



6. To what extent does knowledge of Buddhist literature help in understanding the sculpture at Sanchi?

Ans: Buddhist literature help us upto some extent in understanding the sculpture at Sanchi. It is important that the sculptures at Sanchi depict the teachings of Buddha only. The teachings of Buddha are captured in the literature. It is notable that Buddha used to roam around among people, preaching them on his teachings. However, he did not claim supernatural power. He told us that the world is ever changing. It is full of sorrows. Sorrow flows out of desire. Buddha asked the followers to take the middle path, not too much of penance, nor too much of indulgence. The literature of Buddhism is useful for the interpretation of the sculpture at Sanchi. People are shown in different moods and in sorrow. Different stages of life are depicted and so on. Hence, it can be stated that Buddhist literature throws valuable light on the sculptures of the Sanchi.

7. Discuss the development in sculpture and architecture associated with the rise of Vaishnavism and Shaivism.

Ans: Vaishnavism and Shaivism are the two branches of Hinduism. In case of Vaishnavism, Lord Vishnu was regarded as the chief deity. In case of Shaivism Lord Shiva was regarded as the chief deity. Both traditions were part of the Bhakti movement. Bhakti movement emphasised on the love and devotion of the devotee to the God.

This tradition of Vaishnavism and Shaivism also impacted the tradition of architecture and sculpture. The temples developed the house deities. The initial temples were small and simple. It was a small room called Garbhagriha. Later it expanded, a tall structure was built on the garbhagriha. It was called Shikhara. The walls of the temple were decorated with suitors. Soon temples were built that had huge entrance and big halls for the comfort of visitors. Many of these temples were carved out of rocks. These artificial caves were turned into temples. The tradition of artificial caves is old who had renounced the world. The most important were the Ajivikas, that developed as a sect during the reign of Asoka. Later a good example of the rock-cut temple is the Kailash Nath temple of the 8th Century. It was carved out of a single piece rock. There is a copper plate inscription at the temple of Ellora wherein the sculptor exclaims, "How did I make it!" Sculpture was yet another way of expression. Deities were given many shapes and forms in the sculpture. Shiva has been shown in the form of Linga. Many deities have shown in different forms, sometimes grotesque. There were also combination of man and animal forms.

8. Discuss how and why stupas were built. Describe the structure of stupa with example.

Ans: About 200 years after the time of Buddha King Asoka erected a pillar at Lumbini. This was to announce the visit of Buddha to this place. Stupas were the mounds put on the bodily remains of the body of Lord Buddha or of any object that was used by him. At the place of stupas such objects were buried. These were places of great respect under the tradition of Buddhism, as they had the relics of Buddha. As per the description of Asokavadana which a famous Buddhist book, Emperor Asoka gave Buddha's relic to all major cities. Later on such places stupas were put. The most

important stupas are at Sanchi, Bharhut and Saranath. The structure of a stupa was like a dome and hemisphere. On the top of it, there would be a balcony called harmik. This balcony represented the abode of God. The harmik was covered with an umbrella. There used to be railings around the balcony. The construction of the stupas was made possible by the contribution of many. On the forefront were the monarchs. The Satvahan Kings offered huge amount for the construction of the stupas. Apart from the monarchs, merchants, artisans and common men and women also contributed to the construction of the stupas.

9. Of the religious traditions discussed in this chapter, is there any that is practised in your neighbourhood? What are the religious texts used today, and how are they preserved and transmitted? Are images used in worship? If so, are these similar to or different from those described in this chapter? Describe the buildings used for religious activities today, comparing them with early stupas and temples.

Ans: The chapter discusses the religious traditions of ancient India which included, Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, so on. As I live in the walled city of Delhi have seen people practising all these traditions. The religious textbooks of all religions are preserved and kept with great respect. They have been translated in many languages including many regional languages of the country. Now they are also preserved in the form of CD and other modern devices. Images are also used by worshippers of these religions. The Hindu deities have almost same images as they had in the past. Jains and Buddhists also use images. Temples are used by Hindus, Buddhists and Jains. Mosques are made by Muslims and churches by the Christians. The structure of all these are different but with some similarities too.

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