

# **VAC 1 (Understanding India)**

## **Unit 2**

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# **Art and Architecture of Ancient India**

## History of India

It has been divided into 3 periods

Ancient

Medieval

Modern



## A BRIEF TIMELINE ON ANCIENT INDIA

4,00,000 BC – 2500 BC

Paleolithic Age, Mesolithic Age, Neolithic Age and Age in the sub-continent

2500 BC – 1500 BC

Indus Valley Civilization

1500 BC – 1000 BC

The Vedic Age

322 BC – 185 BC

The Mauryan Dynasty

185 BC – 320 AD

The Greek Invasions

320 AD – 520 AD

The Gupta Era

606 AD – 647 AD

Harshavardhana Era

9th Cen. AD – 13th Cen. AD

The Chola Empire

648 AD – 1000 AD

Rashtrakutas, Palas and Pratiharas establish their empire.

## Art and Architecture of Indus valley civilization

Location- Present day Pakistan and northwest India

Two most famous cities: Harappa And Mohenjo-Daro

### Art

1. Seals made of steatite or terracotta depicted animals like bulls, elephants and rhinoceroses and human figures



Unicorn Seal

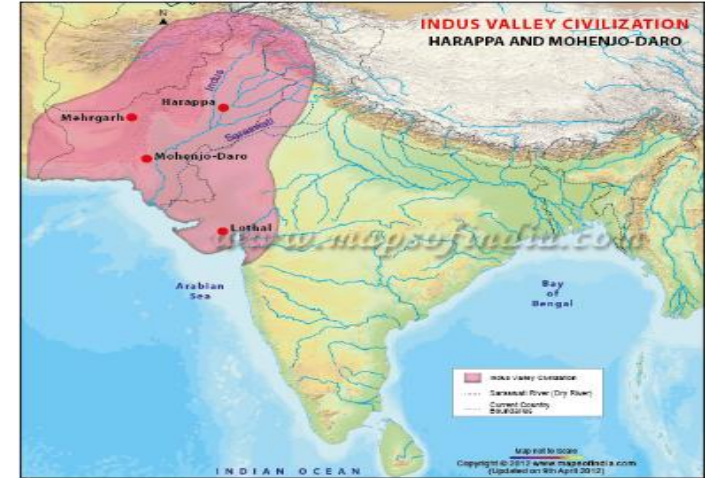


Bull Seal



Pashupati Seal

Seals are believed to be used for trading purpose

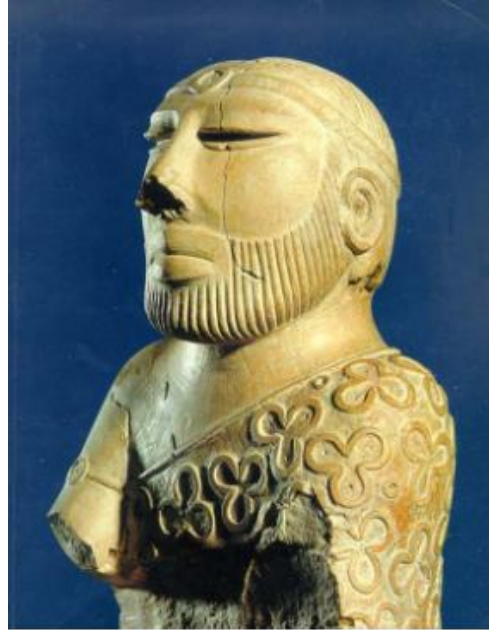




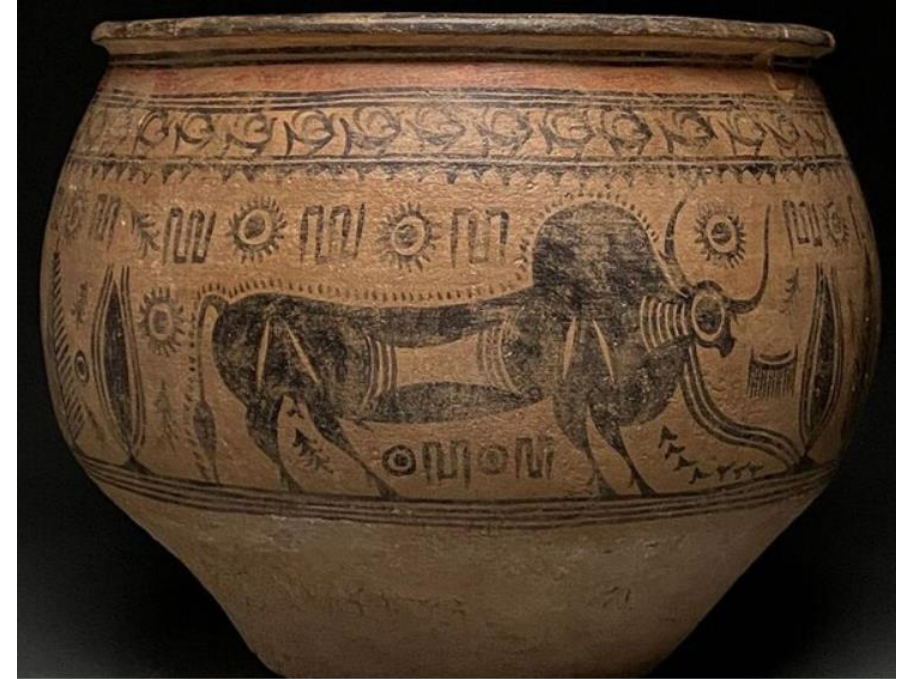
2. Other artistic artifacts included beautifully crafted pottery, detailed sculptures and jewellery



Dancing Girl bronze sculpture  
(National Museum: New Delhi)



Bearded priest draped  
in a shawl.



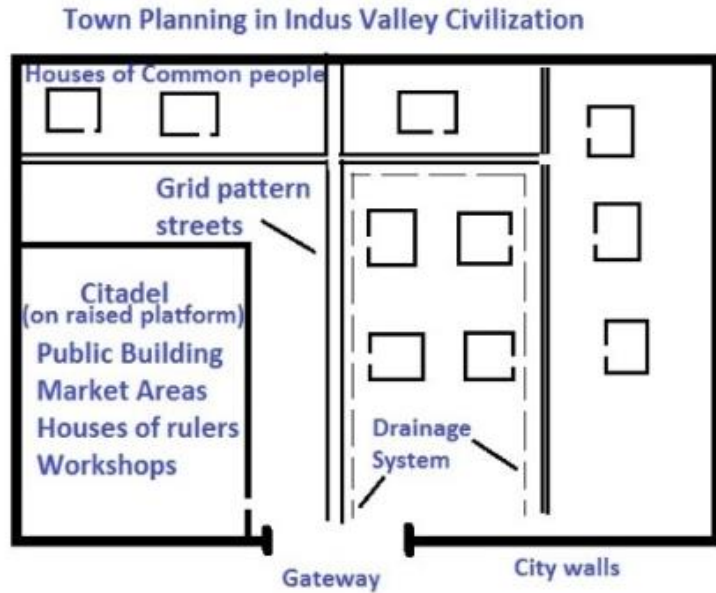
Decorated terracota vessel



Jewellery of Indus valley civilization

## Architecture

They featured remarkable urban planning with well organized blocks, straight roads and complex drainage system. Houses are made of baked bricks and included several rooms, private well and bathrooms.



The great bath of Mohenjodaro



## The Mauryan art and architecture

Mauryan Dynasty: Chandragupta Maurya: The Founder

The Mauryan rulers, particularly Ashoka were patrons of various religions including Jainism, Buddhism, which is reflected in the diverse architectural and artistic achievements of that time

1. Yaksha and Yakshi Statues known for its polished finish and details carving

(Yakshas and Yakshinis are featured in popular art. Friendly nature spirits, often known as fertility spirits, are referred to as Yaksha. Yakshini is the female counterpart of the male Yaksha)



Didarganj Yakshi  
(Bihar)

These rock –cut highly polished caves (viharas) are being used by buddhis monks for living



Barabar Caves in Bihar

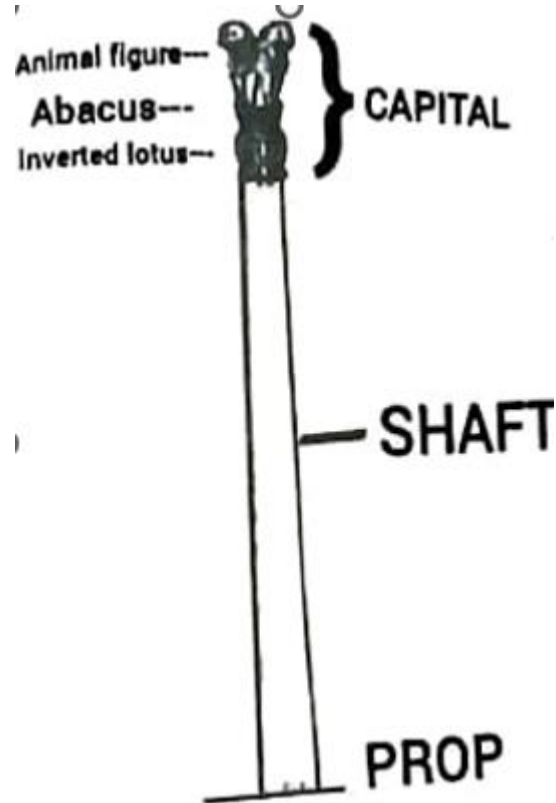


Nagarjuna Caves In Bihar

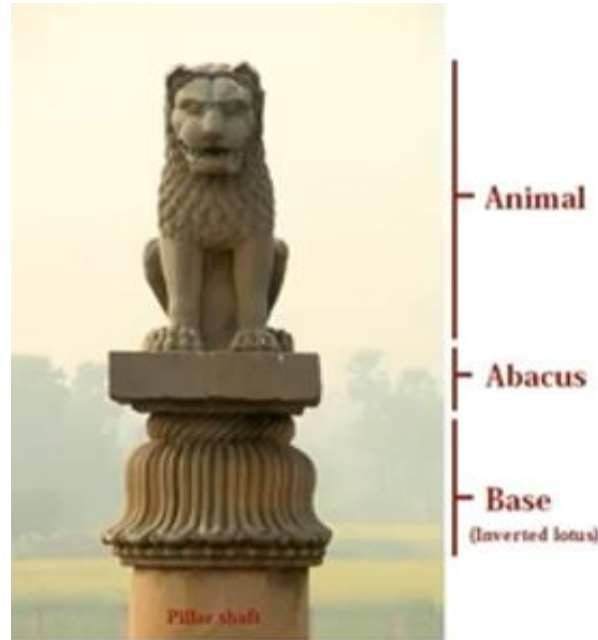


## Pillars

- Most of the pillars are made by Ashoka, these pillars are made to commemorate victory or use as a symbol of state and to propagate sermon as well. These pillars are made of polished sandstone.
- Monolith Shaft
- An excellent example is Ashoka Pillar at Sarnath



Ashokan Pillar



Detailed view of Capital

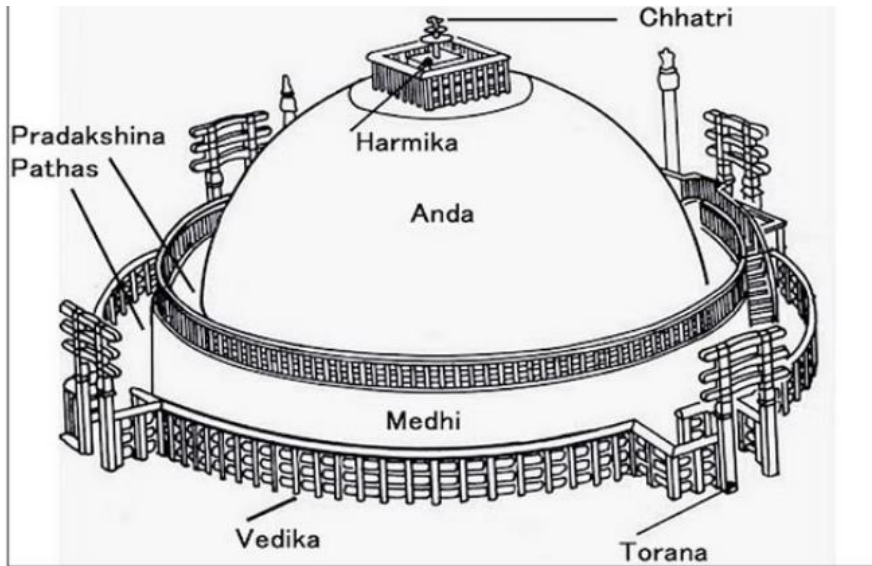


Sarnath Pillar (Varanasi)

- *National Emblem*
- *To commemorate 1<sup>st</sup> sermon of Buddha*
- *Four animals in abacus, elephant, horse, bull and lion. The key wheel (ashok chakra or Dharma chakra) separates the animals from each other.*
- *This 12-bar wheel is also featured in Indian national flag*

## Stupas

- A dome-shaped structure erected as a Buddhist shrine **containing the remains of a holy or sainted person**
- **Ashoka is credited with building 84,000 stupas**



Sachi Stupa, Madhya Pradesh

# Post Mauryan Art and Architecture

## Three school of art

### 1. Gandhara School of Art

- First sculptural representation of buddha in human form
- Gandhara school of art was originally developed in western frontiers of Punjab and border of Afghanistan.
- This school was patronized by both Shaka and Kushan rulers (Kanishka).
- Blended Greek and buddhis style
- Resemble Apollo (Greek God)
- Having Halo
- Muscular body
- Both standing and seated position

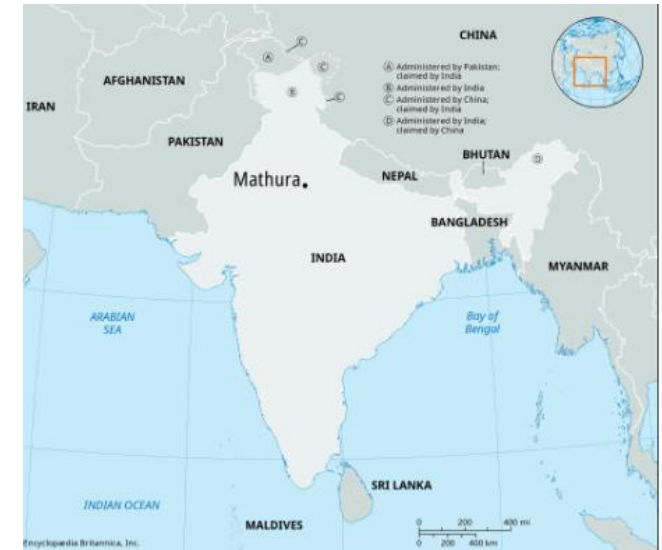


Halo



## 2. Mathura School of Art

- Bank of Yamuna river
- Indigenous
- Buddhism, Jainism and Hindu images are found
- Patronized by Kushana
- Focus on emotion (facial expression)
- Delighted Buddha image



Buddha Image



Lord Vishnu in Mathura  
School of Art Style



Head of Jain Tirthankara



### 3. Amravati School of Art

- Unlike Gandhara and Mathura schools which focused on single image, Amravati school laid more emphasis on the use of dynamic images or narrative art (like jataka tales)
- Amravati art initially developed on the bank of river Krishna
- Patronized by Satvahana rulers
- Mainly Buddhism



Amaravati School of Sculpture

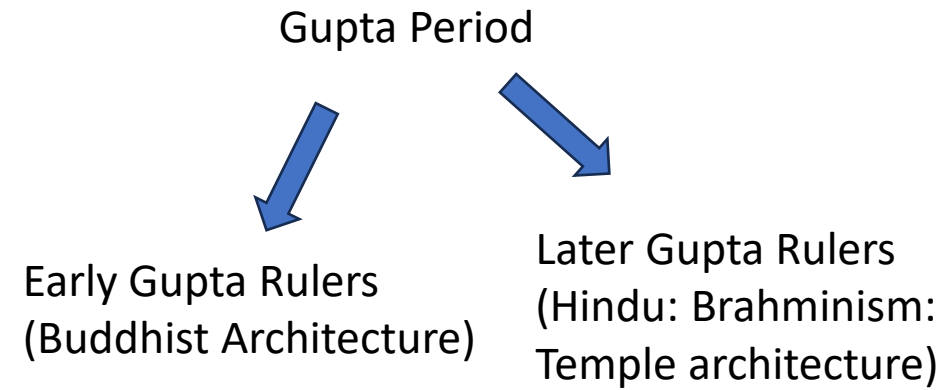


Gandhara	Mathura	Amravati
1. High influence of helenistic and greek art features.	1. Indegenous in nature	1. Indegenous in nature
2. Grey-sandstone is used. (we also find images made of stucco with lime plaster)	2. Spotted red sandstone	2. White marble
3. Mainly Buddhist images are found	3. Buddhism, Jainism and hindu images are found.	3. Mainly Buddhism
4. Patron- kushana	4. Kushana	4. Shatavahanas
5. Found in north-west india	5. North india. Mainly region of Mathura	5. Deccan region near Krishna-godavari delta.
6. Spiritual Buddha images. Very stylish with wavy hair,	6. Delighted Buddha and not spiritual look	6. Mainly depicts stories of jatakas.
7. Has beard and moustache.	7. No beard and moustache	
8. Lean body.	8. Strong muscular feature	
9. Both seated and standing images are found.	9. Most of them are seated.	
10. Eyes are half closed and ears are large	10. Eyes are open with small Ears.	

## The Gupta period (319 AD to 467 AD art and architecture)

Founder of Gupta dynasty- Sri Gupta

Importance rulers- Chandragupta II, Samudragupta



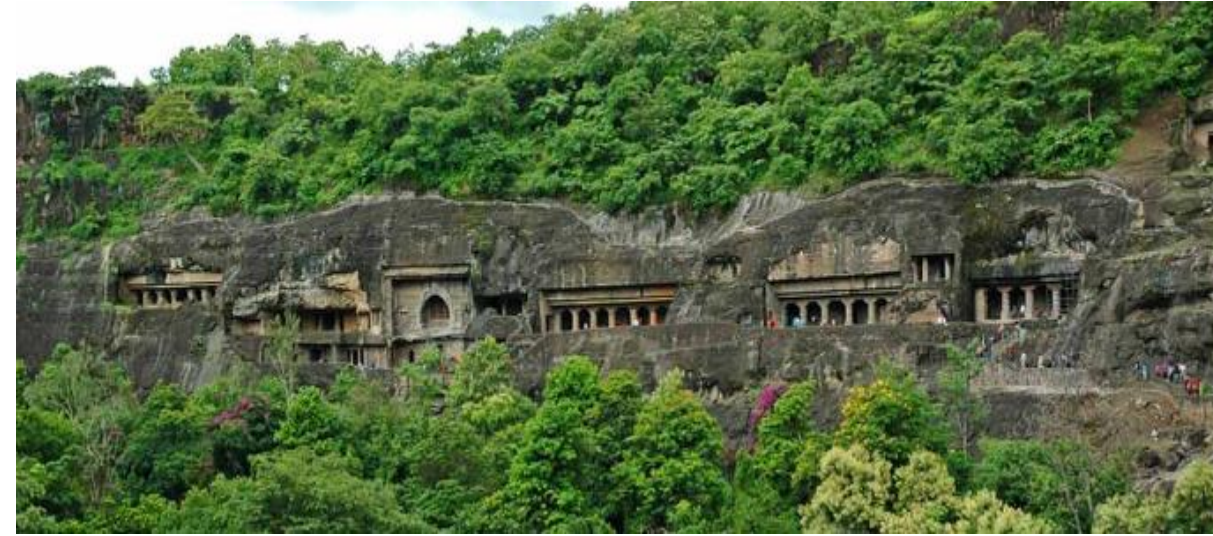


# Cave architecture

## 1. Ajanta Caves (200BC to 650 AD)

(Aurangabad, Maharashtra)

- Total 29 caves i.e. 25 viharas + 4 chaitya (prayer hall)
- Mural painting (direct painting on walls)
- Use of Fresco painting
- Absence of blue colour
- Theme: Buddhism
- Some prominent sculptures are i) Mahaparinirvana of Buddha in cave no.26
- Naga king and his consort in cave no. 19



**Ajanta Caves**



**Cave no. 26 image**



**Cave no. 19 image**



**Fresco painting**

(Fresco is a [mural](#) painting technique that involves applying paints upon freshly laid ("wet") lime plaster)



## 2. Ellora Caves (5 AD to 11 AD)

(Aurangabad, Maharashtra)

- 34 caves (17 Brahminical, 12 Buddhist, 5 Jain)
- Cave 1-12: Buddhist
- Cave 13-29: Hindu
- Cave 30-40: Jain
- The Hindu and Buddhist caves were predominately constructed by Rastrakuta dynasty and Jain caves by Yadava Dynasty

Prominent Caves:



**Cave no.10:** Chaitya cave of Vishwakarma



**Cave no. 12:** 3 Storeyed row of Manushi Buddha



**Cave no 14:** Ravan ki khai



**Cave no. 15:** Dasavatara cave



**Cave no. 16:** Kailash Temple (monolith, developed under the patronage of Rashtrakuta king, Krishna I

## Other caves

### Bagh Caves:

Located on the bank of Baghni River in Madhya Pradesh.

### Junagadh Caves:

These are Buddhist caves located in Junagadh district of Gujarat.

A unique feature of the Junagadh caves is the presence of a 30-50 ft high citadel known as "Upar Kot" in front of the prayer hall.

### Mandapeshwar Caves:

Located in Borivalli near Mumbai and also known as Montperir caves, it was developed in late Gupta period as a Brahmanical cave later converted in Christian Cave.

### Udayagiri caves (not to be confused with Udayagiri-Khandagiri Caves in Odisha)

It is located in Vidisha, Madhya Pradesh. Created in early 5th century AD under the patronage of Chandragupta II. Sculpture of Varaha (Boar incarnation of Vishnu)

Nasik caves (23 Buddhist caves, also known as Pandav Leni)

Place: Nasik, Maharashtra

## Stupa

- Decline in the development of stupas
- Most important stupa is Dhamek stupa, Sarnath, Varanasi

## Sculpture

- Use of cream colour sandstone
- Use of metal
- Dressed (Lacked nakedness)
- Decorated Halo
- Example: Sultanganj Buddha



Sultanganj Buddha



Dhamek Stupa



## Temple Architecture of Gupta Period

- The Gupta period (4th–6th century CE) is renowned for its contributions to Indian temple architecture, its laid the foundation of temple architecture in India, marking a crucial transition from simple, early forms to more complex and developed temple structures.
- Gupta period was the beginning of the free style temple architecture. While earlier religious architecture in India primarily focused on rock-cut cave.
- Emergence of Square sanctum (Grabhagriha) and pillar porch (mandapa)
- Earlier temples had flat roofs but later sikhara develop.
- Temple walls were adorned with sculpture of deities and other figures.
- Gupta temples were constructed using both stone and brick.



Temple no. 17, Sanchi, MP



Bhitargaon Temple, Kanpur



Parvati temple, Nachna  
Kuthara, MP



## Temple evolution during Gupta Period

- **First type:** Square temples with flat terraces, surrounded by pillars, with an **entrance**, **garbhagriha**, and **mandapa**. Example: Kankali Devi temple at Tigawa.
- **Second type:** Similar to the first, but with a **Pradakshina** area and two-storeyed temples, like the **Shiva temple in Bhumara**
- **Third type:** Square temples with a pyramidal roof (**shikhara**), higher platform, seen in the **Dashavatara temple with ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu**.
- **Fourth type:** Rectangular temples with a hollow roof, such as the **Kapoteswara temple**.
- **Fifth type:** Circular temples with distinct corners creating a rectangular pattern, like the **Maniyar Math in Rajgir**.



Kankali Devi temple at Tigawa



Shiva temple in Bhumara



Dashavatara temple,  
Deogarh, UP



Kapoteswara temple

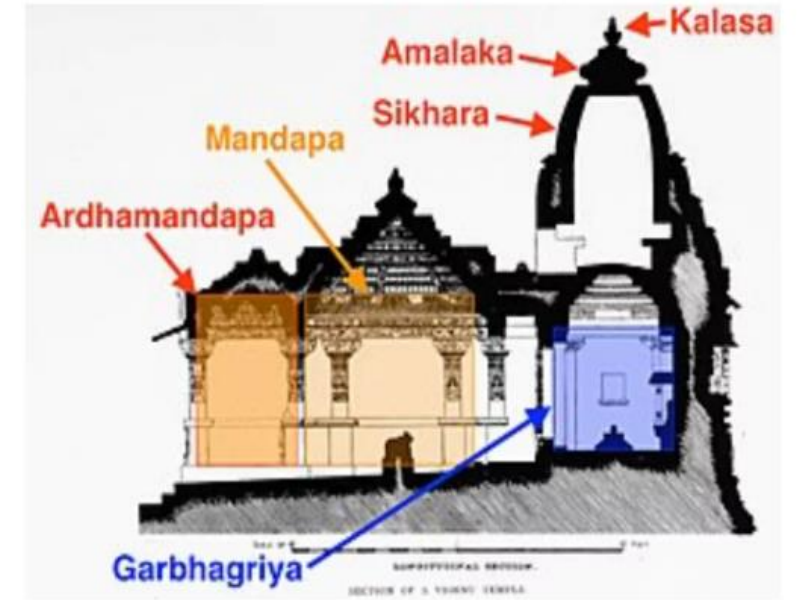


Maniyar Math in Rajgir

# Temple Architecture

## Structure of the Hindu Temple

- **Sanctum (Garbhagriha):** The sanctum, initially a small cubicle with a single entrance, evolved into a larger chamber over time. It is designed to house the main icon.
- **Entrance (Mandapa):** The entrance to the temple, whether a **portico or collonaded hall**, serves as a space for accommodating a large number of worshippers.
- **Architectural Elements:** In freestanding temples, a mountain-like spire is featured, taking the form of a curving **Shikhar in North India** and a **pyramidal tower known as a vimana in South India**.
- **Vahan and Dhvaj:** Positioned axially before the sanctum, the **vahan represents the mount** or vehicle of the **main deity**, accompanied by a **standard pillar, or Dhvaj**.



## **Division of Indian Temple Architecture**

Indian temple architecture is broadly classified into three main styles based on regional, structural, and stylistic variations. These are:

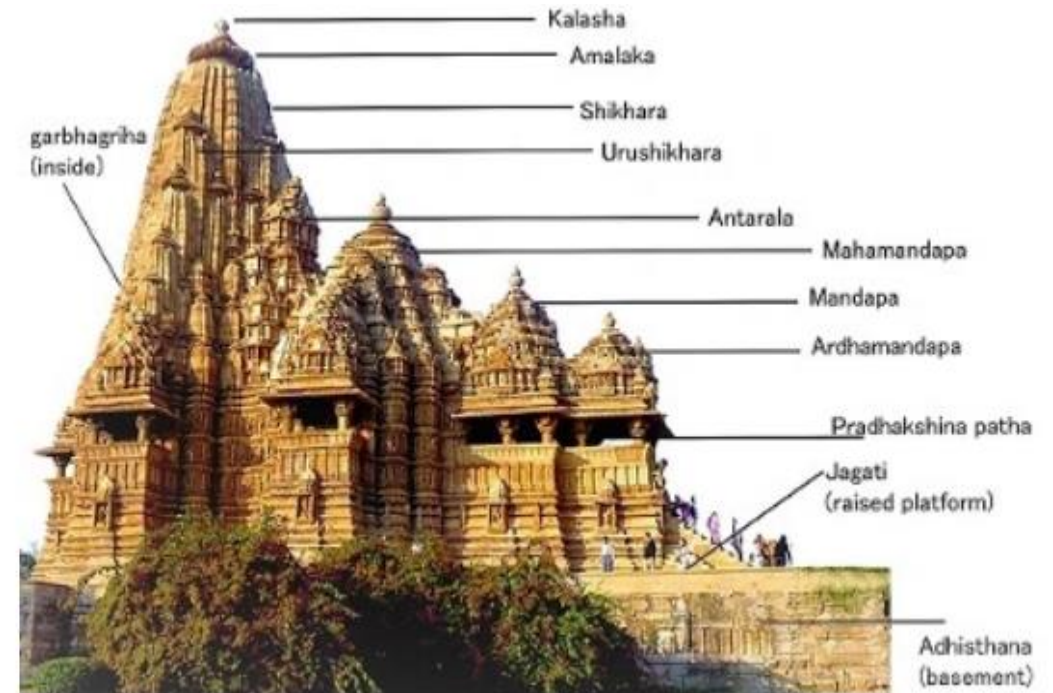
1. Nagara (Northern Style)
2. Dravida (Southern Style)
3. Vesara (Hybrid or Mixed Style)

## Nagara (Northern Style)

• **Location:** Predominantly found in North India, including regions such as Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Odisha, and Maharashtra.

• **Key Features:**

- **Shikhara (Tower):** The most prominent feature of Nagara style temples is the shikhara, which is a tall, curved or beehive-shaped superstructure above the sanctum. The shikhara is often subdivided into smaller shikharas or projections.
- **Multiple Shikharas:** The central tower is usually the tallest, surrounded by smaller towers that mimic the main shikhara, creating a hierarchical effect.
- **Garbhagriha (Sanctum):** The sanctum housing the deity is generally a simple square structure.
- **Amalaka and Kalasha:** The shikhara is often crowned with a round, ribbed stone (amalaka) and a finial or pot-like structure (kalasha).
- **Mandapa (Hall):** These temples often have mandapas, which are pillared halls for devotees.
- **Lack of Elaborate Boundaries:** Unlike Dravidian temples, Nagara temples often lack elaborate boundary walls or large gateways.







Sun temple, Konark, Odisha



Kandariya mahadeva temple Khajuraho,  
Madhya Pradesh



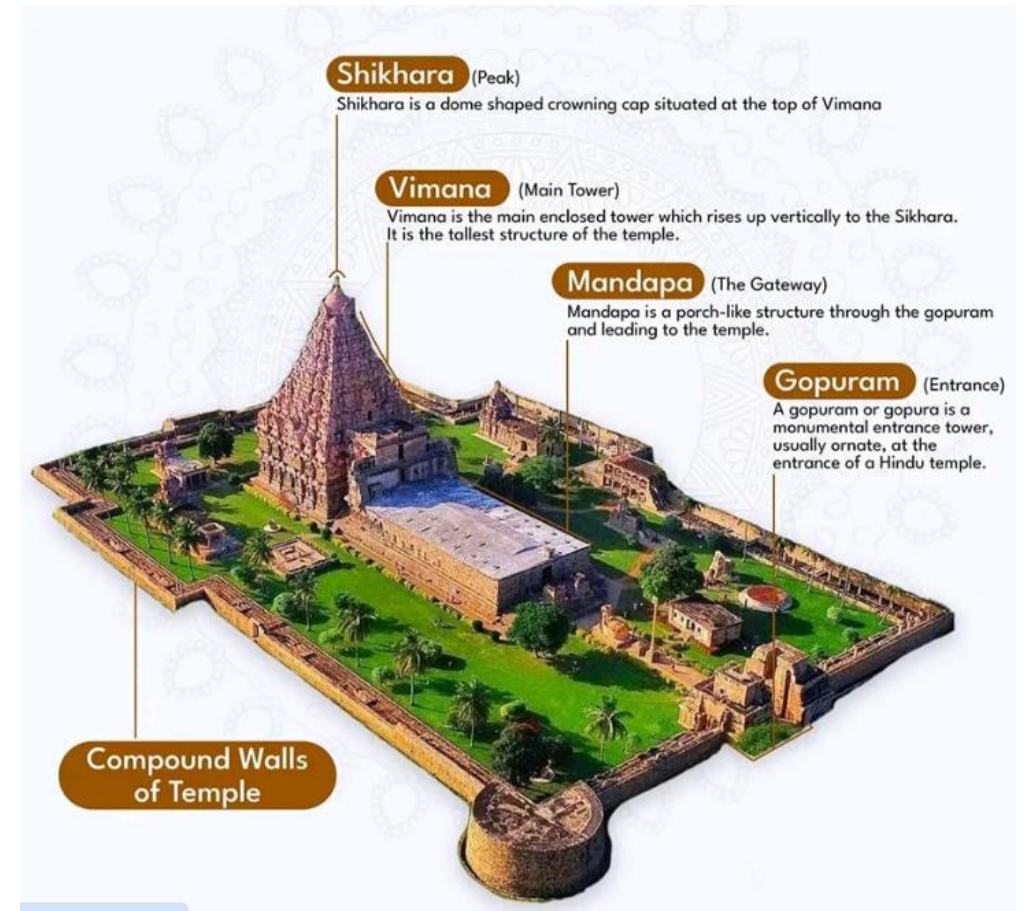
Jagannath Temple, Puri,  
Odhisha

## Dravida (Southern Style)

• **Location:** Primarily in South India, covering Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Telangana.

• **Key Features:**

- **Vimana (Tower):** The vimana is a pyramidal, tiered tower with a flat or slightly convex top, directly above the sanctum. Unlike the curved shikhara of the Nagara style, Dravidian vimanas have stepped or receding stories. In the South Indian temples, the word **Shikhara** is used only for the crowning element at the top of the temple which is equivalent to the **amalaka** and **kalasha** of North Indian temples.
- **Gopurams (Gateway Towers):** Large, ornate gateway towers (gopurams) at the entrance of temple complexes.
- **Enclosed Temple Complex:** Dravidian temples are often enclosed within high walls, with concentric courtyards leading to the sanctum.
- **Mandapams:** These temples usually have several mandapas, including pillared halls and separate halls for various rituals.
- **Water Tanks:** A temple tank or water reservoir is often an essential part of the complex.
- **Ornamentation:** Dravidian temples are known for their intricate stone carvings depicting deities, mythological scenes, and motifs.







Brihadeshwara temple, Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu  
(Chola Dynasty)



Meenakshi Temple, Madurai, Tamil Nadu  
(Pandya Dynasty)



Shore temple, Mahabalipuram, Tamil Nadu  
(Pallava Dynasty)

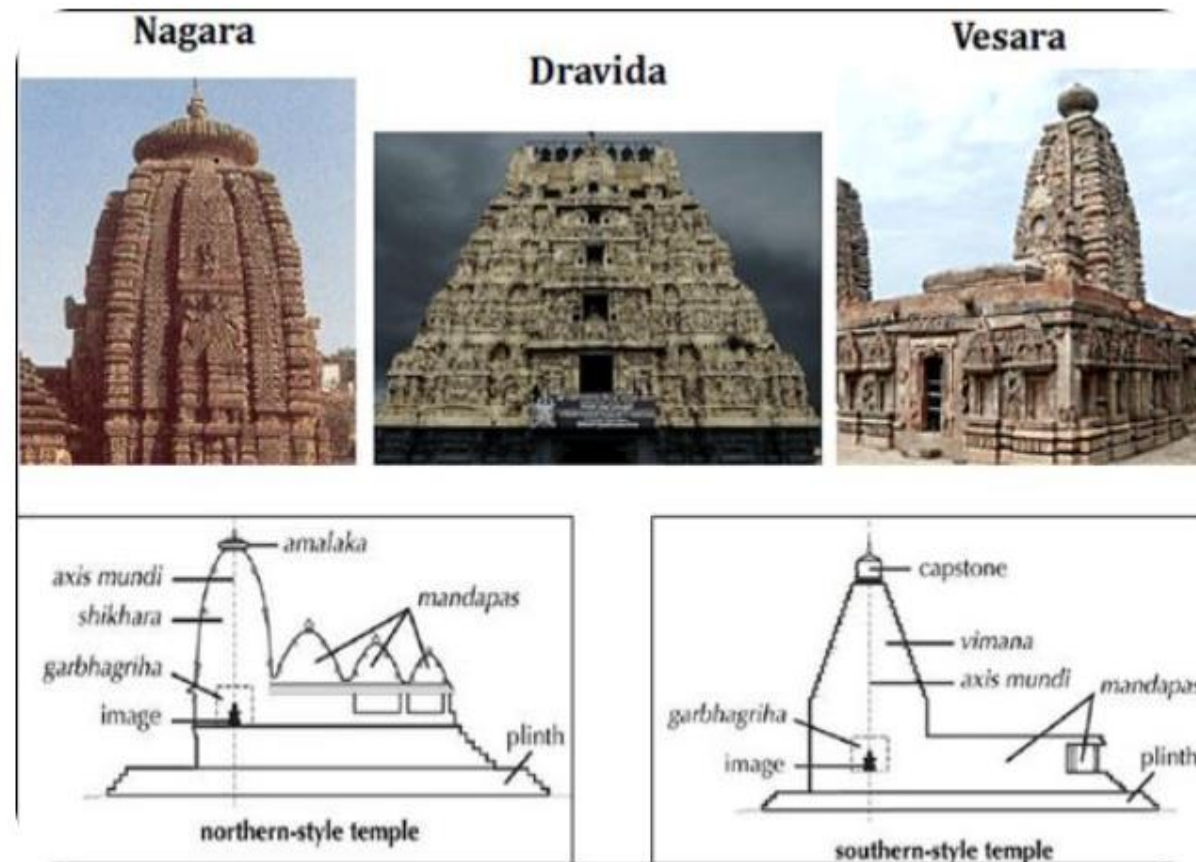


## Vesara (Hybrid or Mixed Style)

• **Location:** Vesara architecture developed primarily in the Deccan region, including Karnataka and parts of Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra.

• **Key Features:**

- **Combination of Nagara and Dravida Elements:** Vesara temples combine aspects of both northern and southern styles. For example, they may have a southern-style vimana with northern-style shikharas.
- **Shikhara Variations:** In Vesara style, the shikhara is usually shorter and has unique shapes—often circular or stellate (star-shaped).
- **Complex Floor Plans:** The floor plans often show star-like projections, especially in the Hoysala style, where star-shaped or polygonal plans are common.
- **Intricate Carvings:** Vesara temples, particularly those built by the Hoysalas, are noted for their extremely detailed and intricate carvings on walls, pillars, and ceilings.
- **Multiple Mandapas:** Vesara temples frequently have multiple pillared halls with exquisite sculptural details.





Hoysala Temple, Karnataka



Virupaksha Temple, Pattadakal, Karnataka

The Gupta period is known as the "**Golden Age of India**" because of the many advancements in science, art, literature, religion, and medicine that took place during this time:

**The Gupta Empire's achievements in the field of science are :-**

- The scientists of the Gupta era could detect eclipses using their own technology and they even knew about the presence of 7 planets of the solar system.
- Aryabhata was one of the most renowned mathematicians and scientists of the era who determined that the earth revolves around the sun along with rotating on its axis.
- Aryabhata also claimed the earth to be spherical and he even calculated the earth's circumference.
- Medicinal progress such as using particular herbs for treating wounds.
- Mathematicians of this era invented the decimal system.

**The Gupta Empire's achievements in the field of literature are :-**

- The 18 Puranas were written during this era and they preserve the era's tradition, religious and philosophical principles etc.
- The Indian epics of Ramayana and Mahabharata were completed in the 4th Century AD.
- Kalidasa was a writer of this period and his works such as Meghaduta, Raghuvamsa and Kumarasambhava are considered as classics. His poems and prose were among the best literary works of the time.



### **Achievements in the field of art for the Gupta Empire are as follows :-**

- Cave temples were mainly built in the Gupta era. Famous cave temples of Ajanta and Bagh were made by cutting into rocks and were mainly Buddhist temples.
- Cave temples of Udaygiri, which represented the Hindu culture.
- The cave paintings of both Bagh and Ajanta caves .
- A copper statue of Lord Buddha in Sultanganj, Bihar.

The achievements of the Gupta Empire is actually unending but here were some of the main achievements.

### **Achievements in the field of Medicine for the Gupta period are as follows**

The Gupta period saw the writing of important works such as the Charaka Samhita and the Sushruta Samhita. The smallpox vaccination was also introduced during this time

## Art and Architecture of Medieval India (8<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> century)

Period	Key Features	Notable Dynasties and Empires
Early Medieval (8th–12th century)	Emergence of regional kingdoms, religious diversity, Bhakti movement beginnings	Palas, Rashtrakutas, Cholas, Rajputs
Late Medieval (13th–18th century)	Islamic rule, Delhi Sultanate, Mughal Empire, Bhakti & Sufi movements, cultural synthesis	Delhi Sultanate, Vijayanagara, Mughals, Marathas, Sikhs

# MEDIEVAL INDIA HISTORY

(HINDI)

## DELHI SULTANATE

THE SLAVE DYNASTY (1206 - 1290)

THE KHILJI DYNASTY (1290 - 1320)

THE TUGHLAQ DYNASTY (1320 - 1414)

THE SAYYID DYNASTY (1414 - 1421)

THE LODHI DYNASTY (1451 - 1526)

## MUGHAL DYNASTY

BABUR (1526 - 30)

HUMAYUN (1530 - 56)

AKBAR (1556 - 1605)

JAHANGIR (1605 - 27)

SHAHJAHAN (1627 - 57)

AURANGZEB (1657 - 1707)

## ADVENT EUROPEANS

ADVENT OF PORTUGUESE

ARRIVAL OF DUTCH

ADVENT OF ENGLISH

ARRIVAL OF FRENCH



## 1. Hindu Temple Architecture

**South India:** The Chola, Hoysala, and Vijayanagara empires produced grand temples with intricate sculptures, such as the Brihadeshwara Temple in Tamil Nadu, a Chola masterpiece. These temples were designed in Dravidian style with large gopurams (towered gateways), finely detailed stone carvings, and large courtyards.

**North India:** Rajput architecture was prominent, exemplified by temples in Khajuraho and Modhera. The Nagara style of temple architecture, characterized by its tall shikhara (spire) and lack of gopurams, was common in this region.

## Characteristics of the Architecture during Sultanate period

1. **Combination of Indo-Islamic architecture:** The buildings of sultanate period were designed by Muslim architecture but they had to employ Indian craftsmen who had their own method of construction. Therefore their monuments shows a blend of Hindu and Islamic style.
2. **Buildings constructed with the materials of Hindu temples:** In the beginning, several buildings are constructed out of the materials used in the temples that were destroyed by some of the Muslim rulers.
3. **Arched and domes in the Muslim structures:** The use of arch and dome added charm to the Muslim buildings and also enabled them to dispense with the need of a large number of pillars to support the roof (used by Hindus to support the roof of their temples).
4. **Carvings:** Characterized by intricate calligraphic inscriptions, floral motifs, and geometrical patterns. Arabic and Persian inscriptions were often paired with Indian motifs like lotus patterns and hanging bells.
5. **Use of stones:** During Sultanate period several types of coloured stones like red, yellow, light black and white marbles was used.

## Art and architecture of sultanate period

### Architectural Monuments of the Slave Sultanates

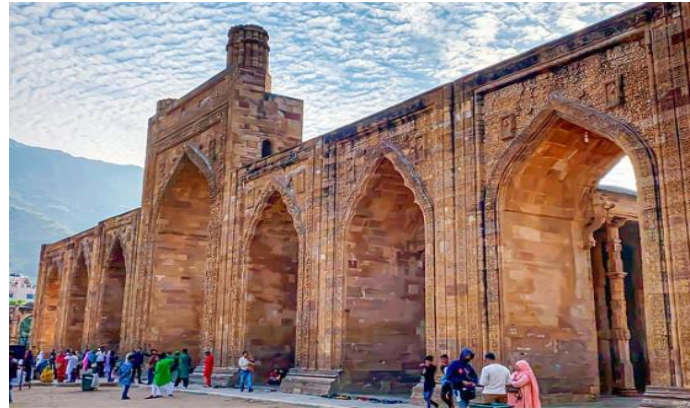
- The Slave Dynasty, founded by Qutb-ud-din Aibak, was the first Islamic rule established in Delhi.
- He started with the construction of buildings of mosques as a symbol of Islamic victory.
- In the beginning, they converted temples and other structures demolished into mosque.
- There was an excessive use of red sandstone, arches and domes.
- He constructed mosques of Quwat –ul-Islam in Delhi (near Qutub Minar) and Adhai din ka Jhonpara in Ajmer. These were built by using materials obtained by destroying temples and Sanskrit college respectively.
- Aibak started construction of world famous Qutub Minar in 1199 in the memory of sufi saint Khwaja Qutubuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki. The construction was completed by Iltutmish.
- The **tomb of Iltutmish**, [Qutub Minar Complex](#), was built in **1235 A.D**, is a beautiful monument of Persian art.



## Some Architectural Monuments of Slave Dynasty



Quwwat –ul-Islam mosque, Delhi



Adhai din ka Jhonpara mosque, Ajmer, Rajasthan



Sultan garhi tomb, Malakpur



Qutub Minar, Delhi



Tomb of Iltutmish, Delhi

## Some notable Architectural Monuments of the Khilji Sultanates

- **Alai Darwaza:** Constructed by Alauddin Khilji as the main gateway to the Qutub Minar complex, the Alai Darwaza (southern gateway of Quwat –ul-Islam) is notable for its true arch design, a square plan, and highly detailed decorative inlay work in red sandstone and white marble.
- **Siri Fort:** Alauddin Khilji built Siri Fort to serve as his capital. This large fortified city used thick, rounded bastions, and large, thick walls. It served both defensive and administrative purposes



Alai Darwaza Delhi



Siri Fort, Delhi

## Some Architectural Monuments of Tughlaq Dynasty

The style of architecture underwent a marked change under the Tughlaq dynasty. In contrast to lavish ornamentation of the preceding centuries their buildings were characterized by massiveness and extreme simplicity. Economic difficulties might have been one of the reason. Some notable monuments are

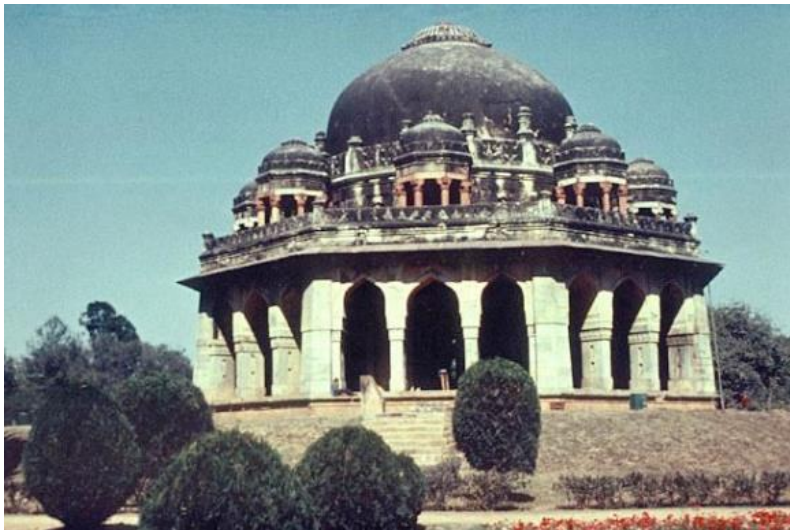
- Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq constructed the new city of Tughluqbad east of Qutub area, his own tomb and a palace.
- Muhammad Bin Tughlaq constructed the new city of Jahanpanah near city of old Delhi, the fort of Adilabad near Tughlaqabad.
- Firoz Shah Tughlaq is credited with the construction of several buildings and founded many towns. Among them. notable bulbings of the the new city of Firozabad, the palace fort known as Kotla Firuz Shah within it, a college and his own tomb. He also build number of mosque such as kali Masjid and Babampuri.



## Sayyids and Lodis

These dynasties ruled during a period of political instability, they left behind notable architectural innovations, especially in tomb architecture.

- A large number of tombs were built, mostly on the pattern of Khan-i-Jahan Tilangani's octagonal mausoleum. The important mausoleum built on this model are tombs of Muhammad Shah Sayyid and Sikandar Lodi
- Lodi sultans adopted a new style of constructing tombs on a raised platform. Some tombs were built within parks eg. Tomb of Sikander Lodi within Lodi Garden (New Delhi).
- Among the most important mosques was the "Moth ki Masjid" (New Delhi)



**Muhammad Shah Sayyid, New Delhi**



**Lodi Garden, New Delhi**

## Sultanate Art Forms

- **Painting:** Limited due to Islamic prohibitions against idol worship, but some paintings influenced by Iranian art were produced.
- **Music:** Introduction of new ragas and instruments like the sitar and tabla, with notable contributions from Amir Khusro.
- **Sculpture:** Suffered due to iconoclastic actions of Muslim invaders; however, it continued in Hindu-ruled regions like the Vijayanagara Empire.

- **Metallurgy:** Advanced art of making pottery and metal articles with colorful designs, widely used in royal and noble households.

## Mughal architecture

The Mughals built magnificent forts, places, gates, public buildings, mosques and baolis(water tanks or well), etc. In fact use of running water even in their palaces and pleasure resorts was a special feature of the Mughals.

### Evolution of Mughal Architecture

#### **Babur (1526–1530):**

- Focused on garden design rather than monumental architecture.

#### **Humayun (1530–1556):**

- Early efforts were modest, but after his death, his tomb (known as Humayun tomb, build by his widow Bega Begum) set a new benchmark.

#### **Akbar (1556–1605):**

- The first Mughal king with the time and resources to engage in extensive construction was Akbar. Some of the notable work are

**Fatehpur Sikri (36 km from Agra):** Akbar's capital city, showcasing buildings like Buland Darwaza, Jama Masjid, Panch Mahal, Jodha Bai Mahal etc. There are hundreds of building, which are all beautiful. It is probably difficult to find out so many beautiful buildings at one place.

**Agra Fort:** Built of red sandstone, within the fort, Akbar built Jahangir Mahal for the residence of his son. The building is wholly Hindu in design and workmanship

The Gujrat style of architecture is used most widely in the palace built probably for its Rajput wife and wives



**Jahangir (1605–1627):**

- More interest in painting and gardening than in architecture.

**Shah Jahan (1628–1658):**

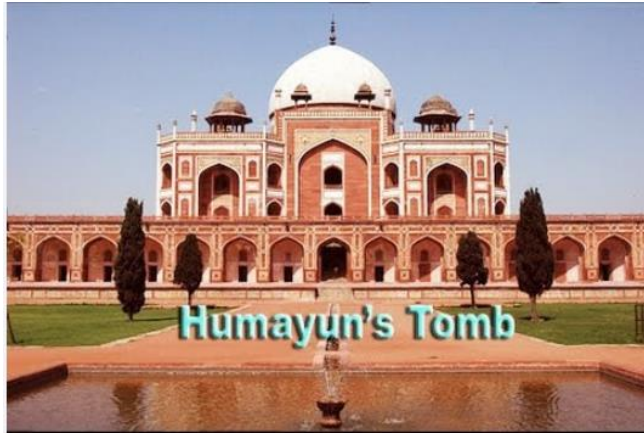
Shah Jahan's reign marked the zenith of the Mughal architecture. During his time a perfect assimilation of the Hindu and Muslim architecture took place. The extensive use of marble and *pietra-dura* characterized all his major buildings. Some notable buildings are:

- Taj Mahal: A symbol of love and architectural perfection, built for Mumtaz Mahal
- Red Fort: A grand palace-fort with impressive halls and mosques.
- Jama Masjid (Delhi): One of the largest mosques in India.

**Aurangzeb (1658–1707) and Later Mughals:**

Mughal architecture began to decline after the death of Shah Jahan

## Some notable Architectural Monuments of Mughal Dynasty



Humayun Tomb, Delhi



Agra Fort, Agra



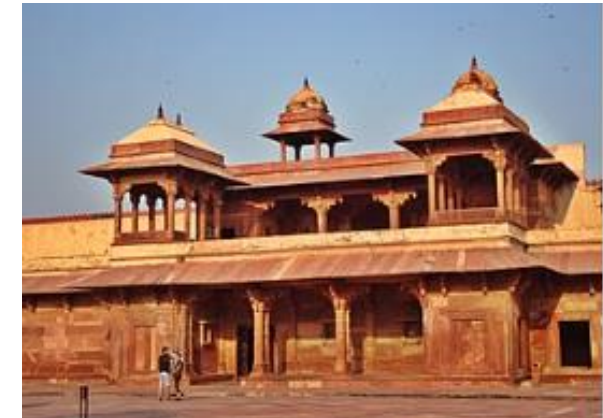
Taj Mahal, Agra



Buland Darwaza



Panch Mahal



Grand gateway of [Jodha Bai Mahal](#)

**Some monuments in Fatehpur Sikri town**

## Mughal Painting

Mughal painting echoes an elite mixture of Indian, Persian and Islamic styles. Indian Mughal paintings emerged during the rule of Mughal Emperor, Humayun (1530-1540). When he returned to India from the outcast, he additionally brought along two eminent Persian artists, Mir-Sayyid Ali and Abd-ussamad. Mughal paintings of India advanced as well as flourished under the reign of Mughal Emperors, Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan.

### Growth of Mughal Painting

#### 1. Akbar

- Mughal painting has advanced largely in the reign of Akbar ☐
- The paintings are usually based on tales and epics like the Mahabharata, Ramayana and Persian epics.
- It also started demonstrating an enriched naturalism, with animal tales, landscape, portraits, etc.  
☐ Akbar established a separate department for painting.
- He started the concept of Karkhana or **Tasvir khana**. ☐ Indian painters were also present in karkhana. That's why there is Indian influence in the paintings. ☐
- Famous painters of that time are Dashwant, Baswan and Kesu. Most of the paintings during Akbar's reign were miniature paintings.

## **Jahangir**

- Mughal Emperor Jahangir ruled from 1605 to 1627
- He stretched great support to several art forms, specifically paintings.
- This era has seen enhancement in brushwork, along with the usage of much lighter and subdued colors. ¶ The main themes of this era's paintings were revolved around the events from the life of Jahangir's, along with portraits, birds, flowers, animals, etc.
- He also started the portrait paintings.
- Decoration of margins started from his time.
- He also has his own workshop for painting.
- One of the famous painters of that time was Ustad Mansoor. And famous paintings of that time are zebra, Turkey, and Maulana-do-Pyaza.

## **Shah Jahan**

The elegance and modification of the Jahangir period were seen at the time of Shah Jahan also.

The themes were musical parties, lovers on terraces and gardens, ascetics gathered around a fire, etc.

## **Decline**

- The Aurangzeb did not pay too much attention to the development of the Mughal paintings which led to dispersal of artists to different places of the country.
- The period of Muhammad Shah did experience a short revitalization of the Mughal paintings.
- With the onset of Shah Alam II, the art almost became non-existent and alternative school of painting, recognized as Rajput paintings, started developing.



# Rajput Painting

## Themes

- **Subjects:** Indian epics, romantic Vaishnava literature, and musical genres.
- **Styles:** Confluence of folk art and classical traditions.

## Characteristics

- **Scale:** Usually small, with detailed and vibrant depictions.
- **Influence:** Popular Vaishnavism, emphasizing the worship of Lord Rama and Krishna.

## Example

- **Rajput Miniatures:**
  - **Period:** Flourished from the 16th to the 19th centuries.
  - **Significance:** Reflect the cultural and artistic sensibilities of the Rajput courts.

## Music in Mughal Empire

- Mughals were great patrons of **Music**. It was another field in which Hindus and Muslims collaborated.
- Akbar was a great fan of music and was a patron of all those who practised it.
- Akbar was an accomplished musician. He continued his studies in Hindu vocalisation with **Lal Kalawant**, who taught him "every breathing and sound that pertains to the Hindi language."
- According to **Ain-i-Akbari** (written by Abdul-Fazl ibn Mubarak), there were 36 high-level musicians in the Mughal court of Akbar.
- Tansen** (also known as **Mian Tansen**), regarded as one of India's greatest musicians, held a position of great importance in Akbar's court.
- Tansen** invented several new ragas and was even credited with having the ability to stop the flow of the **Yamuna** with his music.
- The Mughals are credited with bringing two disparate musical systems (Hindu and Muslim) together and giving birth to national Indian music.

## **Bhakti Movement**

The **Bhakti Movement** was a significant socio-religious reform movement in India that brought religious reforms to medieval Hinduism. It spanned from 7<sup>th</sup> century in south India and later spread to North India, lasting until the 17<sup>th</sup> century with profound impacts on Indian culture, spirituality, and social life. It emphasized devotion (bhakti) to a personal god, challenging orthodox practices and promoting equality and inclusivity.

### **Key Features**

1. **Devotion to a Personal God:** The movement emphasized devotion (bhakti) to a personal deity such as Vishnu, Shiva or various forms of the Goddess. The devotion was expressed through singing hymns, chanting, and other forms of worship.
2. **Rejection of Rituals and Castes:** Bhakti saints often rejected the rigid caste system and the complex rituals associated with Brahmanical Hinduism, they preached that anyone, regardless of caste or gender, could attain salvation through devotion. Simplified religious practices, focusing on inner devotion rather than elaborate ceremonies.
3. **Social Equality and Reform:** The movement promoted social equality and criticized social evils such as untouchability and caste discrimination. Bhakti saints advocate a more inclusive society. Welcomed women and marginalized communities as key participants and even as spiritual leaders.
4. **Use of Vernacular Languages:** Unlike the traditional Sanskrit scriptures, Bhakti saints composed their devotional songs and poetry in local languages, making their teachings more accessible to the common people.
5. **Influence of Sufism:** The Bhakti movement in North India was influenced by Sufism, a mystical Islamic tradition. Both movements emphasized love and devotion to God and there was a significant exchange of ideas between Bhakti saints and Sufi mystics.

## Important Saints and Poets

### 1. South India (7th–12th Century):

- **Alvars** (devotees of Vishnu) and **Nayanars** (devotees of Shiva) were early proponents.
- Famous saints: Andal, Appar, Sambandar, and Periyalvar.

### 2. North India (12th–17th Century):

- **Kabir**: Rejected both Hindu and Muslim orthodoxy, emphasizing devotion to a formless God.
- **Ravidas**: Advocated for equality and opposed caste-based oppression.
- **Meera Bai**: A Rajput princess devoted to Krishna, celebrated for her soulful devotional songs.
- **Tulsidas**: Wrote the *Ramcharitmanas*, a retelling of the Ramayana in Hindi.
- **Surdas**: A blind poet known for his devotional songs dedicated to Krishna.
- **Guru Nanak**: Founded Sikhism, emphasizing devotion, equality, and ethical living.
- **Sankardeva**: In Assam, Sankardeva introduced bhakti both in the Brahmaputra valley and Cooch Behar. He made some significant innovations in the devotional practice such as inclusion of dance-drams-music form in the preaching of bhakti

### 3. Other Prominent Figures:

- **Chaitanya Mahaprabhu** (Bengal): Promoted Gaudiya Vaishnavism centered on Krishna
- **Dnyaneshwar** (Maharashtra): Authored a Marathi commentary on the Bhagavad Gita.



## Significance and Impact

1. Promotion of Hindu Muslim Unity: Bhakti saints advocate for unity between Hindus and muslims fostering religious tolerance. This led to improved relations between the two communities and created an environment of harmony and corporation.
2. Reformation of Hindu religion: Bhakti saints endeavored to eradicate prevalent evils within Hindusium, they worked to diminish caste discrimination and fostered a sense of unity among all sections of society.
3. Advancement of social equality and fraternity: The Bhakti movement challenged the caste system and uplifted marginalized communities, instilling self-respect and confidence among lower castes. It promoted social harmony and equality, breaking down barriers of discrimination.
4. Development of Regional Languages: Bhakti saints contributed significantly to the development of regional languages such as Hindi, Punjabi, Marathi and Bengali. Their literary works enriched these languages and promoted cultural diversity



Bhakti movement image

## Sufi Tradition

The Sufi tradition, also known as Tasawwuf, encompasses various mystical trends within Islam, emphasizing direct communication between God and individuals through personal experience. Sufism was a revolt against orthodox Islam.

### Salient features of Sufism

- Love and devotion:** Sufis believe that love and devotion are the only way to reach God. They also believe that service to God is the same as service to humanity.
- Inner purity:** Sufis focus on inner purity, while orthodox Muslims focus on external conduct.
- Equality:** Sufis believe that all people are equal, regardless of caste, creed, color, or other social distinctions.
- Self-discipline:** Sufis believe that self-discipline is essential for gaining knowledge of God.
- Respect for other religions:** Sufis believe that all religions are different paths to God, and that it's important to respect and value the diversity of religious beliefs and practices

## Some devotional practices of Sufism include

**Zikr:** A practice of remembrance of God, often involving repeating divine names or phrases. Zikr is a core ritual in Sufism, and is often performed in a group with synchronized chants and movements.

**Meditation:** Sufis practice meditation, which often involves focusing on breathing and using mantras.

**Asceticism:** Sufis often renounce material pleasures and live simple lives to focus on their spiritual path

**Sama:** A musical gathering that includes singing, playing instruments, dancing, reciting poetry and prayers, and wearing symbolic attire.

**Music:** Sufis often use religious music during meditation or in place of it. **Qawwali** is a popular devotional music form that originated in the Sufi tradition.

**Pilgrimage to Sufi shrines:** A popular practice in popular faith and practice



Sufi Sama ceremony

Sufi saints popularized devotional music and songs. Several sufi saints composed literary works in vernacular languages. **Amir Khusro**, was a noted “guzzle” writer. The poetry of Khusro was so full of sweetness that he was called ‘Tutiy-i-Hind (the parrot of India). He is credited with more than 90 works on different subjects i.e historical and romantic as well.

Sufism started from the philosophy of unity of being or Wahadut-ul-Wajud by Ibn-ul-Arabi [1165-1240 AD].

### **Development of Sufism in India**

Islam penetrated India from Saudi Arabia as traders during the 7th century C.E. and exchanged goods with the coastal areas of India in the western part. The belief spread to Sind and Multan during the 8th century C.E. when the territories were seized in the north by Muhammad Bin Qasim. The Sufi movement attained superiority during the sovereignty of the Delhi Sultanate in the 10th and 11th centuries

### **Sufi Orders (Tariqas)/Silsila**

Sufism is organized into **orders (tariqas)**, each founded by a master (pir or sheikh) and emphasizing specific spiritual paths. Major orders include:

- **Chishti Order**: Known for love, tolerance, and the importance of music (qawwali).
- **Qadiriyya**: Emphasizes simplicity, devotion, and widespread spiritual guidance.
- **Naqshbandiyya**: Focuses on silent dhikr and strict discipline.
- **Mevlevi Order**: Associated with Rumi and the "whirling dervishes" of Turkey.
- **Suhrawardiyya**: Combines mystical practices with active engagement in society.



The Sufi Movement was a moment to establish a religion of intense devotion, love as its passion, poetry, songs and dance, worship and passing away from God as “ideal” rather than namaz, hajj and celibacy. Here are the list of some Sufi Saints and their contribution for general awarness.

* List of Sufi Saints and their Contribution	
Name of Sufi Saints	Contribution
Khwaja Moinuddin Chisti	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introduced Chishti order in India</li> <li>2. Popularised music recitations called Sama (Mehboob-i-ilahi)</li> <li>3. Keep aloof from royal court.</li> </ol>
Sheikh Shihabuddin Suhrawardi	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Accepted royal Service</li> <li>2. Introduced Suhrawardi order in India</li> <li>3. Wrote the Awarif ul-Maarif, or “The Knowledge of the Spiritually Learned”</li> </ol>
Sheikh Nizamat Ullah	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Preaches fundamentals of Islam</li> <li>2. Introduced Qadri order in India</li> </ol>
Khwaja Pir Mohammad	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introduced Naqshbandi order in India</li> <li>2. Orthodox Sect Mujaddid opposed Shia, philosophy of Wahadat-ul-Shahdud</li> <li>3. Wrote ‘Red-i-Khafid’</li> </ol>

Sheikh Sarfudin Yahya	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Branch of Suhrawardi</li> <li>2. Popularized Firdausi order in India</li> <li>3. Hewas a disciple of Khwaja Nizamuddin Firdausi</li> </ol>
Miyan Bayazid Ansari (Pir Roshan)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Wrote the bookKhai-ul-Byan</li> <li>2. Introduced Rashaniya order during Akbar’s reign</li> </ol>
Mullah Mohammad Mahdi	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Opposed orthodox Muslims</li> <li>2. Introduced Mahadawi order in India</li> </ol>
Nuruddin Noorani (Wali)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Opposed orthodox Muslims</li> <li>2. Introduced Risi order in India</li> </ol>
Abu Wali Qalander	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Wandering monks were called Darveshes</li> <li>2. Introduced Qalandaria order in India</li> </ol>
Abdullah Shattari	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introduced Shattari order in India during Lodhi Dynasty</li> <li>2. Tansen was the follower of this order</li> <li>3. Claimed direct contact with God</li> </ol>

## **2.03.02.02. IMPACT OF SUFISM**

### **1. Religions impact:**

The efforts of Sufi saints helped to lessen religious fanaticism in India. Hindus in larger numbers became followers of Sufi saints. The tombs built after their death has continued to become places of worship for the Muslims as well as the Hindus. Their belief in unity of God helped to remove mutual differences.

### **2. Social Impact:**

Their stress on social welfare led to the establishment of works of charitable nature i.e. opening of orphanages and women service centres. The efforts of Sufi saints helped to promote equality and lessen the evils of casteism. They also tried to infuse a spirit of piety and morality.

### **3. Political Impact:**

Some of the renowned Sufi saints on account of their virtuous and saintly life motivated some of the Delhi Sultans to follow a liberal policy.

### **4. Cultural Impact:**

The sacred places built in the memory of the Sufi saints clearly demonstrate the development of a new type of architecture. The Dargah' of Khawaja Muin-ud-Din Chisti at Ajmer and the Tomb of Nizam-ud-Din Aulia at Delhi have a special place in architecture.