



THE HERITAGE SCULPTURES OF ANCIENT TAMRALIPTA

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Tamralipta is the ancient heritage of India. Now it is called Tamluk (Lat.22⁰20'N, 87⁰55'E). It is now the headquarter of Purba Medinipur District. The heritage sculptures of Sunga epoch, Kusan age, Chole, Gupta etc. are to be found here and there, now. We are trying to bring to light with pictures, now.

Aims and objects:

1. To realize heritage site;
2. To know about that art;
3. To know it's history.
4. To uphold it's importance;
5. To feel it's beauty;
6. To prove that it is a both tangible and intangible heritage;
7. To high light these glorious sculptures.

Introduction

In ancient Pali and Sanskrit literature there are different names of Tamralipta¹ like as Damalipta, Tamralipti, Tamraliptika etc. Mention of it is also found in the works of Pliny, 1st century AD, and the great geographer Ptolemy, 2nd century AD, as Talucate and Tamalites respectively and it was visited by legendary Chinese pilgrims Fahien, Hiuen Tsang, I Tsing.² They have left colorful description of the flourishing of Tamralipta. Sculptures of ancient ages proved, what a glorious heritage Tamralipta was at that time.

History

Hunter wrote, 'Tamluk is only place in Midnapur Distdict concerning which, we have any ancient history.'³ Bayley⁴ and O'Malley⁵ also highlight its heritage. Now we are trying to uphold these sculptures.

The art of terracotta of 2nd century BC uphold these sculptures.





The terracotta is the plaques datable to the Sunga epoch. The remarkable pieces of art with her chaste loveliness wide scene of subject matter, style and outstanding craftsmanship are noteworthy. The art of the Pala period is marked by pleasing to the eye and affective modelling and artistic quality particularly expressed through the medium of stone and metal. The terracotta art of this period is also excellent.



A marvelous history behind it is that, in the year 1842 Michel Madhusudan Dutta, a renowned writer, had come with his father at Tamralipta Emporium and seen various sculptures. Mr. Dutta writes his friend, Mr. Gour Dasbasak about this. After forty years, Mr. Basak came to Tamralipta as a Deputy Magistrate and discovered that sculpture. This is an historical event. This JAKSHI is now world famous sculpture, known as 'Oxford Figurine'. It is now at England, Ashmolean Museum, Ground floor, Room no. 12. But some other sculptures that were seen by Mr. Basak were in a mutilated condition as shown in the pictures.





we have tried to save this historical art and it is our duty to save the heritage. The heritage of Mahisya Eporium, near about 4000 years old, before Mahavarata to 17th century AD. Historian Kalya also egreed with this.⁶ May be these sculptures represent Queen and King.

The terracotta art of Kusan period is represented by typical human forms . Gupta art is characterised by chaste sublimity in human forms. But Buddha teracotta is too much defferent from other forms. BUDDHANG SARANANG GACHHAMI, DHARMANG SARANANG GACHHAMI, SANGHANG SARANANG GACHHAMI... is the anthem of Lord Buddha. Tamralipta was influenced by Buddhism, the son and daughter of Great Asoka had gone to Shinghal from that place. 'Dharma' and 'Rankini' cult are also Buddhist cult. In Tamralipta Buddhist culture was highly rich. The heritage of Buddhist culture was spread out from Tamralipta to Dantan (Paschim Medinipur). Boudhya Vihar in Dantan is discovered resently . The myth of Buddha is engrafted with ancient Tamralipta.



BUDDHA. Sanghamitra, the daughter of King Asoka went to Singhal invited by King Devanampiya Tissa on 244 BC. This picture is now at the Kelaniya Raja Maha Vihar, Kelaniya, Sri Lanka. Even it is noteworthy that some of the scritures of the Japanese priests preserved in the Horyuji Temple of Japan are written in Bengali charecters of 11th century. In the Horiuzi Temple of Japan, the manuscript of Buddhistic work entitled Usnisa Vijay Dharini, has lately been found. It is written in a character, which we consider to be identical with that prevalent in Bengali in the 6th century. So Buddhist cultural heritage were found in a very large sence.





These are 'Rankini' and 'Tilada'. Actually these are Buddhist cult. Some other sculptures are also notable but in mutilated condition. These are Visnu, Chamunda etc.





Conclusion

So many sculptures are strewn here and there and some are still buried under the earth also. We should try to preserve these and find out their history. From this sculpture we would be able to understand our culture, art and history of that particular time. This heritage guides us to find our own roots.

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