

Post Mauryan Period - Architecture

The north and south dynasties made advances in art and architecture in areas like stone construction, stone carving, symbolism and beginning of temple (or **chaitya hall-prayer halls**) and the monastery (or **vihara-residential halls**) constructions.



Karle Chaitya, Vihara at Ellora

- The period between 2nd century B.C. and 3rd century A.D. marked the beginning of the sculptural idiom in Indian sculpture where the elements of physical form were evolving into a more refined, realistic and expressive style.
- Under these dynasties, the Asokan stupas were enlarged and the earlier brick and woodworks were replaced with stone-works.
- The Sanchi Stupa was enlarged to nearly twice its

size in 150 B.C. and elaborate gateways were added later.

- The Sungas reconstructed the railings around the Barhut Stupa and built the toranas or the gateways.
- The Satavahanas constructed a large number of stupas at Goli, Jaggiahpeta, Bhattiprolu, Gantasala, Nagarjunakonda and Amravati.
- During the Kushan period, the **Buddha was represented in human form** instead of symbols. Buddha's image in endless forms and replicas

became the principal element in Buddhist sculpture during the Kushan period.

- The Kushans were the pioneers of the **Gandhara School of Art** and a large number of monasteries; stupas and statues were constructed during the reign of Kanishka.



Udayagiri and Khandagiri

Caves, Orissa

- They were made under the Kalinga King Kharavela in 1st-2nd century BC near modern-day Bhubaneswar (for Jain monks).
- Udayagiri caves are famous for the **Hathigumpha inscription** which is carved out in **Brahmi script**.
- **Ranigumpha cave in Udayagiri** is double-storied and has some beautiful sculptures.

➤ **Post Mauryan period-
Sculpture**

Three prominent schools of sculpture developed in this period at three different regions of India.

1. Gandhara School of Art
2. Mathura School of Art
3. Amravati School of Art

1. The Gandhara School of Art (50 B.C. to 500 A.D.)



- The Gandhara region extending from Punjab to the

borders of Afghanistan was an important centre of **Mahayana Buddhism** up to the 5th century A.D.

- Owing to its strategic location the Gandhara School imbibed all kinds of foreign influences like Persian, Greek, Roman, Saka and Kushan.
- The Gandhara School of Art is also known as the **Graeco-Buddhist School** of Art since Greek techniques of Art were applied to Buddhist

subjects.

- The most important contribution of the Gandhara School of Art was the evolution of beautiful images of the Buddha and Bodhisattvas, which were executed in black stone and modelled on identical characters of Graeco-Roman pantheon. Hence it is said, "the Gandhara artist had the hand of a Greek but the heart of an Indian."

The important characteristics of Gandhara school are:

- Depiction of Lord Buddha in

the standing or seated positions.

- The seated Buddha is always shown cross-legged in the traditional Indian way.
- Rich carving, elaborate ornamentation and complex symbolism.
- Use of **Greystone**
- The best specimens of Gandhara art are from **Jaulian** and **Dharmarajika** stupa at Taxila and **Hadda** near Jalalabad in modern

Afghanistan. The tallest rock-cut statue of Lord Buddha is also located at **Bamiyan** in modern Afghanistan.

2. The Mathura School of Art



The Mathura School of art flourished at the city of Mathura between 1-3 A.D. and was promoted **by the Kushans. It**

established the tradition of transforming Buddhist symbols into human form.

- The important characteristics of Mathura school are: The earliest sculptures of Buddha were made keeping the yaksha prototype in mind.
- They were depicted as strongly built with the right hand raised in protection and the left hand on the waist.
- **The figures produced by this school of art do not have moustaches and beards as in the Gandhara Art.**

- Spotted Red sandstone mainly used.
- Here along with the Buddha, the kings, the royal family were included in the architecture.
- It not only produced beautiful images of the Buddha but also of the Jain Tirthankaras and gods and goddesses of the Hindu pantheon.
- The Guptas adopted the Mathura School of Art and further improvised and perfected it.

3. The Amravati School of Art



Amravati School of Sculpture

The Amravati school of Art evolved **during Satavahna period**. This school of art developed at Amravati, on the banks of the Krishna River in modern Andhra Pradesh. It is the site for the largest Buddhist stupa of South India. The

stupendous stupa could not withstand the ravages of time and its ruins are preserved in the London Museum. This school of art had a great influence on art in Sri Lanka and South-East Asia as products from here were carried to those countries.

Differences among Gandhara, Mathura and Amaravati Schools



Basis	Gandhara School	Mathura School	Amaravati School
External Influence	Heavy influence of Greek or Hellenistic sculpture, so it is also known as Indo-Greek art .	It was developed indigenously and not influenced by external cultures.	It was developed indigenously and not influenced by external cultures.
Ingredient Used	Early Gandhara School used bluish-grey sandstone while the later period saw the use of mud and stucco .	The sculptures of Mathura School were made using spotted red sandstone .	The sculptures of Amaravati School were made using white marbles.
Religious Influence	Mainly Buddhist imagery , influenced by the Greco-Roman pantheon .	Influence of all three religions of the time, i.e. Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism.	Mainly Buddhist influence.
Patronage	Patronised by Kushana rulers .	Patronised by Kushana rulers	Patronised by Satvahana rulers .
Area of development	Developed in the North-West Frontier, in the modern-day area of Kandahar.	Developed in and around Mathura, Sonkh and Kankalitila. Kankalitila was famous for Jain sculptures.	Developed in the KrishnaGodavari lower valley, in and around Amaravati and Nagarjunakonda.
Features of Buddha sculpture	The Buddha is shown in a spiritual state , with wavy hair. He wears fewer ornaments and seated in the position of a yogi . The eyes are half-closed as in meditation. A protuberance is shown on the head signifying the omniscience of Buddha.	Buddha is shown in a delighted mood with a smiling face. The body symbolizes muscularity, wearing a tight dress. The face and head are shaven. Buddha is seated in padmasana with different mudras and his face reflects grace. A similar protuberance is shown on the head.	Since the sculptures are generally part of narrative art, there is less emphasis on the individual features of Buddha. The sculptures generally depict life stories of Buddha and the Jataka tales, i.e., previous lives of Buddha in both human and animal form.