

CLOTHING

- The garments worn in Vedic times onwards did not fundamentally differ from those worn by Hindus in later times.
- A single length cloth draped around the body, over the shoulders and fastened with a pin or a belt. This was a comfortable dress to be worn in a hot and humid climate which prevailed in India in comparison to the weather from where these people migrated.
- Lower garment was called *paridhana* or *vasana*. It was usually such a cloth fastened around the waist with a belt or a string which is called *mekhala* or *rasana*.
- Upper garment was called *Uttaiya* and worn like a shawl over the shoulders. This upper garment was usually discarded at home or in hot weather especially by the people belonging to lower strata.
- Third garment called *pravara* was worn in cold season like cloak or a mantle.



- This was general garb of both sexes and varied only in size and in the manner of wearing.
- Of poor people, sometimes the lower garment was a mere loincloth, but of rich was up to feet.
- In many sculptures, the lower cloth is pleated in front and held with a long girdle. Sometimes the girdle appears to the end of cloth itself.
- This might have been the precursor of the modern *sari*.
- Sometimes the end of the cloth was drawn between the legs and fastened at the back in the manner of *dhoti*.
- Stitching was not unknown as is evident from the depiction of women in jackets and bodices.



CLOTHING OF MAURYA AND SUNGA

Women:-

- Women tied their antariya in different ways.
- Originally opaque, it later became more and more transparent.
- A simple small antariya or strip of cloth, langoti was attached to the kayabandh at the center front, and then passed between the legs and tucked in at the back.
- A longer version of the antariya was the knee-length one, being first wrapped around and secured at the waist, the longer end then pleated and tucked in at the front, and the shorter end finally drawn between the legs, Kachcha style, and tucked in at the waist at the back.
- Another version, the lehnga style, was a length of cloth wrapped around the hips tightly to form a tabular type of skirt. This was not drawn between the legs in the kachcha style.



- The uttariyas of upper-class women were generally of thin material decorated with elaborated borders and quite often worn as a head covering.
- Their kayabandhs were very similar to those of the men. In addition, they sometimes wore a patka, a decorative piece of cloth attached to the kayabandh in front by tucking in one end at the waist.



Men:-

- The main garment was the antariya of white cotton, linen or flowered muslin, sometimes embroidered in gold and precious stones.
- For men, it was an unstitched length of cloth draped around the hips and between the legs in the kachcha style, extending from the waist to the calf or ankles or worn even shorter by peasants and commoners.
- The antariya was secured at the waist by a sash or kayabandh, often tied in a looped knot at the center front of the waist.
- The kayabandh could be simple sash, vethaka; one with drum-headed knot at the ends, muraja; a very elaborate band of embroidery, flat and ribbon-shaped, pattika; or a many-stringed one, kalabuka.
- The third item of clothing called uttariya was another length of material, usually fine cotton, very rarely silk, which was utilized as a long scarf to drape the top half of the body.



- The uttariya was worn in several ways to suit the comforts of the wearer: very elegantly by those at court, who drape it on both shoulders or one shoulder, or diagonally across the chest and casually knotted at the waist, or it could even be worn loosely across the back and supported by the elbows or wrist, and in many other ways according to the whims of the weather.
- But for the labourer and the craftsman, it was more a practical garment to be tied around the head as protection from sun, or tightly around the waist leaving the hands free for work, or again as a towel to mop the face when sweating.
- Its uses were endless for the poor sections of the society and for them it would be made of coarse cotton.



HEADGEAR AND HAIRSTYLE

WOMEN:-

- Women generally covered their heads with the *uttariya*, worn straight or crosswise, often resplendent with beautiful borders.
- The hair, centrally parted, was made into one or two plaits or in a large knot at the back.
- The *uttariya* could be worn simply hanging down at the back or secured to the head with a headband, or with one end arranged in a fan at the top of the head.
- Skullcaps were sometimes worn under or over the *uttariya* to keep it in place, or at times it could be decorated with a fringe or pendants.
- Helmets too are seen as headgear for phrygian women who probably wore long-sleeved tunic with tight fitting trousers and a phrygian cap which was conical and had ear flaps.
- In India, the Amazons wore in addition, the crossed-at-chest belt *vaikaksha*, with metal buckles, shield, and sword.



Men:-

- As regards male headgear, in the early Mauryan period there is no trace of the turban *mauli*, but in the Sunga period we find great emphasis on this form of male head dress.
- These were remarkable headdresses in which the hair itself was often twisted into a braid along with the turban cloth.
- This twisted braid was then arranged to form a protuberance at the front or the side of the head but never at the center top, as only priests could use this style.
- Over the turban a band was sometimes used to hold it in place. In addition, decorative elements like a jewelled brooch or a *jhalari* could be attached to the turban, or one end folded in pleats and tucked in like a fan.

