

Basic Overview:

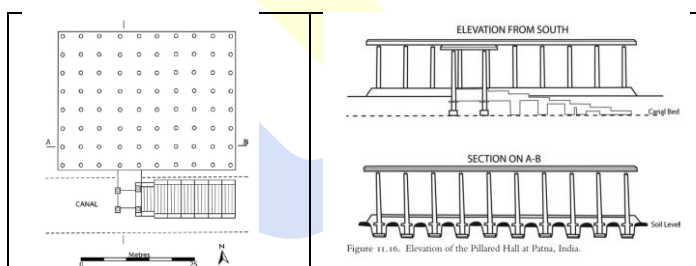
- **Variety** of Structural Remains
 - **Religious:** Stupas, Rock-cut (chaitya, viharas), Pillars
 - **Royal:** Pillared hall, wooden palisade at Pataliputra
- Re-emergence of **monumental art** after long gap
- **Palace Art**
 - Linked to political ideology: Uniformity, Purpose
 - Still, 'popular art' not absent (eg sculptures)
- **Total Complex**

(a) Royal Palace

Bulandibagh – Royal Palace, Capital, Wooden Palisade
Kumrahar – 80 Pillared Hall (Chunar sandstone)

Pataliputra was the Mahanagar/metropolis of the ancient India. Indica and excavations attest to that and support each other. Fortifications and drains are found in two important parts at the edges of the modern Patna.

Megasthenes describes **Pataliputra** as a city in the shape of a parallelogram (9.2*1.7 miles) at the junction of Ganga and Son... defended by a wooden wall with slits for the discharge of arrows and many towers and gateways. Megasthenes has also described the **Palace of Chandragupta**.



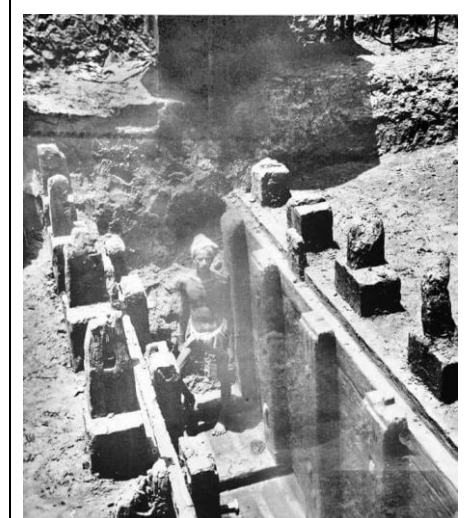
Archaeologists flag concern over buried Mauryan period assembly hall, demand immediate restoration

The hall, situated at Kumrahar area here, first came to light during excavations in 1912-13, and was allegedly buried by officials of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) in 2004, due to frequent waterlogging and seepage.

PTI

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Ruins of the stone gates in Persepolis, the ceremonial capital of the Achaemenid empire, declared by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site in 1979.



Friedrich Oscar Oertel, a German archaeologist, who discovered Lion capital of Ashoka at Sarnath in 1904-05.

(b) Ashokan Pillars and Capitals



Fig. 23. Mode of transporting a stone pillar, after a relief from the citadel of Raichur.



Characteristics of Ashokan Pillars

- No base
- Height upto 14 m
- Tapering
- Plain and Circular shaft
- Chunar Sandstone
- Polished
- Monolith
- Abacus and Capital – Topped with animal and other sacred symbols.

Animal Capitals

- 7 capitals (6 places) = 5 lions, 1 elephant, 1 zebu
- Not all capitals are equally graceful.

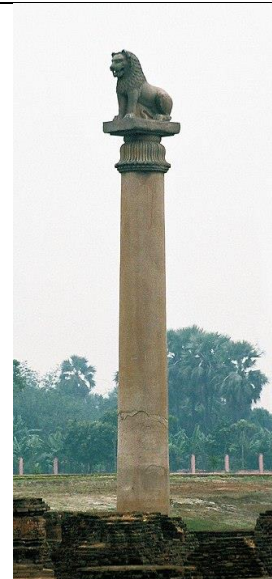
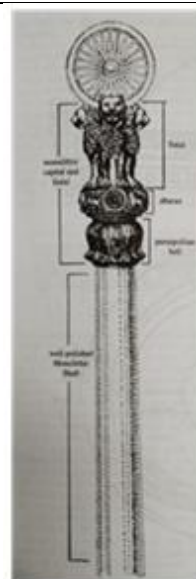
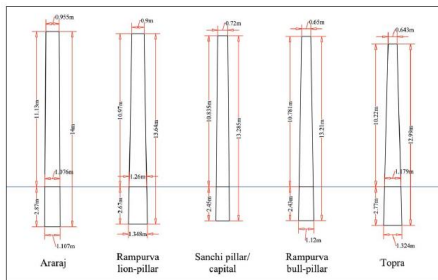




Figure 11.20. The Asokan pillar at Lumbini, Nepal.



Rampurva capitals, in West Champaran, discovered in c. 1876 by A.C.L. Carlleyle.



Nageshwarnath Temple, Ayodhya



Fatehabad/Hisar (Haryana)



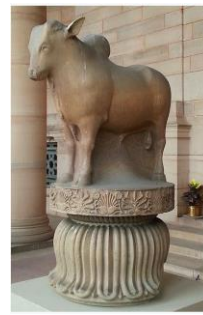
Lat Bhairav, Banaras



Vaishali Lion



Sankissa Elephant



Rampurva Bull



Lauriya Nandangarh



Rampurva Lion



Sanchi



Sarnath



Bansi, near Basti (UP)

Motifs: Rich Buddhist symbolism yet wider cultural context:

Symbol	Meaning
Lotus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purity and fecundity Buddha's first seven steps
Chakra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dhammachakra (first sermon) Sovereignty of chakravarti king
Elephant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Airavat in the dream of Maya (conception of Buddha) Gaja-Lakshmi Dream of Trishala in Jainism
Bull	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fertility Vaishakha Purnima (Buddha's birth)
Horse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Siddhartha's departure (Great Renunciation)
Lion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shakya-simha, Sovereignty of Buddha in spiritual field
4 Lions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent of Maurya empire Spread of Dhamma in 4 directions

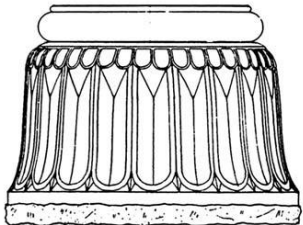
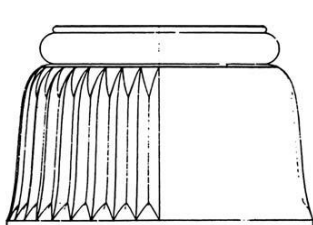




Constituent Assembly Debates, 22 July 1947, while accepting the National Flag

Speech of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan brought out the real essence of the wheel and the tricolour. He said:

"We cannot attain purity, we cannot gain our goal of truth, unless we walk in the path of virtue. **The Ashoka's wheel represents to us the wheel of the Law, the wheel of the Dharma. Truth can be gained only by the pursuit of the path of Dharma, by the practice of virtue.** Truth - Satya, Dharma, Virtue, these ought to be the controlling principles of all those who work under this Flag. **It also tells us that the Dharma is something which is perpetually moving.** If this country has suffered in the recent past, it is due to our resistance to change. There are ever so many challenges hurled at us and if we have not got the courage and the strength to move along with the times, we will be left behind. **There are ever so many institutions which are worked into our social fabric like caste and untouchability. Unless these things are scrapped, we cannot say that we either seek truth or practice virtue. This wheel, which is a rotating thing, which is a perpetually revolving thing, indicates to us that there is death in stagnation. There is life in movement.** Our dharma is sanatana, eternal, not in the sense that it is a fixed deposit but in the sense that it is perpetually changing..."

Comparison with Persian architecture:

	Ashokan Pillars	Achaemenid Pillars
Similarities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both have religious and political significance. Both undertaken as royal art. Both were made using sandstone. Both have capital – lion mostly 	
Differences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monolithic Round shaft Smooth surface Polished surface Some with inscriptions No foundation Independent free-standing pillars Capital at top. Only animal figures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Segmented Square form Fluted surface Unpolished No inscriptions Have foundation. Structural pillars Capital both at top and bottom. Humans + Animals + Mythological
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: flex-end;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Pillar Base, Susa</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Pillar Base, Persepolis</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Abacus and Bell, Allahabad</p> </div> </div>		
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- Impossible to determine the influence of Achaemenid imperial ideology. When Alexander destroyed it, the Persian empire was long decaying and when Chandragupta became the king, it was long dead.
- Totally Indian technology (monolithic, polish etc) but inspired by Persian idea.
- Design can be similar yet may carry different meaning. With dhamma inscription, the whole meaning of pillar is transformed.
- Despite borrowings, if any, outstanding cultural achievement of the time in the world.

Other Animals/birds on Ashoka edicts/sculptures

	<p>Dhauli Elephant</p>
	<p>Lomas Rishi (Barabar hills, Gaya) Cave façade – Elephants</p>
	<p>Sarnath Abacus frieze Bull, Horse, Elephant, Lion (guardians of 4 directions)</p>
	<p>Mahabodhi Vajrasana – Geese</p>
	<p>Sanchi Abacus Geese</p>



(c) Stupa

- Enigmatic enchanting structure synonymous with popular Buddhism.
- Not the Buddhist invention:
 - Pre Buddhist: Shatapatha Brahmin, Tarai tradition.
 - Not exclusive to Buddhism: Jain Stupa
- **Mahaparinibban Sutta** (Sutta Pitaka): The most standard account of Buddha's nirvana.

Location of 8 Stupas	
Allakappa	?
Kapilavastu	Shakya capital
Kushinara	Malla capital
Pava	Malla city
Rajagriha	Magadha capital
Ramagrama	Koliya capital
Vaishali	Vajji capital
Vethadipa	?



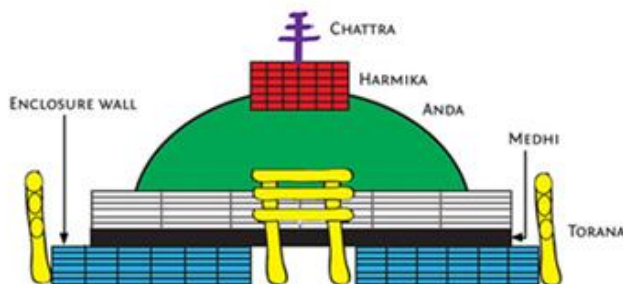
(War of Relics – Several chiefs against the Mallas of Kushinagar)

	
Dhatu	Drona

- Veneration transformed from relic to stupa itself as emblem of Buddhism.
- Stupa as living presence
-

Type of Stupa	Meaning
Sharirika stupa	Relics (Buddha, Great Disciples/Bhikkhus)
Paribhogika stupa	Used objects (prayukta vastu) like clothe, vessel etc)
Uddeshika stupa	Locations of imp events, pilgrimage places (eg Shravasti)
Sankalpa stupa (votive)	The faith of followers is represented – shraddha, dana. To gain merit.
Symbolic stupa	Kalchakra, Shanti etc

(PS. Stupa can be stationary or portable also)



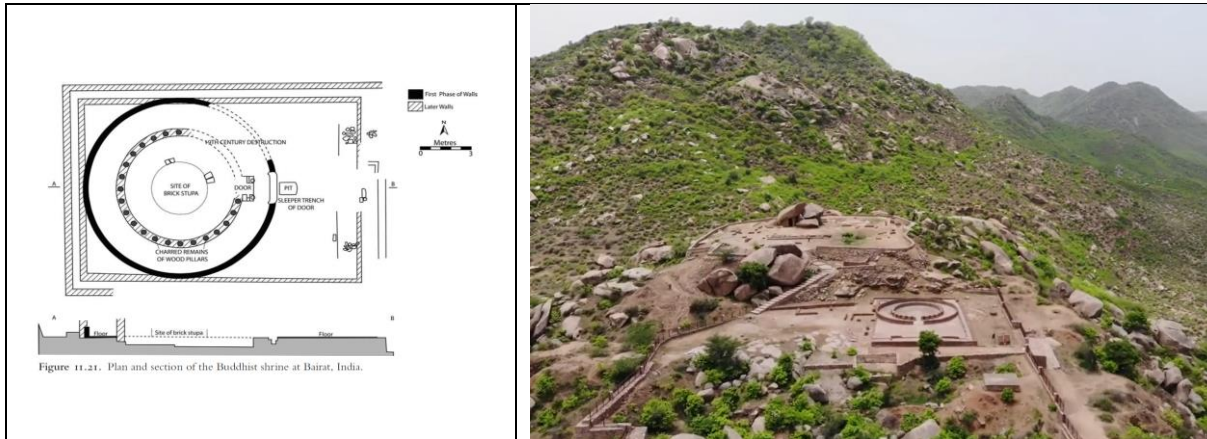
Parts	Symbolism
Anda on Medhi (Platform)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stored the relics. Shape of cosmos
Harmika (box-like at top)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most sacred, as it is just above the relics.
Chhatra, Yashti	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raj-chhatra Three discs – Buddhist Tri-ratna Yashti – Axis of the universe
Vedika and Torana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eastern – Birth of Buddha (Lumbini) Southern – Nirvana (Bodh Gaya) Western – DCP (Sarnath) Northern – MPN (Kushinagar)
Pradakshinapath	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circumambulation (east to north – tracing life of Buddha)

Ashokavadana credits Ashoka with collecting relics from 8 drona stupas and re-enshrining them through **84,000 stupas** throughout the **Jambudvīpa**. Some identified Ashokan Stupas: *Vaishali (re-modelled)*, *Dharmarajika Stupa (Taxila)*, *Dharmarajika Stupa (Sarnath)*, *Sanchi Stupa (inner core)*, *Kanaganahalli stupa (inner core)*, *Sirpur stupa (Chhattisgarh)*, *Deorkothar Stupa (MP)*.

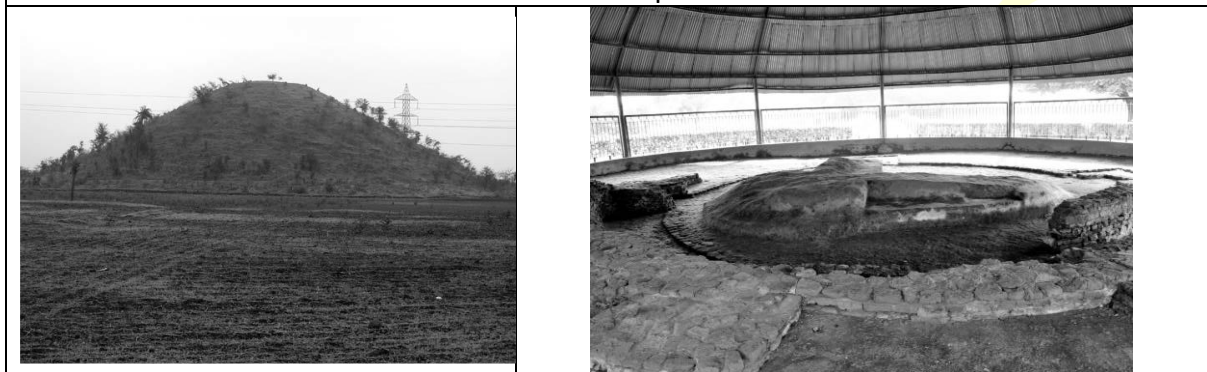


(Ashoka's visit to Ramgrama to take relics from Naga)

Later Era Sculptures		Present image
 <p>Nagas worshipping Ramagrama Stupa, Amaravati</p>	 <p>Ramagrama Stupa covered in Nagas, worshipped by Elephants, Amaravati (British museum)</p>	 <p>Ramagrama stupa today</p>



Bairat Stupa



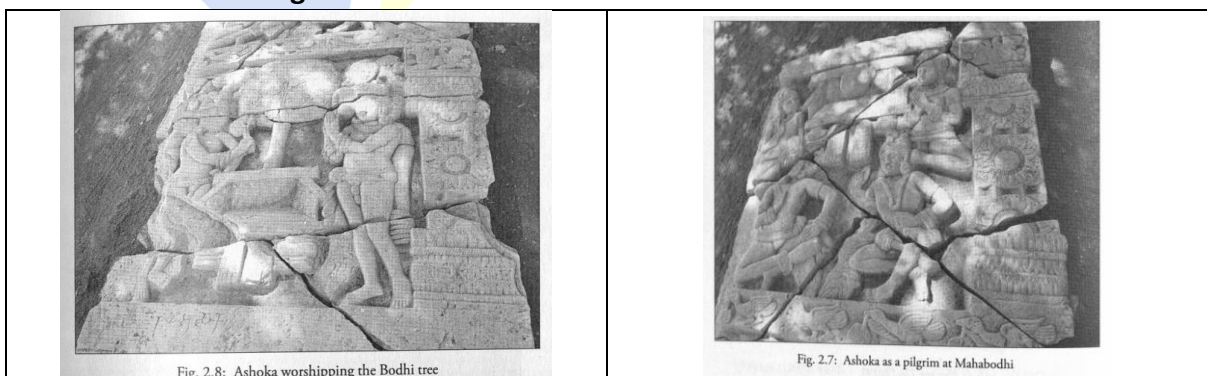
Ujjayini's Kanipura Stupa, associated with Devi

Vaishali
(mud stupa at the centre, outside later brickwork)



Raja Ashoko and Kanaganahalli Stupa (Post-Mauryan structure)

More Ashoka at Kanaganahalli



(e) Folk/popular Art

Northern Black Polished Ware (NBPW) pottery: It was made of filtered clay (smooth), made on fast spinning wheel (even surface), glazed (coating layer added during firing) with intricate geometrical designs painted on a black background. After this, the entire surface was covered with a natural resin and fired, leaving a highly lustrous glaze.

Terracotta figures: These usually depicted humans, animals, and mythological figures. They reflected local customs and beliefs through the depiction of Yakshas and Yakshinis (semidivine entities).



Life Size Frontal Images (stone/terracotta): Roundness + Full frontal conception

- Parkham Yaksha
- Besnagar Yakshi
- Didarganj Yakshi



In the end....

