

# BUDDHIST ARCHITECTURE

**Aim :** - To present the nature of evolution of Buddhist forms in respect with changing era.

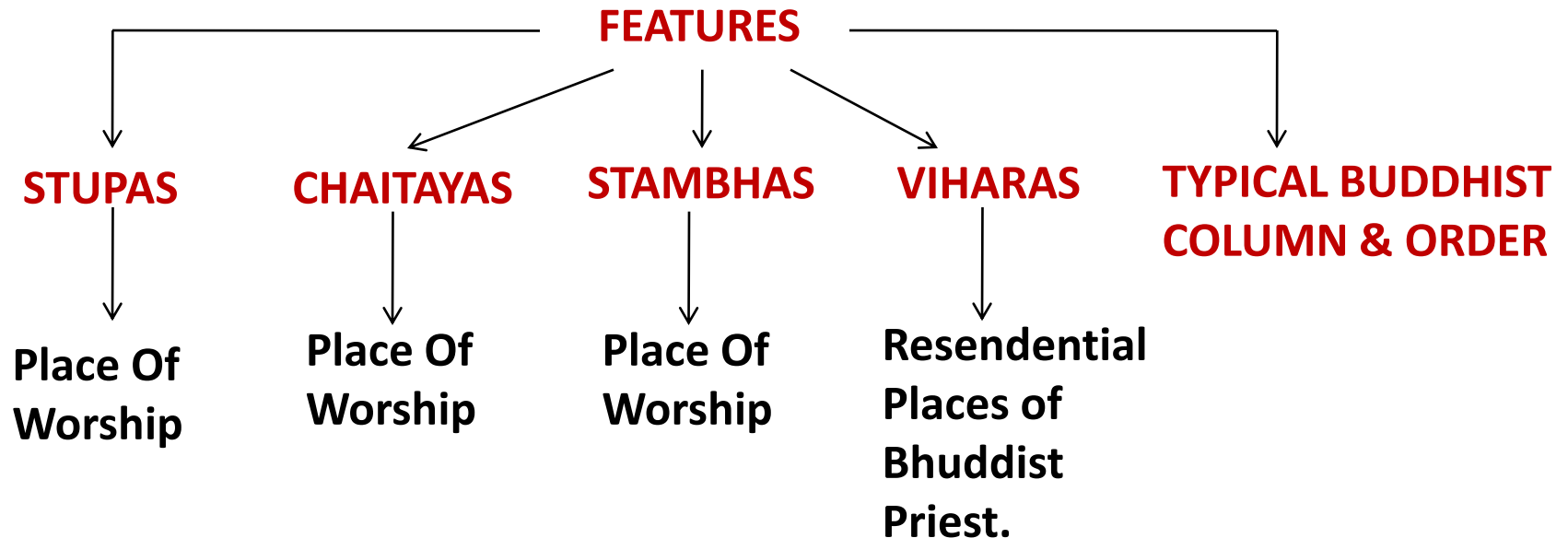
**Objective:** -To understand the building typologies in Buddhist architecture.

# Who was the founder of Buddhism?

**SIDDHARTHA GAUTAMA**

The word *Buddha* means "awakened one" or "the enlightened one".

# DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF BUDDHIST ARCHITECTURE



# BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY

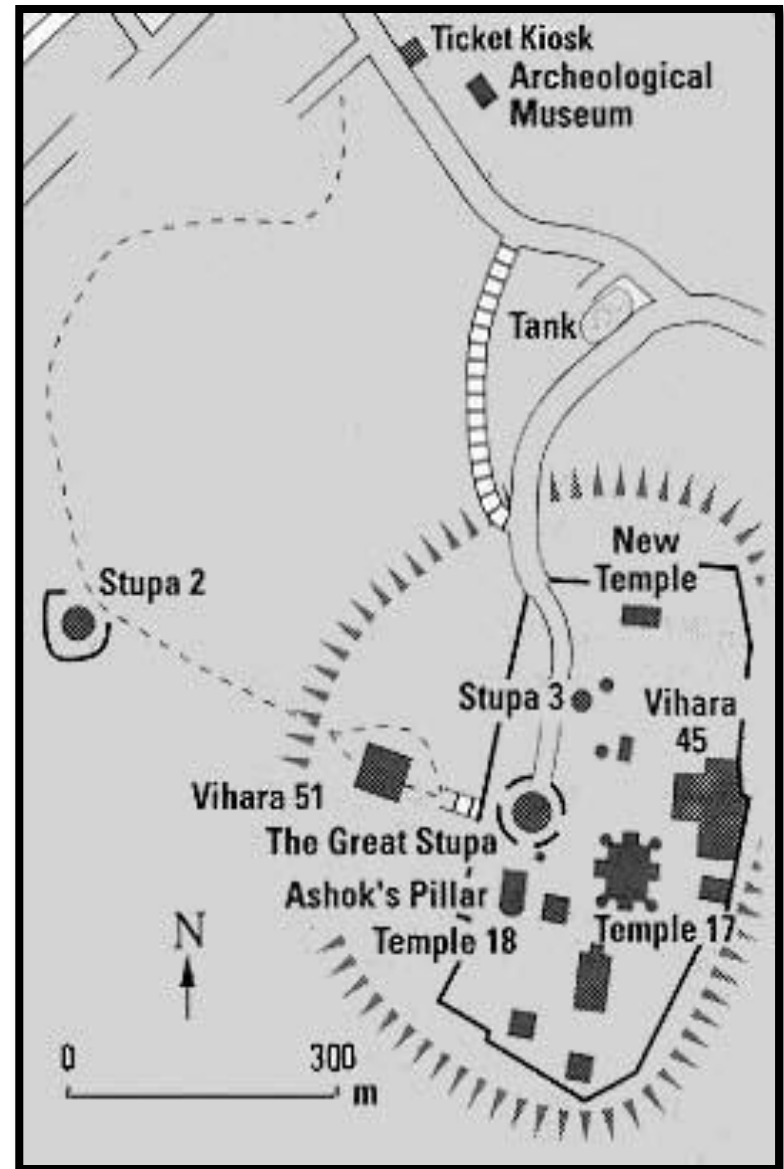
The basic elements of Buddhist philosophies which were produced in the form of architectural features :-

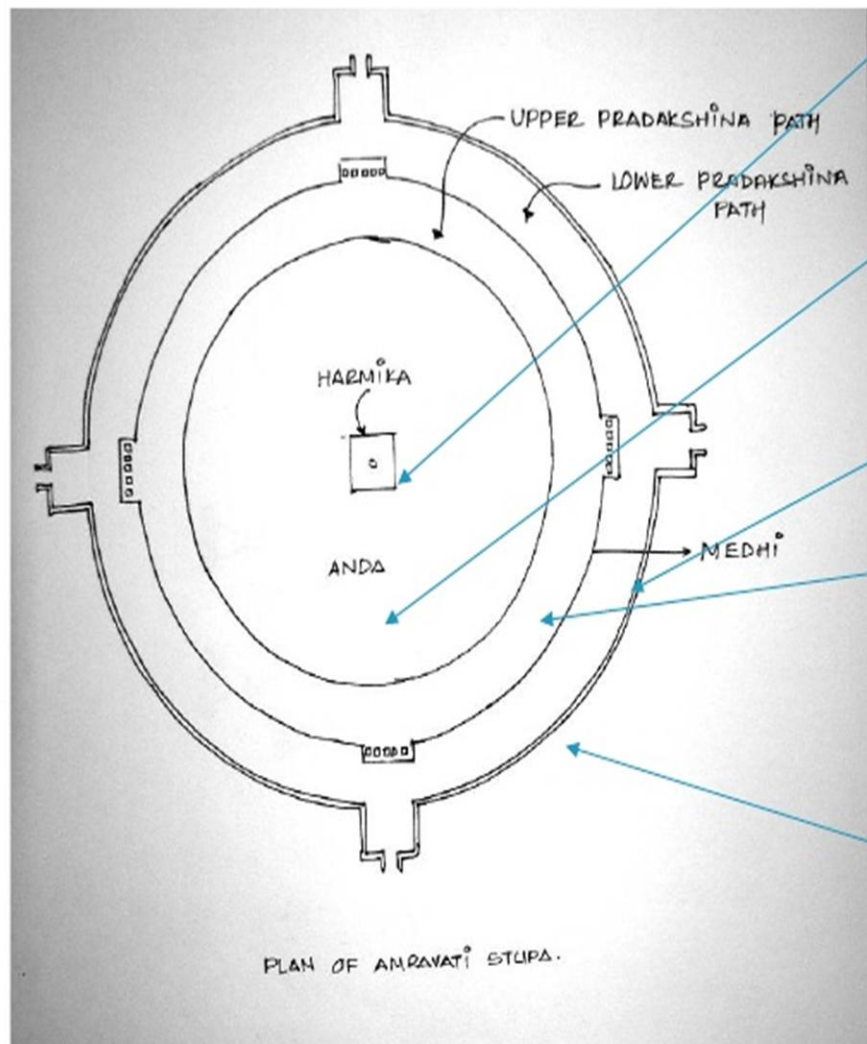
- ❑ The **square** base represents **earth**.
- ❑ The hemispherical dome / Vase represents water.
- ❑ The **conical spire** represents **fire**.
- ❑ The **upper lotus parasol** and the crescent **moon** represents **air**.
- ❑ **The sun** and dissolving point represents the **element of space**.

# STUPA

A stupa is a mound-like structure containing buddhist relics, typically the remains of Buddha, used by Buddhists as a place of worship.

These stupas are the circular tumuli built of earth, covered with stone or brick, the plan, elevation, section and the total form of which were all derived from circle.





**HARMIKA**

**ANDA**

**MEDHI**

**UPPER  
PRADAKSHINA  
PATH**

**LOWER  
PRADAKSHIN  
APATH**

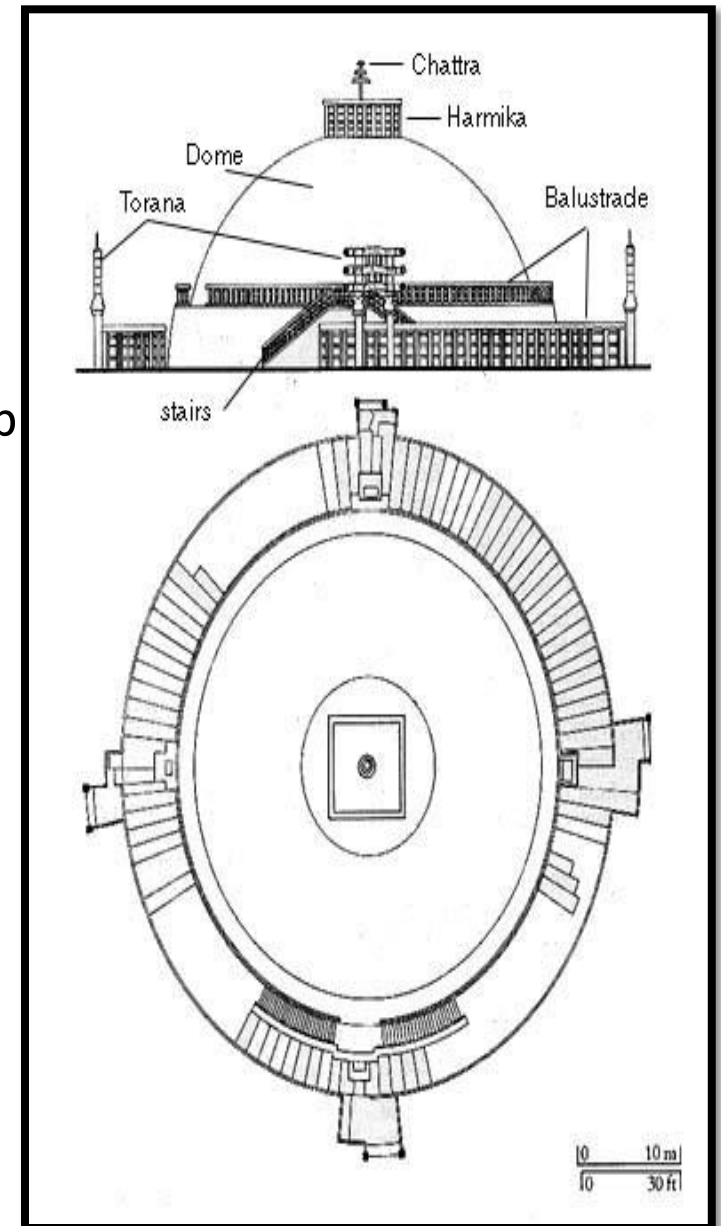
# THE GREAT STUPA, SANCHI

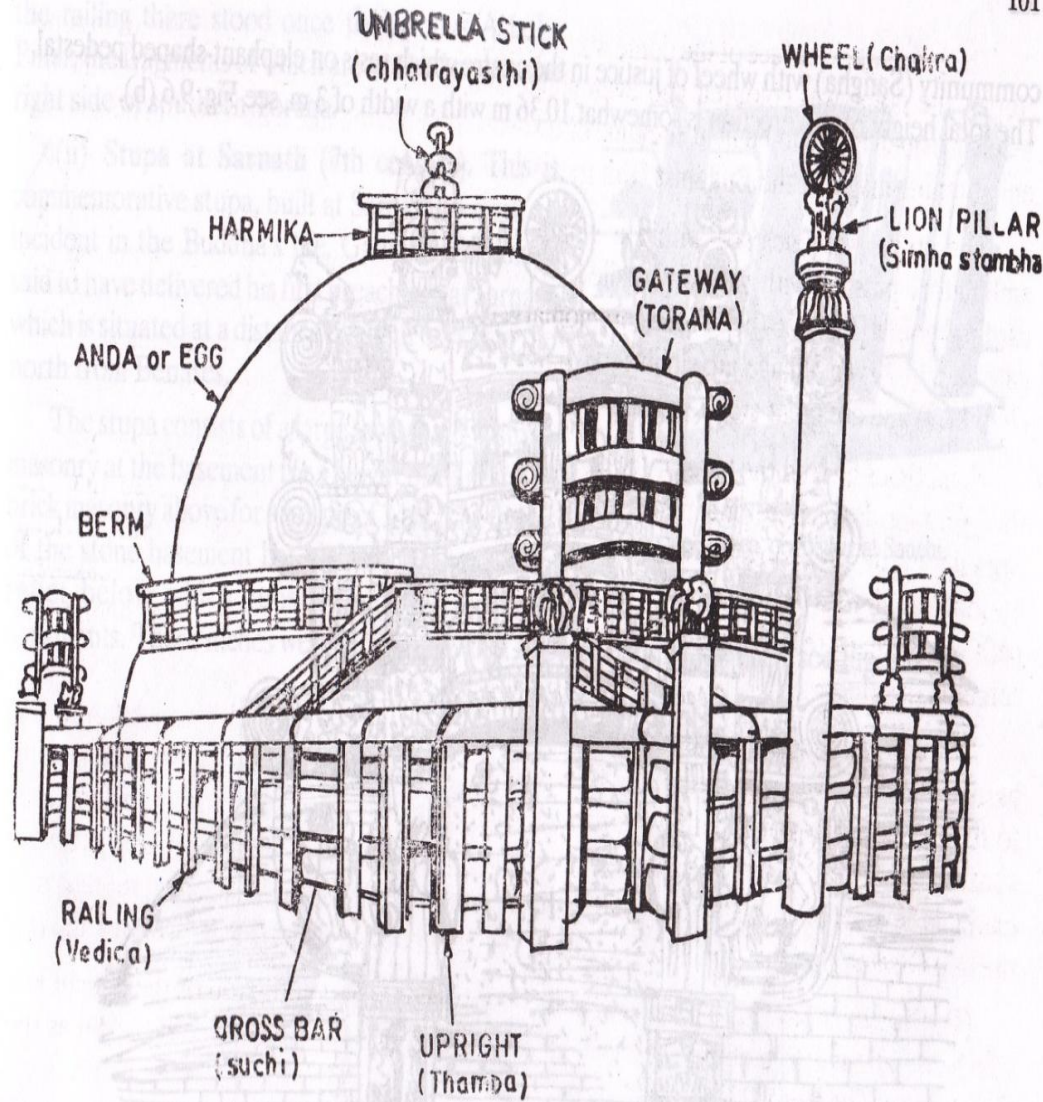
- LOCATION – Sanchi (Bhopal, M.P)
- Its nucleus was a simple hemispherical brick structure built over the relics of the Buddha.
- It was crowned by the *chatra*, a parasol-like structure symbolizing high rank, which was intended to honour and shelter the relics.
- It has four profusely carved ornamental gateways and a balustrade encircling the whole structure.



## THE GREAT STUPA, SANCHI

- **DOME**- is a solid brick-work **32.32m** in diameter and 12.8m high.
- The dome has a slight 'crushed' profile at top and was surmounted by **HARMIKA** with a central **triple UMBRELLA**.
- The facing of the dome consists of dry masonry composed of hammer dressed stones laid in even courses.
- **The terrace 4.87m high** from ground was added thus creating a separate and **upper AMBULATORY passage 1.8m** wide access to which was provided by a double staircase with high **BALUSTRADE**, on the south side.

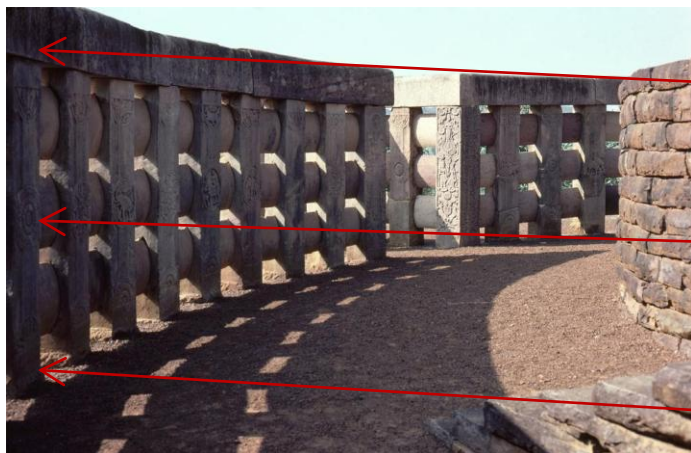




• There are **four gateways** known as **'TORANAS'** at the cardinal points to the compass and are slightly staggered from the railing enclosing stupa.

• The ambulatory or pradakshina path is fenced by railing 3.35m high all around the stupa.

• Outside the railing there once stood the famous ashoka pillar, the fragments of which are noticed now to the right of southern torana.



Ushnisha

Urdhava patas

45cm dia

60-90 cm/c

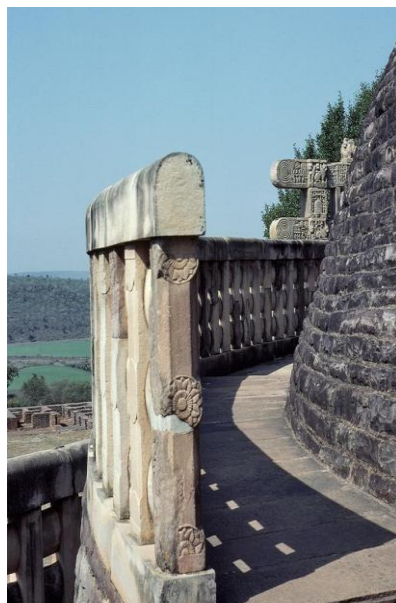
Suchi 60 cm dia



Harmika or triple umbrella



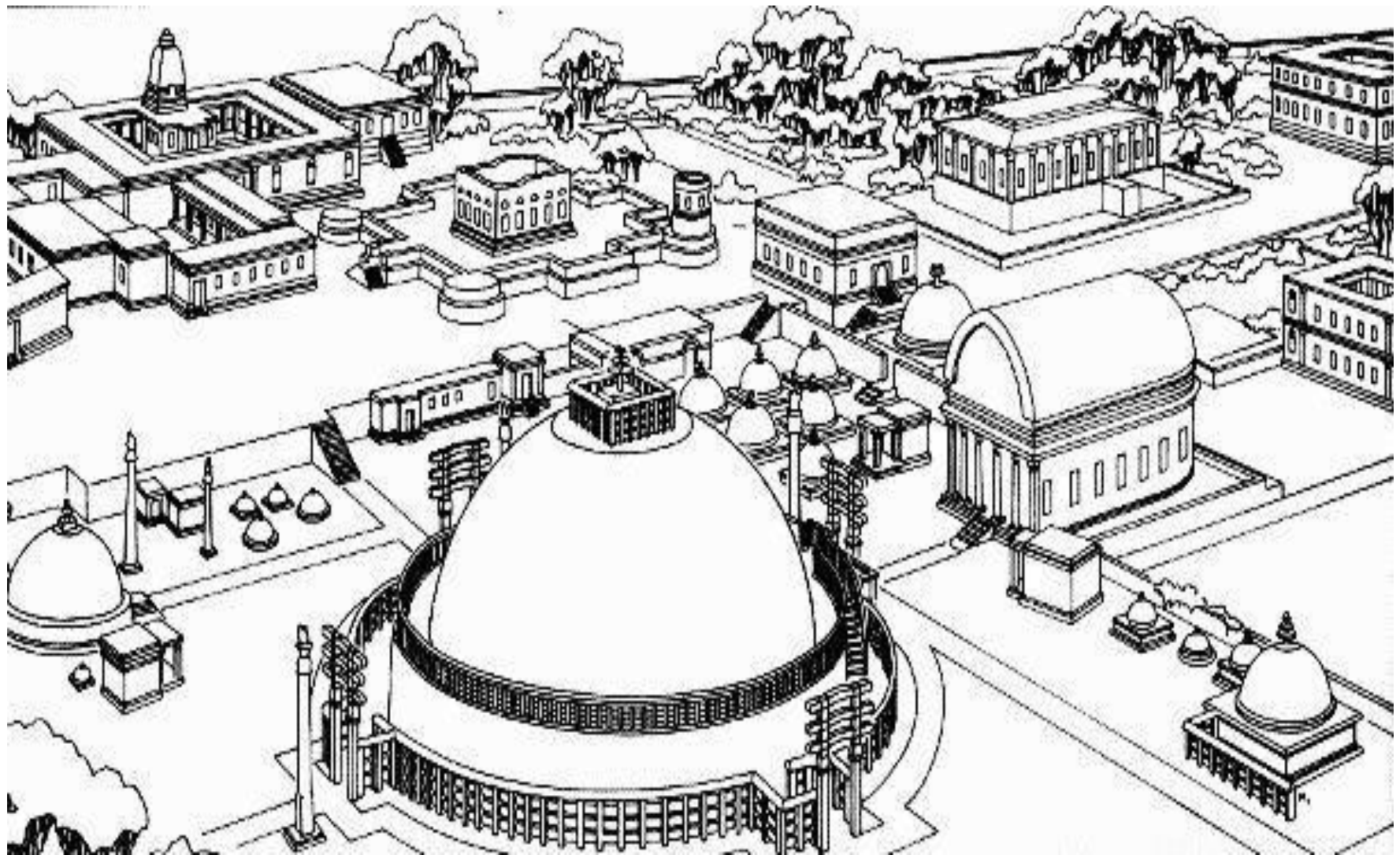
Upper Ambulatory  
1.8m wide 3.35m high



Stone vedica

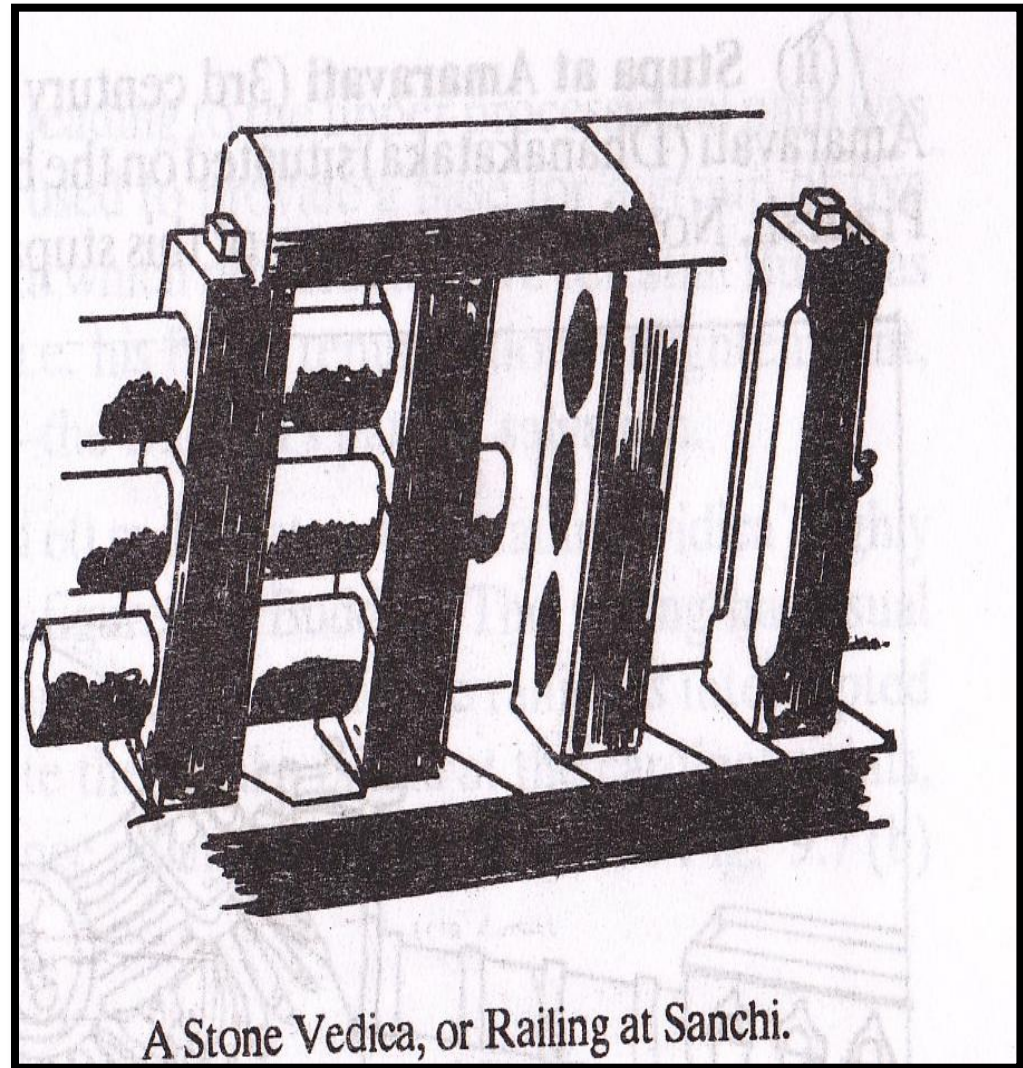


Steps leading to upper ambulatory



## RAILING OR VEDICA

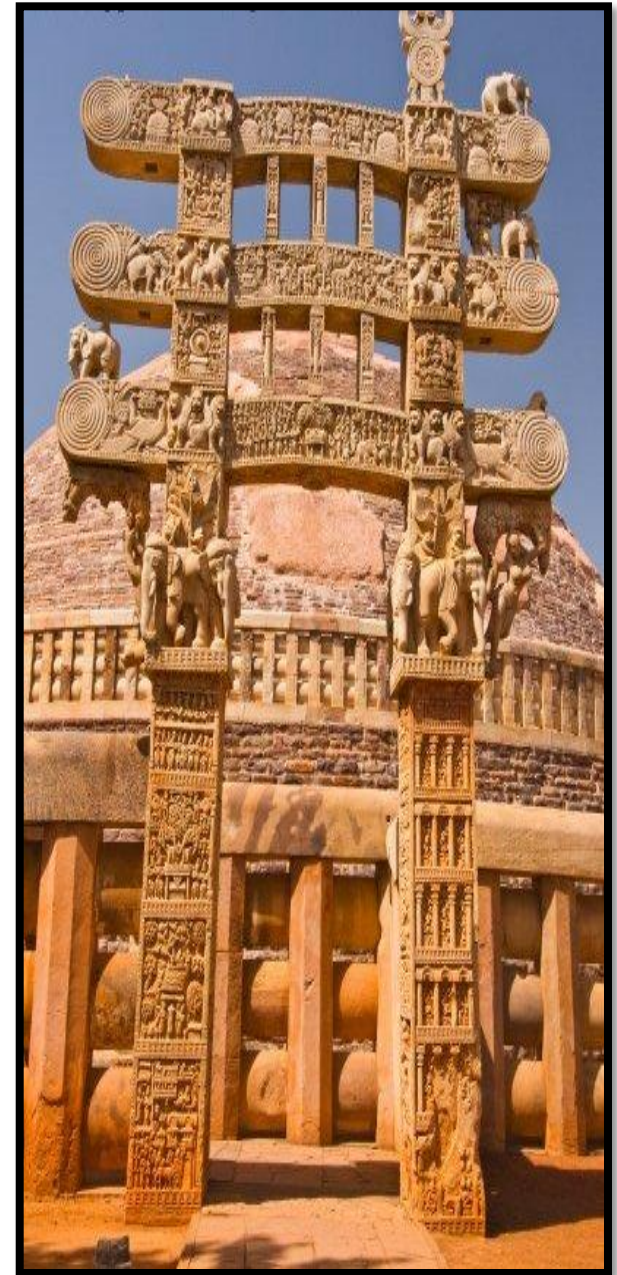
- The vedica or railing consists of **upright octagonal plan** 45cm in diameter spaced at 60 to 90cm from each other and **connected by three lens shaped horizontals** called 'suchi' or needles 60cm deep being threaded through the holes of the upright.
- The **top horizontal bar** is provided **with coping** to drain out rain water.



A Stone Vedica, or Railing at Sanchi.

# TORANA

- Toranas, the entrance to the ambulatory were accepted as the traditional type of ceremonial potals and excel the array of architectural embellishment.
- Torana consists of two square uprite columns** with capital of lion or elephant heads denoting strength.
- These columns support three separate horizontal panels** between each of which is a row of ornamental balusters.
- These panels are supported by atlantean figures, a group of dwarfs, lions and elephant.
- The **total height** of this erection is somewhat **10.36m** with a **width of 3m**.



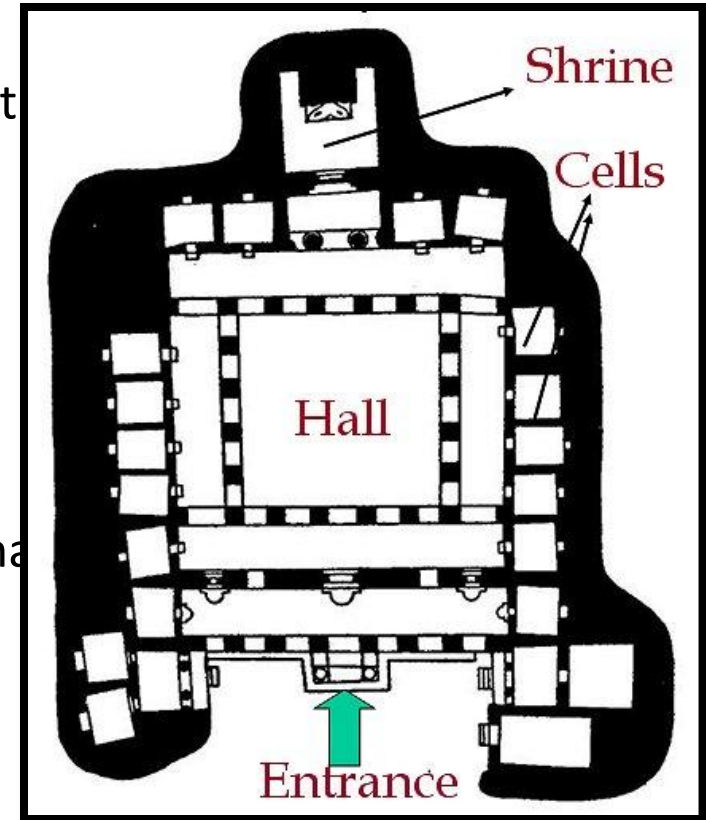
# VIHARAS OR MONASTERIES

- These are the residential places of the buddhist priests.

They consist of :

- **MAIN-HALL** entered by a door-way.
- **ASSEMBLY HALL**
- **DINING CHAMBERS**
- **CELLS** are provided for meditation.
- The shrines contains beautiful figures of Buddha and the walls of the antechamber depict the stories based on Buddha's life.
- Some great structural viharas were about 60m high covered with glazed tiles.
- **Pillars** were richly chiseled in the form of dragons.
- **Beams** were painted in red and rafter with all colors of rainbow.

- **Some of the important Buddhist viharas are those at Ajanta, Ellora, Karle, Kanheri, Bagh and Badami.**



Plan of rock cut vihara



The interior walls were having inscription about buddha's life but their were no frescoes and paintings

### Vihara at Kanheri

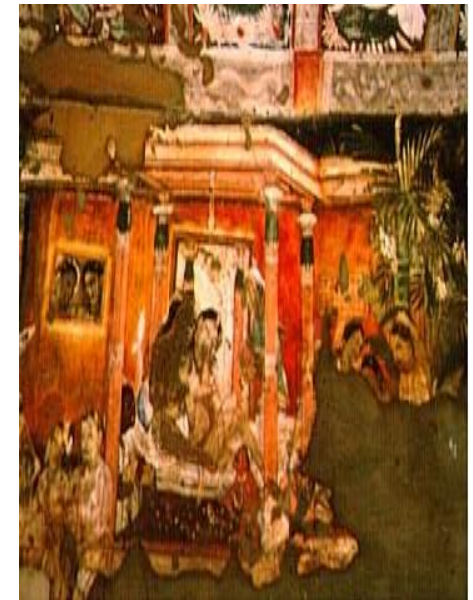


These viharas consist of the simple cells with no decoration. It undoubtedly represent the initial stage in construction



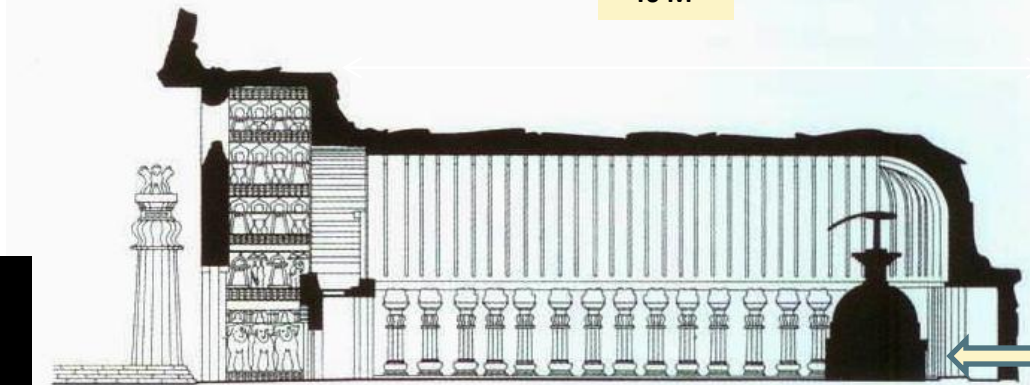
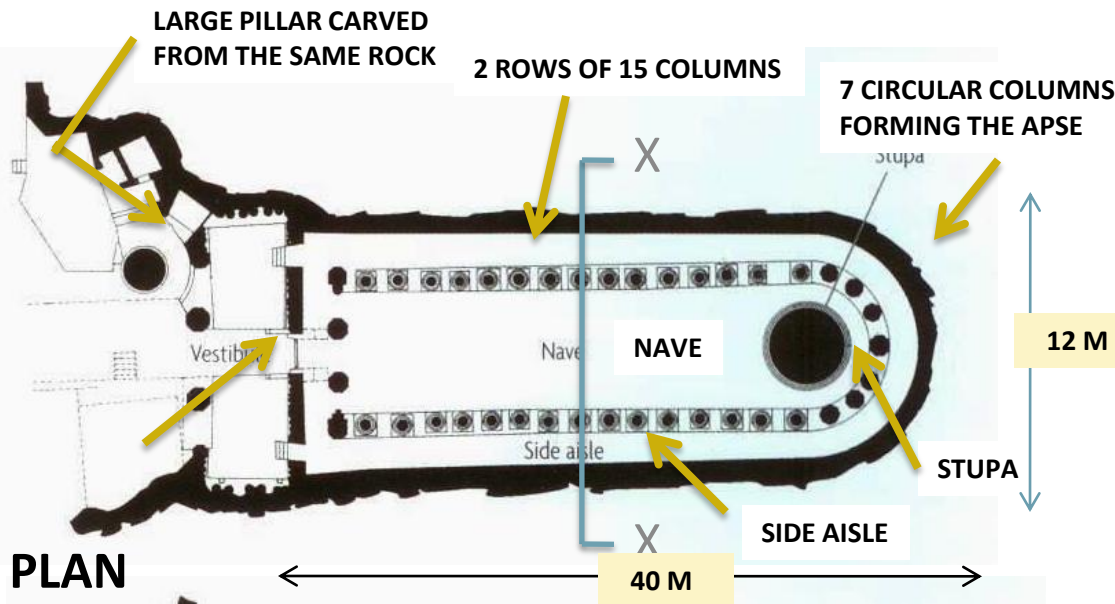
These were the residential places of buddhist priest , there are 25 rock cut viharas at ajanta .

With the progress in the design Viharas of ajanta were the outcome. The walls were having figures of celestial beings ,dancers & deities



# CHAITYAS

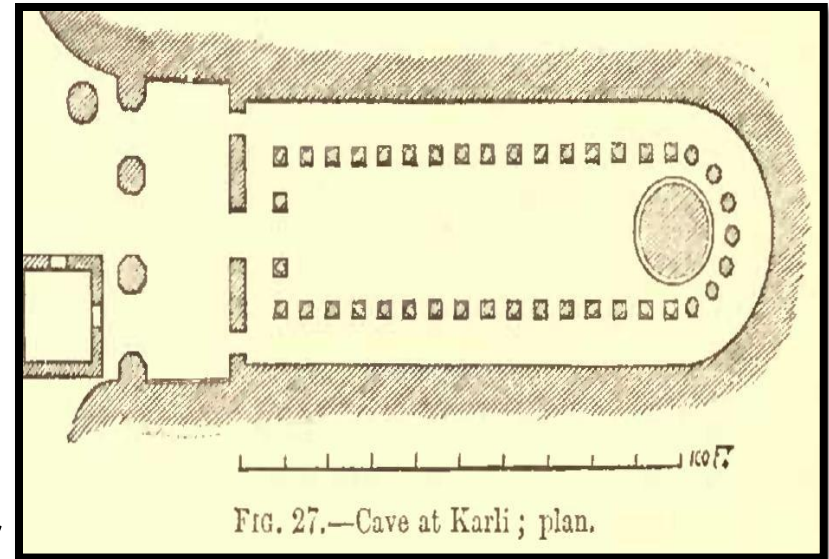
•Chaityas or 'sacred spots' are the temples as well as assembly halls created out of the particular demands of buddhist religion. These became necessary to accommodate those who congregated to pay their homage.



- These have a small rectangular door-way which opens to a vaulted hall, with apsidal end and divided longitudinally by two colonnades forming a broad nave in the centre and two side aisles.
- At end is a stupa also carved in natural rock with enough space around it for circumambulation
- The roof is usually semi-circular. aisles.

## CHAITYA AT KARLI

- The chaitya hall is 38.5m long and 13m wide with a vaulted roof rising to a height of 13.7m.
- The entrance of the chaitya is very grand and consists of three doorways set.
- ROOF -The roof is supplemented by a series of wooden ribs which are closely spaced.

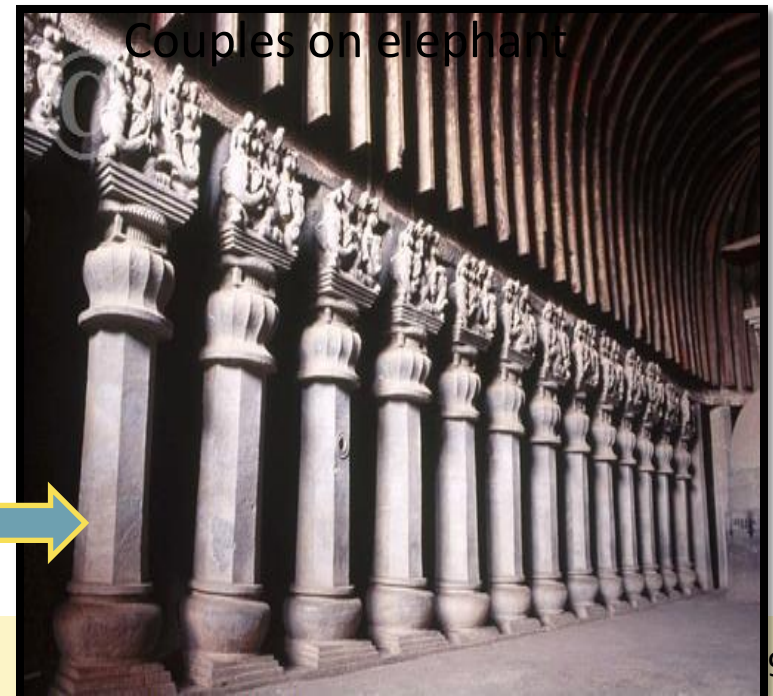


- INTERIOR -The hall is divided by two rows of columns forming a broad nave in the centre.

Facade of chaitya hall at karli

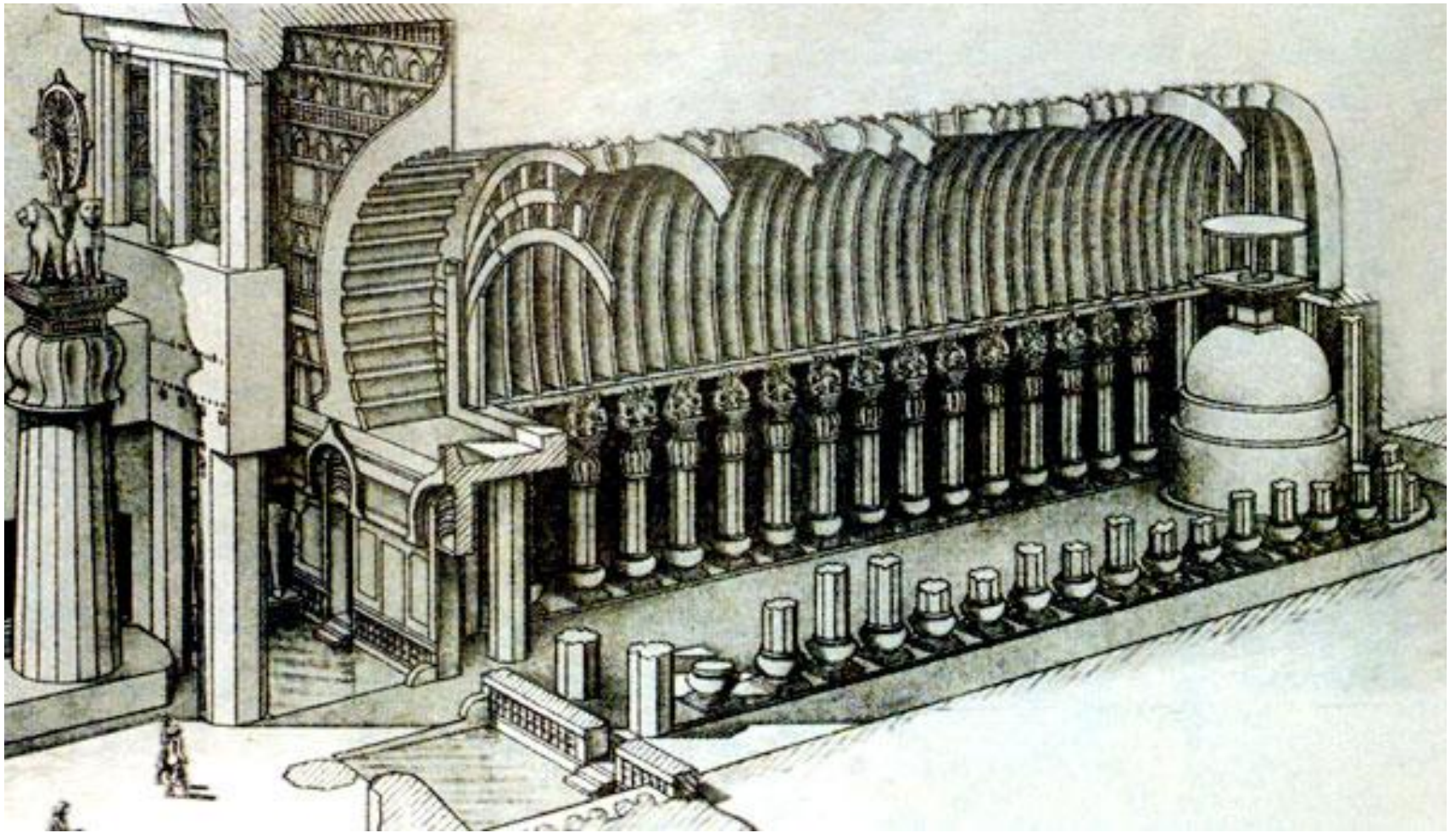


- COLUMN- 1.22m in diameter and 7.32m high, with bell shapes capital which supports a pair of kneeling elephants carrying male and female riders and those of horses and tigers in the rear.
- The shaft is octagonal in shape and has a vase-shapes base.
- At the end is a stupa, caved in natural rock, with railing and inverted stepped pyramid or tee at the top.
- A beautiful 'lat' surmounting with four addorsed lions is erected at the entrance of the chaitya.



Richly carved  
pillars





Section in perspective of rock-cut chaitya hall at karli

# AJANTA CAVES

- **LOCATION-** Aurangabad district of Maharashtra state of India.
- These caves are excavated in horse-shoe shaped bend of rock surface nearly 76 m in height overlooking a narrow stream known as Waghora.
- In all, total 30 excavations were hewn out of rock which also include an unfinished one. Out of these, five (cave no. 9, 10, 19, 26, and 29) are chaityagrihas and the rest are viharas.
- The world famous paintings at Ajanta also fall into two broad phases. The earliest is noticed in the form of fragmentary specimens in cave nos. 9 & 10, which are datable to second century B.C.



- The Ellora Caves not only bear witness to three great religions (Buddhism, Brahminism and Jainism) but they also illustrate the spirit of tolerance, characteristic of ancient India, which permitted these three religions to establish their sanctuaries and their communities in a single place, which thus served to reinforce its universal value.
- The caves, with their uninterrupted sequence of from 600 to 1,000 monuments, bring to life again the civilization of ancient India.



## References:

[http://asi.nic.in/asi\\_monu\\_whs\\_ajanta.asp](http://asi.nic.in/asi_monu_whs_ajanta.asp)

[https://www.google.co.in/?gfe\\_rd=cr&ei=7JifVdG\\_M-HI8AeyqrYI&gws\\_rd=ssl#q=buddhist+architecture](https://www.google.co.in/?gfe_rd=cr&ei=7JifVdG_M-HI8AeyqrYI&gws_rd=ssl#q=buddhist+architecture)

1. Write note on followings with examples and figures-

1. CHAITYA HALL

- Chaitya Caves At Bhaja
- Chaitya Caves At Kondane
- Chaitya At Karli

2. VIHARAS

3. STUPAS

- Stupa at Sarnath
- Stupa at Bahurat
- Stupa at Budh-gaya
- Stupa at Budh-gaya

4. STAMBHAS