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Arts of the Mauryan Period and Rock Cut Architecture: Part 2 (Indian Culture – NCERT) for Competitive Exams

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Arts of the Mauryan Period

Rock Cut Architectures

- Ashoka also had constructed much rock cut buildings during his period and most of them are belongs to Buddhism.
- A good sample of Mauryan rock cut architectures is the rock-cut cave at Barabar hills.

Lomus Rishi Cave, Barabar Hills



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- Lomas Rishi Cave is a rock-cut cave carved at Barabar Hills near Gaya in Bihar.

- It was constructed by Ashoka for Ajeevika sect. and front of cave is decorated with the semicircular Chaitya (worship place) arch as the entrance.
- The inner hall of this cave is in rectangular shape with a circular chamber at the back.
- Entrance is located on the side wall of the hall.

Stupas and Chaityas



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- The largest number belongs to the Buddhist religion and Stupa, chaitya and vihara are also part of Buddhist and Jain monastic complex.
- In the third century B. C. one of the best examples of the structure of a stupa is seen at Bairat, Rajasthan.
- During the time of Ashoka the Great Stupa at Sanchi was constructed with bricks and then it was stone and many new accompaniments were made after some time.
- Many stupas were created which shows the approval of Buddhism.
- The design of patronage is very collective and there are very few examples of royal patronage.
- Patron's lay variety followers to gahapatis (householders, ordinary farmers, etc.) and kings.
- Contributions by the guild are also declared at several places.
- But there are very few Inscriptions which talk about the names of artistes such as Kanha at Pitalkhora and his believer Balaka at Kondane caves and Artisans' groups like stone carvers, goldsmith, carpenters, etc. are also declared in the legends.

- And these traders show their contribution with their place of origin.
- Stupas were decoratively built with certain additions like the encircling of the circumbulatory path with railings and sculptural decorations during the subsequent century (mainly 2nd century B. C) .
- Stupa involved a cylindrical drum and a **circular anda** with a harmika and chhatra on the top which is consistent all over with slight variations in shape and size.
- In the later periods the Entrances were also added.

Depiction of Buddha in Chaityas

- Buddha has showed symbolically through their footprints, stupas, lotus throne, chakra, etc. during earlier period and narrative became its part slowly.
- So that many events form the life of Buddha, the Jataka stories, etc. are showed on the railings and torans of the stupas.
- The well-known event of Buddha's life is events connected to birth, renunciation, enlightenment, dhammachakrapravartana (first sermon) , and mahaparinirvana (death) is portrayed.
- Chhadanta Jataka, Ruru Jataka, Sibi Jataka, Vidur Jataka, Vessantara Jataka and Shama Jataka is the story of Jataka which are also figured.

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