

**INDIAN SCHOOL MUSCAT**  
**SENIOR SECTION - FINE ARTS DEPT**  
**HISTORY OF INDIAN ART – BUDDHIST, JAIN & HINDU ART**  
**CLASS XI – WORKSHEET No. 3**

**BUDDHIST INDIAN SCULPTURES**

Buddhist Indian sculptures can be best defined as splendid examples of religious sculpture and architecture. This type of sculpture developed in India around 255BC, especially, due to the efforts of Mauryan emperor Ashoka. Impressed by the ideologies of Buddhism Ashoka adopted it as the state religion. It was on his initiative that some remarkable Buddhist Indian sculptures were carved out. These sculptures used for popularizing this new religion. Hence a completely different idiom in the history of Indian sculpture evolved.

The Buddhist Indian architecture including the construction of stupas, chatyas and pillars. Iconography becomes an important part of the Buddhist architecture. As far as the sculpture was concerned it was simpler compared to the later sculpture included an iconic representation of Gautham Buddha. The style evolved by Ashoka can also be seen in buildings that sprang up in the Buddhist Pilgrimage centers. While discussing about the architecture and sculpture it is important to include the sculptures of stupas. The sculpture of Sanchi is a fine specimen of the Buddha art.

Another important construction that emerged with the Buddhist religious principles are the caves, the architecture and the sculpture of Buddhist caves. Apart from this the sculpture of Chaityas, sculpture of Vihara and sculpture of Ashokan Pillars are quite significant too.

**SCULPTURE OF MAURYAN PERIOD**

This period marked an imaginative and impressive step forward in Indian sculpting. Although some would consider the pillars of Ashoka as architecture, owing to their free standing nature and elaborately carved animal capitals most of the art historians consider them as the example of sculpture. Coomaraswami (Art critic) distinguishes between court art and a more popular art during the Mauryan period. Court art is represented by the pillars and their capitals. Popular art is represented by the works of the local sculptors like **Chauri Bearer** or **Yakshini** (Didarganj, Patna, Bihar) and **Lion Capital** (Sarnath, UP)