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Chapter 3 – Ancient India: Cultural Development During the Gupta Period and the Pallavas and the Cholas (For CBSE, ICSE, IAS, NET, NRA 2022)

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The last phase of ancient Indian history starts in early fourth century A. D. and ends in about the 8th A. D. The Guptas built a strong and powerful kingdom and under the political unity and state patronage that was provided by them.

Cultural Development During the Gupta Period

- During The Gupta period art became more creative and Hindu gods and goddesses also came to be portrayed. The general scheme that was followed was to exhibit the portrait of the king on one side of the coin or an appropriate goddess with her associated symbols on the other side.
- Besides coins, the coins, Gupta art found adequate expression in monuments and sculptures. The skilled artists of this age used their tools and skills to express the ideals and philosophical traditions of India through various art forms.



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- Examples of the Guptas art can be seen at the dashavatara temple at Deogarh and the cave temples in Udaigiri hills.
- The most famous examples of Gupta art that still remain are the numerous seated and standing images of Buddha from Sarnath.

The Pallavas and the Cholas

- The Pallavas and the Cholas and their contribution to art, architecture, Administration and conquests.
- Pallavas were great patrons of art and architecture. The ‘ratha’ at Mahabalipuram style of temples built by them were fine examples of rock-cut temples.
- The Pallavas also built structural temples like the Kailash Nath and Vaikunthperumal temples at Kanchipuram.

- The Pallavas the tradition of building temples was further developed by the Cholas in the south.
- The achievements of the Cholas also lie in their conquests across the seas and developing democratic institutions for governance at the village level.
- The village Panchayat called *sahha* or *Ur* had extensive powers. It had control over finances too.
- The Cholas rulers were also great builders. The Dravida style of temple architecture reached its Zenith under the Chola rulers.

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