

Art and Culture Class 04

22nd February, 2024 at 9:00 AM

THE CLASS STARTED WITH A BRIEF REVIEW OF THE PREVIOUS CLASS: (09:12 AM):

GUPTA PERIOD ART: (09:15 AM):

- The Gupta Age is considered the Golden Age of Art & Architecture.
- There was a holistic development in many fields at the time of Gupta ruler Chandragupta II.
- Cave architecture has reached its climax and temple art began during this period.
- Not only were temples created at this time, but Manuscripts related to the temple construction were also written.

• **There are two important texts in this regard:**

- a) Vishnu-Dharmottar Purana.
- b) Vastu Shastra.

• **CAVE ARCHITECTURE: (09:22 AM):**

- **1) Ajanta Cave (Sambhajinagar):** It is situated at the gorge of the Waghora river.
- These caves are Buddhist where 4 Chaityas and 25 Viharas are there.
- Caves were created on the steep side of the hill as such there are no courtyards in Ajanta.
- Not only single but double-storey caves were also created in Ajanta.
- Inside the Ajanta sculptures based on Buddhism and Fresco mural paintings were created.
- **The famous sculptures inside the Ajanta include:**
- a) Depiction of Mahaparinirvan Buddha.
- b) Demon Mara Vijay's army approaches Buddha to disturb his meditation.
- c) Buddha entering into the Bhumi Sparsha Mudra.

FRESCO-MURAL PAINTINGS: (09:45 AM):

- In the very first stage, a mix of clay, cow dung, and rice husk was applied to the wall of the cave.
- In the second step, it was plastered with the limestone.
- In the final stage, images were created and filled with the colors.
- The initial mixture absorbs the color and imprints the painting on the wall.
- Thus it increases the longevity of the painting.
- Examples are Padampani Buddha (Bodhisattva holding a Lotus), and Vajrapani (Bodhisattva holding a thunderbolt) Buddha, Flying Apsara, Dying Princess, Avalokiteswara (Bodhisattva the Lord who looks down with compassion).

- **2) ELLORA CAVES: (09:59 PM):**

- Ellora caves were created on the sloping side of the hills as such the courtyards can be seen in Ellora and are located in Sambhajinagar Maharashtra.
- There are a total of 34 caves of which 17 belong to Hinduism, 12 are Buddhist Caves, and 5 to Jainism.
- Even the Triple Storey caves can also be seen at Ellora.
- The Hindu caves of Ellora mainly developed during the tenure of the Rastrakuta Rulers.
- Cave Premise Number 16 of Ellora is the Kailashnath Temple, it is the biggest Monolith Temple (carved out of single rock from top to down) in India created by the Rastrakuta ruler Krishna I.
- It is regarded as one of the architectural wonders of India.
- In its construction top-down approach was followed & the walls of the temple are ornated with sculptures based on Hindu mythology.
- Inside the Buddhist Caves sculptures of the Buddha and Bodhisattvas were created.
- Jain caves were generally referred to as the Indra Sabha and they are ornamented with sculptures of the Jain Thirthankaras.
- Not many fresco murals are in Ellora but there is one surviving example from the Rastrakuta period which is Lord Vishnu riding the Garuda.

BAGH CAVES: (10:18 AM):

- **3) Bagh Caves:**

- Located closer to Indore on the banks of the Bagh Rivers.
- There are a total of 9 sandstone caves which are purely Buddhist.
- It has 1 Chaitya and the rest are the Viharas.
- Cave number 04 is called Rangmahal which has beautiful fresco paintings created during the Gupta Age.

- **4) NASHIK CAVES: (10:23 AM):**

- Situated in the Trimbak range of hills.
- They are associated with the Hinayana form of Buddhism and a total of 23 Buddhist Viharas were created.
- **Note:** Nashik is otherwise famous for Hinduism it is one of the places where the Kumbh Mela is organized and it is also the place of Shivjyotirlinga Trimbakeshwar.

- **Jyotirlingas:**

- 1) Somanath: Gujrat.
- 2) Nageshwar: Gujrat.
- 3) Trimbakeshwar: Maharashtra.
- 4) Girishneshwar: Maharashtra.
- 5) Bhimashankar: Maharastra.
- **(Note: Assam also claims to have a Shivling with the same name as Bhimashankar.)**
- 6) Omkareshwar: Madhya Pradesh.
- 7) Mahakaleshwar: Madhya Pradesh (Ujjain).
- 8) Malliakarjun: Andhra Pradesh.
- 9) Rameswaram: Tamilnadu.
- 10) Vaidyanath: Jharkhand (Deoghar).
- 11) Kashi Vishwanath: UP (Banaras).
- 12) Kedarnath: Uttarakhand.

UDAYGIRI CAVES OF VIDISHA (MP): (10:49 AM):

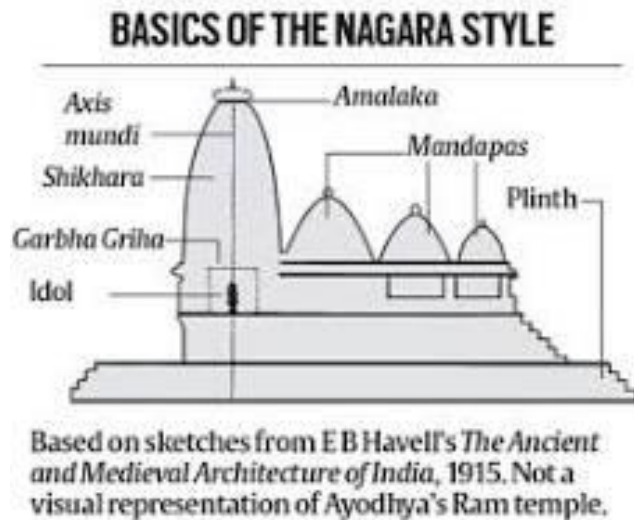
- **5) Udaygiri Caves:**
- These caves were created in the Gupta Age and it was famous for their very big sculptural panels based on the Varahaavtar of Lord Vishnu.
- **6) Udaygiri-Khandagiri Caves of Orissa:**
- These caves were created by the Jaina king of Orissa known as Kharavela.
- These caves have sculptures based on Jainism particularly the depiction of 24 Thirthankaras.
- **7) Elephanta Caves:**
- It is situated off the coast of Mumbai on an island.
- These caves are associated with the Shaivaite Tradition.
- Tri-Murti is the most famous sculpture in this place which depicts the Bhairav, Mahesh, and Uma.
- **8) Junagarh Caves:**
- These caves are generally referred as to Uparkot (caves created on praised levels connected through stairs).
- It is situated near the Girnar Hills of Gujrat.

SARNATH STYLE OF ARCHITECTURE: (11:18 AM):

- It is often regarded as the extension of the Mathura style.
- It was mainly practiced in the area between Mathura-Sarnath-Nalanda.
- Pink sandstone obtained from the Chunar Mines was used for its creation.
- In the later phase, copper sculptures were also created.
- Generally, Buddha's image was accompanied by a Jataka Panel.
- Buddha was often depicted with a transparent drapery. The Halo in the sculptures was decorated at the margins but not in the middle.
- **Example of Copper Sculpture:** Sultanganj Buddha.
- **TEMPLE ART IN NORTH: (11:26 AM):**
- **a) Evolution of Temples:**
- **a.1) First Phase:**
- In the very first stage flat roofs and square temples were created on a grounded platform.
- Decorative pillars were installed in the gallery and these pillars were not in-depth in nature.
- For example, Temple number 17 of the Sanchi.
- **a.2) Second Phase:**
- In the second stage Flat roof temple approach continued but now temples were created on an upraised platform.
- In some places, double-storey temples were also created.
- For example, Parvati Temple at Nachna Kuthara (MP).
- **a.3) Third Phase:**
- In this stage, though the chamber of the temple was square a curvilinear tower Shikhar was created on the top of the chamber.
- For example, the Dashavtar temple in Deogarh Jhansi.
- This stage gave rise to the Nagara Style of Temple in the North.

NAGARA STYLE OF TEMPLE ARCHITECTURE: (11:35 AM):

- Diagram of the Nagara Style of the temple:



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- **Characteristics of the Nagara Style:**
- Generally, the boundary walls are not created in the Nagara Style of temples.
- Water tanks are also not created as the majority of the temples are situated on the banks of perennial rivers.
- The appraised platform on which the temple is created is known as Jagati.
- Mandap is a hall with columns and it is the place of prayers and worship.
- Garbhagriha or Embryo chamber is the most sacred place in the temple where the idols of the deities are installed.
- Many of the Nagara temples followed the **Panchayatan Style** whereby the image of the main god was installed along with the 4 subsidiary Gods.
- Around the Garbhagriha Parikrama Path or covered ambulatory passage way is created.
- On the Mandap part of the temple inclining pyramidal towers with a wide base are created and these towers are shorter in height and known as Phamsan Shikhar.
- On the Garbhagriha a high-rising curvilinear tower known as Rekhaprasad Shikhar is created.
- Amlak is a horizontal disc that gives pause to the growth of the Shikhar.
- The top-most structure at the Shikhar is called a Finial which could be any Hindu religious symbol.
- The Rekhaprasad Shikhar symbolizes two mythological mountains Kailash and Meru mountains.
- For example, Mahaeswar and Omkarehwar, Kashi Vishwanath, etc. are prominent Nagara-style temples.

TOPICS OF THE NEXT CLASS: Continuation of the Remaining Styles of Temple Architecture, etc.