its exterior features two small arches on either side and a central portal known as the iwan, while the three domes and four kiosks are elegantly coated with white marble. Inside, the mosque is intricately designed, with 569 prayer mats laid out on the

floor and walls engraved with the names of Allah and verses from the Holy Quran. A mihrab indicates the direction of Mecca, and a minbar with three steps leads to a flat platform from which the maulana delivers sermons. A stone measuring 19 feet by 6.5 feet marks the temporary grave of Mumtaz Mahal, and a pool in front of the mosque allows worshippers to perform ablutions before prayer. The mosque's floor also features 539 black marble prayer carpets, and the walls are further adorned with Quranic inscriptions. Two towers flank the mosque, one on the north and one on the south, completing its symmetrical and harmonious design.

Mausoleum

After crossing the garden, people reach the tomb which covers the area of 95 square meter. People can enter the tomb through a double staircase. There are four minarets each of 137 feet. They are made in such a way that they will not fall on the main tomb during a mishap or a natural calamity. One letter is engraved on each minar and on combining we get the name Ar-Rahman which is one of the many names of Allah. There is a central chamber having four rooms below it for the graves of other family members. Aurangzeb replaced the original screen with octagonal screen which was made up of marble and precious stones.

Tomb

The tomb of the Taj Mahal is one of the beauties of the monument. The dome has the circumference of 110 yards and height is 107 yards. The tomb is based on Islamic structure which symbolizes the unification of heaven and earth. The square on which the tomb stands symbolizes the universe. In total, the whole dome symbolizes the throne of Allah as it is supported by pillars at four corners which symbolizes the flow of grace. The tomb also includes the verses from the Holy Quran. The tomb is well-furnished with carpets, lamps, silver doors and others.

Mughal Bridges

During the time of Mughal Emperor Akbar, the Shahi Bridge in Jaunpur was built. The Shahi Bridge was built by Munim Khan in the years 1568–69 under the orders of Mughal Emperor Akbar. The bridge took 4 years to build. Afzal Ali, an Afghan architect, developed it.

Mughal Painting

The Mughal style of miniature painting represents a remarkable fusion of indigenous Indian themes with Persian and later European influences, reflecting a synthesis of diverse artistic traditions. The artworks of this period exhibit a sophisticated blend of Islamic, Hindu, and European visual cultures and aesthetics, producing a richness that surpassed both conventional Indian and Iranian painting of the time. This style's significance lies not only in the extraordinary skill of its artists but also in the vision and patronage of the Mughal rulers, who encouraged a congregation of tastes, philosophies, and faiths through a unique visual language.

Within the Mughal courts, artistic production became formalized with organized workshops, and many skilled artists were brought from Iran, resulting

in a harmonious Indo-Iranian style, especially during the early years of the empire. This artistic eminence was nurtured by the interaction of Indian and Iranian artists, whose collaborative efforts elevated the Mughal painting tradition. The Mughal idiom developed on Indian soil as a consequence of the interaction between pre-Mughal and contemporaneous art schools of India and Persia, rather than in isolation. Indigenous Indian and Mughal painting styles coexisted, assimilating various influences and local talents in distinctive ways, creating a dynamic and enduring legacy in the history of South Asian art.

Self Assessment Questions

S.N.	Questions (5 Marks)	LOCF Mapping		
1	Write a short note on the Five Pillars of Islam.	CO1	PO2	K2
2	Describe the features of Islamic mosques.	CO2	PO2	K2
3	Mention two important mausoleums of Islamic architecture in India.	CO2	PO3	K1
4	State the architectural significance of Quwwat-ul-Islam Mosque.	CO3	PO4	K2
5	List two important features of Qutub Minar.	CO3	PO4	K1
6	Name two Mughal architectural monuments and their locations.	CO4	PO3	K1
7	Identify key features of Mughal paintings.	CO5	PO4	K2
S.N	Questions (8 Marks)	LOCF Mapping		
1	Explain the Five Pillars of Islam and their influence on Islamic architecture.	CO1	PO2	K3
2	Discuss the architectural features of Islamic mosques and mausoleums in India.	CO2	PO4	K3
3	Describe the Quwwat-ul-Islam Mosque and its historical significance.	CO3	PO4	K4
4	Explain the architecture of Qutub Minar and its artistic features.	CO3	PO4	K3
5	Discuss Humayun's Tomb and its contribution to Mughal architecture.	CO4	PO4	K3
6	Explain the architectural and cultural significance of Fatehpur Sikri.	CO4	PO5	K4
7	Analyze the Red Fort in terms of Mughal architecture and symbolism.	CO4	PO6	K4
8	Describe the features of Taj Mahal and explain why it is a world heritage site.	CO4	PO6	K4
9	Discuss the characteristics and themes of Mughal paintings.	CO5	PO4	K3
10	Evaluate the overall contribution of Islamic and Mughal art to Indian cultural heritage.	CO4	PO5	K5

UNIT- V

Learning Objectives

1. To understand the development of Colonial Architecture in India.
2. To study the features of colonial forts in India.
3. To examine the historical importance of Fort St. George in Chennai.
4. To understand the characteristics of Indo-Saracenic Architecture.
5. To study the architectural features of Chatrapati Shivaji Terminal in Mumbai.
6. To examine the importance of Victoria Memorial in Kolkata.
7. To understand the architectural significance of Amir Mahal in Chennai.
8. To study the features of the Senate House, University of Madras.

Course Outcomes

1. Explain the development of Colonial Architecture in India.
2. Describe the features of colonial forts with reference to Fort St. George.
3. Identify the characteristics of Indo-Saracenic style of architecture.
4. Explain the architectural importance of Chatrapati Shivaji Terminal.
5. Describe the historical significance of Victoria Memorial.
6. Explain the architectural features of Amir Mahal.
7. Analyse the structure and importance of the Senate House, University of Madras.
8. Understand the influence of colonial architecture in Indian cities.

Colonial Architecture

Dutch colonial architecture became highly influential during the seventeenth century, particularly in the territory that would later become New York. During this period, the Dutch controlled New Netherlands, and their architectural style reflected a blend of European design principles adapted to the materials and conditions of the New World. Characteristic features of Dutch colonial houses included steeply pitched roofs, gambrel forms, and use of local brick or stone, which together created a distinctive aesthetic that persisted even after the British took control. This style experienced a revival in the twentieth century, known as the Dutch Colonial Revival, demonstrating its enduring appeal.

In contrast, British colonial architecture in the same region evolved in two main periods. The First Period, corresponding to early settlement, was often rudimentary, reflecting practical needs and limited resources. Later, during the Georgian period in the eighteenth century, British colonial architecture became more refined and formal, showcasing symmetry, decorative columns and pilasters, shuttered windows, and prominent chimneys. These features reflected both the wealth and the classical tastes of Britain, producing a distinct contrast with the simpler, adaptive forms of Dutch colonial design while contributing to the overall architectural diversity of early American colonies.

Colonial Architecture

Colonial architecture refers to the building styles used by European settlers in North America, particularly along the Atlantic coast, where many examples still survive today. Faced with unfamiliar environments and limited access to traditional construction materials, colonists adapted by using locally available resources, resulting in a distinctive blend of European design and New World practicality. This synthesis is especially apparent in British and Dutch colonial architecture, where traditional European forms were combined with adaptations suited to local materials and conditions, creating a unique architectural legacy that reflects both heritage and innovation.

British Colonial Architecture

British colonial architecture, prominent along the Atlantic coast, reflects European classical influences, particularly from Ancient Greek and Roman designs, adapted for practical use in the New World. A defining characteristic of these buildings is their symmetry, often with two stories, creating a balanced and orderly appearance. British colonial houses are the most common surviving examples of this style, built to accommodate the steady flow of European settlers. From the early seventeenth century through the American Revolution, British colonial architecture can be divided into two main periods: the First Period, which was simpler and utilitarian, and the Georgian Period, which was more refined and demonstrated the wealth and sophistication of Britain.

Dutch Colonial Architecture

In the seventeenth century, the area now known as New York was the Dutch colony of New Netherlands, with the trading port of New Amsterdam serving as a key hub for transatlantic commerce. Dutch colonial buildings shared certain features with British colonial architecture, such as symmetrical designs, prominent chimneys, and two-story layouts, but they also displayed distinct characteristics. Dutch houses often included Dutch doors, split horizontally so the top could open independently of the bottom, and gambrel roofs, which separated the first and second stories with a double-sloped design. Interiors were commonly plastered with clay and horsehair, materials that were readily available and affordable. While the Dutch lost control of the colony to the British in the 1660s, their architectural contributions, particularly masonry skills and distinctive roof and door designs, continued to influence the built environment in the region.

Colonial Style Buildings

While many examples of colonial style buildings have been destroyed due to the amount of time elapsed since their construction, plenty remain in their stead. The following examples display the aspects of Dutch and British colonial architecture discussed in the above lesson.

Whipple House

The Whipple House was built in 1677 by Captain John Whipple in Ipswich, Massachusetts. The House was built in the Salt Box style and eventually modified from its original form by its inheritors. The building was constructed mainly from wood and serves as an excellent example of First Period British colonial architecture.

Fort St. George

The year 1644 adds another glorious chapter in the history of the South Indian city Chennai, then known as Madras, conferring upon it a gift of the St. George Fort along the shores of Bay of Bengal. Historically famous as White Town, the fort has taken its name from St. George who is believed to have a significant influence in the region during that era and whose birthday coincides with the day of completion of the construction of the fort. The fort is considered to be the first establishment of the British in India. Initially erected as a trading post, it later served as the origin of the modern Indian Army. A live example of the

military architecture marvel, the St. George Fort is probably the most noticeable ancient monument in Chennai. The fort holds great historical importance and is looked after by the Archaeological Survey of India.

Towards the end of the 17th century, the East India Company was fully established within the territory of India, with British primarily focusing on the trade and economic activities. However, as time passed, the company felt the need to have a permanent trading station. The dream was realized when it acquired the coastal land from a chieftain of Vijay Nagar. The company built the fort on this land and expanded their activities. It served as a home away from home for the officials of the East India Company. Furthermore, this helped in the development of the city Madras, now Chennai.

Primarily, the St. George Fort is divided into two sections: St. Mary's Church and the Fort Museum. St. Mary's Church enjoys the status of being one of the oldest surviving churches built by the British in India as well as the oldest Anglican Church on the land of India. This beautiful building, established in 1680 has stood the test of times and still holds the splendour of the yore. The tombstones in its graveyard are incomparable and are seen as the oldest one in India. Another fascinating structure here is the 150 ft tall Flagstaff, made entirely of teakwood. Though the original flagstaff is no more to be seen, its relics are still visible. The church is famously known as the 'Westminster Abbey of the East'.

In the seventeenth century, the area now known as New York was the Dutch colony of New Netherlands, with the trading port of New Amsterdam serving as a key hub for transatlantic commerce. Dutch colonial buildings shared certain features with British colonial architecture, such as symmetrical designs, prominent chimneys, and two-story layouts, but they also displayed distinct characteristics. Dutch houses often included Dutch doors, split horizontally so the top could open independently of the bottom, and gambrel roofs, which separated the first and second stories with a double-sloped design. Interiors were commonly plastered with clay and horsehair, materials that were readily available and affordable. While the Dutch lost control of the colony to the British in the 1660s, their architectural contributions, particularly masonry skills and distinctive roof and door designs, continued to influence the built environment in the region.

Indo- Saracenic architecture



Indo-Saracenic Architecture is a fusion of traditional Indian architecture, Indo-Islamic motifs, and 19th-century British Neo-Gothic and Neo-Classical

styles. The term “Saracen” historically referred to Muslim or Arabic-speaking peoples and was commonly used in Europe until the 19th century. This architectural style emerged in the late 19th century, following the Great Revolt of 1857, when British architects sought to adapt their public buildings to better blend with Indian culture. While the layout and structural engineering—using iron, steel, and poured concrete—remained British, they incorporated Indian and Islamic features such as domes, arches, and jalis into elevations, giving the appearance of traditional Indian structures while maintaining advanced British construction standards.

The adoption of Indian features was influenced by the Arts and Crafts Movement in England, which aimed to revive traditional craftsmanship and reform design in response to industrialization. Prominent architects of the Indo-Saracenic style included Robert Fellowes Chisholm, Samuel Swinton Jacob, Henry Irwin, Edwin Lutyens, and Charles Mant. This style was primarily applied to public and government buildings under the British Raj, as well as palaces for princely rulers. One of the earliest examples is the Chepauk Palace in Chennai, built in 1768 by Paul Benfield, which demonstrates the use of Rajasthani jalis and arched windows inspired by Islamic architecture.

Chatrapati Shivaji Terminus (formerly Victoria Terminus) Indo-Saracenic Architecture

Chatrapati Shivaji Terminus, initially known as Victoria Terminus is one of the iconic examples of Indo-Saracenic Architecture located in Mumbai, Maharashtra. This 127-year-old building was listed as a UNESCO world heritage site in 2004. This building was designed by British architect Frederick William Stevens and is not just an architectural icon but one of the symbols of Mumbai. It took 10 years to construct the building starting in 1878. It is a railway station with a headquarters and also a major international port in India. The marvelous features of these buildings are stone domes, pointed arches, and turrets taken from Indian architecture. Along with these features, there are Gothic characteristics that can be seen on the facade like the gargoyles and allegorical grotesques.

History of Victoria Memorial

The Victoria Memorial, an architectural masterpiece situated in Kolkata, India, stands as a glorious tribute to Queen Victoria and her reign. This majestic monument, constructed between 1906 and 1921, is a symbol of the city's rich history and cultural heritage. Designed by architect William Emerson, the memorial seamlessly blends British and Mughal architectural elements, creating a mesmerizing spectacle that captivates visitors from around the world. Beyond its architectural magnificence and cultural significance, the Victoria Memorial bears witness to the turbulent history of India. The history of Victoria Memorial dates back to the time of British colonial rule, serving as a reminder of that era. However, after India gained independence in 1947, the memorial transformed into a symbol of Kolkata's resilience, representing the struggles and aspirations of the Indian people during the freedom movement.

The Victoria Memorial, a striking architectural landmark in Kolkata, was

conceived as a tribute to Queen Victoria, with its foundation stone laid by the Prince of Wales in 1906. Construction took approximately 15 years, and the memorial was completed in 1921, showcasing a blend of British and Mughal architectural elements. Its surrounding gardens were opened in 1924, followed by the inauguration of the museum and art gallery in 1930. Funded largely through public contributions, the memorial not only exemplifies architectural grandeur but also houses a rich collection of historical artifacts and artworks, including portraits of British royalty, rare photographs, manuscripts, weapons, and textiles. Over the years, renovations and restoration projects have helped preserve its magnificence. Today, the Victoria Memorial stands as both an iconic landmark and a cultural hub, reflecting Kolkata's heritage and the intertwined histories of India and the British Empire, attracting millions of visitors who come to admire its artistry and historical significance.

History of Victoria Memorial's Inception & Construction

The idea of constructing a memorial for Queen Victoria originated in 1901, four years after her death, with the proposal that it be built in one of the three Presidency cities—Calcutta, Madras, or Bombay. Calcutta was ultimately chosen due to its historical significance as the capital during British rule. In 1905, a Royal Commission was established under Lord Curzon, then Viceroy of India, to plan and oversee the construction of the Victoria Memorial Hall. Curzon ensured that the best architects from both Britain and India were consulted for the design. William Emerson of the India Office and Vincent Esch were appointed as the lead architects. Construction began in 1906 and continued for fifteen years, reaching completion in 1921. The memorial was built using the finest quality white Makrana marble from Rajasthan, and different sections of the complex—including the Memorial Hall, gallery wings, and gardens—were constructed under the supervision of Lord Hardinge, Curzon's successor as Viceroy of India.

History of Victoria Memorial's Architecture & Design



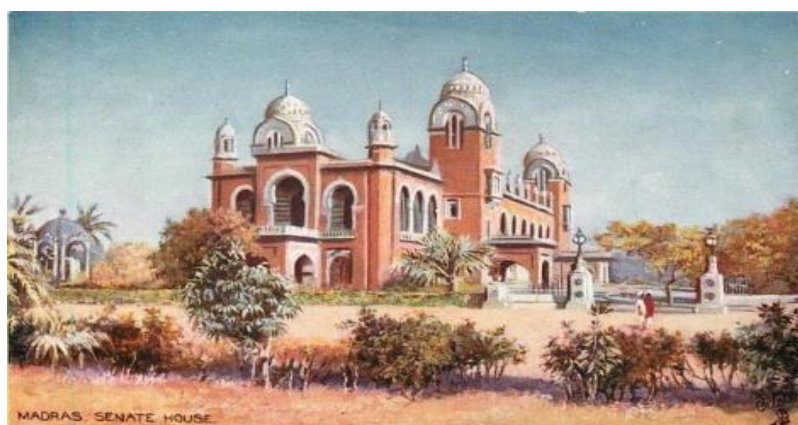
The Victoria Memorial exhibits a distinctive Indo-Saracenic architectural style, drawing inspiration from Muslim buildings in India. Its design features massive domes, arches, balconies, and colonnades, with a central circular hall surrounded by arcades. The major domes include the Durbar Hall dome, which rises to a height of 144 feet, and the inverted lotus-shaped dome. The structure is adorned with intricate carvings, sculptures, and reliefs depicting themes such as

British rule in India, created by notable sculptors including Thomas Horace Leist, John Lockwood Kipling, and William Frederick Woodington. The interiors are richly decorated with materials like Belgian glass, Italian marble, Numidia marble from North Africa, and teak wood from Burma. The complex also includes meticulously designed gardens spread over 60 acres by Jamshedji Burjorji Madan, featuring fountains, pools, lawns, trees, and diverse floral species. The museums within the memorial house collections related to India's history, European paintings, rare books, and documents. Overall, the Victoria Memorial exemplifies a harmonious blend of Western neoclassical style with traditional Indian architectural elements.

Senate House

The Senate House in Madras, designed by Robert Fellowes Chisholm and built between 1869 and 1873, was originally constructed for convocations of the University of Madras, though it has more recently been used for storage. Winning the competition to design both this building and Presidency College marked the beginning of Chisholm's most successful phase in Madras, bringing him recognition from the Governor-General of Madras, Lord Napier. The Senate House is considered Chisholm's "more ambitious Saracenic exercise," conceived symmetrically in a Byzantine manner with four corner towers topped by onion domes. Each face of the towers features intricate polychrome brick and stonework with carved voussoirs, tiled domes, and pendentives, reflecting the sophistication of the new hybrid Indo-Saracenic style. Some scholars, including Paul Walker, speculate that the building may have been completed according to a later design rather than Chisholm's original plan.

A notable feature illustrated in contemporary postcards is the statue of Queen Victoria, described by Philip Davies as "seated in Imperial majesty under a magnificent pavilion of intricate cast-ironwork supplied by Macfarlanes of Glasgow." Edgar Thurston noted that the statue was a replica of a work by Sir Joseph Edgar Boehm, while Mary Togg asserts it was executed by Boehm himself at a cost of £4,700, funded by Rajah Godey Naranyanan Gujputel Rao. The statue was unveiled on 20 June 1887, to commemorate the Queen's Golden Jubilee, and



remains on Wallajah Road to the south of the university. The postcard also captures the Senate House in splendid isolation, emphasizing its architectural grandeur without the presence of later surrounding buildings.

S.N.	Questions (5 Marks)	LOCF Mapping		
1	Write a short note on St. George Fort, Chennai	CO1	PO2	K2
2	Describe the features of Indo-Saracenic architecture.	CO2	PO2	K2
3	Mention two architectural features of Chatrapati Shivaji Terminal, Mumbai.	CO3	PO3	K1
4	State the architectural significance of Victoria Memorial, Kolkata.	CO4	PO4	K2
5	List two features of Amir Mahal, Chennai.	CO5	PO3	K1
6	Name two important buildings of University of Madras related to Indo-Saracenic style.	CO5	PO3	K1
7	Identify key cultural or historical significance of colonial forts and buildings.	CO4	PO5	K2

S.N.	Questions (8 Marks)	LOCF Mapping		
1	Explain the historical and architectural importance of St. George Fort, Chennai.	CO1	PO6	K2
2	Discuss the features of Indo-Saracenic architecture with examples.	CO2	PO4	K3
3	Describe the architectural features of Chatrapati Shivaji Terminal, Mumbai.	CO3	PO4	K3
4	Explain the design and significance of Victoria Memorial, Kolkata.	CO4	PO4	K3
5	Discuss the architectural and historical features of Amir Mahal, Chennai.	CO5	PO4	K3
6	Describe the Senate House of University of Madras and its Indo-Saracenic elements.	CO5	PO4	K3
7	Compare colonial forts and Indo-Saracenic buildings in terms of style and function.	CO2	PO4	K4
8	Examine the cultural and artistic significance of colonial architecture in India.	CO4	PO5	K5
9	Analyze the fusion of European and Indian architectural elements in Chatrapati Shivaji Terminal	CO2	PO3	K4
10	Evaluate the contribution of colonial and Indo-Saracenic architecture to India's heritage	CO4	PO5	K5

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Course Outcomes:

CO 1 Explain the various forms of Indus and Mauryan Art.

CO 2 Compare and contrast the Gandhara and Mathura Schools of Art.

CO 3 Examine the similarities and differences between temple architectural styles.

CO 4 Discuss the relation between the five pillars of Islam and Islamic architecture.

CO 5 Appreciate the features of colonial architecture

CO Mapping with Programme Outcomes

	PO 1	PO 2	PO 3	PO 4	PO 5	PO 6	PO 7	PO 8
CO 1	3	3	2	2	3	3	2	3
CO 2	3	3	2	2	3	3	2	3
CO 3	3	3	2	2	3	3	2	3
CO 4	3	3	2	2	3	2	2	3
CO 5	3	3	2	2	3	3	2	3
Total	15	15	10	10	15	14	10	15
Average	3	3	2	2	3	2.8	2	3

S-Strong (3)

M-Medium (2)

L-Low (1)

CO Mapping with Programme Specific Outcomes

	PSO 1	PSO 2	PSO 3	PSO 4	PSO 5
CO 1	3	3	2	3	2
CO 2	3	3	3	3	3
CO 3	3	3	3	3	3
CO 4	3	3	3	3	3
CO 5	3	3	2	3	2
Total	15	15	13	15	13
Average	3	3	2.6	3	2.6

S-Strong(3)

M-Medium (2)

L-Low (1)