

Cultural Contribution of Palas

Sculpture

The Gupta tradition of sculptural art attained a new height under the patronage of the Pala rulers and it came to be known as PALA SCHOOL OF SCULPTURAL ART.

It is Eastern style of Medieval sculpture. The art incorporated lot of local characteristic in Bengal under the Palas and it continued right up to the end of the 12th century.

The sculpture of stones and bronze were constructed in large numbers mostly in monastic sites of Nalanda, Bihar Sharif, Rajgir, Bodhgaya, Ghosranwan etc.

Most of the sculpture of this period drew their inspiration from Buddhism. Apart from Buddha, sculpture of God and Goddess of Hindu Dharma like Vishnu, Balram, Uma, Maheswar, Surya and Ganesha were also constructed.

The finest sculpture of this school include a female bust, two standing AVALOKITESHWARA image from Nalanda. Buddha seated in Bhumsparasamudra and images of Avalokiteshwar and images of Avalokiteshwar seated in Archa Paryanka etc.

Buddhist sculpture is characterised by a prominent and elaborately carved block slab and lotus seat frequently supported by lions.

Of the various form of Shakti icon. Maheswar (inspired by Tantricism) was even more popular.

than Ganesha. VAISHNAVA images were also produced during the 11th and 12th century.

Generally, only frontal parts of the body have been shown in the sculpture. The front was highly detailed and decorated. The sculpture inspite of the beauty engraved with them lack genuineness because of over use of decorative. Due to the influence of TANTRICISM, the sculpture of gods were given different touches like that of female, animal etc.

Bronze sculptures are casted in dyes. Bronze casting was an important feature of PALA SCULPTURES. Such sculptures have been found from Nalanda and Kukrihar (near Gaya) - The art of metal casting attained a new high degree of proficiency at the Buddhist centre of Kukrihar as well as at the University of Nalanda where it appears to have formed a part of the curriculum.

Largest of bronze idols was found at Sallangay (Bhagalpur) which is being showcased at Birmingham Museum.

The Bronze figures were usually cast by "the cire perdue" process and were subsequently finished. Some of the names in guild of TARANATH, namely two artists father and son DHIMAN and BITPAL are being the founder of school of cast metal images sculptures and painting. They were the resident of Nalanda and worked under the Palas Kings DHARMPALA and Darpala.