

# STUPA ARCHITECTURE IN INDIA

Before Christ (B.C.)							
2.5 mn  PALEOLITHIC LPA MPA UPA	10,000  Meso lithic	6,000  Neolithic	4,000  wheel	4000	3000 T	2000	1000
				3900	2900	1900	900
				3800	2800	1800	800
				3700	2700 E	1700	700
				3600	2600 S	1600	600
				3500 Pre	2500 Indus	1500	500 Mahajanapada
				3400 Harappan	2400 Valley	1400	400 MAURYAS
				3300 S	2300 Civiliza	1300 Rigvedic	300
				3200 I	2200	1200 era	200
				3100	2100	1100	100 Dark Age
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			2900				
			3000				
			Anno Domio (A.D.)				

Buddha 568 - 483 BC\*\*

Haryanka Dynasty 544 - 413

Sisunaga 413 - 345

Nanda 345 - 321

Mauryas (320 - 180 BC)

Alexander Invasion 327 - 325 BC

we are here!!

**Indian Context**

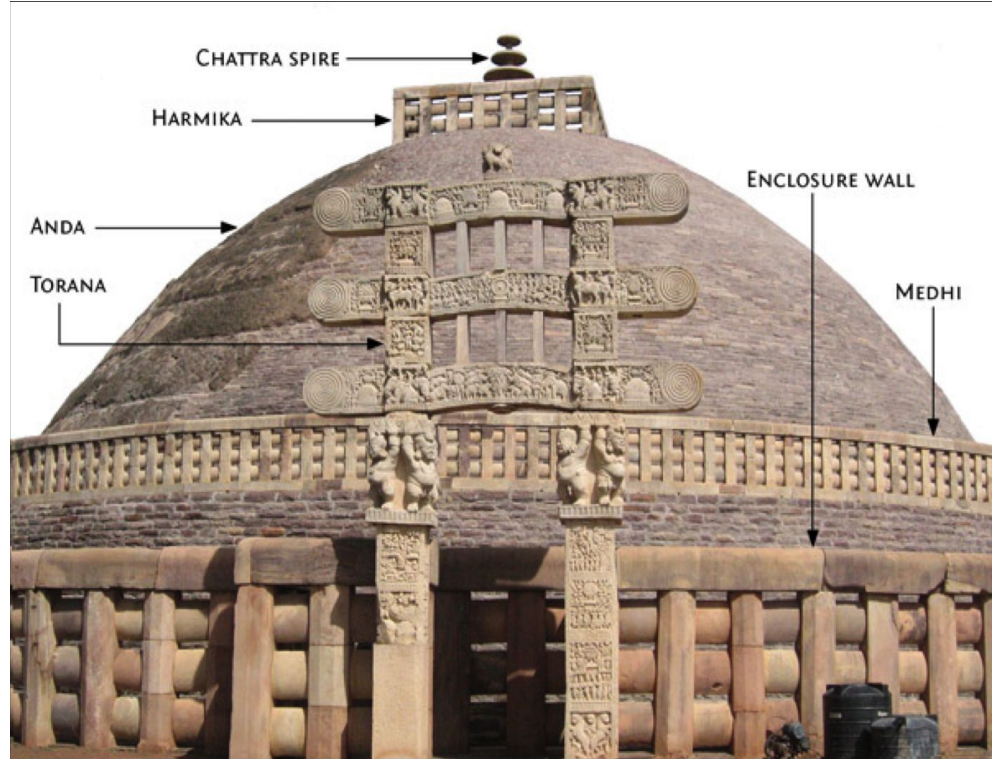
Neolithic = 6,000 - 1,000 BC

Chacolithic = 3,500 - 1,200 BC [Jorwe - 700 BC]

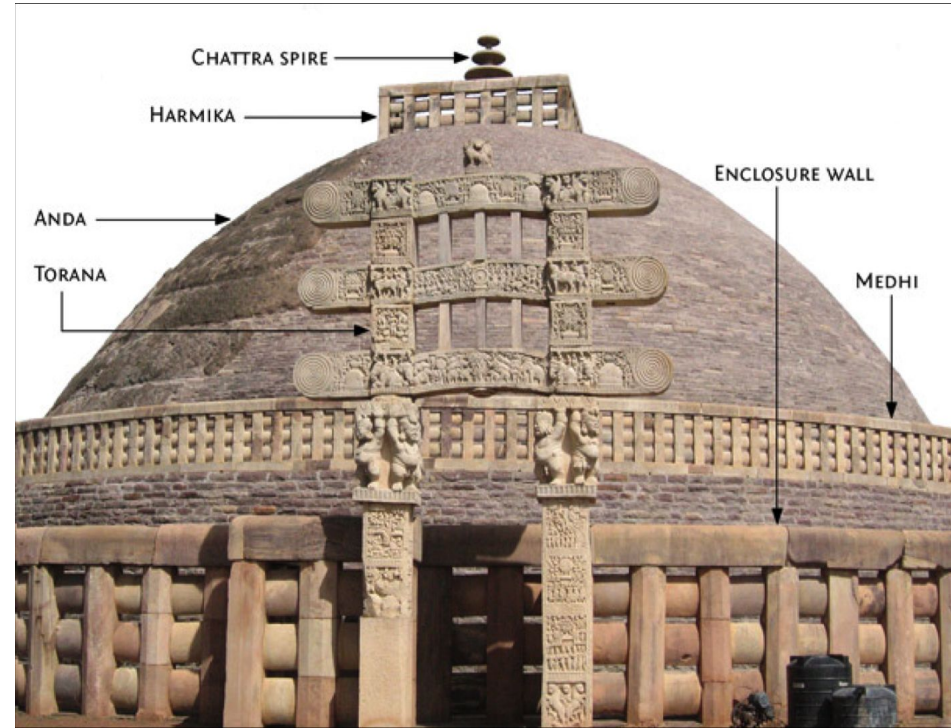
# STUPA IN VEDIC PERIOD

## What is the meaning of Stupa?

- The term stupa comes from **Sanskrit**
- **means 'heap' in literal sense.**
- In Pali language it is called "**Thupa**".
- The **first reference** of the term stupa is found in **Rigveda** where it was used for fire coming out of an altar (Yajna).
- During the **Vedic age** stupa meant a structure built over the funeral place of important personalities by using **bamboos and wood**. It is a conventional representation of a funeral cumulus in which relics and ashes of the dead were kept.



- After the death of Buddha, nine stupas were erected. Eight of them had the relics of Buddha at their medhi while the ninth had the pot in which the relics were originally kept.
- The location of the nine stupas built after the death of Buddha are
  - **Rajagriha, Vaishali, Kapilavastu, Allakappa, Ramagrama, Vethapida, Pava, Kushinagar and Pippalivana.**
- During the period of Ashoka, the art of stupas reached its climax. Almost 84,000 stupas were erected during his period.
- Although a Vedic tradition, stupas were popularised by the Buddhists.



*Request of the Buddha who had asked that he be buried under the earth "heaped up as rice is heaped in an alms bowl.*

# STUPA IN BUDDHISM

- Stupa architecture in its proper form was associated with Buddhism.
- According to the Buddhist text **Mahaparinibbana Sutta**, 9 stupas were built by 9 important personalities of the age when Mahatma Buddha died.
- As Buddhism spread beyond India frontiers, stupa architecture also spread world over.
- A large number of stupas were built in Tibet, China, Korea, Japan and south-east Asian countries over the period of time.
- Stupas are known by different names:
  - Caitya - Nepal
  - Chorten - Tibet
  - Dagoba - Sri Lanka
  - Zedi/Chedi - Laos and Cambodia
  - Candy - Indonesia
  - Pagoda - Japan and Vietnam

## Buddha's Message through Stupa:

Buddha's last words that 'every living thing decays and everyone should work for his salvation diligently' are symbolized by stupa architecture.

## CLASSIFICATION OF STUPAS

Buddhist stupas are classified into 5 main categories: on the basis of the purpose or occasion associated with their construction.

These are:

- 1. Relic Stupa**
- 2. Object Stupa**
- 3. Commemorative Stupa**
- 4. Symbolic Stupa**
- 5. Votive Stupas**

## Relic Stupas (Saririka)

- Relic stupas were constructed **on bodily remains of Buddha, his disciples and Bodhisattvas**.
- These are the most sacred among all Buddhist stupas.
- **Sanchi Stupa is an example.**

## Object Stupas (Paribhogika)

- These stupas were built on **personal belongings or important items used by Buddha**, his disciples
  - Begging bowl, sandals, robes
  - Buddhist scriptures were kept in these stupas.
- **Kesariya Stupa** (east Champaran district of Bihar) was built by emperor Ashoka over Buddha's begging bowl.
- According to the Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang, Kushana king Kanishka built a stupa at Kapisa (Afghanistan) on Buddhist scriptures. These scriptures were inscribed on **copper plates** after the completion of the **4th Buddhist council held at Kundalvana** located near Srinagar in Kashmir.

## Commemorative Stupas (Uddeshika)

- These stupas were built in the memory of important events associated with the life of Buddha and Bodhisattvas.
- Emperor Ashoka built a number of such stupas at places like Lumbini, Bodhagaya and Sarnath.
- **Dharmarajjika Stupa built by Ashoka at Sarnath** is the finest example of this category.

## Symbolic Stupas

- They were built to symbolize the invisible presence of Mahatma Buddha. Since Buddha was a God, he was believed to be present everywhere. Therefore, such stupas could be built anywhere.
- These stupas reminded people that Buddha and his Dharma were there with them always and everywhere. Relics or objects were not used in these stupas.
- **Amaravati Stupa built by Satavahanas** in the Deccan region is an example of this category.

## Votive Stupas

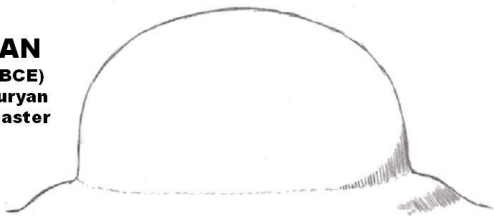
- These stupas were built by devotees at important Buddhist centres and monasteries near the main stupas when they went there for pilgrimage.
- These were very small in size and were erected in a few hours.
- The construction of these stupas was carried out to earn merit, that is, to get the grace of God.
- **A large number of such stupas can be seen at Sarnath, Bodhgaya, Lumbini and Kushinagar.**

# EARLY EVOLUTION OF THE STUPA

(BUTKARA Great Stupa, 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE- 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE)

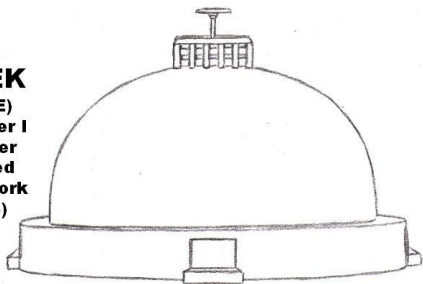
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**MAURYAN**  
(3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE)  
Coinage: Mauryan  
Schist and plaster



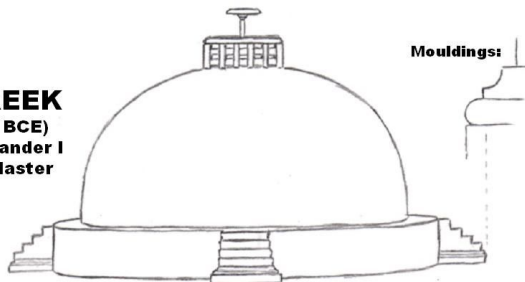
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**INDO-GREEK**  
(2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE)  
Coinage: Menander I  
Schist and plaster  
Niches for figured panels or relief-work  
(Butkara I, p35)



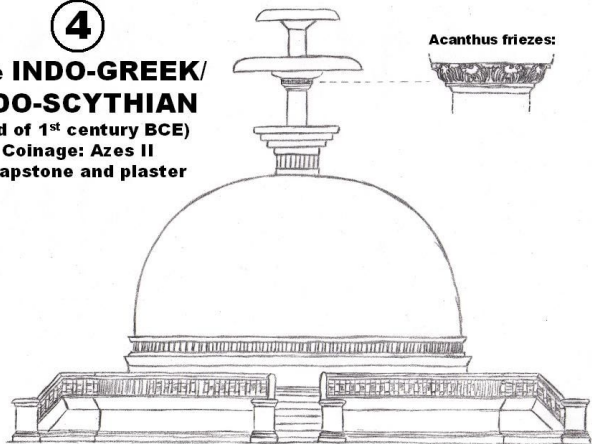
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**INDO-GREEK**  
(2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE)  
Coinage: Menander I  
Schist and plaster



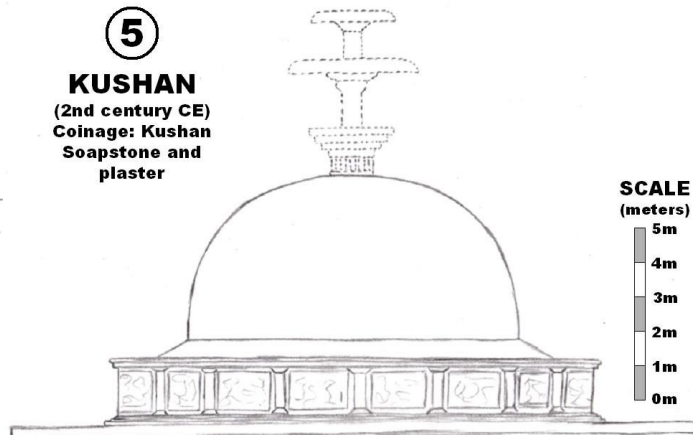
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**Late INDO-GREEK/  
INDO-SCYTHIAN**  
(End of 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE)  
Coinage: Azes II  
Soapstone and plaster

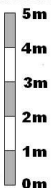


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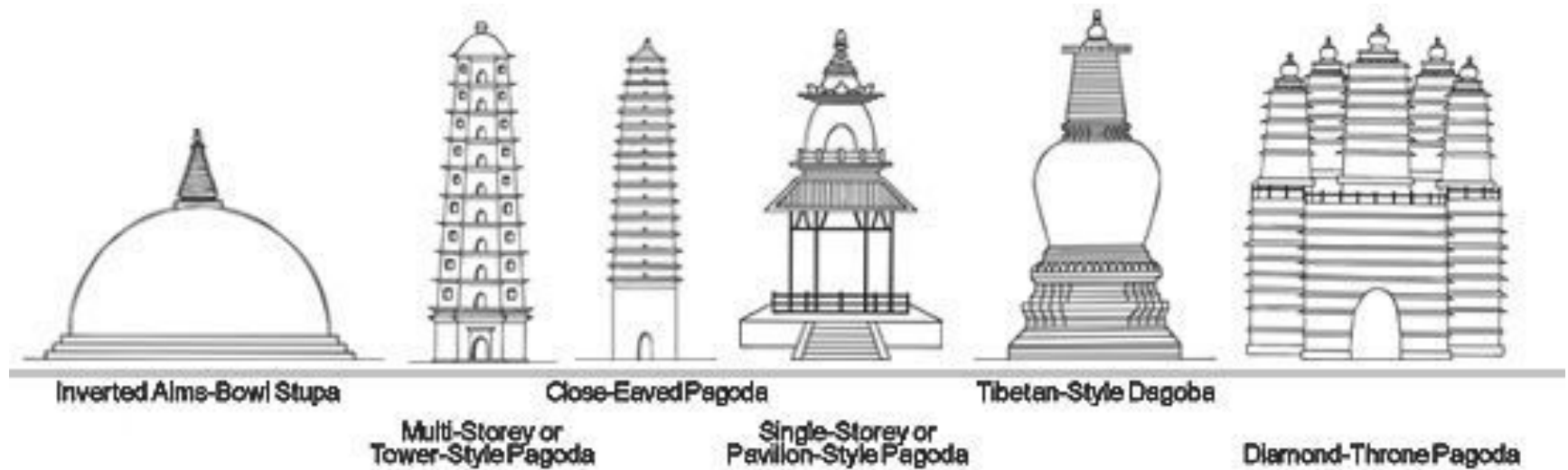
**KUSHAN**  
(2<sup>nd</sup> century CE)  
Coinage: Kushan  
Soapstone and plaster



**SCALE**  
(meters)



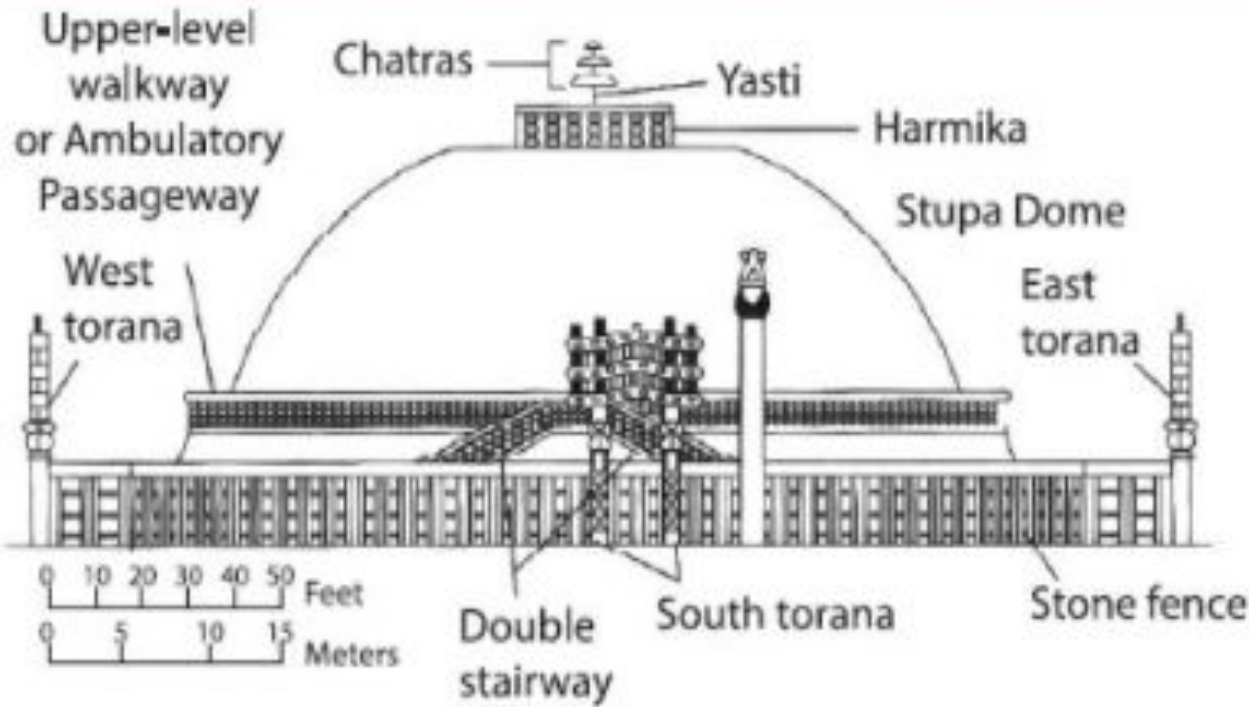
*Early Buddhist Stupa-art, while depicting folk motifs and narratives successfully expounds Buddhist ideals, Elucidate.*



The shape of the stupa represents the Buddha, crowned and sitting in meditation posture on a lion throne.

**Misc. Fact: A Kalachakra Stupa** is a stupa whose symbolism is not connected to events in the Buddha's life, but instead to the symbolism of the Kalachakra Tantra, created to protect against negative energies. It is the **rarest kind of stupa**.

The Kalachakra Tantra refers to external, internal and alternative aspects. The external aspect deals with cosmology, astronomy and astrology, the internal deals with the individual's inner energy-system; the interrelationship between body and mind.



## Five purified elements

Although not described in any Tibetan text on stupa symbolism, the stupa may represent the five purified elements:

- The square base represents **earth**
- The hemispherical dome/vase represents **water**
- The conical spire represents **fire**
- The upper lotus parasol and the crescent moon represent **air**
- The sun and the dissolving point represent **wisdom**

## Basic Architecture of Stupa

In the most basic sense, as an architectural representation of a sacred burial site, a stupa - no matter where it is located in the world or when it was built - has three fundamental features:

### 1) A hemispherical mound (Anda):

The anda's domed shape recalls a mound of dirt that was used to cover the Buddha's remains. It has a **solid core** and **cannot be entered**.

Consistent with their symbolic associations, the earliest stupas contained actual relics of the Buddha; the relic chamber, buried deep inside the anda, is called the **tabena**. Over time, this hemispherical mound has taken on an even grander symbolic association:

- *the mountain home of the gods at the centre of the universe.*
- *symbol of latent creative power*
- *architectural replica of the infinite dome of heaven, representing the cycle of death and rebirth.*

2) **A square railing (Harmika):** The harmika is inspired by a square railing or fence that surrounded the mound of dirt, marking it as a sacred burial site.

### 3) A central pillar supporting a triple-umbrella form (Chattra):

The chattra, in turn, was derived from umbrellas that were placed over the mound to protect it from the elements. Just as the anda's symbolic value expanded over time, the central pillar that holds the umbrellas has come to represent the **pivot of the universe**, the **axis mundi along which the divine descends from heaven** and becomes accessible to humanity.

And the three circular umbrella-like disks represent the three jewels, or **triantha, of Buddhism**, which are the keys to a true understanding of the faith:

(a) *Buddha;*

(b) *dhamma (Buddhist teachings or religious law)*

Around these three core building blocks were added secondary features:

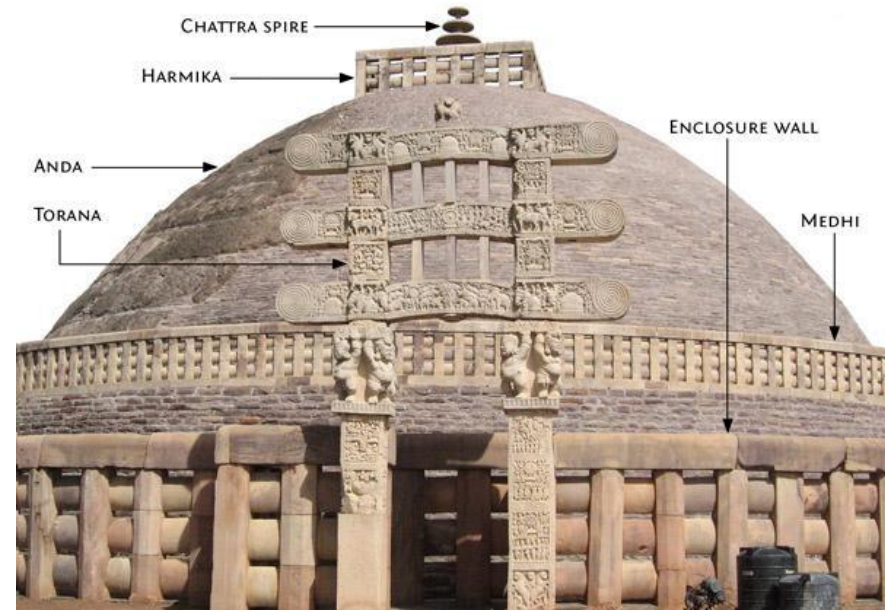
- **Enclosure wall with decorated gateways (Toranas) at the cardinal directions**

The wall - with its trademark three horizontal stone bars - surrounds the entire structure.

- **A circular terrace (Medhi)**

The terrace - surrounded by a similar three-bar railing - supports the anda and raises it off the ground. It likely served as a platform for ritual circumambulation.

In Buddhism, circumambulation or **pradakshina** has been an important ritual and devotional practice since the earliest times, and stupas always have a pradakhshina path around them.



**Sanchi Stupa**

# PARTS OF STUPA IN BUDDHISM

## Anda

- It is the main part of a stupa in the shape of a hemisphere or dome or inverted bowl. It was a solid structure built by collecting earth and a brick or stone layer put over it.

## Medhi

- It was the wider base of a stupa.

## Pradakshina Path

- The English translation of the name is '**Circumbulatory Path**'.
- It was built over a Medhi for devotees to take rounds around the stupa to get the grace of Mahatma Buddha.
- Stairways were constructed to reach it from ground level.



## Harmika

- It is the top portion of a stupa. A casket containing relics or some object was buried at the top part of a stupa, which was slightly flattened.
- Harmika comprised this flattened portion surrounded by a railing/ Vedika.
- symbolized the zenith beyond life and death (nirvana). Its resemblance to a **sacrificial altar** was of particular significance for the attainment of nirvana required the sacrifice of the self and the world (what was below needed to be sacrificed to reach the top).

## Chhatra [Parasol] and Yashti

- Yasti was a part of Chhatra. It is the staff or Danda erected at the top portion of a stupa.
- Three, five or seven round disks were attached to it. Chhatra consisted of Yashti and disks.
- The yasti, which rises through the top of the anda, *symbolizes the axis mundi, the point at the center of the universe that connects heaven and Earth.*
- Chhatra symbolized:
- *the Three Jewels of Buddhism: the Buddha, the Dharma (the Law), and the Sangha (the community of monks).*
- *all powerful and sovereign status of Mahatma Buddha.*
- *the sacred Tree of Life or enlightenment.*

## Vedika

- It refers to the railing built around a stupa.
- Through there are 3 railings at three different levels.
  - The first railing was built on the ground around the Anda.
  - The second railing was built at around the middle of Anda over Medhi to act as a peripheral wall around Pradakshina Path and
  - the third railing was built at the top to surround the Chhatra.
- Crossbars used in the railings were known as **Suichi**.

Vedikas were repeated around the stupa and on the terrace on which the anda rested (medhi level). They served to demarcate the *boundary of the sacred precinct with the secular world*.

## Torana

- Toranas were erected in all the four directions as gateways.
- These were highly ornamented in nature.
- Scenes from Jataka stories and day-to-day life of people were depicted on Toranas.
- Resembles - open to everyone in every direction

# DEVELOPMENT OF STUPA ARCHITECTURE

- After the death of Buddha, nine stupas were erected. Eight of them had the relics of Buddha at their medhi while the ninth had the pot in which the relics were originally kept.
- one built by Drona (Brahman) over the urn
- The location of the nine stupas built after the death of Buddha are

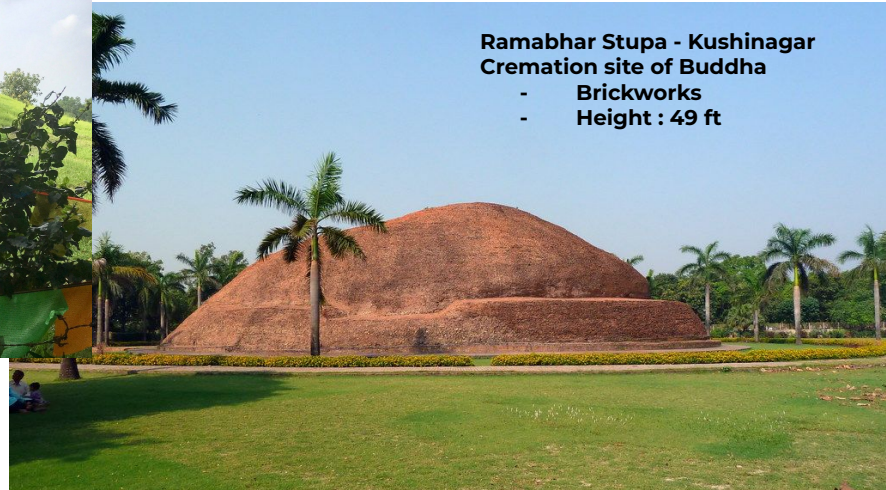
- **Rajagriha**
- **Vaishali**
- **Kapilavastu**
- **Allakappa**
- **Ramagrama**
- **Vethapida**
- **Pava**
- **Kushinagar**
- **Pippalivana**



*Ramagrama stupa (Nepal) remains the only intact and original stupa containing relics of Buddha*



Buddha's ashes mud Stupa (saririka) built by the Licchavis, **Vaishali** and one of the earliest stupas  
Asoka opened, took out some relic and placed back the original casket and layered the stupa with bricks



**Ramabhar Stupa - Kushinagar**  
**Cremation site of Buddha**  
- **Brickworks**  
- **Height : 49 ft**

## Piprahwa Stupa

- **Location:**
  - Village near Birdpur in Siddharthnagar district of Uttar Pradesh.
  - 12 miles from **Lumbini**
- burial place of the portion of the Buddha's ashes that were given to Moriyas
- 13 sealings with **Kushan script** - of the community of the monks of great Kapilvastu
- A buried stupa was discovered by **William Claxton Peppe**, a British colonial engineer and landowner of an estate at Piprahwa in January **1898**.
- On one of the vases was a Brahmi script which was translated by Georg Bühler
- **1899**, a ceremony was held and the bone relics were handed off to an emissary of King Rama V and traveled to Bangkok.
  - The bone relics were immediately distributed across several locations, including
    - *Golden Mount Temple in Bangkok, Thailand*
    - *Shwedagon pagoda in Rangoon, Myanmar*
    - *Arakan pagoda in Mandalay, Myanmar,*
    - *Dipaduttamarama Temple in Colombo, Sri Lanka*
    - *Waskaduwe Vihara in Kalutara, Sri Lanka*
    - *Marichiwatta stupa in Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka*



*The Piprahwa stupa is one of the earliest surviving stupas.*



## Kesariya Stupa

- **Location:** 110 kilometres from Patna, in the Champaran (east) district of Bihar
- **Discovery:** led by **Colonel Mackenzie in 1814 to General Cunningham's** proper excavation in 1861–62
- **Mahajanapadas/Origin\*\*:**
  - stupa mound may even have been inaugurated during the Buddha's time, as it corresponds in many respects to the description of the stupa erected by the **Licchavis of Vaishali to house the alms bowl the Buddha** has given them\*\*
- **Mauryas**
  - The first construction of the Stupa is dated to the 3rd century BCE. original Kesariya stupa probably dates to the time of Ashoka (250 BCE), as the remains of a capital of a Pillar of Ashoka were discovered there
- **Gupta Era:**
  - current stupa dates to the **Gupta Dynasty** between 200 AD and 750 AD, and may have been associated with the 4th century ruler Raja Chakravarti



- circumference of almost 400 feet (120 m) and height of about 104 feet (32 m) - **one of the tallest and largest**
- many architectural similarities with the Buddhist temple located in Indonesia, Borobodur
- excavated chambers show a combination of statues in **bhumisparsha (of Akshobhya)** and **dhyanimudra (of Amitabha)** on the same side

- Having emerged in 5th century BC, stupa architecture continued to flourish in India for more than a thousand years.

### During Mauryan Period

- According to the **Buddhist text Avadana Sutta**, the 10 original stupas were opened up by Ashoka and he distributed their relics among 84,000 stupas built by him. [As per Dipvamsa]
- Some of the prominent Ashokan stupas are located at **Sanchi, Sarnath, Bharhut, Amaravati** and **Lumbini**.
- Amaravati Stupa was discovered by **Colonel Collin Mackenzie in 1797 AD**.

- Mauryan period onwards, Buddha was depicted **symbolically** via stupa, lotus, Chakra and throne.
- Also, **Jataka stories** were depicted on the railings and toranas of the stupas
  - Virupandita Jataka
  - Chhadanta Jataka
  - Sibi Jataka
  - Vessantara Jataka
  - Shama Jataka

## Virupandita Jataka

This Jataka tale illustrates the perfection of character of truthfulness (sacca). painting of Vidhurapandita Jataka. The Bodhisatta was once a king's advisor



**Yaksa General Punnaka flying on his horse**

## Sibi Jataka

- It is one of the Jataka tales detailing episodes of the various incarnations of Buddha. Each Jataka tale illustrates the Buddhist ideals of "Dharma" and sacrifice in various forms.



**Slab with the Shibi Jataka, Gandhara, 2nd-3rd century AD**

## During Post-Mauryan Period

- During the post-Mauryan age (200 BC - 300 AD), stupa architecture continued to flourish after some decline under Pushyamitra Sunga, the founder of Sunga dynasty.
- **Pushyamitra Sunga** was anti-Buddhist. He destroyed Buddhist stupas and monasteries

## *Agnimitra*

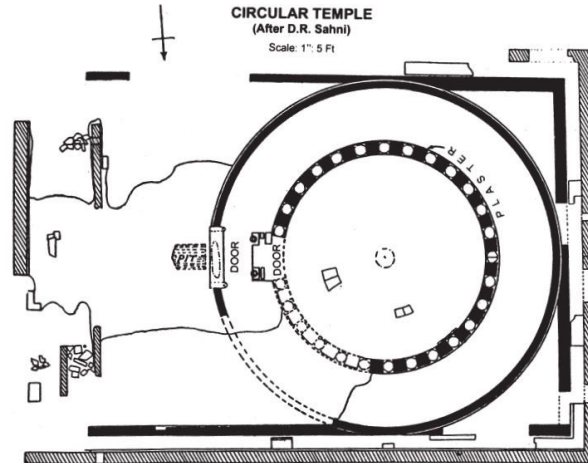
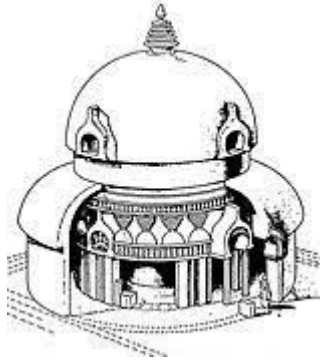
- **Agnimitra**, the son and successor of Pushyamitra Sunga, was a liberal and progressive ruler. He was favourably disposed towards Buddhism.
- **He was the hero of Malvikagnimitram, a Sanskrit play written by the great poet Kalidasa.**
- He repaired Sanchi Stupa of Ashoka destroyed by his father and built two more new stupas at Sanchi.

## *Satavahana, Ikshavaku and Vakataka rulers*

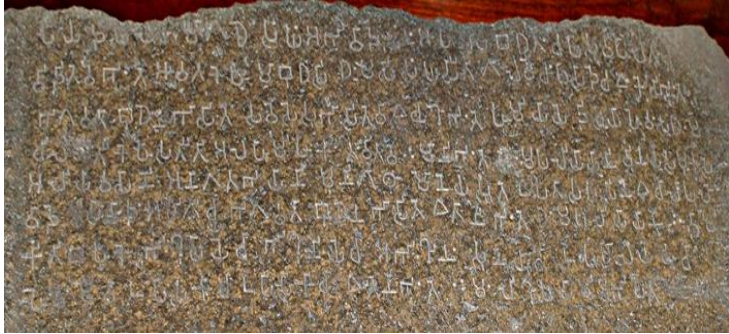
- A large number of stupas were built by Satavahana, Ikshavaku and Vakataka rulers in the Deccan region during post-Mauryan age.

## Bairat Stupa

- **Location:** Bairat, Rajasthan, on a hill locally called "Bijak-ki-Pahari" ("Hill of the Inscription").
- **Time:** Ashoka in the 3rd century BCE, and near it were found two of Ashoka's Minor Rock Edicts, the Bairat and the Calcutta-Bairat Minor Rock Edicts.
- freestanding Buddhist temple, a Chaityagriha
- The temple is of a **circular type**, formed of a central stupa surrounded by a circular colonnade and an enclosing wall

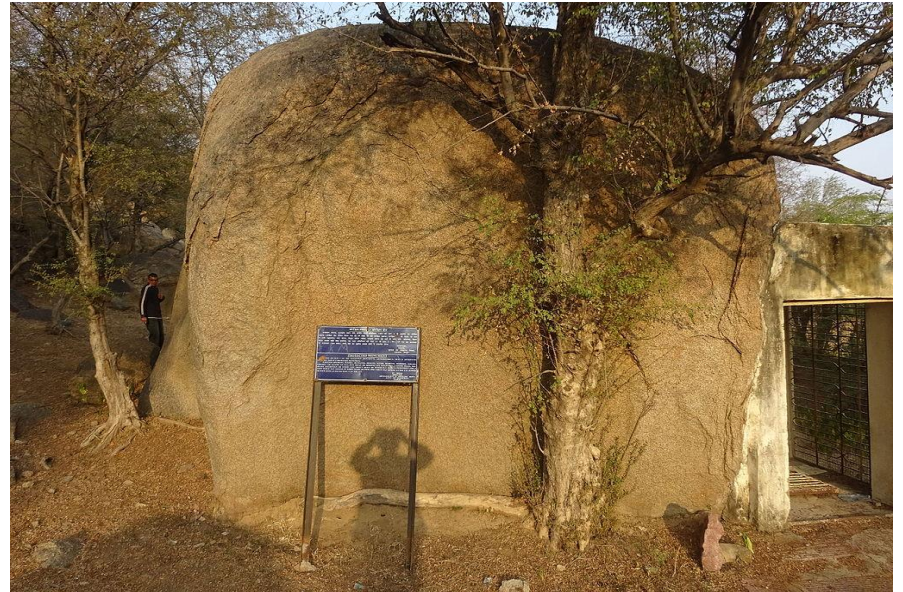


### Minor rock edict of Ashoka in Bairat Stupa



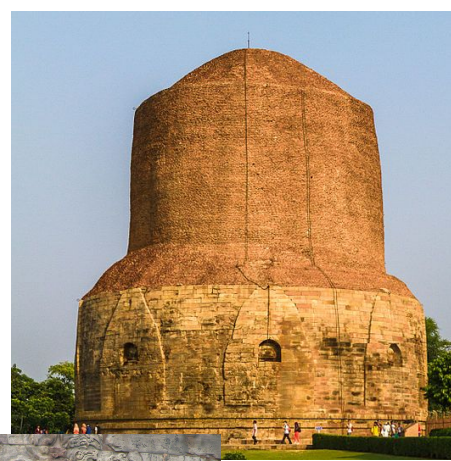
## Historical significance of Bairat

- Bairat is an ancient Indian City which is presently a famous town.
- Ancient times: Virat Nagar, capital of a Machcha or Matsya.
- This kingdom later became a part of Mauryan Empire.
- The ruin of the oldest Buddhist structure (Chaitya) is found here.



# Dhamek Stupa, Sarnath

- Dharmarajika Stupa, - Stupa of the reign of Dharma) is a massive stupa located at **Sarnath**
- some later stupas, such as at Sarnath and Sanchi, seem to be embellishments of earlier mounds.
- The Dhamek Stupa was built in **500 CE** to replace an earlier structure commissioned by **Ashoka in 249 BCE**, along with several other monuments, to commemorate the Buddha's activities in this location.
- An **Ashoka pillar** with an edict engraved on it stands near the site.
  - Buddha gave the first sermon to his first five disciples, led by Kaundinya, after attaining enlightenment, "revealing his Eightfold Path leading to nirvana".
  - Ancient sources the site of the first sermon is mentioned to have been at a "Mriga-dayaa-vanam" or a sanctuary for animals. The last royal endowment at the site is dated to about 12th CE, after which the location of the Mrigadayavanam seems to have been lost
- The stupa was enlarged on six occasions but the upper part is still unfinished.
- **640 CE, Hiuen Tsang** recorded that the colony had over 1,500 priests and the main stupa was nearly 300 feet (91 m) high.
- Current shape, the stupa is a solid cylinder of bricks and stone reaching a height of 43.6 meters and having a diameter of 28 meters. It is the most massive structure in Sarnath.
  - The basement seems to have survived from Ashoka's structure
  - the stone facing is chiseled and displays delicate floral carvings of Gupta origin.
  - The wall is covered with **exquisitely carved figures of humans and birds**, as well as **inscriptions in the Brahmi script**



## Aniconism in Buddhism

- the earliest phase, lasting **until the 1st century CE**, has been described as aniconic
- the Buddha was only represented through symbols
  - empty throne,
  - Bodhi tree,
  - a riderless horse with a parasol
  - floating above an empty space
  - Buddha's footprints
  - dharma wheel.

This aniconism is relation to the image of the Buddha could be in conformity with an ancient Buddhist prohibition against showing the Buddha himself in human form, known from the Sarvastivada vinaya (rules of the early Buddhist school of the Sarvastivada)

*"Since it is not permitted to make an image of the Buddha's body, I pray that the Buddha will grant that I can make an image of the attendant Bodhisattva. Is that acceptable?"*  
*The Buddha answered: "You may make an image of the Bodhisattava"*



**Maya's dream Sanchi Stupa 1 Eastern gateway**



**Departure of the Buddha from Kapilavastu Sanchi Stupa 1 Northern Gate. Alternatively, King Suddhodana drives out of the Palace, North Gate, Stupa no. 1, Sanchi, Great Departure scene.**

## Sanchi (in Raisen district, MP)

- advantage of being in a better state of preservation than many other early Buddhist stupa-monastery sites
- not associated with any event in the Buddha's life. It was located near Vidisha, one of the greatest cities of the Mauryan Empire.
- Sanchi is **referred to as**
  - **Kakanava or Kakanaya in early Brahmi inscriptions** found at the site.
  - **Kakanadabota** - 4th century CE
  - **Bota-Sri Parvata** - an inscription of the late 7th century
- The remains at Sanchi include stupas, pillars, shrines, and sculptures ranging from the 3rd century BCE to the 12th century CE. These provide a remarkable history of Buddhism

## STRUCTURE

- stone circumambulatory path (**pradakshina-patha**);
- two flights of stairs (**sopanas**) at the base;
- stone railings (**vedikas**) at the ground
- a stone umbrella (**chhatra**) on the summit.
- Stone railings and four gateways (**toranas**) at the cardinal points enclosed the entire sacred space.

## RELICS

- **no relics were found in Stupa no. 1,**
- Stupa no. 2 contained a relic box with bone fragments of 10 Buddhist monks.
- Stupa no. 3 had the relics (bone fragments, beads) of the famous monks Sariputta and Mahamogalana.

**200 BCE-200 CE: STRUCTURE** include **pillars, a pillared hall, and shrines, including an apsidal one.**

Recent excavations at Sanchi

- **ancient dams** made of mud, faced with dressed blocks of stone. These created reservoirs for storing rainwater, suggesting that the monks were involved in **water harvesting**, not only for providing drinking water but also for irrigating the surrounding fields.

## Evolution

### Ashoka

- The main Sanchi Stupa was originally built by Ashoka with bricks but it was destroyed by Pushyamitra Sunga. It is known as Mahastupa.
- original construction work of this stupa was overseen by Ashoka, whose wife **Devi** was the daughter of a merchant of nearby Vidisha. Sanchi was also her birthplace as well as the venue of her and Ashoka's wedding.
- later gave Ashoka two sons, Ujjainiya and Mahendra, and a daughter Sanghamitta

### Agnimitra [Shunga]

- the core of the Great Stupa, was enlarged to its present diameter of 120 feet,
- covered with a stone casing,
- topped with a balcony and umbrella, and
- encircled with a stone railing.
- *[The railings of this stupa were **originally made of wood**. These were **replaced with stone railings by Agnimitra**.]*
- Beautifully ornamented gateways known as **toranas were also added to it** during the post-Mauryan age. Such Four famous gateways, each about thirty-five feet high, were carved during the first half of the first century A.D.

- Decorated with images of auspicious **fertility spirits, known as yakshas and yakshis**,
- the gateways also feature narratives depicting moments from the past lives and final existence of Buddha
- **Motifs** such as wheels, thrones, and footprints are used to symbolize the Buddha, who is not represented in human form until later.

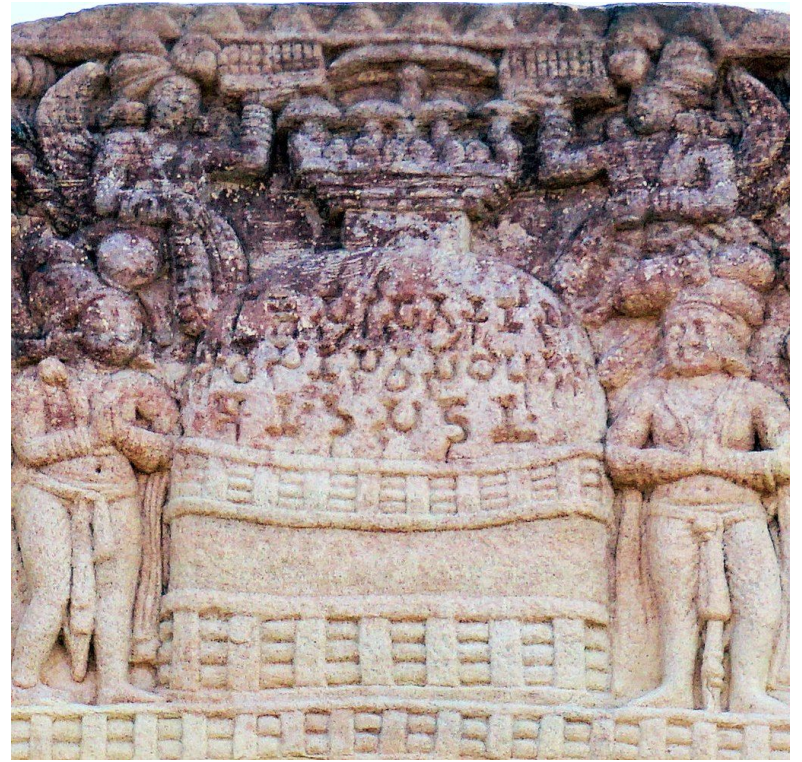
#### **Discovery:**

- *This stupa was discovered by **General Herbert Taylor** in 1818 AD.*
- *General **Alexander Cunningham** carried out excavations at Sanchi.*
- *Proper restoration work was carried out at Sanchi under the supervision of Sir **John Marshall** during the period 1912 to 1919 AD.*
- *At present there are about 50 monuments at Sanchi. These monuments were included in **UNESCO's list of WHS**.*

Satavahana period  
(1st cent BCE – 1st  
cent CE)



The southern gateway of the Great Stupa was, according to an inscription, donated under the rule of "King Satakarni", probably **Satakarni II**

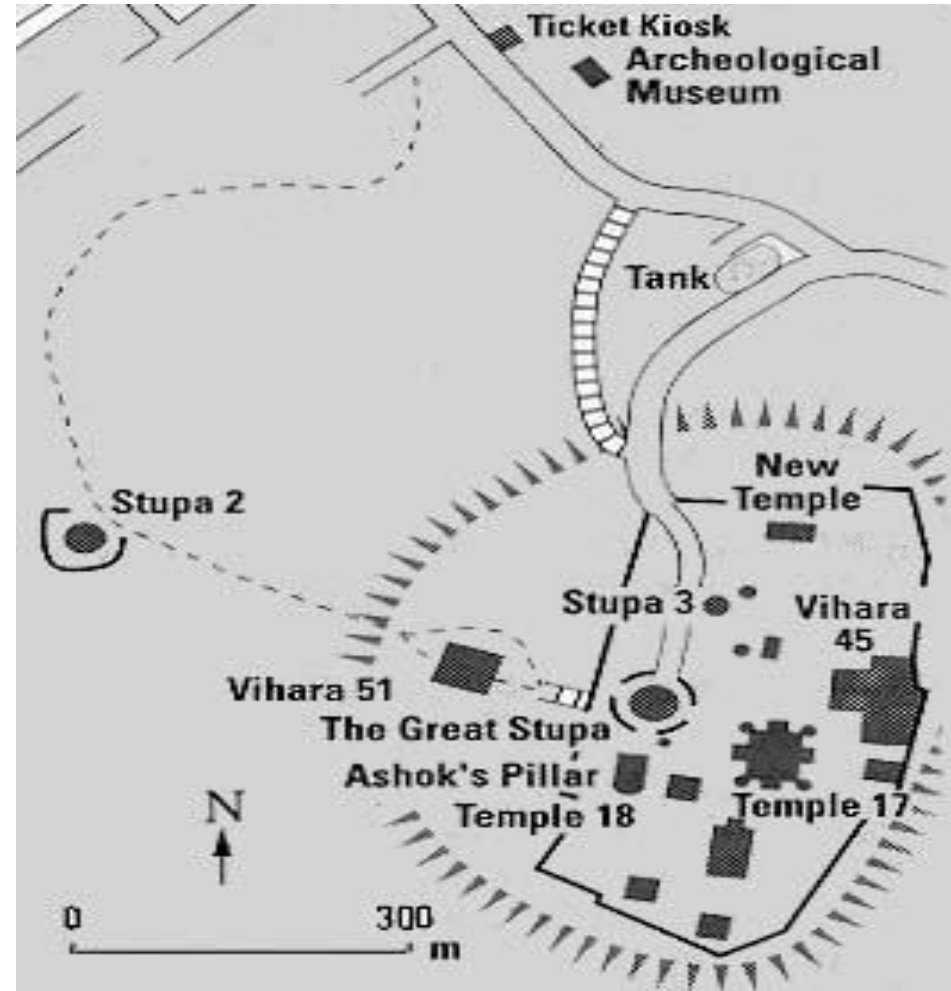


- written in early Brahmi script over the dome of the stupa in this relief.
- Dated 50 BCE - 0 CE.
- The inscription appears on the relief of a stupa at the center of the top architrave, at the rear



## Stupas of Sanchi

- Sanchi is the center of a region with several stupas, all within a few miles.
- **Stupa No. 1**
  - one of the oldest Buddhist monuments in the country and the largest stupa at the site.
  - It was initially built under the Mauryans and embellished with one of the Pillars of Ashoka.
  - Later on under **Shunga and Satvahanas** enlarged and decorated it with gates and railings.
  - The central structure consists of a hemispherical dome on a base, with a relic chamber deep within.
  - **Manushi Buddha** is worshiped as symbol of worship.
  - It portray the various events like
    - besiegement of Kushinagra
    - Buddha's visit to Kapilavastu
    - Ashoka's visit to the Ramgrama Stupa



Parallely to sanchi sculpture, in Mathura images of same period have same quality but have difference in physical appearance of faces and body language.



**Legend of Devi, Sanchi**



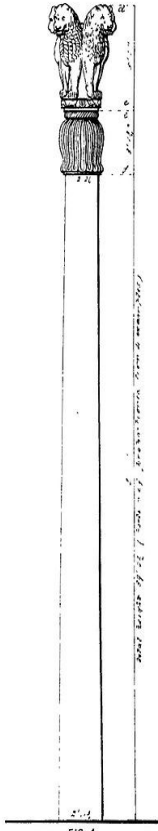
**Kimbell seated Bodhisattva, Mathura**

## Manushi-Buddha

- A Manushi-Buddha is one who has acquired enlightenment by his previous incarnations as Bodhisattva, that he is capable of receiving Bodhi, or Supreme Wisdom, a particle of the essence of Adi-Buddha.
- He has become a Tathagata and can have no more rebirths, but at his death will attain Nirvana-pada, or absorption into the Adi-Buddha.
- Once a Manushi Buddha has performed his allotted task, he enters nirvana and is then beyond the power of men.
- A Buddha who has (temporarily) taken the shape of a man in order to live and work in the world," out of compassion for the suffering of living beings.



**Manushi Buddha**



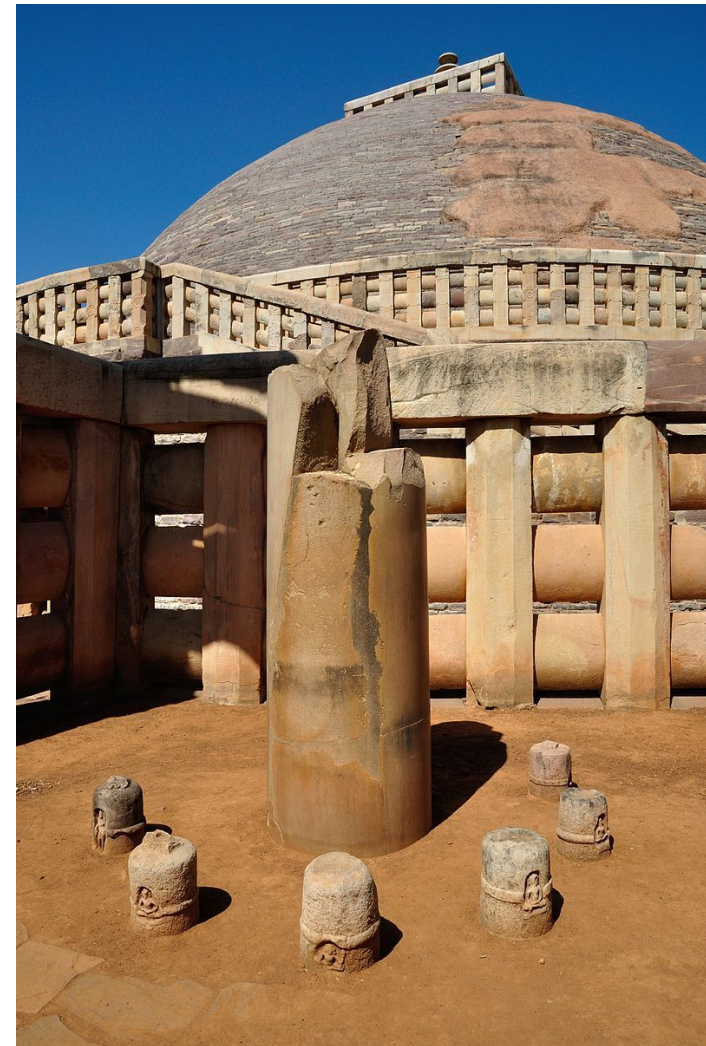
**Ashokan  
Pillar**

## Ashokan Pillar

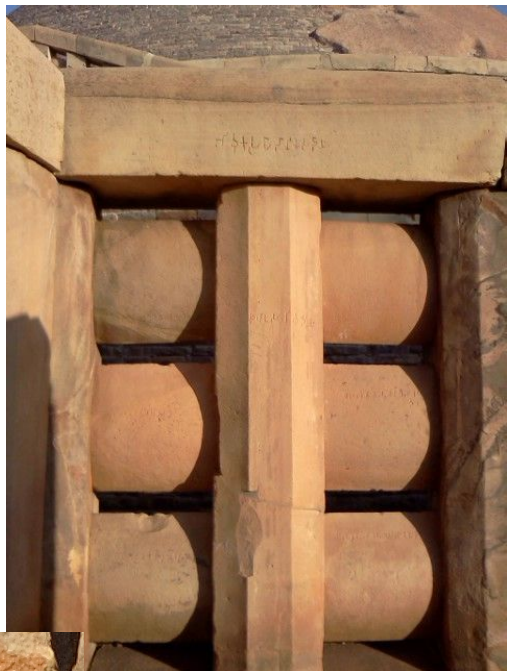
The great stupa has decorative Ashokan pillar erected. It is erected on the side of the main **Torana** gateway.

This pillar consists of **four lions**, which probably supported a Wheel of Law.

The pillar has an Ashokan inscription and an inscription in the ornamental **Sankha Lipi** from the Gupta period.



**Great Stupa (No1). Shunga period structures and decorations**  
**(2nd century BCE)**





## Stupa 2

- Stupa 2 at Sanchi is considered as the birthplace of Jataka illustrations.
  - The Jataka tales is a large collection of Buddhist morality stories in which the Buddha recounts some of his past lives on his long road to enlightenment.
- It contained a relic box with four small caskets of steatite inside, containing human bones.
- It is credited with the earliest displays of decorative buddhist reliefs
- There are also numerous dedicatory inscriptions on the railings of Stupa II in the **Brahmi script**, in a style similar to the Bharhut Stupa.
- It represents various motifs and relief of Buddhist period.



Stupa no. 2



Mason's marks in Kharoshti indicate that craftsmen from the north-west were responsible for foreign reliefs of Stupa No. 2. This medallion was made circa 115 BC



Dharmachakra and triratna



Decorative pillar



Palmette design

## Stupa No.3

- It was built during the time of the Shungas.
- built the railing around it as well as the staircase.
- The Relics of **Sariputra** and **Mahamoggallana**, the disciples of the Buddha have been placed in Stupa No. 3.
- The single torana gateway oriented to the south is not Shunga, and was built later under the Satavahanas, probably
- 50 BCE



**Stupa no. 3**

### **Isipatana**

*Pali word which refers to place where holy man arrived.*



**Lotus medallion present in stupa no.3**



## Sunga Pillar

- Sunga pillar No 25 with own capital on the side.
- attributed to the Sungas, in the 2nd–1st century BCE, and is considered as similar in design to the ***Heliodorus pillar***,
  - *locally called Kham Baba pillar, dedicated by Heliodorus, the ambassador to the Indo-Greek king Antialkidas, in nearby Vidisha 100 BCE.*
- is clear alike from its design and from the character of the surface dressing.

# JATAKA TALES

## What is Jataka?

- It is a **Pali word**. It means “**Birth**” in Sanskrit language.

## What are Jataka Tales?

- In Buddhism, popular stories of **former lives of the Buddha** are called as **Jataka tales**.
- It is interesting to know that these are **preserved in all branches of Buddhism**.

### ***35 tales for didactic purposes (Teaching Purpose):***

- Some Jataka tales are scattered in various sections of the **Pali canon of Buddhist writings**, including a group of 35 that were collected for didactic purposes. These 35 constitute the last book, the **Cariya Pitaka (“Basket of Conduct”)**, of the **Khuddaka Nikaya** (“Short Collection”).
- **Khuddaka Nikaya** is a part of Sutta Pitaka (“Basket of Discourse”).

### ***The 550 Jataka stories***

- Beyond this, a Sinhalese commentary of the 5<sup>th</sup> century that is called **Jataka Atthakatha**, gathers together about **550 Jataka stories**, some of which are quite brief while others are as long as novelettes.

# JATAKA TALES

## The Structure of the Tales

- Each tale begins by **noting the occasion that prompted its telling** and **ends with the Buddha identifying the lives of the people in the introductory story with those of people from the past.**
- **There is humour in these stories** and considerable variety.
- **The future Buddha may appear in them as a king, an outcast, a god, an elephant**—but, in whatever form, **he exhibits some virtue that the tale thereby inculcates.**

## Comparison with non-Buddhist Indian literature:

- Many Jatakas have **parallels in the Mahabharata, the Panchtantra (animal fables), the Puranas (collections of legends),** and elsewhere in non-Buddhist Indian literature.
- **Some turn up again in such places as Greek's Aesop's fables.**

## Depicted in Buddhist sculptures and paintings

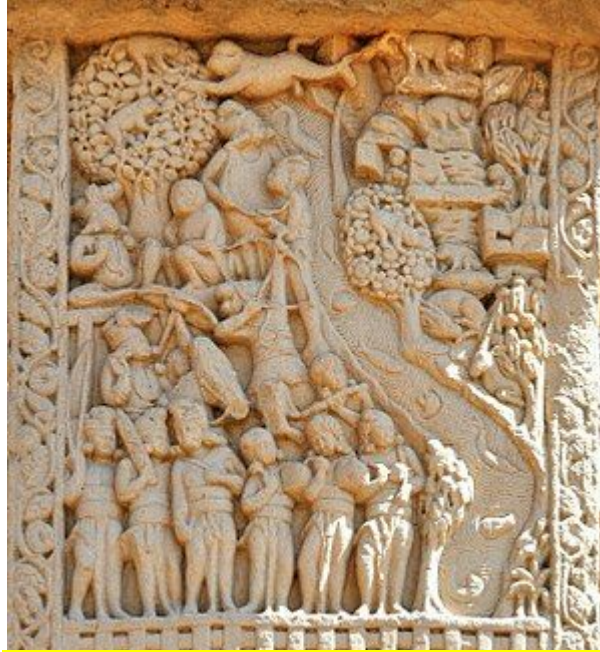
- The Jataka stories have been illustrated frequently in **sculpture and painting throughout the Buddhist world.**



## JATAKA TALES IN SCULPTURES



**Shyama Jataka**



**Mahakapi Jataka**



**Mahakapi Jataka**

# JATAKA TALES THROUGH PAINTINGS



## Mahajanka Jataka at Ajanta Caves

Mahanipata Jataka are a set of stories from the Jataka tales (Khuddaka Nikaya) describing the ten final lives of the Bodisattva who would finally be born as Siddharta Gautama and eventually become Gautama Buddha.



## Vishvantra Jataka at Ajanta Caves

- The Vessantara Jātaka tells the story of one of Gautama Buddha's past lives, about a very compassionate and generous prince, Vessantara, who gives away everything he owns, including his children, thereby displaying the virtue of perfect generosity. It is also known as the **Great Birth Sermon**.
- The tale of Prince Vessantara is celebrated as an annual festival in Thailand, Laos, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Cambodia.

# TORANAS

## What is Toranas?

- Toranas means **gateways**.
- Toranas are associated with **Buddhist stupas like the Great Stupa in Sanchi**, as well as with **Jain and Hindu structures**, and also with several secular structures.

## The Structure of Toranas?

- Toranas typically **consist of two pillars** carrying two or three **transverse beams** that extend beyond the pillars on either side.

## What Material is used?

- Usually **Stone and Wood** is used for Toranas construction.

## Decoration of Toranas:

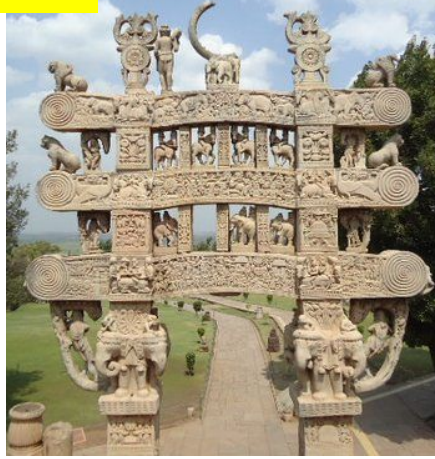
- Toranas are often covered **from top to bottom with exquisite sculpture**. The four toranas of the Great Stupa at Sanchi are superb examples.



Square post

Capital

**Northern Gateway**



**Western Gateway**



**Eastern Gateway**



**Southern Gateway**

# TORANA @ SANCHI

- The four toranas of the Great Sanchi Stupa were added in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC.
- Each gateway is made up of
  - **two square posts**
  - topped by **capitals of sculptured animals or dwarfs**,
  - surmounted by three beams, which **end in spirals**.
  - On the **topmost crossbar** were placed originally the **trident-like symbol of the triratna** and the **wheel of the law**.
- **The crossbars and the intervening square** dies between them are covered with relief sculpture depicting
  - the **events of the Buddha's life**,
  - legends of **his previous births (Jataka stories)**
  - scenes **important to early Buddhism** (such as the emperor **Asoka's visit to the Bodhi tree**)
  - **auspicious symbols**.
- **Inscriptions give the names of the donors of the relief**;
  - one commemorates the gift of the **ivory workers** of Vidisha
    - the tradition of working in ivory may have been translated into stone.
- **The reliefs are deeply carved.** The panels, which employ the **device of continuous narration**, are **crowded, rich, and brimming with life**.
- **Buddha depicted in symbolic form - wheel, an empty throne, footprints.**



**Intervening squares between crossbars.**



**Eastern Gateway**

## Depiction of Yakshas:

- **Set in the angle between the pillar and the lowest crossbar** of the gateways are magnificent figures of **female yakshas (earthly spirits)**.
- **They serve no true architectural purpose**, yet their pose, with leg thrusting against the post and arms entwined in the branches of a tree, **is appropriate to the space they fill**.
- **A damaged torso of a Sanchi yaksha** is preserved at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. The sculptural treatment shows considerable advance over similar **yaksha figures at Bharhut** (stupa of the mid-2nd century BC, in Madhya Pradesh).
- There is much smoother movement in the **flexed bodies** and more **attention given to the open space around the figure**.
- **The fertility aspect of the union of maiden and tree** is emphasized in the sculpture. The smooth modeling and roundness of forms combine to give the yaksha figures a wonderful vitality and a sense of “swelling from within” **characteristic of the finest Indian sculpture of all periods**.



**Yakshini**

## Importance of Toranas in Social life:

- Symbolic toranas can also be made of **flowers and even leaves and hung over the doors** and at entrances in India.
- They are seen in different parts of India.
- **They are believed to bring good fortune and signify auspicious and festive occasions.**
- They can also serve **didactic and narrative purposes** or be erected **to mark the victory of a king.**



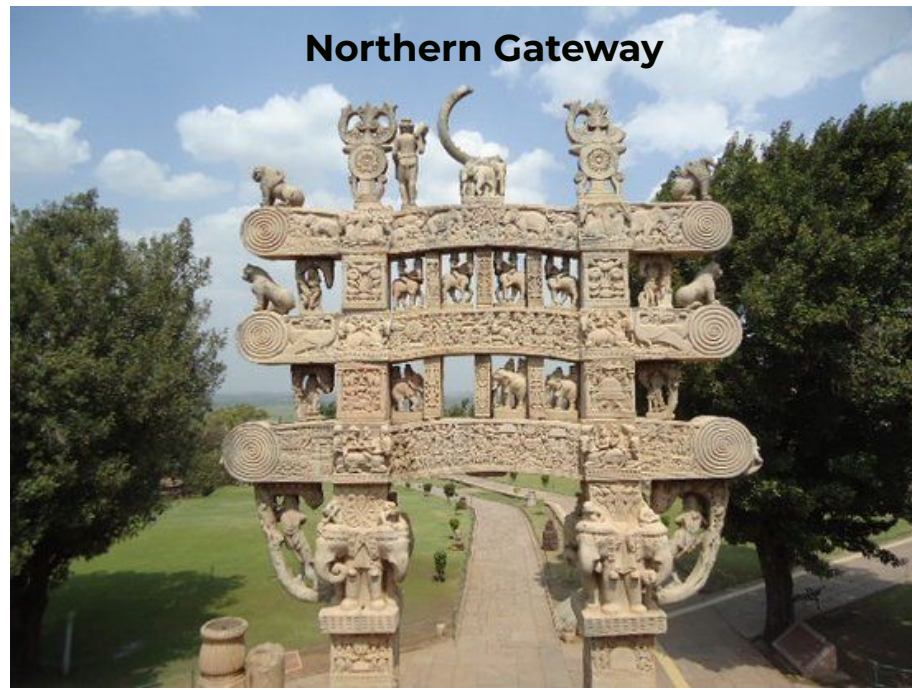
Although made of stone, the torana gateways were carved and constructed in the **manner of wood** and the gateways were covered with **narrative sculptures**.

It has also been suggested that the stone reliefs were **made by ivory carvers** from nearby Vidisha, and an inscription on the Southern Gateway of the Great Stupa ("The Worship of the Bodhisattva's hair") was dedicated by the **Guild of Ivory Carvers** of Vidisha



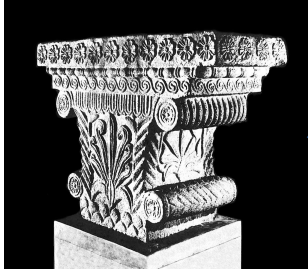
*Begram ivories or the "Pompeii Lakshmi" give an indication of the kind of ivory works that could have influenced the carvings at Sanchi*

## Northern Gateway



The **Begram ivories** are a group of over a thousand decorative plaques, small figures and inlays, carved from **ivory and bone**, and formerly attached to wooden furniture, that were excavated in the 1930s in **Bagram (Begram), Afghanistan**. They are rare and important exemplars of **Kushan art** of the 1st or 2nd centuries CE, attesting to the cosmopolitan tastes and patronage of local dynasts, the sophistication of contemporary craftsmanship, and to the ancient trade in luxury goods.

## load-bearing pillar capital



Similarities have been found in the designs of the capitals of various areas of northern India from the time of Ashoka to the time of the Satavahanas at Sanchi: particularly between the Pataliputra (3rd century BCE), the pillar capitals at the Sunga Empire Buddhist complex of Bharhut (2nd century BCE), and the pillar capitals of the Satavahanas at Sanchi (1st centuries BCE/CE).

**Pataliputra capital** (3rd century BCE) is decorated with rows of repeating rosettes, ovolos and bead-and-reel mouldings, wave-like scrolls and side volutes with central rosettes, around a prominent central flame palmette, which is the main motif. These are quite similar to Classical Greek designs, and the capital has been described as quasi-Ionic. Greek influence, as well as Persian Achaemenid influence have been suggested.



**Sarnath capital** is a pillar capital - The pillar displays Ionic volutes and palmettes. It has been variously dated from the 3rd century BCE during the Mauryan Empire period, to the 1st century BCE, during the Sunga Empire period. One of the faces shows a galloping horse carrying a rider, while the other face shows an elephant and its mahaut.



The pillar capital in **Bharhut**, dated to the 2nd century BCE during the Sunga Empire period, also incorporates many of these characteristics, with a central anta capital with many rosettes, beads-and-reels, as well as a central palmette design. Importantly, recumbent animals (lions, symbols of Buddhism) were added, in the style of the Pillars of Ashoka.

## load-bearing pillar capital



The **Sanchi pillar capital** is keeping the general design, seen at Bharhut a century earlier, of

- recumbent lions grouped around a central square-section post,
- with the central design of a flame palmette, which started with the Pataliputra capital.
- However the design of the central post is now simpler, with the flame palmette taking all the available room.
- Elephants were later used to adorn the pillar capitals (still with the central palmette design), and lastly, Yakshas (here the palmette design disappears).



*Flame Palmette*

## Main themes of the reliefs

- **Jatakas** These are Buddhist moral tales relating edifying events of the former lives of the Buddha as he was still a Bodhisattva.
  - Syama Jataka,
  - the Vessantara Jataka and
  - the Mahakapi Jataka.
- **Miracles**
  - The miracle of the Buddha walking on water
  - The miracle of fire and wood
  - Temptation of the Buddha
- Numerous scenes refer to the **temptation of the Buddha**, when he was confronted with the seductive daughters of Mara and with his army of demons. Having resisted the temptations of Mara, the Buddha finds enlightenment. Other similar scenes on the same subject:
  - Temptation of the Buddha with Mara's army fleeing
  - Enlightenment of the Buddha with Mara's army fleeing

Other narrative panels related to the War over the Buddha's Relics at Sanchi are:

- "The **King of the Mallas bringing the relics of the Buddha to Kushinagara**", right after the death of the Buddha, before the War itself. In this relief, the king is seen seated on an elephant, holding the relics on his head.
- "The **siege of Kushinagara** by the seven kings", another relief on the same subject.



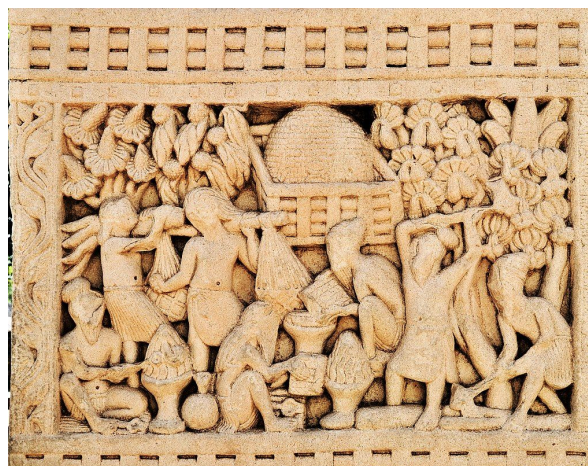
### Great Miracle at Sravasti

also called Mango Tree Miracle, when the Buddha walks in the air and flames broke from his shoulders and streams of water from his feet.



### Miracle at Kapilavastu

King Suddhodana praying as his son the Buddha rises in the air, praised by celestial beings (but only his path, the horizontal slab in the air, is visible)  
Slab = called chankrama



The miracle of fire and wood. This is depicting of the miracles of the wood, the fire and the offering. In the story of Kasyapa's conversion after the miracle of the fire temple, a sacrifice was prepared by the Brahmins, but the wood for the fire could not be split, the fire could not be made to burn, and the oblation could not be offered, until in each case the Buddha gave his consent.

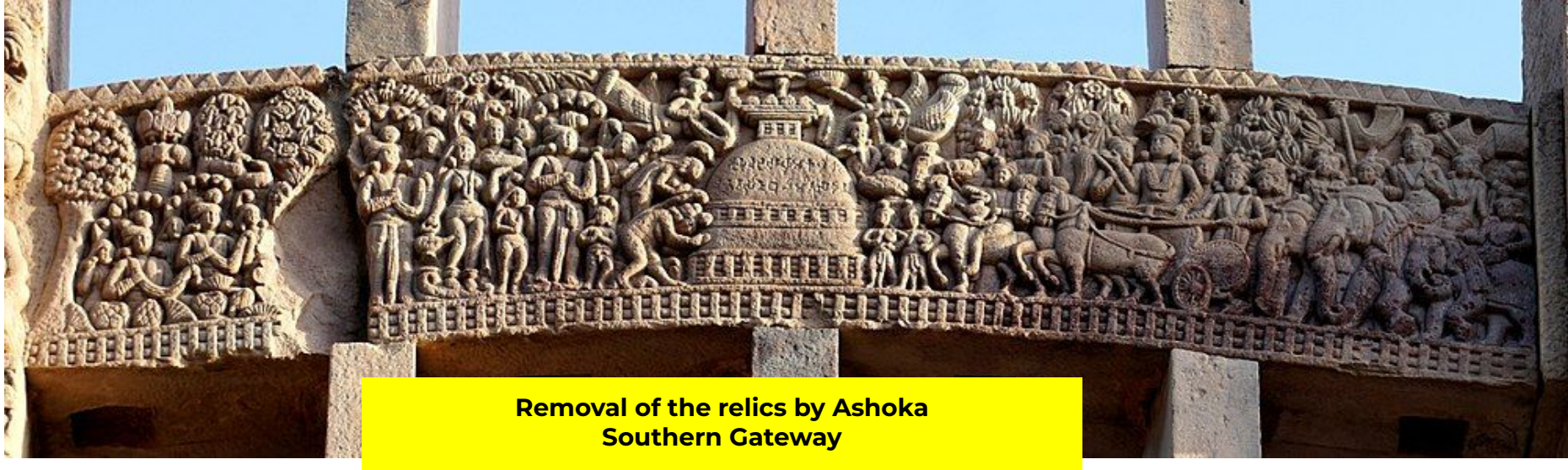


Miracle of the Buddha walking on the River Nairanjana.  
The Nairanjana river is shown in flood and Kasyapa accompanied by a disciple and a boatman are hastening in a boat to the rescue of the Buddha. Then, in the lower part of the picture, the Buddha, represented by his promenade (chahbama), appears walking on the face of the waters, and in the foreground the figures of Kasyapa and his disciple are twice repeated, now on dry ground and doing homage to the Master (represented by the throne at the right hand, bottom corner)

## Southern Gateway - Front

Removal of the relics by  
Ashoka  
Southern Gateway





### Removal of the relics by Ashoka Southern Gateway

#### **King Ashoka visits Ramagrama.**

King Ashoka visited Ramagrama, to take relics of the Buddha from the Nagas, but he failed, the Nagas being too powerful.

Asoka endeavored to gather the eight shares of the relics to divide them up, and distribute them among 84,000 stupas, which he himself erected. He only obtained seven of these portions.

Here, in the centre of the architrave, is depicted the stupa of Ramagrama. Above the stupa are heavenly figures bearing garlands in their hands. To the right, the Emperor Asoka is approaching in his chariot, accompanied by a retinue of elephants, horsemen and footmen; and to the left, the Nagas and Naginis, in human form with serpent hoods, worshiping at the stupa, bringing offerings, or emerging from the waters of a lotus-pond. On the projecting end of this architrave is an elephant in a lotus-pond with mahaut and females on its back, and a second female scrambling up behind; in the background, a pavilion with female figures looking out.

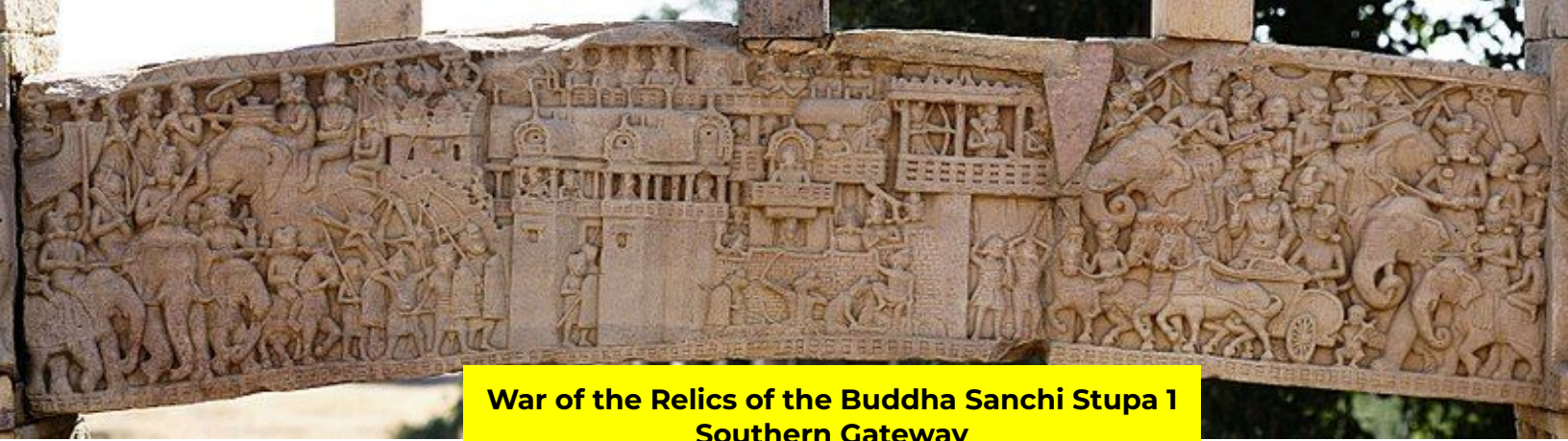
An inscription on the dome of the stupa records that the architrave was the gift of one **Balamitra**, pupil of Ayachuda (Arya-Kshudra), the preacher of the Law

## Southern Gateway - Rear

Six Buddhas of the past and Gautama Buddha, with  
his Bodhi Tree at the extreme right.  
24 Buddhas before Buddha// 1st Dipankar



War of the Relics of  
the Buddha



**War of the Relics of the Buddha Sanchi Stupa 1  
Southern Gateway**

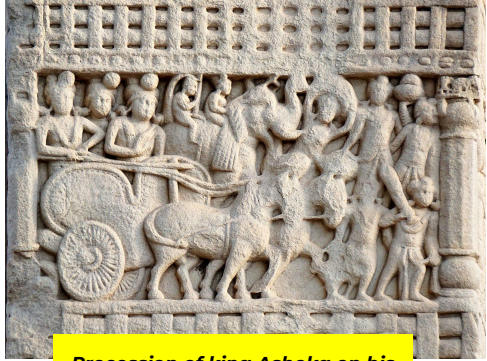
The Buddha died in Kushinagara, the capital of the Mallas, who initially **tried to keep all the relics of the Buddha for themselves.**

A war erupted in which the chiefs of seven other clans waged war against the Mallas of Kusinara for the possession of the Buddha's relics.

In the centre of the architrave, the siege of Kusinara is in progress; to right and left, the victorious chiefs are departing in chariots and on elephants, with the relics borne on the heads of the latter.



*Ashoka with his two Queens visiting the Deer Park Sanchi Stupa 1 Southern Gateway. The motif of Ashoka with his Queens is repeated four times.*



*Procession of king Ashoka on his chariot.*



*The Cortège of Mara*

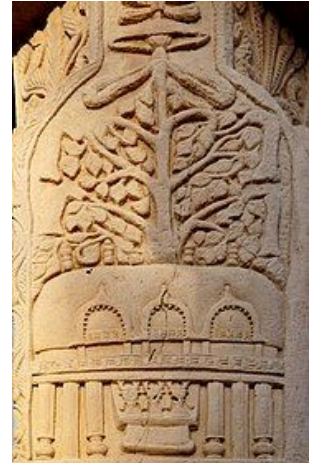
## Panels on Pillars



*Worship of the Bodhisattva's hair*



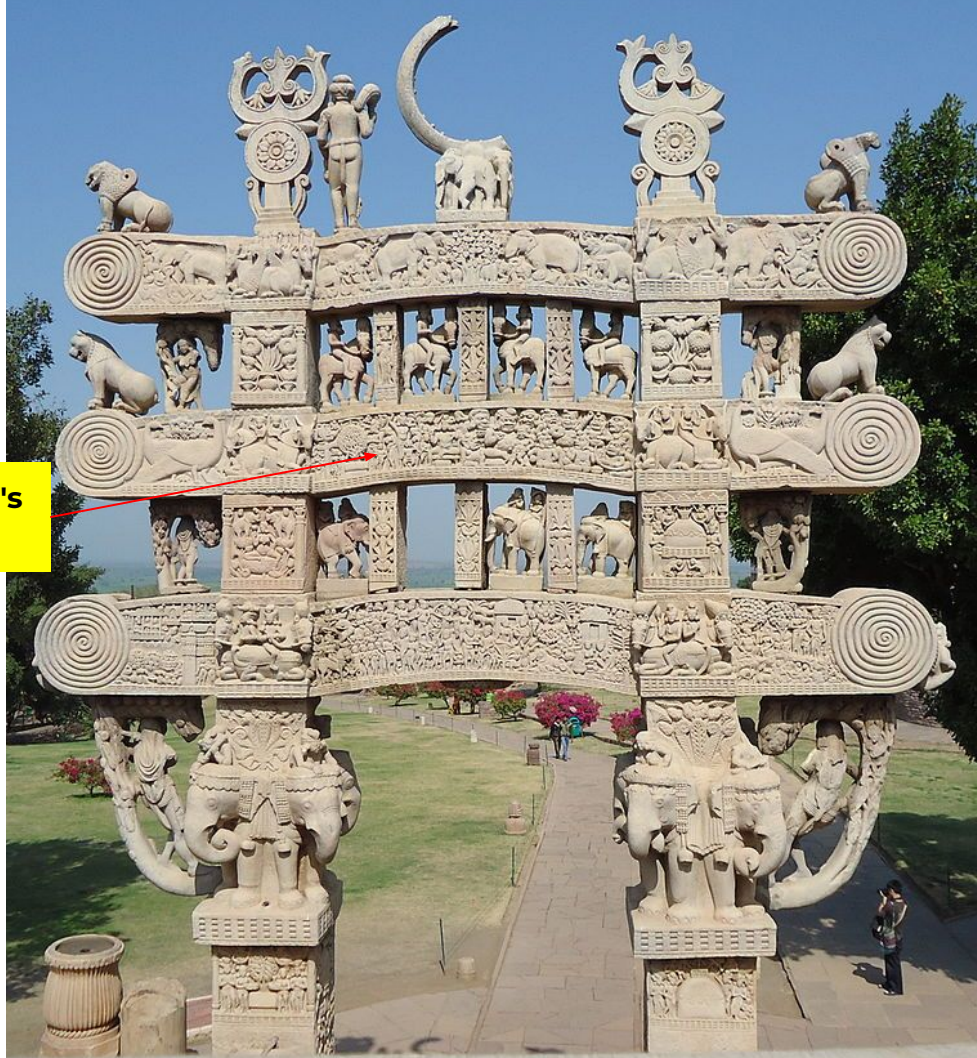
*Ashoka in grief, supported by his two queens, The identification with Ashoka is confirm by a similar relief from Kanaganahalli inscribed "Raya Asoko"*



*Bodhi tree temple*

## Northern Gateway - Rear

**Temptation of the Buddha with Mara's  
army fleeing**





### Temptation of the Buddha with Mara's army fleeing

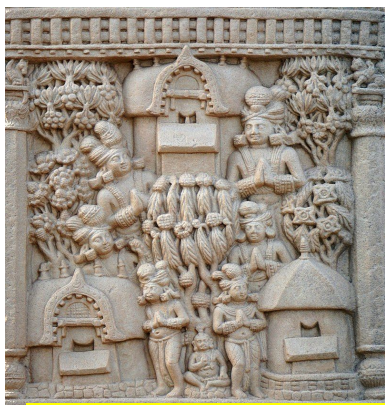
Towards the left end of the panel is the pipal tree at Bodh Gaya with an umbrella and streamers above, and, in front, the **diamond throne (Vajrasana)** of the Buddha, whereon he sat when he withstood the temptations and threats of **Mara, the Satan of Buddhism**, and when he attained to Buddhahood. Human and celestial beings are adoring it.

- The figure to the left of it is perhaps **Sujata, bringing the meal** which she prepared for Gautama before he began his last meditation prior to his enlightenment.
- Near the middle of the panel is **Mara, seated on a throne** with attendants around, and advancing from him towards the throne are his **daughters**, who sought by their blandishments to seduce Gautama from his purpose.
- On his other side, are the hosts of Mara's demons, personifying the vices, the passions and the fears of mankind.
- The vigor and humor with which these fantastic beings are portrayed is very striking, and far more forceful than anything of the kind produced by the artists of the Greco-Buddhist art of Gandhara.

## Panels on Left Pillar



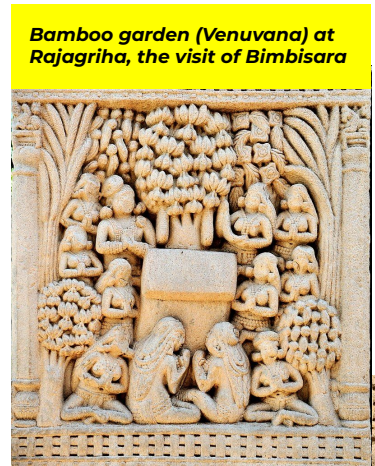
**Great Miracle at Sravasti**  
(also called Mango Tree Miracle,  
when the Buddha walks in the  
air and flames broke from his  
shoulders and streams of water  
from his feet.



**The Jetavana at Sravasti,**  
showing the three favourite  
residences of the Buddha:  
- Gandhakuti,  
- Kosambakuti  
- Karorikuti,  
with the throne of the Buddha in  
the front of each.  
The Jetavana garden was  
presented to the Buddha by the  
rich banker Anathapindika



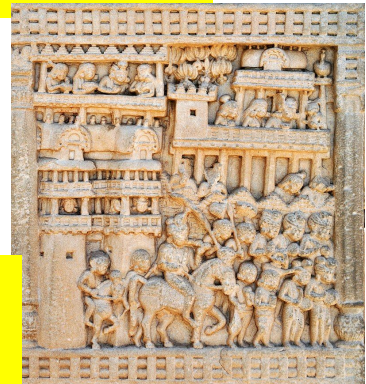
**Paradise of Indra (nandana)**  
Unknown interpretation



**Bamboo garden (Venuvana) at  
Rajagriha, the visit of Bimbisara**



**Visit of Indra to the Buddha  
in the Indrasaila cave near  
Rajagriha.**



**Procession of King Prasenajit of  
Kosala leaving Sravasti to meet  
the Buddha.**

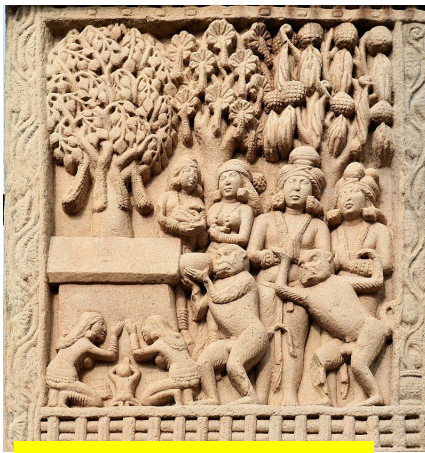


**Royal cortege leaving Rajagriha  
May be Bimbisara or Ajatshatru**

## Panels on Right Pillar



Foreigners making a dedication to Southern Gateway of the Great Stupa.

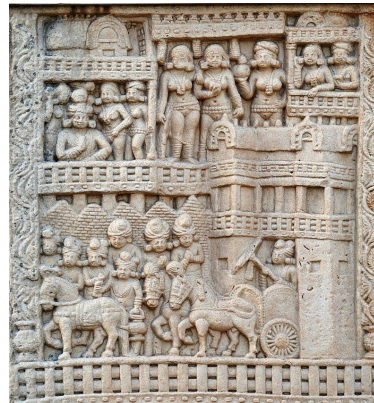


Offering of a bowl of honey to the Blessed One by a monkey.

The Buddha = pipal tree and throne, to which devotees are doing obeisance. The figure of the monkey is twice repeated, first with the bowl and then with empty hands after the gift has been made.  
Greco-Buddhist



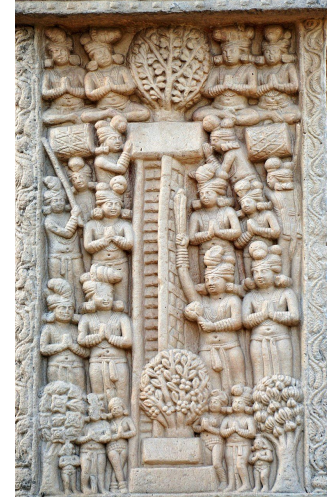
Dvarapala guardian deity



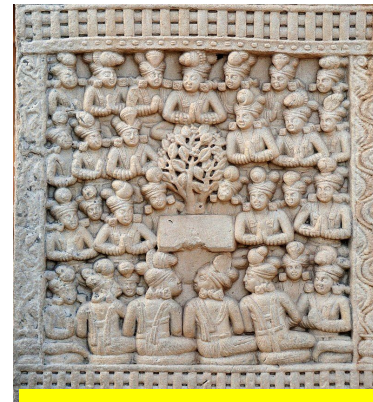
Departure of the Buddha from Kapilavastu



Miracle at Kapilavastu



Descent of the Buddha from the Trayastrimsa Heaven at Sankissa



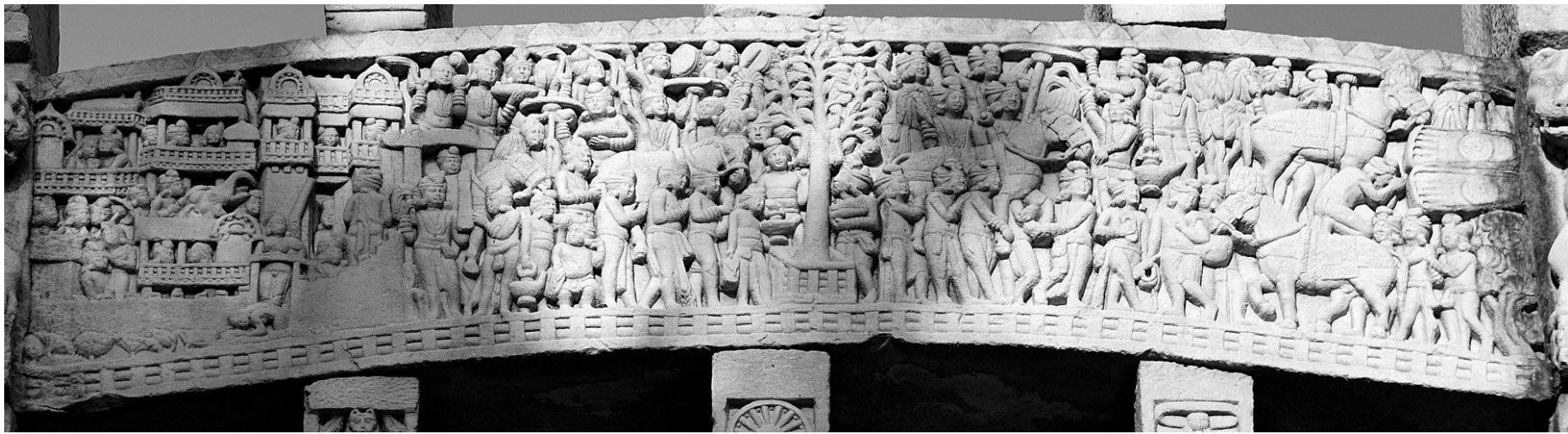
Teaching the Sakyans

**Eastern Gateway - Front**

***The Great Departure***



***Yakshini =  
Shalabhanjika  
Known as  
Manadanakai***



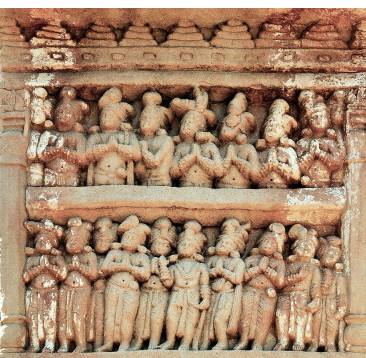
### **The Great Departure**

*During the night, Prince Siddharta leaves the Palace of Kapilavastu (far left) while his wife **Yasodhara**, his **baby Rahula** and the dancers are sleeping.*

*Siddharta rides his horse **Kanthaka**, who is being lifted above the ground by Yakshas in order not to make noise and to avoid awakening the guards. The horse is seen progressing from left to right, away from the city, and progressively higher in the air.*

*Siddharta is not visible, but a chatra royal parasol is held by **Chandaka** in order to signify the fact that Siddharta is riding on the horse. After his arrival in the forest on the right, Siddharta discards his robes, cuts off his hair and returns the horse to Chandaka. The horse is seen returning without a rider, walking on the ground this time, and, of course, devoid of the chatra parasol over it this time. When Siddharta stays in the forest, he is symbolized by the two soles of his feet (extreme right).*

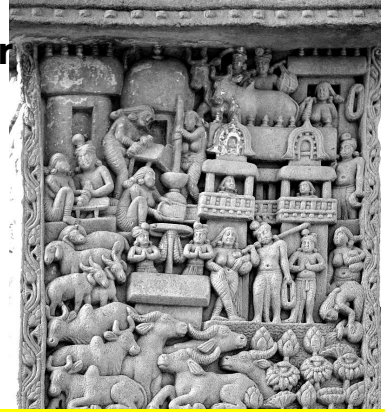
## Panels on Left Pillar



*Miracle of Walking in the air at Sravasti*



*Temple for the Bodhi Tree in Bodhi Gaya.*



*The visit of Indra and Brahma to the Buddha takes place in the town of Uruvilva.*



*Bimbisara with his royal cortege issuing from the city of Rajagriha to visit the Buddha*



*Miracle of the Buddha walking on the River Nairanjana. The Nairanjana river is shown in flood and Kasyapa accompanied by a disciple and a boatman are hastening in a boat to the rescue of the Buddha. Then, in the lower part of the picture, the Buddha, represented by his promenade (chahbama), appears walking on the face of the waters, and in the foreground the figures of Kasyapa and his disciple are twice repeated, now on dry ground and doing homage to the Master (represented by the throne at the right hand, bottom corner)*

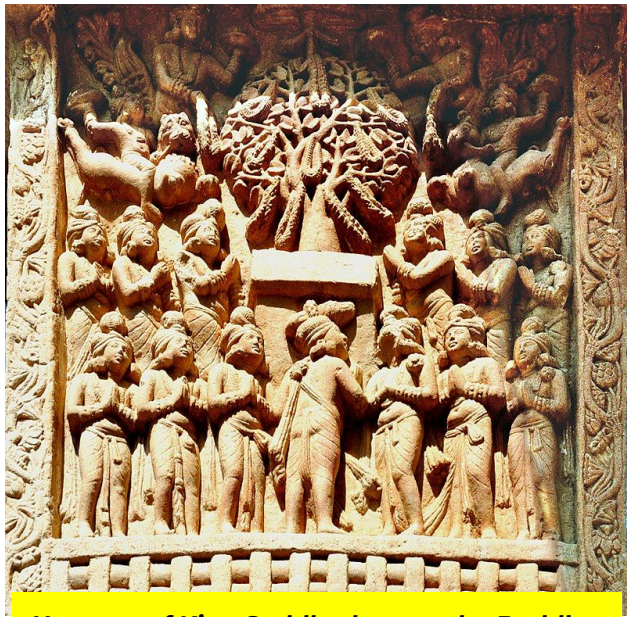


*Buddha tames the Naga at Uruvilva*



*The miracle of fire and wood. This is a depicting of the miracles of the wood, the fire and the offering. In the story of Kasyapa's conversion after the miracle of the fire temple, a sacrifice was prepared by the Brahmans, but the wood for the fire could not be split, the fire could not be made to burn, and the oblation could not be offered, until in each case the Buddha gave his consent.*

## Panels on Right Pillar



**Homage of King Siddhodana to the Buddha.**

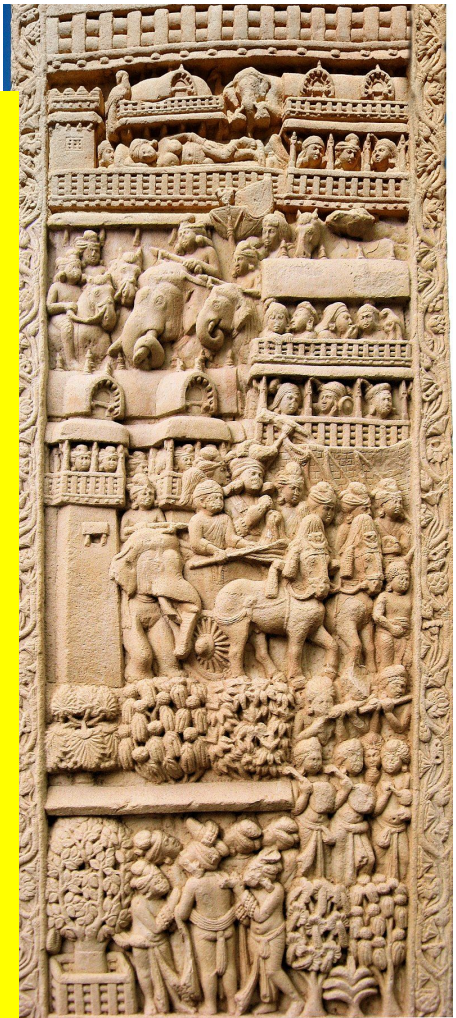
**In the center, the tree and throne of the Buddha, with a group of worshipers around, including King Siddhodana, the father of the Buddha, who is standing immediately in front of the throne. The king wears the same headdress here as in the panel below. The episode represented is the homage paid by the King to his son after his return to Kapilavastu**

**Procession of king Siddhodana from Kapilavastu.**

**At the top is portrayed the dream of Maya, the mother of the Buddha. Maya, the queen, is seen lying in a pavilion of the palace, and on her is descending the Bodhisattva in the form of a white elephant. This scene, which was well known to all Buddhists, serves to identify the city here represented as Kapilavastu.**

**Below it is a royal procession threading its way through the streets of the city and issuing forth from the gate. This is the procession of King Siddhodana, when he went forth to meet his son on his return to Kapilavastu.**

**Then, at the bottom of the panel, is portrayed the miracle which Buddha performed on this occasion by walking in mid-air; and, in the extreme left hand bottom corner, is a banyan tree (nyagrodha) to signify the park of banyans which Siddhodana presented to his son. The Buddha walking in mid-air**

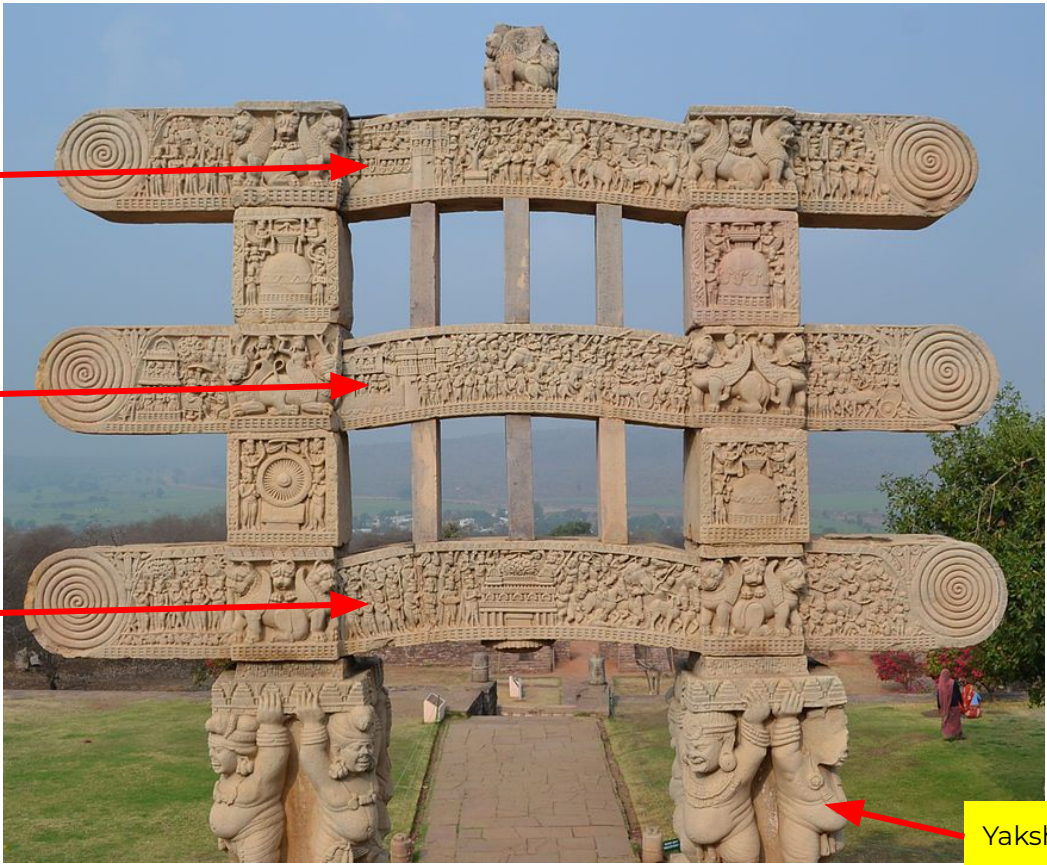


# Western Gateway - Rear

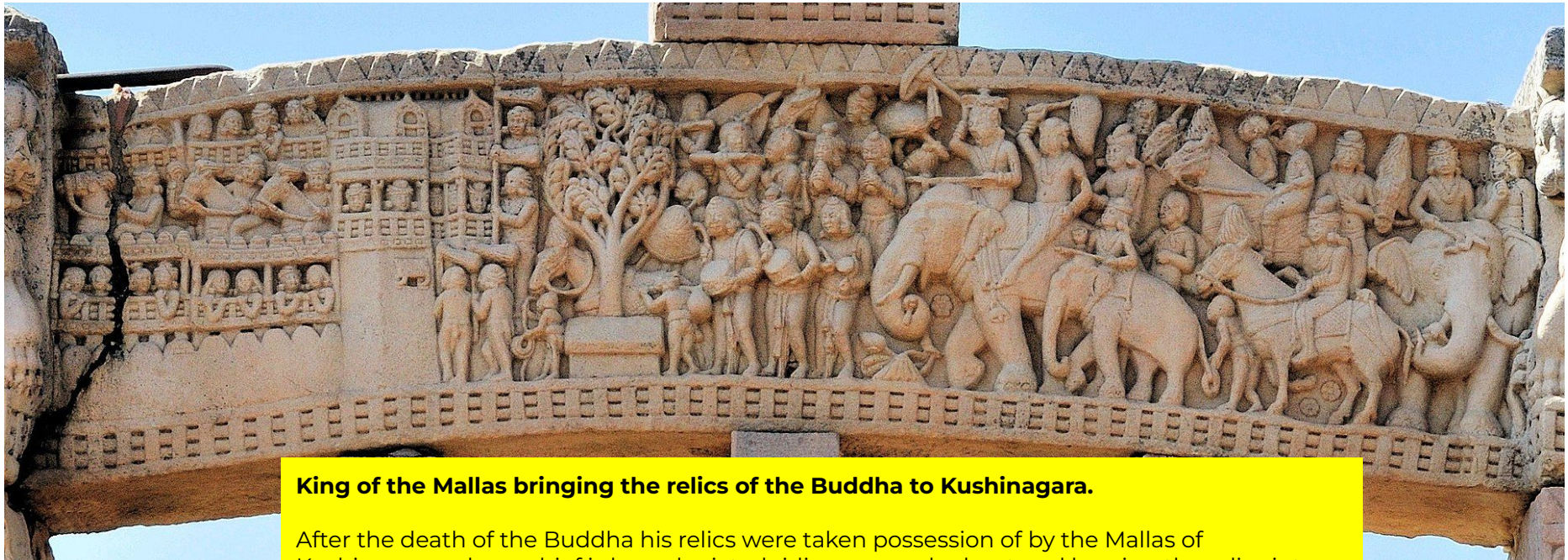
**King of the Mallas bringing the relics of the Buddha to Kushinagara.**

**Siege of Kushinagara by the seven kings**

**Temptation of the Buddha with Mara's army fleeing.**



**Yakshas Pillar capital**



**King of the Mallas bringing the relics of the Buddha to Kushinagara.**

After the death of the Buddha his relics were taken possession of by the Mallas of Kushinagara, whose chief is here depicted riding on an elephant and bearing the relics into the town of Kusinagara on his own head.

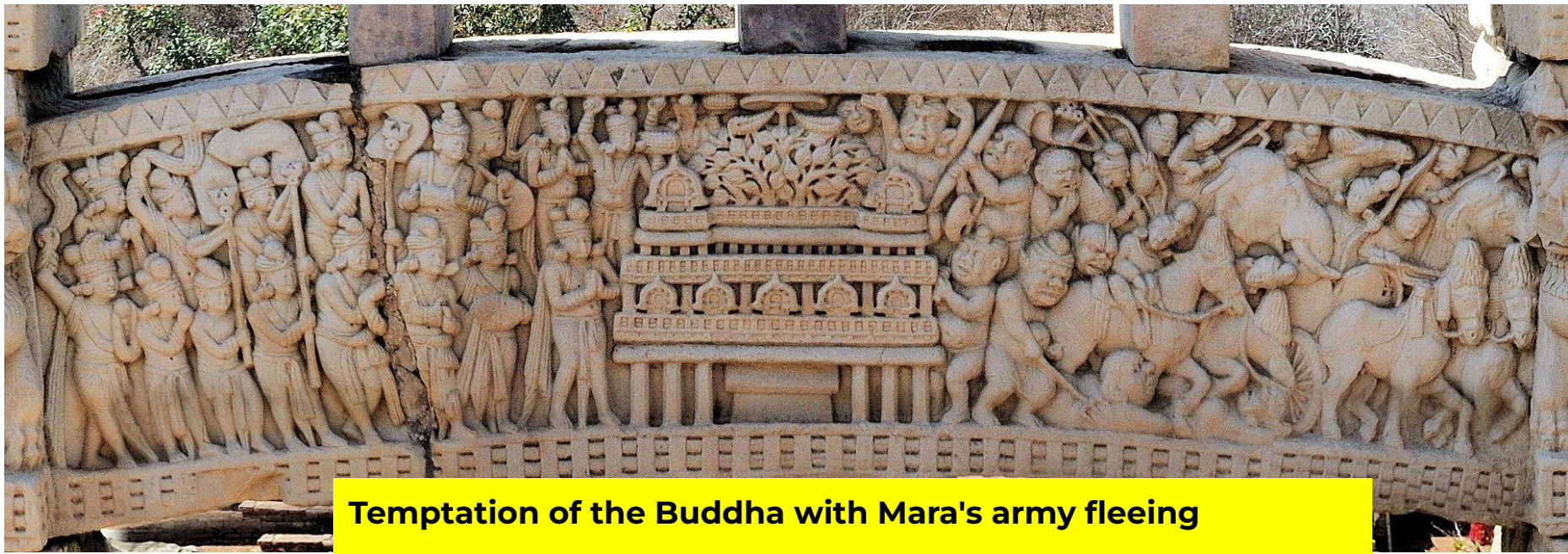
The tree behind the throne in front of the city gate appears to be a Shala tree and to refer to the fact that Buddha's parinirvana took place in a grove of those trees.

The two groups of figures carrying banners and offerings, which occupy the ends of this architrave, are probably connected with the central scene, serving to indicate the rejoicing of the Mallas over the possession of the relics



## **Siege of Kushinagara by the seven kings**

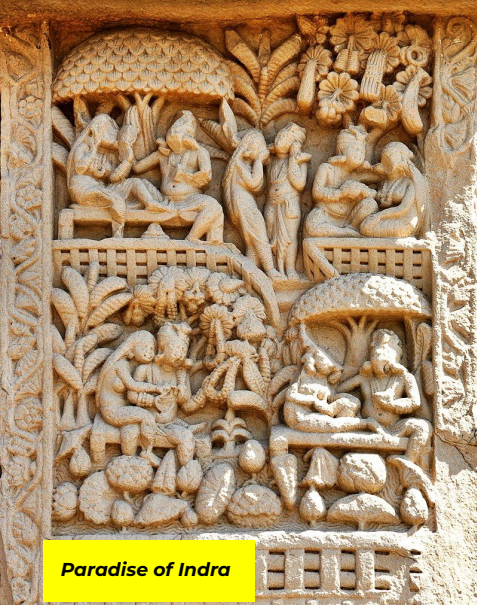
seven rival claimants, distinguished by their seven royal umbrellas, are advancing with their armies to the city of Kushinagara, the siege of which has not yet begun. The seated royal figure at the left end of the architrave may represent the chief of the Mallas within the city.



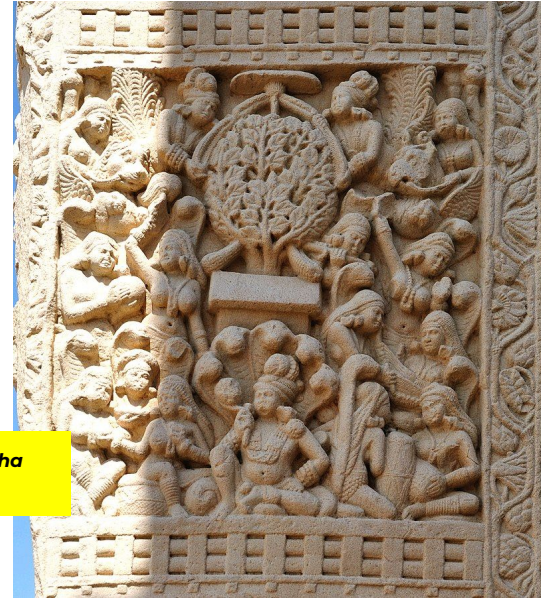
## **Temptation of the Buddha with Mara's army fleeing**

This scene extends over the three sections of the architrave, In the center is the temple of Bodh Gaya with the pipal tree and the throne of the Buddha within; to the right, the armies of Mara fleeing discomfited from the Buddha; to the left, the devas celebrating the victory of the Buddha over the Evil One and exalting his glorious achievements. The temple at Bodh Gaya, which enclosed the Bodhi tree, was built two centuries later by Emperor Ashoka. Its portrayal in this scene, therefore, is an anachronism

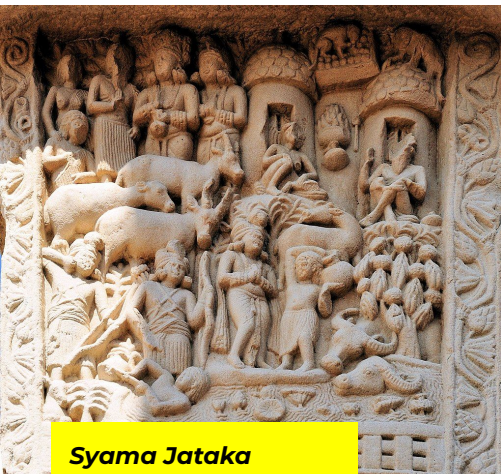
## Panels on Left Pillar



*Paradise of Indra*



*Enlightenment of the Buddha  
with the Nagas rejoicing.*



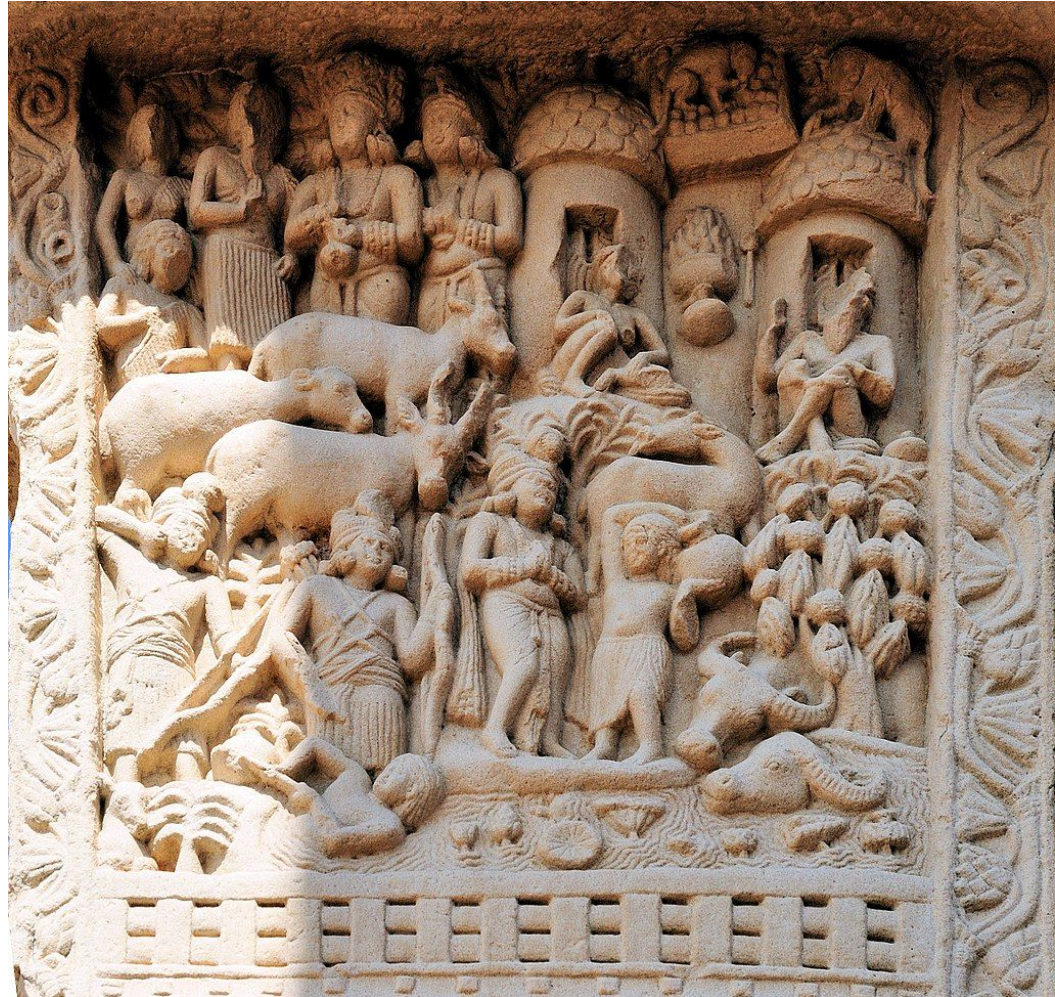
*Syama Jataka*



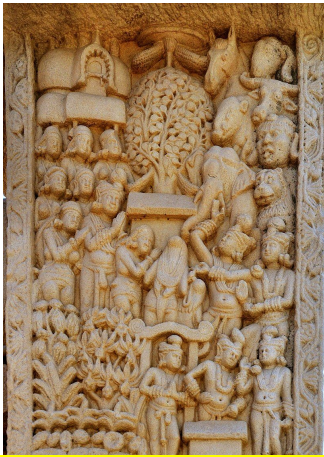
*Miraculous crossing of the Ganges by the Buddha  
when he left Rajagriha to visit Vaishali*

## Syama Jataka

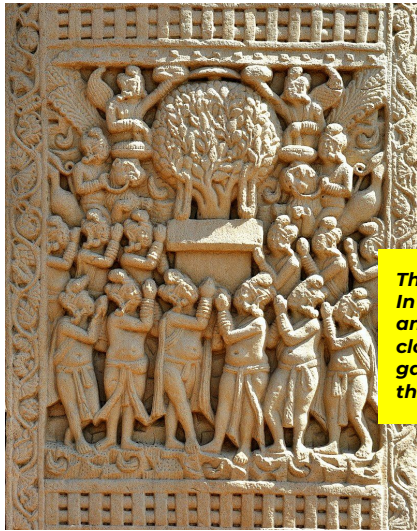
- Syama, the Buddha in a previous life, was the only son of a blind hermit and his wife, whom he supports with devotion.
- One day, Syama goes to draw water at the river and is shot with an arrow by the King of Benares, who is out hunting.
- Owing to the king's penitence and his parents' sorrow Indra intervenes and allows Syama to be healed and his parents' sight to be restored.
  - At the right hand top corner of the panel arc the two hermitages with the father and mother seated in front of them.
  - Below them their son Syama is coming to draw water from the stream.
  - Then, to the left, we see the figure of the King thrice repeated, first shooting the lad in the water, then with bow in hand, then standing penitent with bow and arrow discarded;
  - left top corner are the father, mother and son restored to health, and by their side the god Indra and the king.



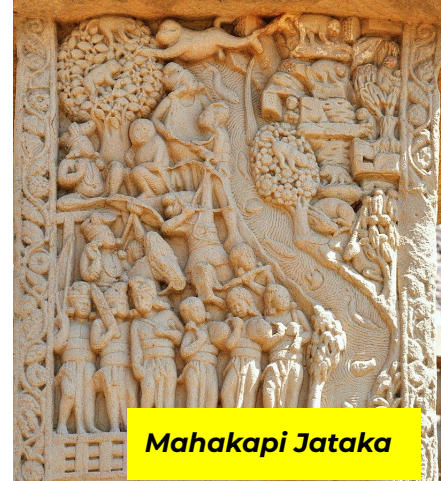
## Panels on Right Pillar



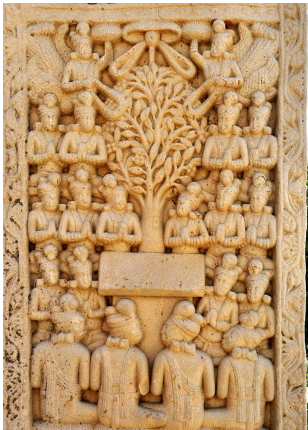
**Enlightenment of the Buddha with Mara's army fleeing.**



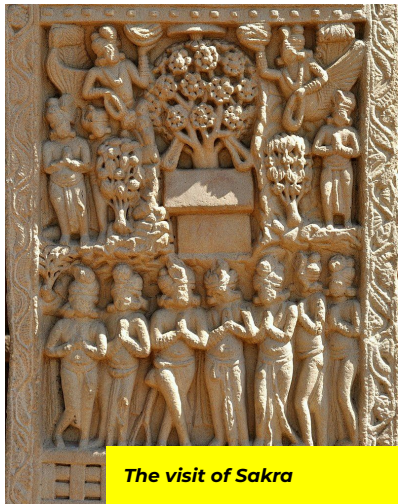
**The Bodhisattva preaching in the Tushita Heaven. In the center of the panel is the tree and throne of the Buddha, and round about the throne a company of gods standing upon clouds in attitudes of adoration. At the top of the panel are gandharvas bringing garlands and below them, on each side of the tree, come Indra and Brahma, riding on lion-like creatures.**



**Mahakapi Jataka**



**Gods entreating Buddha to preach**



**The visit of Sakra**



**Heraldic lions**



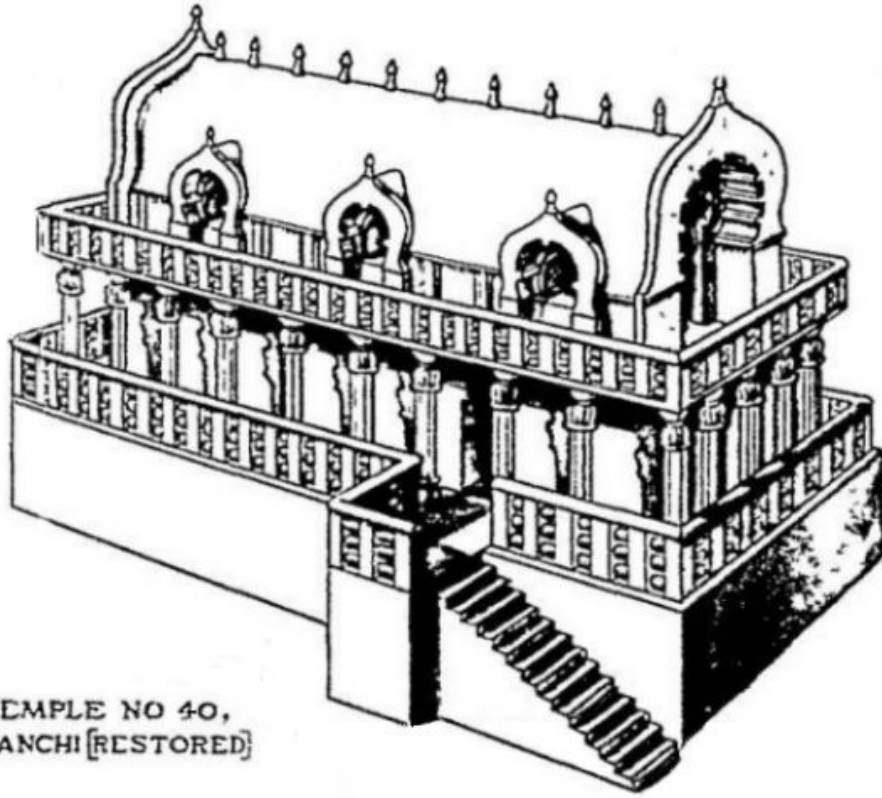
**Dvarapala**

## Mahakapi Jataka

- Bodhisattva was born as a monkey, ruler over 80,000 monkeys. They lived at a spot near the Ganges and ate of the fruit of a great mango tree.
- **King Brahmadatta of Benares**, desiring to possess the mangoes, surrounded the tree with his soldiers, in order to kill the animals, but the Bodhisattva formed a bridge over the stream with his own body and by this means enabled the whole tribe to escape into safety.
- **Devadatta**, the jealous and wicked cousin of the Buddha, was in that life one of the monkeys and, thinking it a good chance to destroy his enemy, jumped on the Bodhisattva's back and broke his heart. The king, seeing the good deed of the Bodhisattva and repenting of his own attempt to kill him, tended him with great care when he was dying and afterwards gave him royal obsequies.

To the left, at the top, is the great mango tree to which two monkeys are clinging, while the king of the monkeys is stretched across the river from the mango tree to the opposite bank, and over his body some monkeys have already escaped to the rocks and jungles beyond. In the lower part of the panel, to the left, is king Brahmadatta on horseback with his soldiers, one of whom with bow and arrow is aiming upwards at the Bodhisattva. Higher up the panel the figure of the king is repeated, sitting beneath the mango tree and conversing with the dying Bodhisattva, who, according to the Jataka story, gave the king good advice on the duties of a chief





TEMPLE NO 40,  
SANCHI [RESTORED]



Sanchi Temple 40 was a 3rd-century BCE temple, one of the first known in India, constructed around the same time as the core of the Great Stupa.

It was an apsidal hall, probably made of timber. It was burnt down sometime in the 2nd century BCE

## Significance of Sanchi Stupa:

- It is a living piece of Indian heritage. It reflects not only the cultural life of the times but also a fine aesthetic sense.
- Sculptures and reliefs found on the toranas of Sanchi Stupa are extremely important source of information about life in India during the ancient age.
- Life of Buddha described in Jataka stories is portrayed along with scenes from day-to-day life.
- Stories like Sujata offering food to Buddha, Bimbisara's visit to Buddha and animals moving in a procession to see Buddha are depicted.
- Buddhist symbols such as elephant, wheel and horse are also found on Sanchi Stupa. Buddha was never depicted in human form on stupas; he was always portrayed through Buddhist symbols.
- Folk deities such as Yaksha and Yakshini are also depicted as worshipping Buddha on Sanchi Stupa.
- This was a careful strategy to overawe common masses and to convince them of the greatness of Mahatma Buddha over their deities.
- **By using these folk motifs and narratives and common cultural symbols, Buddhist stupa art succeeded in promoting Buddhist ideals among a vast majority of the common masses.**

Sanchi is the center of a region with a number of stupas, all within a few miles of Sanchi, including

- Satdhara (9 km to the W of Sanchi),
- 40 stupas,
- the Relics of Sariputra and Mahamoggallana, now enshrined in the new Vihara,
- Bhojpur (also called Morel Khurd, a fortified hilltop with 60 stupas) and
- Andher (respectively 11 km and 17 km SE of Sanchi), as well as
- Sonari (10 km SW of Sanchi).
- Further south, about 100 km away, is Saru Maru.
- **Bharhut** is 300 km to the northeast.



The many Buddhist monastic sites in Central India include Bharhut, Sanchi, Satdhara, Andher, Sonari, and Bhojpur. Of these, those of Bharhut and Sanchi have been best studied.

### Bharhut

- sculptures at Bharhut: 3rd cent. BCE to the end of the 2nd century
- inscriptions: 2nd → 1st centuries BCE

The Bharhut stupa has been completely destroyed over time and its parts are scattered in various museums, with a major collection housed in the Indian Museum in Kolkata.

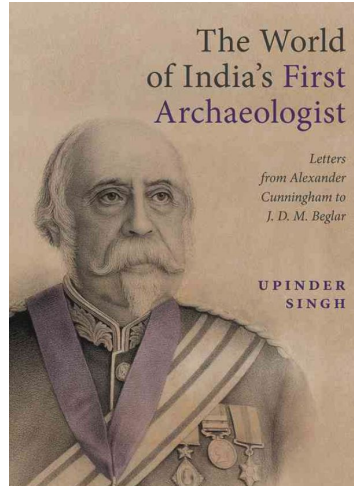


## Bharhut Stupa

- Bharhut is located in the Satna district of Madhya Pradesh,
- In **1874** it was excavated by Alexander Cunningham.
- Bharhut stupa was **initially built by Asoka** and was later improvised by the Sungas.
- Inscription panel found in Bharhut explicitly labelled in **Brahmi characters.**
- Most of the artefacts were decorated in stupa during Sunga period.
- The major donor for the Bharhut stupa was King **Dhanabhuti.**
- The sculptures made have been added during the reign of the **Sughanas**, a northern Buddhist kingdom.



MAJOR-GENERAL SIR ALEXANDER C. CUNNINGHAM, K.C.S.I., G.I.E.,  
LATE BENGAL ENGINEERS.



**Original layout of Bharhut Stupa**

## Inscription of Bharhut Stupa

- The central stupa was surrounded by a **stone railing and four Torana gates**, in an arrangement similar to that of Sanchi.
- It's railing bears a wealth of fine relief carving on its inner face.
- Gateways inscription assigns the work to King Vatsiputra Dhanabhuti during the rule of the Shungas.
- Railings and walls of stupa have numerous birth stories of the Buddha's previous lives, or Jataka tales. Many of them are in the **shape of large, round medallions**.
- The style is generally flat (no sculptures in the round)
- all characters are depicted wearing the Indian dhoti, except for one foreigner, thought to be an Indo-Greek soldier, with Buddhist symbolism.
- An unusual feature of Bharhut panels is inclusion of text in the narrative panels.



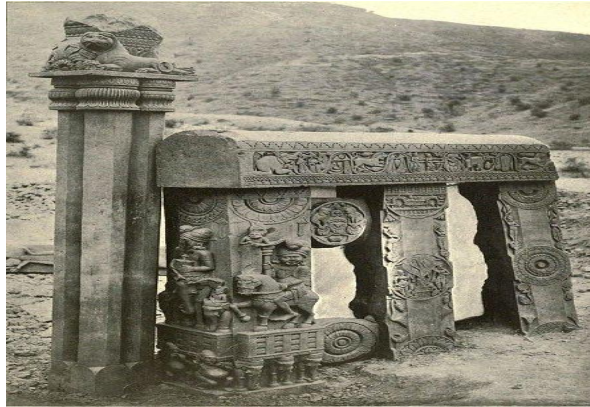
**Railings of Bharhut Stupa**

## Sculpture of Bharhut Stupa

- The railings have numerous images of the yakshas and yakshis
  - The Yakshas and Yakshis represent the protection of nature and its great fertility, which ensures the continuance of life.
- Availability of the space is utilized to the maximum by the sculptors.
  - Folded hands in single figures with hand clinging to chest
  - used the pictorial language very effectively to communicate stories.
    - Ex: Queen Mayadevi's (mother of Siddhartha Gautama) dream, a descending elephant is shown
  - One main characteristic in all the **male images** is the **knotted headgear**.



Dream of Queen Maya



Site excavated in Bharhut Stupa



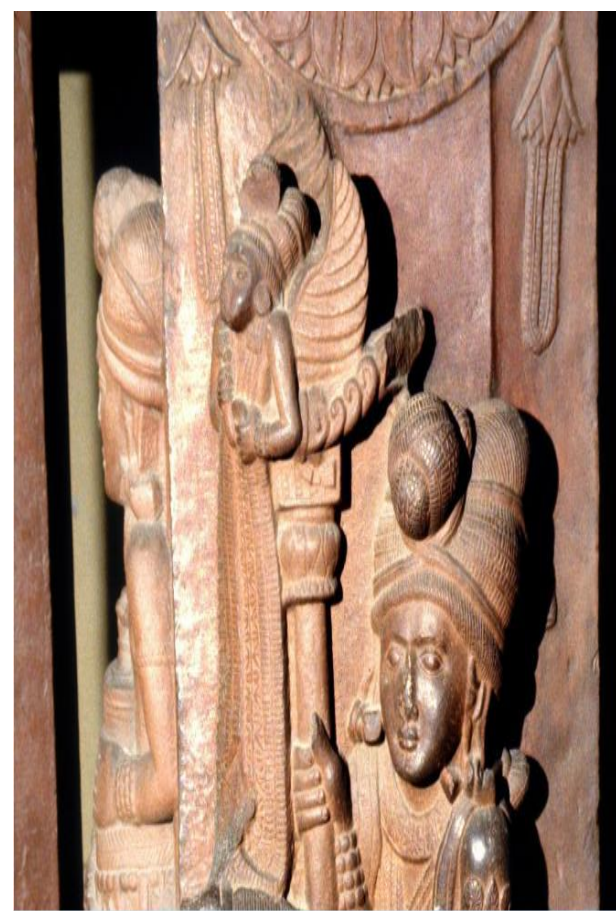
Sculpture of Yakshini



**Folded hand Yakshas**



**Yakshini,  
Bharhut**



**Male with knotted headgear**

## Jataka story in Bharhut stupa

- Many of these jataka reliefs are labelled with Prakrit inscriptions in Brahmi script,
- These Jataka stories are shown by combining the events according to the location of the story.
- Characters of the stories did not have excellent finishing.
- Projection of body parts hands and feet was not possible in shallow carvings due to this twisted legs and hands carved.



Buddha incarnated as a deer, rescues a merchant from drowning in the river (bottom of medallion).

**Ruru Jataka**

## Mahakapi Jataka

- In this story a hunter who has come to the forest to trap monkeys.
- The Buddha, out of his compassion, transforms himself into a human bridge between the two trees across the river so that the monkeys can escape from the hunter's clutches.
- Even though his back was badly hurt by this gesture, the Buddha showed his greatness by sacrificing himself for the benefit of others.
- Below the tree is the Buddha telling the hunter about the importance of being kind and helpful to all living beings.



**Mahakapi Jataka: The Great Monkey King**

As time passes from and sculpture architecture passes through one dynasty to other. Art gradually modified in the stupa architecture with deep carving pronounced volume and a very naturalistic representation of human and animals. Some examples are sculptures of Bodhgaya, Sanchi Stupa-2 and Jagayyapetta.



**The relief of the horse-headed ogress in Sanchi Stupa No.2.**



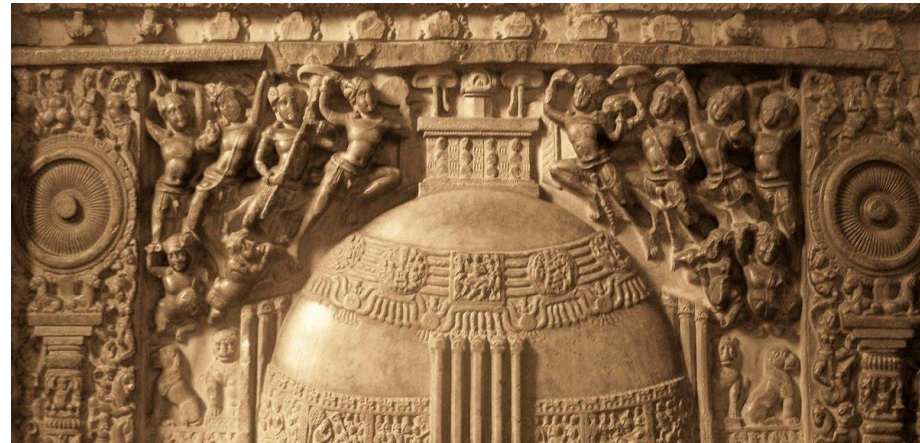
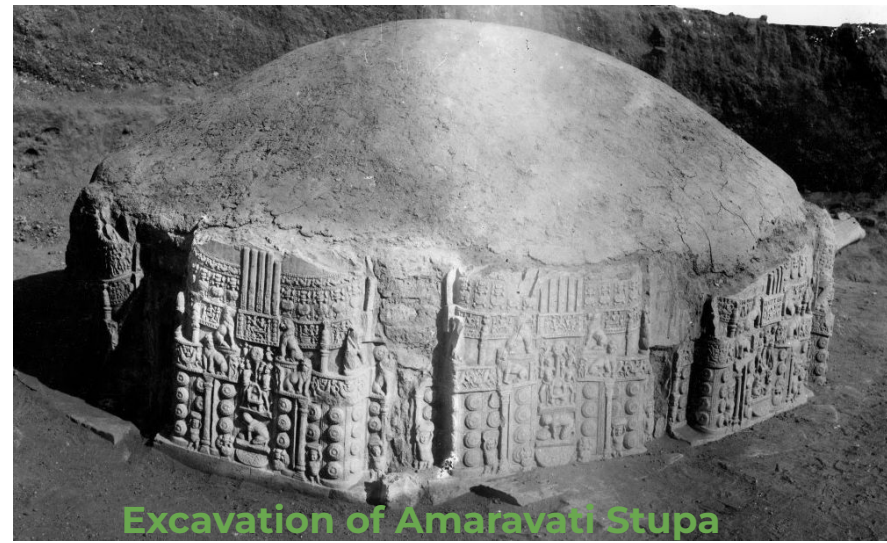
**Buddha in Bodh Gaya**

	Patronage/Era	Name	location	Further development	features
483 BC ++	Mahajanapadas/Aajatshatru	Rajagriha	Rajagriha		
483 BC ++	Mahajanapadas/Licchavis	Vaishali	Vaishali		
483 BC ++	Mahajanapadas/Shakyas	Kapilavastu	Kapilavastu		
483 BC ++	Mahajanapadas/Buliyas	Allakappa	Saran dist., Bihar		
483 BC ++	Mahajanapadas/Koliyas	Ramagrama	Nepal	Ashoka could not open	
483 BC ++	Mahajanapadas/Brahmin of Vethadipa	Vethadipa	Bettiah distt., Bihar		made on urn
483 BC ++	Mahajanapadas/Mallas of Pava	Pava	Fazilnagar, UP		
483 BC ++	Mahajanapadas/Mallas of Kushi.	Ramabhar Stupa	Kushinagar		
483 BC ++	Mahajanapadas/Moriyas	Pippalivana	Siddharth Nagar	Kushan	Ashes distributed to Thailand, Myan
483 BC ++	Mahajanapadas/Licchavis of Vaishali	Kesariya Stupa	Champanan, Bihar	Ashoka -> Gupta	over begging bowl
250 BC	Ashoka	Bairat Stupa	Rajasthan	-	Circular Buddhist Temple Ashoka minor rock edicts
250 BC	Ashoka	Dharmarajika Stupa	Sarnath	Ashoka -> Gupta	Hiuen Tsang - 1500 priests + 300 ft
250 BC	Ashoka	Sanchi	Raisen distt., MP	Ashoka -> Agnimitra -> Satavahanas	
250 BC	Ashoka	Bharhut Stupa	Satna, MP	Ashoka -> Sungas	sculpture
250 BC	Ashoka	Amaravati Stupa	Guntur, Andhra Pradesh	Ashoka -> Satavahanas	
250 BC	Ashoka	Sannati / Kanaganahalli Stupa	kalburgi district of Karnataka.	Ashoka -> Satavahanas	
250 BC	Ashoka	Adurru Stupa	East Godavari distt., Andhra		Sanghamitra
200 BC - 300 AD	Satavahanas	Thotlakonda	Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh	Satavahanas	
4th - 5th AD	Gupta	Chaukhandi Stupa	Sarnath	Guptas -> Mughals	
4th - 5th AD	Gupta	Ratnagiri	Odisha	Narasimhagupta	
4th - 5th AD	Gupta	Mirpur Khas stupa	Sindh, Pakistan		
		Guntupalli	West Godavari distt., Andhra		

## Amaravati Stupa

- It was built in 3rd century BC, at Amaravati in the Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh on the banks of R. Krishna
- It was built during the reign of Ashoka or by Ashoka\*\*
- Later, it was built under **satavahana dynasty and Ishvaku**
- **Hinayana -> Mahayana**
- The stupa found to be engraved with intricate carvings depicting the life and teachings of Lord Buddha.
- The important sculptures from the site are now in a number of museums in India and abroad.
- Excavation: Colin Mackenzie and dated 1816

Hiuen Tsang visited Amaravati in 640 CE, stayed for sometime and studied 'Abhidhammapitakam'. He wrote a glorious account of the place, Viharas and monasteries that existed



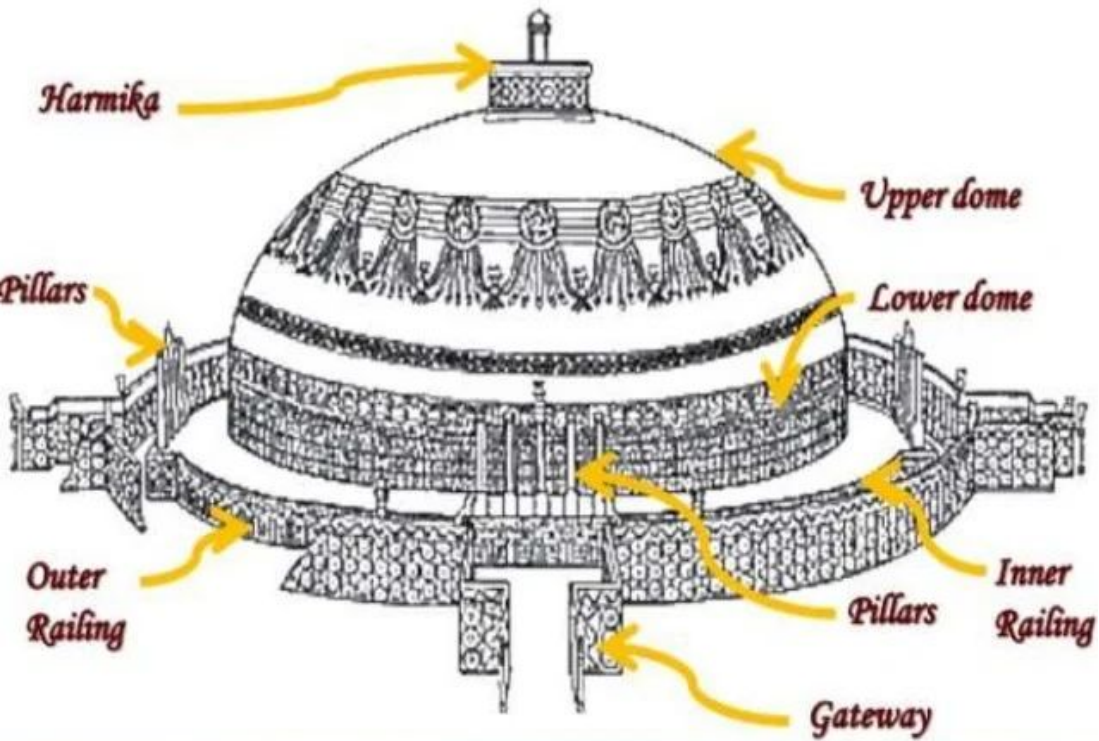
**Relief from the side of the stupa**

White marble and limestone

Design over anda/ covered with sculptured panels

Drum slabs





Lion figures

Free standing  
columns  
surmounted by  
Lion figures



- It consists of a circular vedika, depicting Lord Buddha in his human form, on top of an elephant.
- The high platforms of the stupa protrude in four directions. This monument showcases the typical Mauryan architecture in South India.

### Construction

- The main construction phases of Amaravati fall in two main periods, with the additions consisting of railings (vedika) and carved slabs placed around the stupa
- These slabs are usually called '**drum slabs**'
  - *because they were placed round the base of the stupa which has a shape similar to a circular drum.*
- The late period of construction started around 50 BCE and continued until 250 CE.
- Later construction include **standing Bodhisattvas and goddesses.**
- Amaravati continued to be active after this time, probably to about the thirteenth century.



The ruin structure of Amaravati Stupa

## Sculpture of Amaravati Stupa

- Regarded as one of the three major styles
- Narratives - Jataka stories
- characterized by intense emotions.
- Bodies are shown with three bends (**Tribanga**), and the sculpture composition is more complex than Sanchi.
- The Dream of Queen Mayadevi has also been depicted here.
- Independent Buddha images are also found at Amaravati, Nagarjunakonda and Guntapalle.
- The Amaravati school of art had great influence on art in Sri Lanka and South-East Asia. It also had influence over South Indian sculpture.
- The stupa is related to the **Vajrayana teachings of Kalachakra**, still practiced today in Tibetan Buddhism.
  - *The Dalai Lama of Tibet conducted a Kalachakra initiation at this location in 2006.*



Buddha Preaching  
in Tushita Heaven,



Great Departure



Mara's assault



Stolen marble of Stupa in  
British museum

## Sannati Maha Stupa (Kanaganahalli Stupa)

- Sannati stupa is located in kalburgi district of Karnataka.
- been initially built during **Ashoka's reign**
- later renovated by **Satavahana kings**. It is assumed to be built during 3rd to 4th century.
  - Names of the kings Yajna Shri Satakarni etc.
- It is also known as **Maha Stupa**, which had been referred to as **Adholoka Maha-Chaitya** (*The Great Stupa of the Netherworlds*) in the inscriptions.
- It have 60 dome slabs with exquisite sculptures showing Jataka stories and portraits of Asoka.
- Dome dia - 75 metre

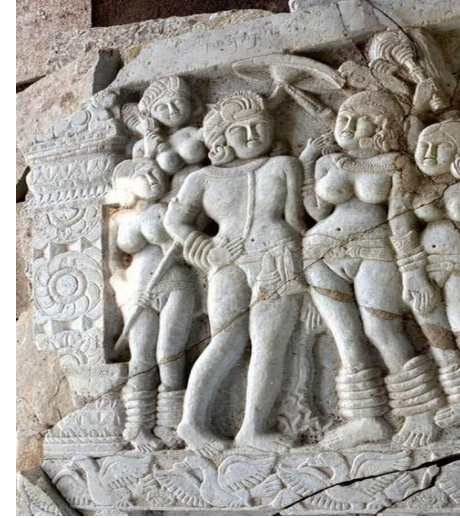
### Sculpture

- There are many standing and seated images of Buddha.
- A sculpture-portrait of Ashoka seated on his throne with his queens was also discovered.



**Remains of sannati stupa**

- The emperor with his queen and attendants are carved on a slab, which has an inscription identifying him that reads **Raya Asoka** (Raja Asoka).
  - It is the first-ever sculpture of Asoka with his name inscribed.
- The emperor is shown as paying obeisance to the tree and the artist has rendered it with great naturalism.
- The Buddha is depicted with symbols - nagamucchalinda (serpent with five or more hoods), elephant, swan, dharmachakra and empty throne with cushions.
- Limestone base relief sculptures



**Emperor Ashoka with his queen**



**Empty throne**



**Ashoka and revival of Bodhi tree**

## Adurru Stupa

- It is a 2,400-year old Buddhist stupa located on the western bank of the Vainetaya, a tributary of river Godavari, of East Godavari district.
- The foundation stone for Adurru was laid by **Sanghamithra**, a Buddhist nun and daughter of King Ashoka, en route to Sri Lanka.
- In 1953, the ASI conducted excavations that brought to light the remains of stupas, chaityas and viharas.
- The following remains and artifacts were excavated by ASI from the Adurru Buddhist site are Upa stupas, Stupas, Chaityas, Viharas, Jars, Troughs, Dishes and Bowls.
- The most beautiful and the most famous one is the mahastupa, built like a giant wheel with a platform with a diameter of 17 feet.



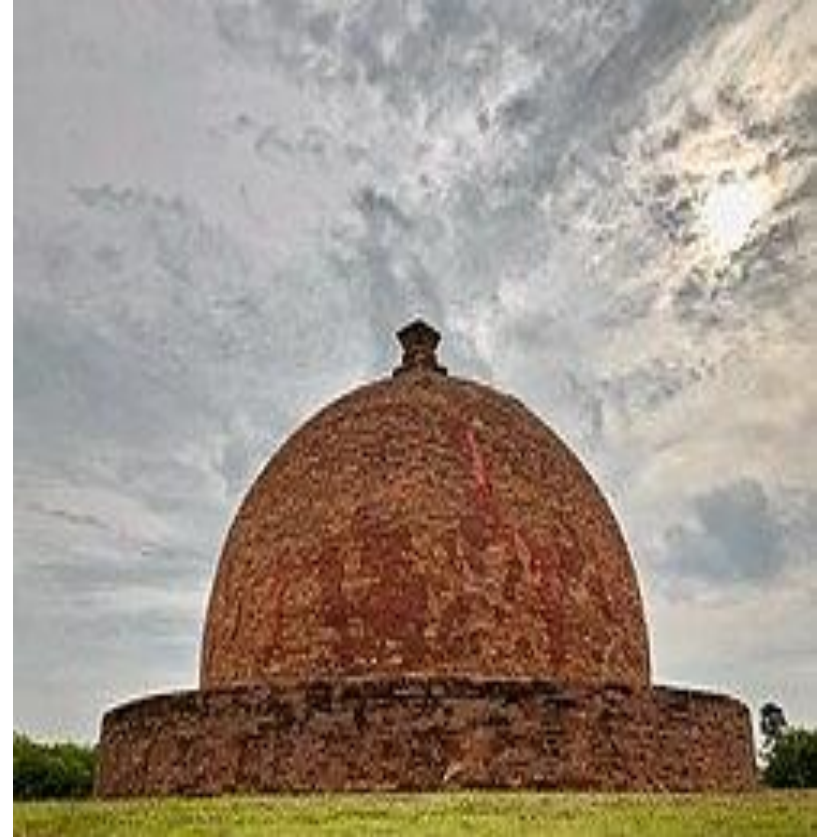
**Aduru Stupa**

**Mercantile Age  
200 BCE - 300 CE**



### Mahastupa of Thotlakonda

- Thotlakonda Stupa is a famous Buddhist Gomba. It is located in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.
- It can be traced to 300 BC to 300 AD.
- It is considered an important source of dissemination of Buddhism to Sri Lanka and various parts of Southeast Asia.
- The ruin of stupa witness the well-established Theravada (Hinayanana Buddhism).
- Thotlakonda came to light during an aerial survey by the Indian Navy for setting up a naval base.
- The excavation of Thothlakond reveal **Satavahana dynasty lead and Roman silver coins** indicating foreign trade; terracotta tiles, stucco decorative pieces, sculptured panels, miniature stupa models in stone, and Buddha footprints were also found.
- The excavations also yielded twelve inscriptions in the Brahmi script.



**Mahastupa at Thotlakonda**

## [Peshawar/Gandhara Stupas]

### Kanishka Stupa (Shaji-ki-Dheri)

- It established by the Kushan king Kanishk in 2nd century in today's Shaji-ki-Dheri or the outskirts of Peshawar, Pakistan.
- Buddhist relics were discovered which we transferred to the U Khanti Hall at Burma (Mynamar).
- The first stupa built after the death of Kanishka and rebuilt under Kushan rule in the 4th century CE into a cruciform stupa with a tower-like structure, with four staircases and four corner bastions, and possibly pillars at each corner.



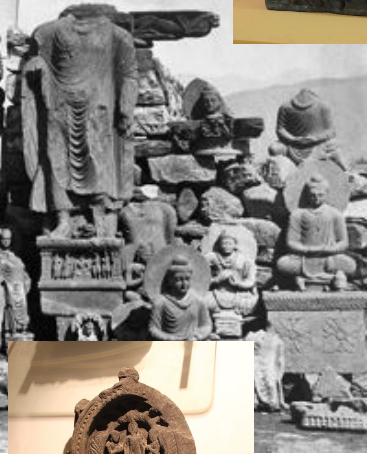
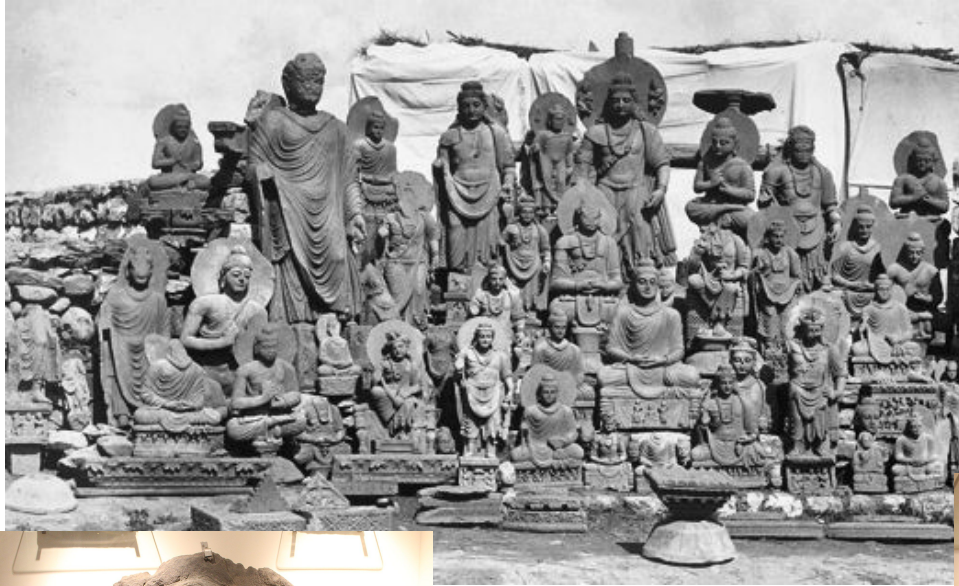
**Remains of the stupa**



**Statue of the Buddha**



**Loriyan Tangai** is an archaeological site in the **Gandhara area of Pakistan**, consisting of many stupas and religious buildings where many Buddhist statues were discovered.



Submission of Naga king Apala



Appearance of the stupa @ Loriyan Tangai



Bimaran casket  
(1st century CE)



Buddha (with  
"BODDO" in Greek  
script) on a coin of  
Kanishka



Statue with inscription  
mentioning "year 318",  
probably 143 CE

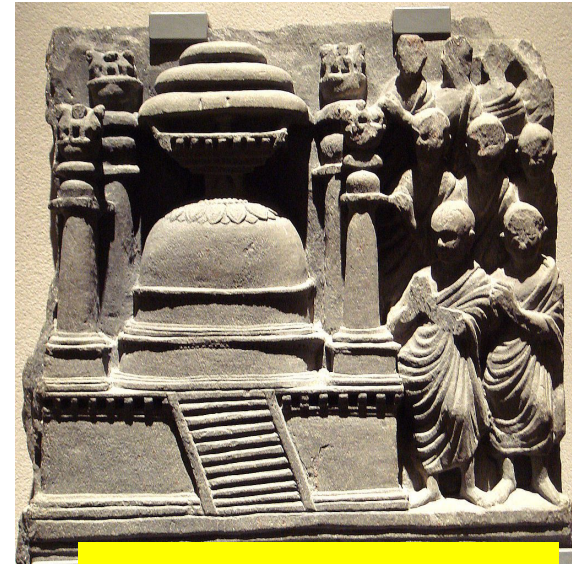


The inscribed Kanishka casket found at the site of the Kanishka Stupa and containing relics of the Buddha, now in Peshawar Museum

The stupa's wooden superstructure was rebuilt atop the stone base, and crowned with a **13-layer copper-gilded chatra**. [Mentioned by Fa Hein]

In the 5th century CE, stucco imagery was probably added to the site, in keeping with contemporary popularity for Buddhist imagery

Gandhara Stupas were built by a Greek engineer Agesilaus after death of Kanishka



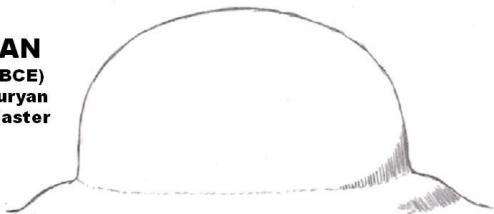
Stupa with a **square base**, and pillars at the four corners, Gandhara 2nd Century

# EARLY EVOLUTION OF THE STUPA

(BUTKARA Great Stupa, 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE- 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE)

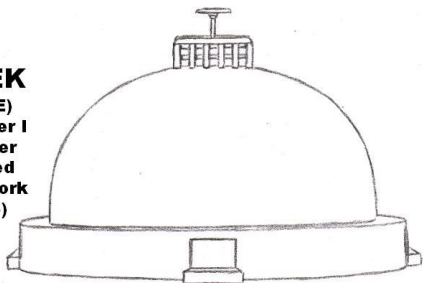
1

**MAURYAN**  
(3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE)  
Coinage: Mauryan  
Schist and plaster



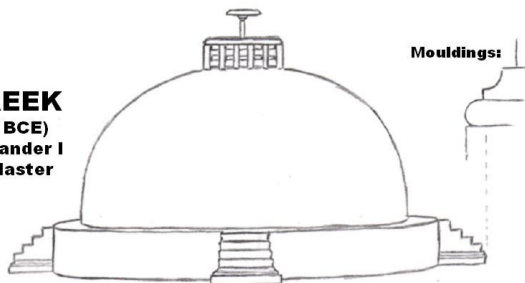
2

**INDO-GREEK**  
(2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE)  
Coinage: Menander I  
Schist and plaster  
Niches for figured  
panels or relief-work  
(Butkara I, p35)



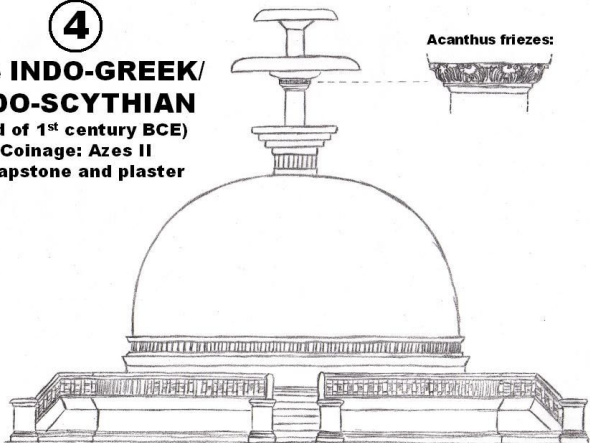
3

**INDO-GREEK**  
(2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE)  
Coinage: Menander I  
Schist and plaster



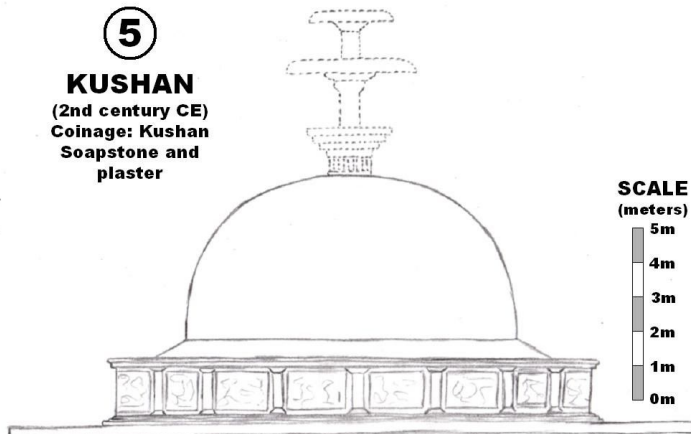
4

**Late INDO-GREEK/  
INDO-SCYTHIAN**  
(End of 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE)  
Coinage: Azes II  
Soapstone and plaster

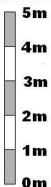


5

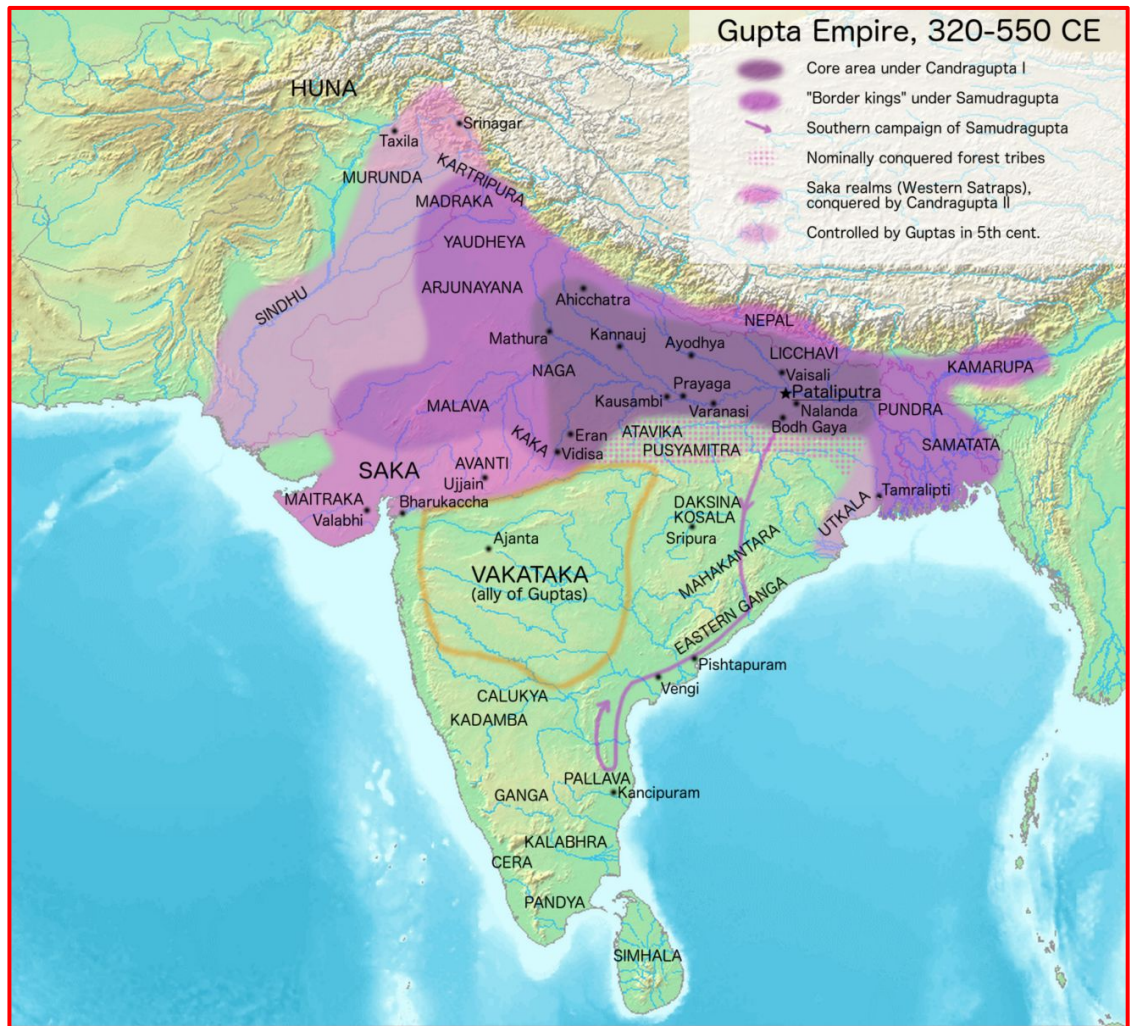
**KUSHAN**  
(2<sup>nd</sup> century CE)  
Coinage: Kushan  
Soapstone and  
plaster



**SCALE**  
(meters)



# GUPTA ERA



## During Gupta Period:

- During the Gupta age (300 AD - 550 AD), stupa architecture was no longer very popular.
- This was the result of emergence of Nagara style of temple architecture.
- **Dhamekh Stupa of Sarnath** is the only available example of this period.

- **Sarnath is widely famous for deer park due to which it is referred as “Mrigadava” (deer-park)**



**Dhamekh Stupa**

## Chaukhandi Stupa

- Sarnath district of Uttar Pradesh.
  - believed to mark the place where the Buddha first met a group of five ascetics (who were later to become his first disciples).
- Stupa is a high earthen mound covered with a brickwork edifice topped by an **octagonal tower**.
- It's name Chaukhandi comes from the **four-armed plan of the stupa**, which was declared to be of national importance by the Archaeological Survey of India in June 2019.
- It was first recorded by Hiuen Tsang between 634 and 645 A.D.



**Chaukhandi Stupa**

## Artefacts

- Images of Buddha in Dharmachakra Pravartana Mudra and other statues found during excavations at this Stupa are believed to be rare artifacts and classic examples of art from Gupta period.

## Construction

- It was built during the Gupta period 4th and 5th century.
- The octagonal tower perched on top of the stupa is a much later addition.
- 1567 - The tower commissioned by the Mughal emperor Akbar in memory of his father Humayun, who visited Sarnath 35 years previously in 1532.
- **Govardhan, the son of Todarmal** altered and modified the Chaukhandi Stupa to its present shape.



**The Chaukhandi Stupa as photographed in 1860,**



**The octagonal tomb**

## Ratnagiri

- Ratnagiri is the site of a ruined vihara, once the major Buddhist monastery in modern Odisha.
- In the reign of the Gupta king Narasimha Baladitya.
- The main elements were an impressive stupa (Stupa ) surrounded by several hundred smaller stupas of varying dimensions, three quadrangular monasteries.



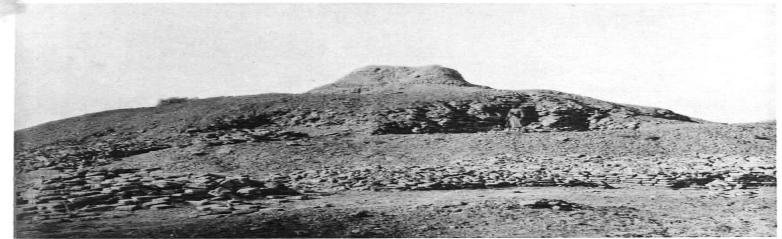
Stump of main stupa, and smaller stupas

## Other Stupas of Gupta period

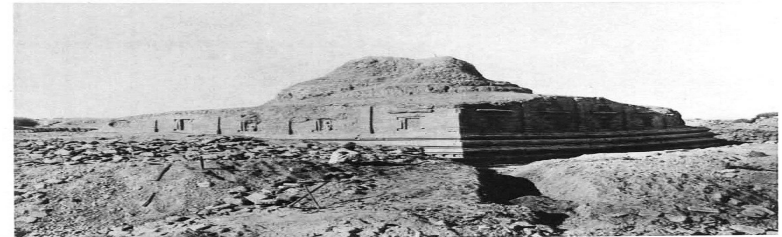
## Mirpur Khas stupa (Kahu-Jo-Darro)

- Found at the Mirpurkhas archaeological site in Sindh, Pakistan.
- Historic Indian and Arab coins were found during its excavation.
- These different terracotta artwork found here similar to those seen at Sarnath and at Mathura. Clay tablets containing the Buddhist formula "Ye Dharma Hetu" in 7th-8th century script were also found.

MIRPUR-KHAS STUPA, SINDH.



(a) STUPA BEFORE EXCAVATION, FROM THE N.-W.



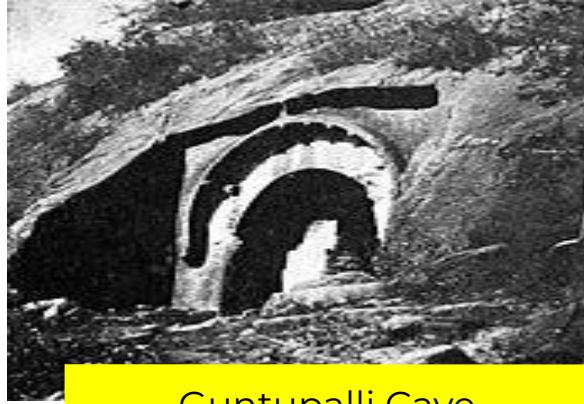
(b) STUPA AFTER EXCAVATION, FROM THE N.-W.

## Stupa/ Buddhist site in southern India

- **Amaravati Stupa**
- **Stupa of Guntupalli**
- **Sannati Mahastupa**
- **Adurru Stupa**
- **Mahastupa of Thotlakonda**
- **Dhuli Shanti Stupa**
- **Vengi in Andhra has many Stupa sites**
  - **Jagayyapetta**
  - **Amaravati**
  - **Bahattiprolu**
  - **Nagarjunakonda**
  - **Goli**

## Stupas of Guntupalli

- The Guntupalli stupa is located at West Godavari district, in the state of Andhra Pradesh in India. Along with stupa it has two Buddhist caves, a chaitya hall and a large group of stupas.
- The chaitya hall has a rare carved stone entrance replicating wooden architecture, a simpler version of that at the Lomas Rishi Cave.



Guntupalli Cave



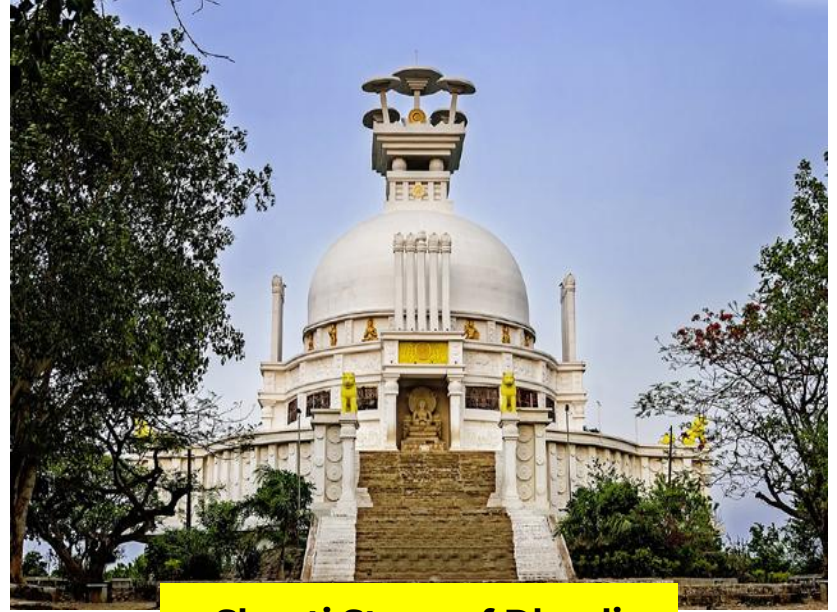
One of the stupa of Guntupalli



Stupa remains below the main stupa

## Dhauri Shanti Stupa

- It is located on the banks of the river Daya, 8 km south of Bhubaneswar in Odisha.
- Also known as peace pagoda.
- The site of Dhauri is presumed to be the area where the Kalinga War was fought.
- It has four massive idols of Lord Buddha in various postures along with episodes from Gautam Buddha's life carved on stone slabs.
- There also exist a number of edicts that display King Ashoka's intention to promote joy, peace and contentment all through the world.



**Shanti Stupa of Dhauri**



**Dhauri Major Rock Inscription of Ashoka.**

*The front is shaped as an elephant. Dhauri, Puri District,*

## Important stupas in northern India

- **Shanti Stupa, Leh**
- **Dro-dul Chorten Stupa, Sikkim**

### Shanti Stupa, Leh

- It is a Buddhist white-domed stupa on a hilltop in Chanspa, Leh district, Ladakh.
- **Built in 1991** by Japanese Buddhist monk, **Gyomyo Nakamura** as part of the Peace Pagoda mission.
  - *A Peace Pagoda is a Buddhist stupa to inspire peace, designed to provide a focus for people of all races and creeds, and to help unite them in their search for world peace.*
  - *It holds the relics of the Buddha at its base, enshrined by the 14th Dalai Lama.*



**Shanti stupa**

## Description

- It was built by both Japanese Buddhists and Ladakh Buddhists.
- It features the photograph of the current Dalai Lama with the relics of the Buddha at its base.
- The stupa is built as a two-level structure.
- The first level features the central relief of Dharmachakra with deer on each side.
- A central golden Buddha image sits on a platform depicting the "turning wheel of Dharma" (Dharmachakra).
- The second level has reliefs depicting the "birth" of Buddha, the death of Buddha (mahanirvana) and Buddha "defeating the devils" while meditating.



**Main Buddha in Shanti Stupa**

## Dro-dul Chorten Stupa, Sikkim

- It is located in Sikkim.
- It was built in **1945 by Trulshik Rinpoche**, head of the Nyingma order of Tibetan Buddhism.
  - The Nyingma school is the oldest of the four major schools of Tibetan Buddhism.
- Stupa is surrounded by **108 Mani Lhakor** or **prayer wheels**.



**Dro-dul Choten Stupa**



**Mani Lhakor**

## Stupa in western India

### Devnimori Stupa

- It is located in devnimori Buddhist archaeological site in the Aravalli District of northern Gujarat, India.
- It has dated to the **3rd century or 4th century CE**.
- Site excavations have yielded
  - Buddhist artifacts dated prior to 8th-century in the lowest layer,
  - mixed Buddhist and Hindu artwork from the Gurjara-Pratihara period in the middle,
  - topped by Muslim glazed ware attributed to the 14th century.
- It is the free-standing stupa in the area of Gujarat.
- Nine images of the Buddha were found inside, influenced by the Greco-Buddhist art of Gandhara.
- Three relic caskets were retrieved from the stupa.
  - One of these caskets bears an inscription which mentions a date: the 127th year in the reign of Western Satrap ruler **Rudrasena**.



**Devnimori stupa**

**Also, prominence of Stupas in Vadnagar, mentioned by Hiuen Tsang**

## Stone Relic Casket recovered from Devni Mori.



## Recent Developments

- The world's second tallest statue of Gautam Buddha is proposed to be built in Dev Ni Mori, Sabarkantha district, Gujarat.
- The proposed statue (108m) would be second in the world after the **Spring Temple in China** (153 meters).

## Important Stupas from Around the World

1. Ruwanwelisaya – Sri Lanka
2. Borobudur, Java
3. Boudhanath Stupa - Nepal
4. Swayambhunath Stupa – Nepal
5. The One Hundred and Eight Stupas – China
6. Kyaiktiyo Pagoda – (Golden Rock Stupa) – Myanmar
7. Benalmadena Stupa - Spain
8. The Great Stupa of Dharmakaya Which Liberates Upon Seeing – USA
9. The Great Stupa of Universal Compassion – Australia | Under construction



Ruwanwelisaya Stupa

### Ruwanwelisaya Stupa, Sri Lanka

- The Ruwanweli stupa is located in Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka.
- It was built by **Sinhalese King Dutugemunu in 140 B.C.**, who became king of Sri Lanka after a war in which the Chola King Elara (Ellalan) was defeated.
- The stupa was damaged during the **Chola conquest** of Anuradhapura but was renovated during the reign of **Parakramabahu I (1153–1187)**, who invaded South India, capturing large parts of Tamil Nadu
- It has two quarts of the Buddha's relics in the stupa, which make it the largest collection of his relics anywhere.

## Borobudur, Java

- Mahayana Buddhist temple
- Borobudur was likely founded around 800 AD which corresponds to the period between 760 and 830 AD, the peak of the **Sailendra dynasty** rule over Mataram kingdom in central Java, when their power encompassed not only the **Srivijayan Empire** but also southern Thailand,
- It is the **world's largest Buddhist temple**.
- The temple consists of
  - nine stacked platforms, six square and three circular,
  - topped by a central dome.
  - decorated with 2,672 relief panels
  - 504 Buddha statues.
  - The central dome is surrounded by 72 Buddha statues, each seated inside a perforated stupa
- the temple design follows Javanese Buddhist architecture, which blends the Indonesian indigenous tradition of **ancestor worship and the Buddhist concept of attaining Nirvana**.
- The temple demonstrates the influences of **Gupta art** that reflects India's influence on the region, yet there are enough indigenous scenes and elements incorporated to make Borobudur uniquely Indonesian



## Boudhanath Stupa, Nepal

- It is located in is a stupa in Kathmandu, Nepal.
- It was founded by the Nepalese Licchavi king Sivadeva (c. 590–604 CE).
- In 1979 it is declared as UNESCO World Heritage Site.



**Boudhanath Stupa,**

## Swayambhunath Stupa

- It is an ancient religious complex atop a hill in the Kathmandu Valley, west of Kathmandu city.
- It was founded by the great-grandfather of King Manadeva (464-505 CE).
- Emperor Ashoka has visited this stupa in the third century BCE and built a temple on the hill which was later destroyed.

### Architecture

- It consists of a dome at the base, above which is a cubical structure painted with eyes of Buddha looking in all four directions.
- Accompanied by pentagonal toran present above each of the four sides with statues engraved in them.
- There is a large pair of eyes on each of the four sides of the main stupa which represent Wisdom and Compassion.
- There are carvings of the Panch Buddhas (five Buddhas) on each of the four sides of the stupa.



## The One Hundred and Eight Stupas, China

- It is an array of one hundred and eight Buddhist stupas on a hillside on the west bank of the **Yellow River at Ningxia in China.**
- It was constructed during the period of the Western Xia kingdom (1038–1227).
- It has been arrayed in a triangular formation.
- Reason for 108 stupas is that the number 108 is a sacred number in Buddhism, for example Buddhist rosary beads number 108.



## Kyaiktiyo Pagoda, Myanmar

- It is a well-known Buddhist pilgrimage site in Mon State, Myanmar.
- It was built on the top of a granite boulder covered with gold leaves pasted on by its male devotees.
- The rock and the pagoda are at the top of Mt. Kyaiktiyo.



Benalmadena Stupa,  
Spain, 2003



The Great Stupa of Dharmakaya Which Liberates Upon  
Seeing, USA  
It was built to inter the ashes of Chogyam Trungpa, who  
died in 1987.  
2001 inaugurated

**With reference to the Indian history of art and culture, consider the following pairs: (2014)**

Famous work of sculpture

**Site**

1. A grand image of Buddha's Mahaparinirvana with numerous celestial musicians above and the sorrowful figures of his followers below - **Ajanta**
2. A huge image of Varaha Avatar (boar incarnation) of Vishnu, as he rescues Goddess Earth from the deep and chaotic waters, sculpted on rock - **Mount Abu**
3. "Arjuna's Penance"/ "Descent of Ganga" sculpted on the surface of huge boulders - **Mamallapuram**

Which of the pairs given above is/are correctly matched?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans C

In which of the following relief sculpture inscriptions is 'Ranyo Ashoka' (King Ashoka) mentioned along with the stone portrait of Ashoka? **2019**

- [a] Kanganahalli [b] Sanchi  
[c] Shahbazagrhi [d] Sohgaora

***Early Buddhist Stupa-art, while depicting folk motifs and narratives successfully expounds Buddhist ideals, Elucidate.***