

4.5. Pottery

The pottery associated with the Mauryan period consists of many types of wares. But the most highly developed technique is seen in a special type of pottery known as **Northern Black polished ware (NBPW)**, which was the hallmark of the preceding and early Mauryan Periods. The NBPW is made of finely levigated alluvial clay. It can be distinguished from other polished or graphite coated red wares by its peculiar luster and brilliance. It was largely used for dishes and small bowls.

5. Post – Mauryan Art

From the second century BCE onwards, various rulers established their control over the vast Mauryan Empire: the Shungas, Kanvas, and Guptas in the north and parts of central; the Satavahanas, Ikshavakus, Abhiras, Vakataks in southern and western India. Incidentally it also marked the beginning of main Brahmanical sects such as the Vaishnavas and the Shaivas. However the most important part of that period was arrival of foreign tribal groups like the Indo Greeks. They mingled themselves with the various changes - socio cultural, political and economic level, which heralded almost a new kind of architecture typically termed as the “Post Mauryan Architecture”.

The construction of Caves, Stupas and sculpture continued from where it was in the Mauryan Period. Notable was the advancement in Sculpture making which reached its climax during this period. Some of the finest sculptures are found at Vidisha, Barhat (M.P.), Bodha Gaya (Bihar) Jaggayapeta (A.P.), Mathura (U.P.) Khandgiri-Udaigiri (Odisha), Bhaja near Pune, Pavani near Nagpur (Maharashtra).

5.1. Caves Tradition

In western India, many Buddhist caves dating back to the second century BCE onwards have been excavated. Mainly three architectural types were executed – (1) Apsidal Vault – Roof **Chaitya** halls (found at Ajanta, Pithalkhora, Bhaja); (2) Apsidal Vault – Roof pillarless hall (found at Thana – Nadsur); and (3) Flat- Roofed quadrangular hall with a circular chamber at back (found at Kondivite). In all the chaitya caves a stupa at the back is common.



Chaitya hall, Karla

The second important development in the caves was excavation of **Viharas**. The plan of *viharas* consists of a veranda, a hall and cells around the walls of the halls. Some of the important *vihara* caves are Ajanta Cave no. 12, Bedsa cave no. 11, Nashik cave no. 3, 10, 17.

Purpose of cave structures:

