

Study of the Classical Period (700BC-200BC)

Art and Culture

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FINDINGS

Art

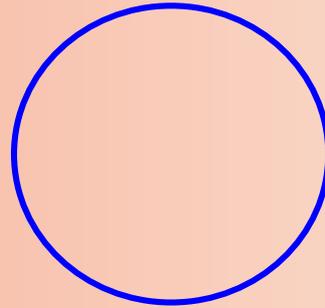
- People were artistic in nature.
- *Samadhi* (Intense concentration) led to good Art in every field.
- Various media, tools and performing arts developed.
- Creativity peaked with the dissemination of philosophy.
- Art was accepted as means to “*PurusArtha*”, the object of human pursuit.

Culture

- Was diverse – function of geography and local adjustments.
- Arts influenced in creating traditions.
- Cultural harmony prevailed and was nurtured.
- People were religious in nature, strongly attuned to liberation.
- Religion played a strong role in forming the cultural values.

ART AND CULTURE

What do you see?



Let us revisit this at the end of the presentation, and look at it through the eyes of the person in Classical Period of India.



ART AND CULTURE

- Pottery
- Painting
- Textile art
- Sculpture
- Rock carvings
- Art of storytelling
- Natyashastra
and Natya
- Theatrical art
- Music and Musical
Instruments
- Art of living
- Culture
- Life of women
- Cultural transformation

POTTERY – THE ART OF CREATING OBJECTS



Northern Black Polished Ware (NBPW):

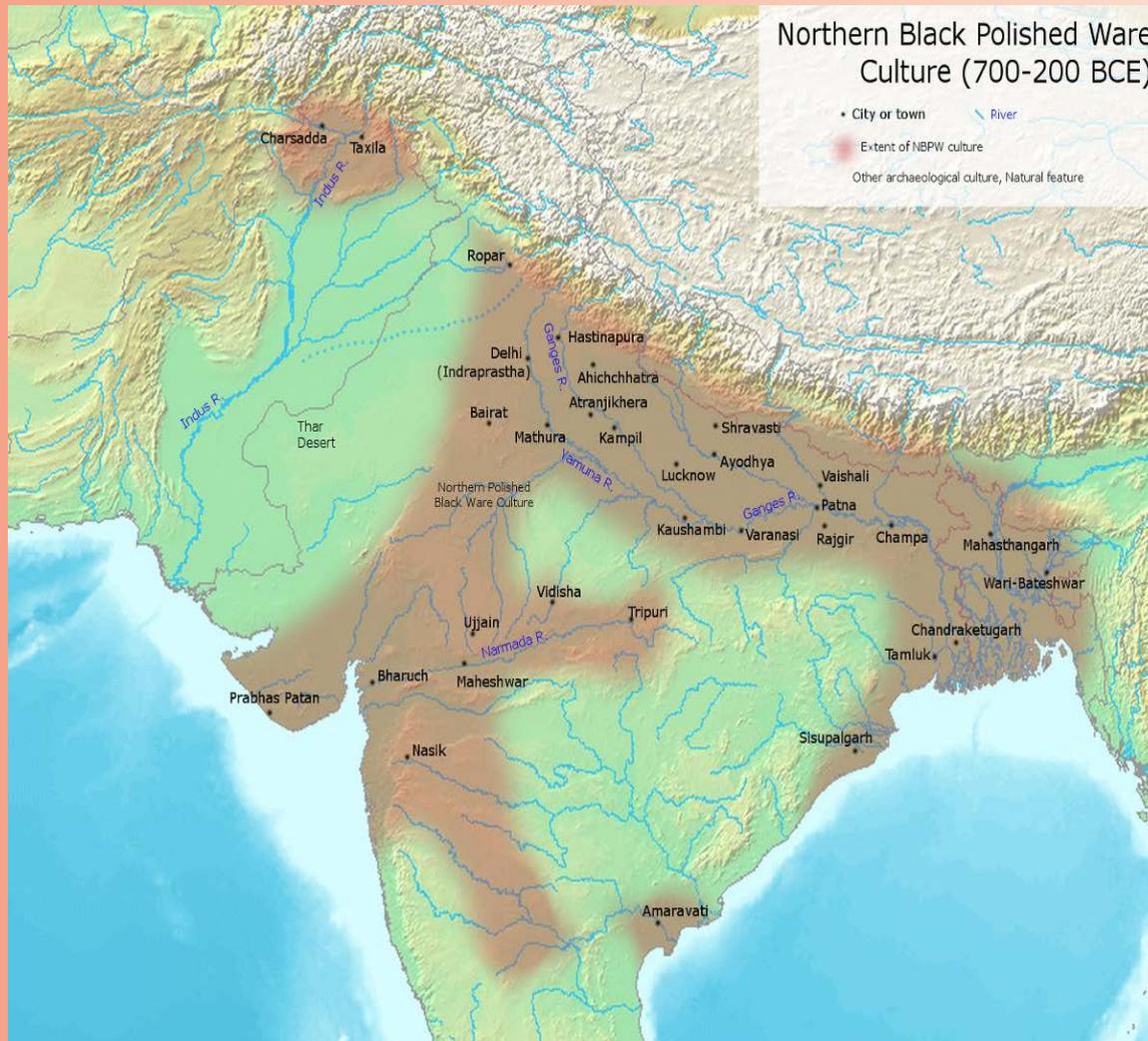
- Was well fired, wheel-made deluxe pottery, made with finely powdered clay.
- Was a luxury style of burnished pottery that was used by elites during 600 BC.
- Had a glossy surface that was usually unpainted.
- Rarely had patterns (bands, wavy lines, dots,...) or was painted in yellow or light vermillion.
- Did not show much innovation.



POTTERY (Continued)

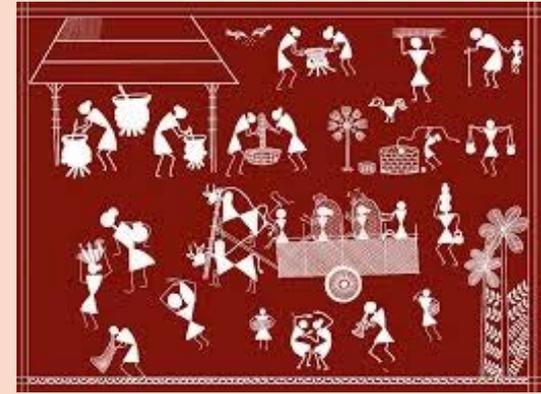
NBPW pottery was found at almost 1,500 sites, from Taxila and Charsada in the Northwest to Amaravati in Andhrapradesh, and from Prabhas Patan in Gujarat to Tamruk.

Such dispersion of a homogeneous type of pottery implies a culture that shared technology and materials.



Art of Painting

- Women periodically used rice flour mix to create murals on the walls of their houses.
- Warli and Gond art –
 - ✓ Originated among tribes, to transmit folklore within a populace.
 - ✓ Usually depicted social life.
- Madhubani and Kalamkari art –
 - ✓ A more intricate, colorful painting.
 - ✓ Later depicted deities and mythological scenes.
- Storytelling was a strong element of every painting.



TEXTILE ART

- The Indian tradition of fabric art dates back to 3000BC.
- Artifacts from Mohen-jo-daro and Harappa show mature textile art and crafts.
- Vedic texts refer to wool, cotton yarn, warp and embroidery.
- In the 6th century BC, material progress includes textiles, as mentioned in Buddhist literature.
- The Greek historian Herodotus (484-425 BC) describes the Indian fabrics as of “exceeding beauty & excellence”.
- There is reference by Greeks to Indian fabrics decorated with patterns and combinations of resist-dyeing and hand painting.
- The Arthasastra by Kautilya is eloquent about the variety of textiles produced in India during the Maurya period.

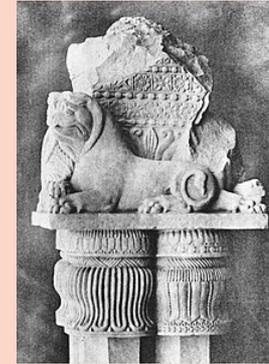
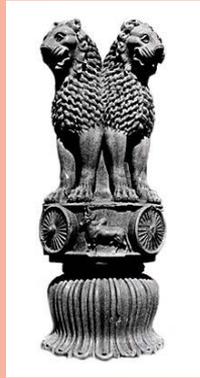
EARLY SCULPTURE: PUNCH-MARKED COINS

- The first coins in India - Puranas, Kashapanas or Panas - date from 700 BCE; they have assorted symbols punched on pieces of silver or copper of defined weights.
- The earliest Indian coins have no specific shapes and were mostly unified: kosala karshapanas, circa 525-465 BC. Average diameter 25mm, average weight 2.70 gm. Each piece had a variety of punch-marks on both sides.
- Despite the lack of inscriptions, these early coins were marked by a variety of symbols and belonged to almost 17 Janapadas.



Ancient Indian Coin from Taxila, India, dating back to the 304-232 BC.

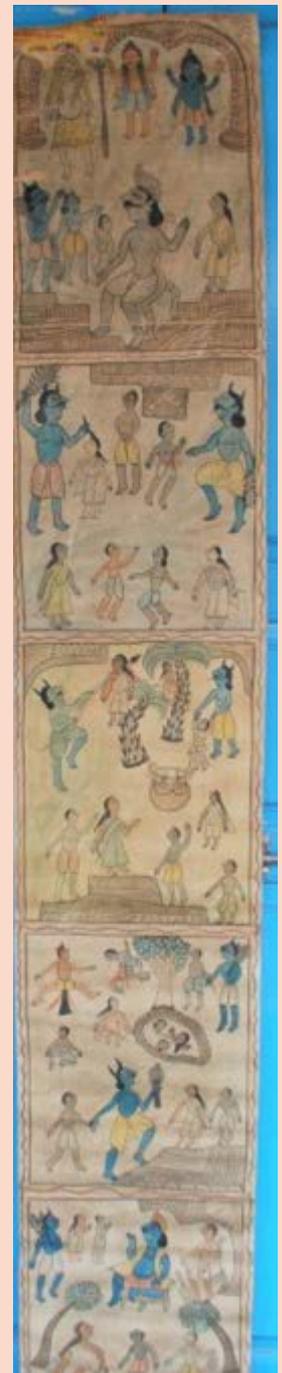
ROCK CARVINGS



- The great Stupa at Sanchi is one of the oldest stone sculptures.
- The Barabar caves -
 - ✓ Are carved entirely out of granite, with a highly polished internal surface capable of exciting echo effect.
 - ✓ Mimic a timber texture, grain and structure.
- The pillars of Ashoka had highly realistic animal sculptures and used a characteristic polish.
- The capital of Pataliputra includes classical designs such as rosettes, beads and reels, with stylized flames.

ART - STORYTELLING

- Storytelling was a common pastime.
- Buddhist and Jain texts refer to Upadhyayas (wandering teachers) carrying Charana chittas (mobile painted panels) of the samsara chakra.
- Semi-literate bards chose heroic deeds of royal personages as themes for their ballads, and recited accompanied by the lute.
- Aboriginal Santal people traditionally accompanied jadupatas scrolls with storytelling -
 - ✓ Jadupatas are painting scrolls, and consist of 10 -20 story panels arranged vertically; they are unrolled as the story is sung.
 - ✓ Jadupatuas earned their living by wandering in villages and chanting traditional tribal stories of creation, death, and life in the underworld.



CREATION OF the *Natya Shastra*

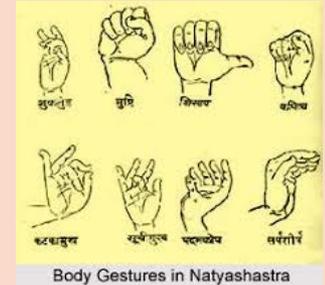
- Story telling was enjoyed by all: the nobility as well as the masses.
- Those who were literate in the four Vedas realized the essence of storytelling and enhanced this art form.
- The Natya Shastra is a performing arts treatise by Bharatha Muni, is divided into 36 chapters, and contains more than 6,000 verses.
- It is notable for its aesthetic “Rasa” theory.
- It helped create wholesome forms of art in many media.

NATYA SHASTRA - DEFINED ART

- Natya shastra's primary goal was to create "Rasa", or a sentiment that is evoked in the audience.
- "Rasa" is evoked in the audience through the "Bhava" of the performer.
- Bhava - is the emotion felt by the character, as results of "determinant"(Vibhava), internal and external situations.
- The primary SthAyi bhava and corresponding rasas: Delight (Rati), Laughter (Hasya), sorrow (Soka), Anger (Krodha), Heroism (Utsaha), Fear (Bhaya), Disgust (Jugupsa), and wonder (Vismaya). Corresponding to these mental states are eight Rasas: the Erotic (srngara), the Comic (Hasya) the Pathetic (Karuna), the Furious (Raudra), the Heroic (Vira), the Terrible (Bhayanaka), the Odious (Bibhatasa), and the Marvelous (Adbhuta).
- Enhancing of SthAyi Bhava is possible through 33 Vyabhichari Bhavas(transient emotions) to attain 8 Sattvika Bhavas(involuntary emotions).
- Vibhava--->*cause*--->Bhava--->*expressed*--->Anubhava--->*effect*--->Rasa.
- To master an art form, ***start from identifying the determinants with accurate perceptions to attain the final effect.***

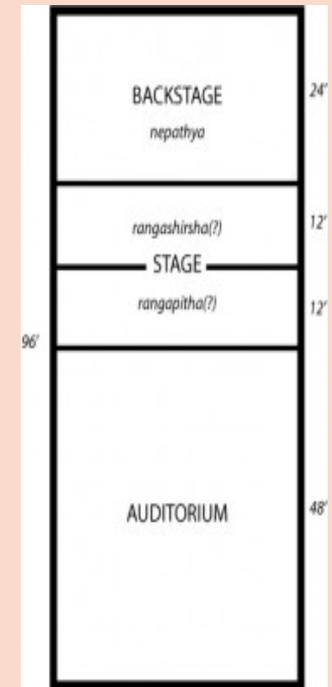
ART OF DANCE-Natya

- Natya is conveying a story through Nritya and Nritta
- Nritta= demonstration of rhythm through graceful body moves.
- Nritya= Nritta+Abhinaya
- Natya Shastra explains the four aspects of Abhinaya (expressing bhava) as:
 - Angika-Physical, using body movements to convey meaning.
 - Vachika-Vocal/Verbal expressions.
 - Aharya-External expressions, conveyed by costume, makeup, accessories and sets.
 - Satvika-psychological, highest level of expressions through minute movements of lips, eyebrows, ears and so on.
- Several styles were evolved by “Devadasis” during this period.
- Bharatanatyam is one of the oldest Ekahara (single performer) dance.
- Koodiyattam has Vachika Abhinaya as its dominant component.
- Mohiniyattam follows the Lasya style described in Natya Shastra.



THEATRICAL ARTS- SANSKRIT DRAMA

- Sanskrit drama was the main source of Indian theater with culture, customs and ethnicity.
- References to drama are found in Patanjali's "Vyakarna", Vatsyana's "Kamasutra", Kautilya's "Artha Shastra" and Panini's "Ashtadhyayi".
- Thirteen out of 35 plays that were written by Bhasa (~300 BC) have been found.
- Drama - a composite of dance, music and acting - was the highest form of art.
- It was staged at seasonal festivals to celebrate special events.
- The influence of *Natya Shastra* enhanced the vital individual components: Script writing, set designs, play production, costumes and direction.



*Basic layout of
Natyashastra Theatre*



Baja caves, carvings
from 200 BCE.

ART OF MUSIC, MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS



- Notes of scales , tala measures and elementary evolution of the raga had been established in classical period.
- Natya Shastra includes 4 types of Atodya(musical instruments): Tata(stringed), Avanaddha(percussion), Ghana(instrument for beating time) and Susira(having holes)like flute.
- Chapters 28-34 of Natya Shastra are dedicated to theory in music, techniques of singing and playing musical instruments.
- In villages, music was an essential element in daily life and most rituals.
- Flute and Veena acquired popularity.

CULTURE

- The civilization was characterized by a large range of ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity.
- Agriculture was the prime occupation of primitive Settlements.
- Within each tribe, people belonged to one of the four occupational groups: Brahmana (priests), Kshatriya (warriors), Vaishya (traders and agriculturist), or Shudras (workers).
- Urbanization and the formation of 16 Mahajanapadas (500 BCE) united several independent cultures.
- With cultures uniting, occupational groups became identities within a structured a caste system, making the identity hereditary over time.
- Samsara, Karma, Dharma and moksha were the basic principles.
- Education and the Guru gained vital importance.
- Three levels of education persisted, with almost 64 different fields of study: these were imparted orally or writing on palm leaves.
- Yoga-meditation was recognized as the means of liberation.

ART INFLUENCES CULTURE



Pottery influences

- Change in food habits: Rice, millet, and sorghum become vital foods.
- Punch-marked coins of the mid NBPW phase indicate a shift from barter system to use of currency of trade.
- Also influenced script development in India: As Kharoshthi and Brahmi scripts bear resemblance to similar sounding Aramic script.

Art of literature

- Sophisticated culture expanded through the abundant literature.
- “Ithihasa” became educators of Dharma and moral lessons to the mass.

FOOD

- Apupa (cake), Odana (cooked with water), Karambha and Yavagu were dishes made of rice and grains.
- Milk products such as curds, sour milk and butter were consumed.
- Certain foods were taboo among the various castes.
- Early notions of vegetarianism developed.
- Intoxicating drinks were regulated by the State.
- All food was categorized as being “hot” or “cold”, and was associated with inherent medical properties.
- Eating habits varied geographically.
- Different traditional menus were followed for various rituals.
- Spices were included in everyday cooking and were considered to be valuable by traders and invaders.
- Oranges were cultivated by breeding two citrus fruits.

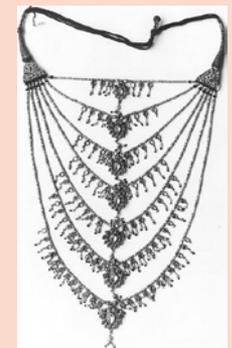
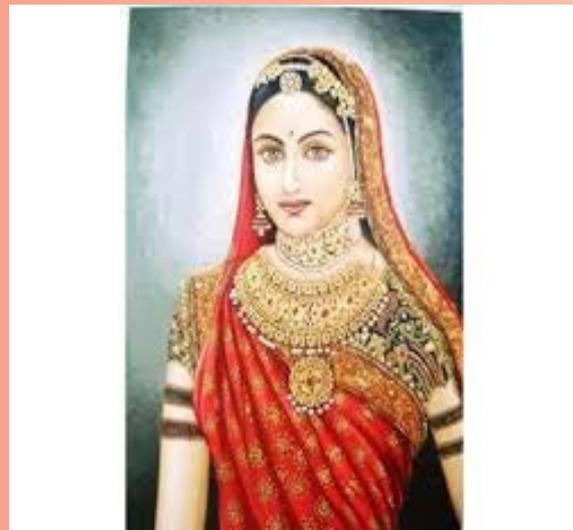


CLOTHING

- Clothing was made of cotton, linen or muslin and was occasionally decorated with gemstones.
- The most common attire was a Antariya (as a lower garment) and Uttariya, a long scarf as an upper garment.
- Satlari, chaulari, paklari were some necklaces.
- Bajuband (armlet) , Kangan (bracelet), Sitara (head wear), Patna were common.



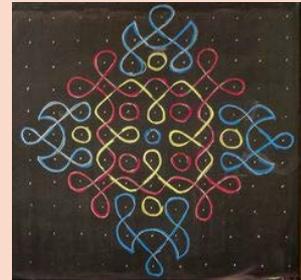
The Didarganj Yakshi depicting the *dhoti wrap*



Satlari Necklace

FESTIVALS

- Kaumudi-Mahotsava (on the day of *Sarat poornima*), Yaksaratri (Diwali), Vasanta and Madana-Mahotsava (Holi) were the principal annual festivals.
- *Samskaras* (domestic rites), such as Jatakarma, Upanayana, Vivaha, and Smasana-Krtya, were followed.
- People decorated homes with kollam and flowers, to welcome the gods.
- Mango leaves were gathered to form a *torana* at entrance.
- Combined art forms like “*Theyyam*” represented the dance of gods during festivals.
- Detailed facial decorations were used on artists that represented gods.



LIFE OF WOMEN

- The position of women was diverse and conflicting.
- Strabo (on the authority of Megasthenes) commented on Indians' love of finery, and of ornamented and flowered painted, printed, embroidered garments.
- Women participated in philosophical debates in the Upanishads.
- The Manusmriti (200 BCE-300 CE) emphasizes that the society which prefers to flourish, needs to confer respect and dignity on women.
- Megasthenes states, female warriors protected Chandragupta.
- Child marriage ("Bala vivaha") began during this period.
- Nagar Vadhu and Devadasis had high esteem in the community.
- Women were traditional home makers.

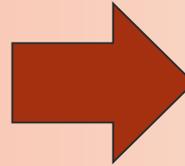
Art of Mind- Cultural transformation

Literate Culture

A literate culture emerged with the rebirth of urban civilization.

The existence of philosophical schools, both Hindu Orthodox (Samkhya, Yoga, Nyaya, Vaisheshika, purva Mimasa, Vedanta) and heterodox (Carvaka, Buddhist philosophy, Jain philosophy) schools focused on teaching practical disciplines to improve human life.

Played a key role in preaching good conduct - such as Ahimsa and tolerance - generating a civilized population.



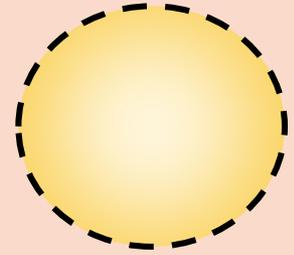
Intellect

The persisting interaction between three rival but closely related faiths enabled a rich and tolerant dialogue, while freely persuading competing speculations about religious and scientific issues. This created a lively intellectual culture to produce crucially important advances in human thought. We call it **Art of Mind**.

The formulation of *Artha Shastra* (the treatise on statecraft, economic policy and military strategy) and *Natya Shastra* (the encyclopedic treatise on the performing arts) are strong evidence of intellect.



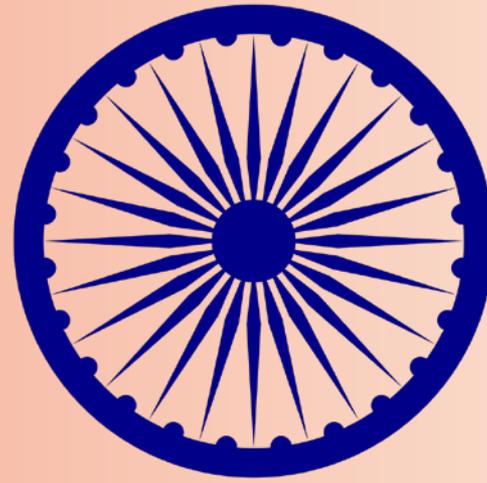
THROUGH THE EYES OF A CLASSICAL INDIAN



- He sees a creation.
- He believes the creator within and wishes to unleash his creativity.
- He sees harmony in countless dots connected, that don't represent the shape if moved from its course.
- Thru Shastra, he approaches to find the determinants (causes) of the image.
- He repeatedly connects the dots in various angles with deep concentration (Samadhi).
- He observes the “center”, he realizes the “equal distance” between the center and the countless dots on the image is the precise determinant of this shape.
- He wishes everyone to see through their own eyes to acquire the knowledge enclosed, and from that day on, it stays on the Ashoka Pillar and today in our Flag.

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Thank you!