

INDIAN

ART & CULTURE

FOR UPSC CSE &
STATE PCS EXAMS

From the Editorial Board

Dear Aspirants,

We are incredibly grateful for the wonderful response we received for our Polity, History, Economy, and Geography books. Inspired by this positive feedback, we are thrilled to announce the release of the second edition of our book titled 'Indian Art and Culture'.

Indian Art and Culture has gained prominence in the UPSC examination, both in Prelims and Mains stage. Its weightage in the exam has been steadily increasing; despite this, there is a dearth of consolidated and updated material on the same subject. Students have to rely on multiple sources making their preparation more difficult.

This book was created taking into account the concern and challenges which the students face during preparing for the subject. The book aims to tackle all these problems, and along with this, it improves students' knowledge base thus saving their precious time and eliminating many academic misunderstandings that they encounter.

Special Features of This Book

This book aims to make your preparation focused and relevant based on UPSC's current trend and pattern, it is revision-friendly, and up-to-date.

- The requirements of the UPSC Civil Services Examination are the exclusive focus of this book.
- We have taken great care to ensure that the materials are written in a clear and easy-to-understand, so that students may learn and recall the concepts to their advantage.
- Wherever necessary, we've incorporated diagrams and pictorial representation of art, culture and heritages of India to make learning interactive and easy.
- We have incorporated maps for easy retention of various topics like IVC sites, Ashoka edicts, Paintings, Folk dances etc.
- We have incorporated the relevant previous year's questions at the end of each chapter so that the students can test their knowledge while understanding the trend of the question.

With all sincerity and humility, the Study IQ team wishes you the best in your preparation, and we hope this book will help you in your journey.

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SAMPLE PAGES

Viharas: It was the monastery where the monks used to live, and it acted as their accommodation during the rainy days. They were carved out of rocks as cave structures.

Features:

1. They all had common features like a veranda, a hall, and cells along the pathways.
2. They were simple regular square halls.
3. They were surrounded by open cells accessible through an entrance porch.

Example: Kanheri (Mumbai, Maharashtra), Junnar (Pune, Maharashtra) etc.



Kanheri Vihara

Udayagiri and Khandagiri Caves, Odisha

They were made under the **Kalinga king Kharavela**, in the **1st- 2nd century BC**. The cave complex has both artificial and natural caves. There are **18 caves in Udayagiri** and **15 in Khandagiri**.

Udayagiri caves are famous for the **Hathigumpha inscription** which is carved out in **Brahmi script**. It tries to highlight the various military campaigns undertaken by the king Kharavela in its Inscriptions.

Example: Ranigumpha cave and Ganeshagumpha cave in Udayagiri.



Ranigumpha Cave

Stupas

Several new features were added to the existing Stupas, and several new stupas were built in the Indian Subcontinent. The main work in the area of Stupas can be seen under the **Sunga dynasty**. Despite being Brahmanical in religion, they showed immense tolerance towards Buddhism. They established not only new stupas but also repaired several existing stupas.

Features:

1. Sunga art was marked by its native style, simple and folk experiences.
2. Sunga Rulers **introduced the Toranas** to the Stupa architecture that depicted the Jataka stories.
3. They used stone on a large scale.

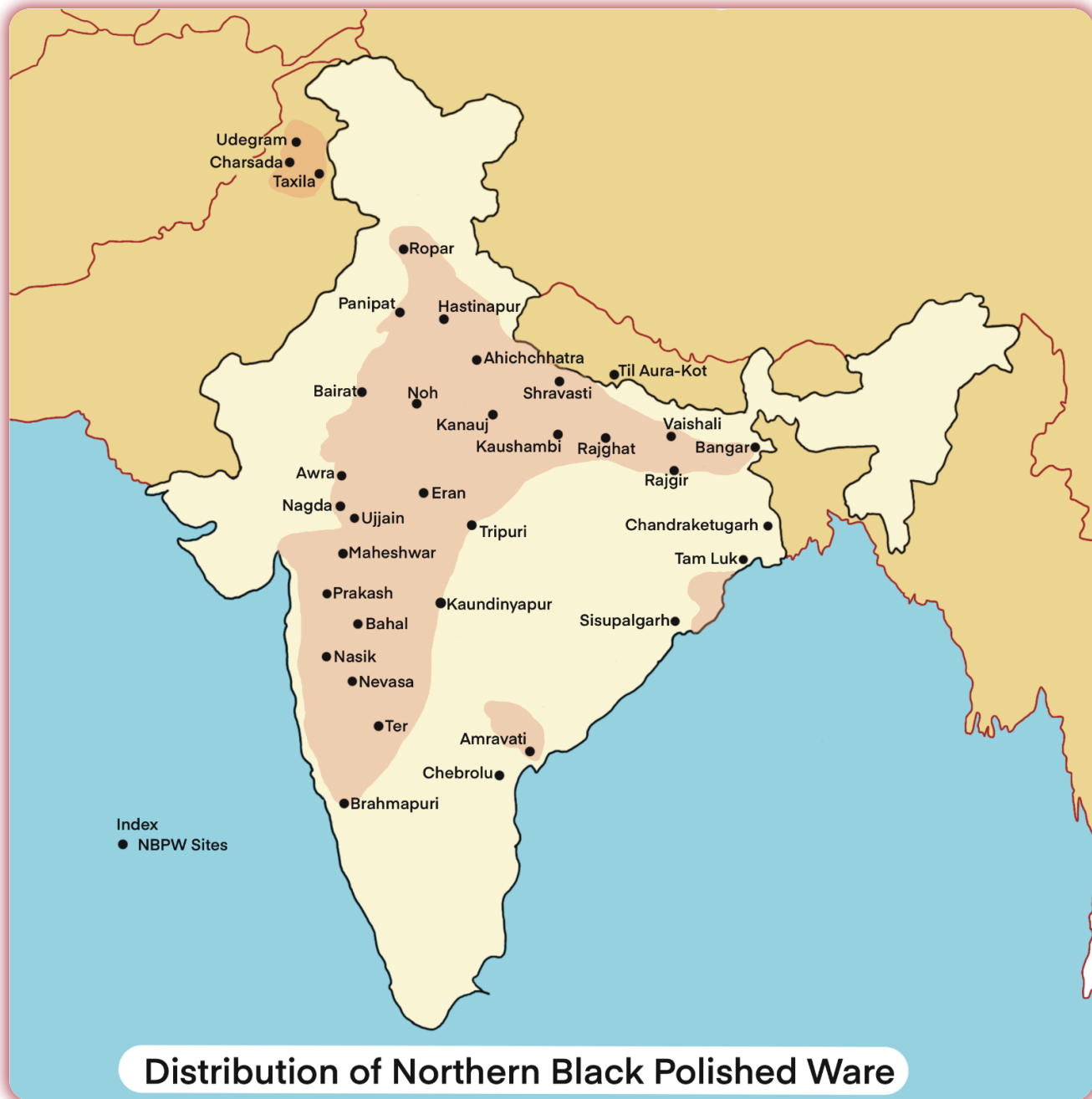
Example: Bharhut and Sanchi Stupa in Madhya Pradesh.

Apart from the Shunga dynasty, Stupas were also built in the Deccan area, especially **at Amravati and Nagarjunakonda**, which had some distinct features, such as:

1. Stupas were built of **Burnt Bricks and Stone**.
2. They had a Spoked-wheel ground plan.
3. The number of spokes from the wheel ranged from 4 to 10.
4. In some stupas of Nagarjunakonda, we find **the Ayaka Pillar**, representing **the five important events of the life of Buddha**.
5. Some stupas used the **sign of Swastika**.



Sanchi Stupa







MEGALITHIC ERA

The existence of Megalithic era pottery extends from the **3rd century BCE to the 1st century CE**. **Megalithic means big stone (Mega- Big, Lith- Stones)**. The megalithic era refers to the period with statues or monuments built of big stones. In South India, the Megalithic era is famous for using iron. The majority of the pots are concentrated in South India.



Sembiyankandiur megalithic pottery with graffiti marks

Different Forms of String Puppetry

Puppetry	Region	Major Features
Kathputli 	Rajasthan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The theme is based on stories from epics like Mahabharata and Ramayana. The puppets are made of wood. They are usually two feet in height, having a wooden head with a huge nose and large eyes. The rest of the body is prepared with colourful and bright pieces of cloth and stuffed clothes, allowing unrestricted movement. The puppets have no legs but are covered with a long pleated skirt unless they are horse riders. The costumes are regional and traditional. The Bhatt community makes these puppets as well as perform with them.
Kundhei 	Odisha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The theme is based upon the stories from epics like Mahabharata and Ramayana. It also depicts the divine love stories of Radha and Krishna. Each show begins with an invocation and includes music, dance and drama. The puppets are made of light wood and are nearly 60cm tall. They have moveable joints for easy manipulation. The joints are attached from a string to a triangular control that the puppet master uses to control the movements. The dresses of the puppets are elaborate, often inspired by the Jatra look. The shows are usually performed on a small stage-like setup with painted backgrounds and curtains. A group of musicians accompanies the puppeteers.
Bommalattam 	Tamil Nadu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The theme is based upon the tales of spirituality and mythology. It combines the techniques of both rod and string puppets. A single puppeteer presents the entire puppet show. The Bommalattam finger puppet dance begins with a homage to God and continues with humorous stories. There are 5 to 8 members in the puppet show troupe. The puppets are made of wood. The strings for manipulation are tied to an iron ring which the puppeteer wears like a crown on his head. These puppets are the largest, heaviest, and the most articulate of all traditional Indian marionettes. The puppets are made of cloth, wood, leather, or other materials.
Gombeyatta 	Karnataka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The theme is based upon religious texts such as Mahabharata, Ramayana, and the Puranas. They are styled and designed like the characters of Yakshagana, the traditional theatre form of the region. The puppets' joints at the legs, shoulders, elbows, hips and knees. These puppets are manipulated by five to seven strings tied to a prop. Some of the complicated movements of puppets are performed by two to three puppeteers at a time. It is accompanied by music that is dramatic and beautifully blends folk and classical elements.
Kalasutri Bahaulya 	Maharashtra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The theme is based upon episodes of the Ramayana. The performers are descendants of families of puppeteers that originally came from Rajasthan and Gujarat. The puppeteers offer prayers before the performance begins, which opens with the arrival of Ganesh riding on his rat. The goddess of knowledge, Saraswati, appears and dances with Ganesh. The performance ends with the appearance on the stage of Shiva riding the bull Nandi. The small puppets are finely sculpted from wood. They wear elaborate headdresses, turbans and ornaments. Connected at the shoulders and knees, the puppets do not have strings attached to their feet, which remain free. A single musician sings the text and alternately, in turn, plays the tabla and the cymbals.

- Another Vaishnavite, **Jaydev** the **writer of Gita Govinda** is one of the stalwarts of Odia literature.
- **Upendra Bhanja's** works like *Baidehisha Bilasa*, *Koti Brahmanda Sundari* and *Labanyabati* are considered landmarks of Odia Literature. He has been conferred the **title "Kabi Samrat" of Odia literature** for his aesthetic poetic sense and skill with words. He was also the pioneer of a new form of poetry called **"Bandha kabita."**
- The **earliest Odia newspaper** was **Utkala Deepika**, first published in 1866.

GUJARATI LITERATURE

In Gujarat, due to the development of trade and commerce, the religious influence of Jainism as well as Hinduism, and also due to the encouragement of rulers like **Chalukyas (Solanki)** and **Vaghela Rajputs**, literary activities were in full force from the 11th century.

- The Jain monk and scholar **Hemacandrācārya Suri** was the first to pen a formal set of 'grammarians principles' for the Gujarati language, during the reign of the Chalukyas king Jayasimha Siddharaja of Anhilwara.
- Jain authors were the first to compose literature in the Gujarati language, in the form of *Rāsas*, *Phāgus* and *Vilāsas*.
- Among non-Jain writers of the time, **Asait Thakar** is considered a major contributor who wrote around 360 *vesha* of *Bhavai*. He is credited with bringing theatre to Gujarati literature.
- **Abdur Raheman**, who wrote **Sandeshkarash**, is considered the first Muslim writer of Gujarati literature.
- Also, Bhakti movement was at its peak in Gujarat and that affected the literature composed there:
 - ♦ **Narsinh Mehta** (15th century)
 - ♦ **Narmad** (19th century)
 - ♦ **Govardhan Ram** (19th-20th century), who wrote the novel '**Saraswati Chandra**'.
- In modern times, Mahatma Gandhi, Ramnarayan V. Pathak, K. M. Munshi ("Prithiv Vallabh"), Swami Anand, Umashankar Joshi, Jhaverchand Meghani, Pannalal Patel, Jyotindra Dave, Chandravadan Mehta, Zinabhai Desai ("Snehrashmi"), Manubhai Pancholi ("Darshak"), and Ishwar Petlikar are the main contributors of the Gujarati literature.

RAJASTHANI LITERATURE

Early Rajasthani literature is created mostly in the oral form, by the **people of Charan tribe** in **two local dialects of Rajasthani**:

1. **Dingal**, which was a dialect of western Rajasthan, and influenced by the Gujarati language.
 2. **Pingal**, which was a dialect of Eastern Rajasthan influenced by the Braj dialect of Hindi.
- Charans are known for their **Khyats**, a form of bardic historical prose to praise the Rajput kings. Khyats were primarily oral accounts that were textualised by the seventeenth century.
 - Rajasthani literature is written in various genres starting from 1000 AD. But, it is generally agreed that modern Rajasthani literature began with the works of **Suryamal Misran** (poet-historian) of the Bundi kingdom in the 19th century. His most important works are the **Vansa Bhaskara** and the **Vir Satsai**.
 - The **Dhola Maru** is another notable literature of Rajasthan, which is the **romantic tale of Dhola and Maru** in Rajasthan.

SINDHI LITERATURE

Before the Arabs, Local Hindus ruled over Sindh. But after the advent of Arabs in 712, **Sindh was amongst the first to come in contact with Islamic settlers in India**, it explains **the influence of Islam and Sufism on Sindhi poetry & literature**.

- Sindhi was among the earliest Eastern languages into which the Quran was translated in the eighth or ninth century AD.
- **Pir Nooruddin**, an Ismaili missionary who lived in Sindh in 1079, **wrote Sufi poetry** in the Sindhi language. His verses, known as **ginans**, are an example of early Sindhi poetry.
- **Abu Mashar Sindhi & Abu Raja Sindhi** are other notable names.

KASHMIRI LITERATURE

The local people of the Kashmir region used the Kashmiri language, and it had influences from Persian and Hindi dialects. The **Sharda script** was anciently used to write Kashmiri, however, now it is mostly written in the Perso-Arabic script or the Devanagari script.

- The use of the Kashmiri language began with the work **Mahānaya-Prakāsha** by Rājānaka Shiti Kantha (c.1250) and over the centuries the language developed far and wide.