Chapter -V - B

\( \alpha \) Contribution of Sanghol Sculpture in the History of Indian Art \( \alpha \)

\( \alpha \) in Relation with other Kushana Visual Art Centers \( \alpha \)

From the travel account of Chinese Pilgrim-Huien Tsiang we can acquire primary information about Sanghol site and understand different aspects of its contribution in the history of Indian art. Huien Tsiang recorded the place as "She-to-t'u-lu" – Satadru. It was known as Sanghapura or Sanghalaya from which the present name "Sanghol" is derived. According to Huien Tsiang he had observed a Stupa along with monasteries sheltering the brethren of Buddhist faith. In that way Huien Tsiang recorded the first hand information of the site in the pretext of Buddhist law and faith. It is the very first contributinal notice of Sanghol as an archaeologically potent site. The present site with the archaeological, materials is locally known as Uchapind, meaning a village of mounds.

Hence the site has contributed three important mounds, which are counted as large (Mahastupa) mound (about 2.35 meter in height), small (laghoo) Stupa mound (about 5 meter in height) and the third is known as Hathiara, which was a fortified habitational Kushana capital. Another important mounds at Sanghol are Polomajra, Suhavi and Bathan. Geographically the location of Sanghol site fall on the ancient northern route the Uttarapatha (Map-I), which connected Takshaśila with Mathura via Indraprastha, Rohitaka and Sanghol.

This highway passes through the ancient cities of present Punjab i.e. Sanghol, Sunetra, Phalakapura (Phillour) and Jalandhara. It is the route that played vital role in the artistic and religious development of Sanghol site.

Sanghol was indeed an important and famous city of Pañcanada as the archaeological remains excavated here are exposing (Map-II). The finding of large number of seals, sealings coins, jewellery, stone sculptures, terracottas and many other objects prove that the ancient township had a strong economic, social and cultural base. In that pretext Sanghol was an entrepot that contributed artistic and cultural base of Kushana period. The Sanghol site witnessed ups and down of different ruling dynasties like Śunga, Indo-Bactrian, Parthian, Kushana, Gupta and the Huns. These dynasties contributed a lot in the history of Sanghol site during 200 B.C. to 500 A.D., while the Huns were known for their destructive attitude. Here I am concentrating on the artistic and cultural contribution of Kushana period that had left
some large chunks of archaeological plan remains, stone Vedika art, citadel, the
township and its strong fortifications. The main archaeological contribution of
Sanghol site include two major Stupas along with small Stupas, 117 sculptural
examples, Suchi and Uṣṇisha parts of Vedika artistically delineated out of Mathura
red sandstone quarried at Sikri. Further seated image of Buddha in Abhaya mudra,
one Buddha head in buff sandstone, one Buddha head form in stucco and another on
is of clay, which is still decorated with paint marks. All of them belong to Kushana
era. Among terracotta images a plaque showing a couple, four Buddhist (Bodhisatva)
heads along with small size statuette.

Among Sanghol Stupas, there were two Stupas of greater size and importance.
The larger one is marked as Dharmacakra Stupa and known as Mahastupa (Stupa
No-I. Plate -2,3), and another one is away from the habitational area, near to present
highway, is known as Stupa No-II (Plate- 4,4A), alongwith the architectural remains
of a monastery (Sangarama). Sanghol art is of Mathura idiom and represent one of the
important art centre, which influenced the other contemporary Kushana sites of
Pañcanada (Punjab) along the way Uttarapatha. The Stupa art of Sanghol contributed
certain features, which established Sanghol as a distinct school of art under Kushana
Mathura idiom. The artistic expression of Sanghol art is contributed by the number of
sculptures unearthed at Sanghol, time to time since 1933.

Sanghol's artistic Vedika art is of eminent style because of the stone used in it,
which is counted as red sandstone with different expressions and tones of colour. It is
one of the important elements that placed its contribution as an extension of Kushana
Mathura idiom in the history of Indian art. During the Kushana period Sanghol
metropolis played a vital role to establish their interest in Uttarapatha particularly in
Pañcanada. The Kushana Mathura center was serving as a great studio of aesthetically
rich plastic art of Buddhist concept.

The expression and study of Sanghol imagery from the Vedika part of
Mahastupa brings to light that the stone used by the carver is the spotted red
sandstone. It contributes and confirms that Sanghol archaeological site of Buddhist
faith and ideology is an offshoot of Kushana Mathura style in the panorama of Indian
art. A minute and careful study of Sanghol Vedika stambha sculpture exposes that
efforts were made to create more beautiful sculptural art in the time period of
Kushana empire in northern India (Āryāvarta). All the Vedika images are made in
buff red sandstone but traces of spots indicate that the carvers were busy in
delineating the imagery and could not afford time for selecting stone of their choice. It contributes that art of Sanghol site impart uniformity of material and subject with Kushana Mathura site mounds. Even then Sanghol imagery has set a design concept of its own, a particular time span and expression of originality in the history of Indian Sculpture. Hence it is of course a Kushana Indian style in the Kanishka (Kaniśka) period that established Sanghol site as a major metropolis of Buddhist art in the IInd century A.D.

Sanghol Buddhist art and its concept are developed out of the previous art traditions that had gained base in north on the Uttarapatha route (Map-I). In north before the progression of Buddhist imagery at Sanghol, it was the Yaksha concept and form worshipped in the Trigarta region (Plate -57,62). Sanghol art has contributed the same concept and imagery in superb look and expression that was never noticed in stone in Indian art history before the excavation of Sanghol site.

Here the specimen of Mauryan court art like pillars with Dharmachakra and Simha (Lion) capital became the part of art and society that dignified the Buddhist art and thought and personified its nature. It is the conceptual imagery that contributed folk art style into a Buddhist thought to glorify the religious philosophy.

The Yakshi images of Mahastupa Vedika stambha now housed in Sanghol Archaeological Museum, Sanghol further established its artistic development over the imagery already delineated at Mathura during Kushana period. Sanghol is an important site of Yaksha and Yakshini concept and form and this site can be mentioned as a mark of religious fervour. Yakshini concept of Sanghol is one step ahead in richness of form compare to its contemporary Kushana centres in Indian art. Though the images have close affinity with Mathura School even then these images interpret many conceptual thoughts above the prevailing surface. It has been the outcome of Sanghol Vedika art and it has attained a unique place in the panorama of Indian art.

It clearly indicate that sculptural art of Sanghol is one of the off shoot of Kushana Mathura art that incorporated the stage for Gandharan Greco-Roman and Mathura idiom at the same place. In the Greco-Roman epoch, Sanghol cannot be termed as a school of Gandharan art in India. It is because of the rendering of material and style of art formation under the patronage of Kushana rulers.

As soon as Kushana rulers extended their empire towards Mathura through Sanghol, they went through the conceptual reality of Indian religious faith. They
accepted the same and patronized the Buddhist thought as a fervent followers of Buddhism. In the above said concept the religious faith is changed into visual thrust and transformed Sanghol into a highly potent artistic school during the Kushana period. Though they prepared imagery at Mathura school of art, where stone as a material was easily available and represented the same concepts at Sanghol to contribute their presence and faith, where stone as a material was not available for the said purpose.

Kushanas marched from Gandhara (Takshaśila) region toward Pañcanada and later toward Mathura in search of the green pasture. Throughout their journey they experienced the need for the sculptural art as a prime expression for Buddhist philosophy, that is the concept behind their established thought of sculptural art. Hence Kushana rulers contributed a concept of unique creative expression in the pretext of Buddhist imagery. The expression has the ideology of visual reality along with the tradition of Indian folk art. The sensuality of Sanghol art under the Mathura idiom, expresses the transformation of material world into the spiritual ideal up to the scale of classical culmination of Kushana period in India.

The carvers of Sanghol Vedika images were familiar with the concept of Indian thought that not to show the religious imagery from behind. The said concept shown in the imagery is here in relief that seems to be one of the most characteristic elements of Sanghol art. They preferred to chisel forms in high relief compare to their predecessors. Their predecessors did not know to carve foreshortened limbs; therefore they turned the palms and feet to the side.

But carvers of Sanghol sculptures are neither primitive nor rigid to explore the figures like them. They added a physical glow and delineated the images in full bloom. Their artistic expression contributed contraposition with sinuous and moving postures along with the flower like hand gestures (mudras) without showing the back of socio-religious images besides Buddhist forms. Sanghol art has not only fully interpreted the life of Buddha and his metaphorical representation but also it put interest in social life around "Him", especially in the fun and frolic aspect of daily life. Obviously the carver admired and sculpted the beautiful figures from social life besides socio-religious forms. Among these subjects, we can see the imagery of Prasādhikā, Yakshi with parrot, Madhupana, Nati, Paribhoga-darshini, Darpana-dharini, Mother and child, Languorous lady, Sringarika and Musician. The archaic concept of art has an advanced outlook towards classical expression by the IInd
century A.D. and onward. It is the contribution of Kushana Buddhist art in north. Sanghol as a great center of religion and art decked with remarkably and beautifully delineated figures of nature spirits. In Sanghol, carvers created really enchanting images of these lesser Godlings in all types of poses with great personal interest and of whom they peopled all parts of life. Such contributions are noticed with aesthetic expression at Sanghol Mahastupa Vedika during Kushana period. The Kushana carver kept no secret of his expression for the sensuous female beauty of the feminine body.

Hence art of Sanghol in India reached a stage that is recognized as pre-classical and exposing all skill and knowledge to the noble cause of endless beauty. Sanghol art has contributed dignity and nobility in art without any excess and over statement of contemporary life.

The form of Buddha is another visual concept contributed by the Kushana Mathura carver for Sanghol metropolis that is not true likeness of lord but an idea of traditional form of Yaksha concept. In that expression image of Buddha become common during Kushana period about the second century A.D. Although a small number of Buddha head forms (largely mutilated) in the Kushana period at Sanghol suggest an early expression of Indian portraiture exposed out of traditional forms.

All these Buddhist sculpture of Kushana period (IIInd and IIIrd century A.D.) breathes in a particular harmony and artistic balance. In the whole stylistic art the commotion, overcrowding and extra movement is not appreciated in any form either religious or social in subject. This type of finest Buddhist art is the example of class, full of lovely creations. In that way there is no extra, no overstatement but it is delineated in nicely carved physical forms in stone. Foreshortening is one of the superb contributions of Sanghol imagery to Indian sculptural art.

The complete parasol of sculptural art of Vedika is aesthetically balanced and the concept of Buddha is dominating the panorama in all its metaphorical expression. The Vedika stambha art along with Usnisha (copingstone) and Suchi (crossbars) parts have decorated the Stupa, which is excellently complementary in physical expression. The outer face is decorated with imagery, metaphorical signs and inner side with lotus flowers (Padma -Nelumbum Speciosum), which represent an important aspect of Indian ornamentation and symbolism. In addition to Indian art and architecture Sanghol Stupa and its parts like stambha and suchi decorated with Lotus medallion. The subject like lotus symbolically is intermingled with all the subjects.
The Vedika art, which covers the Stupa, from Uśnishā (coping stone) to bottom of stambha is divided into two main sections, such as the metaphorical contents and the socio-religious scenes through different images. The distinction is expressed in practical forms. The amount of realism of which the Kushana carver was capable, is best expressed in these forms. The physical grace and exalted beauty make these forms superb examples of artistic glamour. Henceforth Sanghol art has contributed a truth about humankind and society with beauty and gently carved attractive forms, either spiritual or mortal in meaning. In Sanghol like the other parts of India these were the dear lesser-known divinities that the folk loved, with great passion, and with whom they lived. In that case Yakshinis and other mortal nymphs are elemental as personification of nature. The carver of Sanghol Mahastupa Vedika stambha art was not in favour of lifeless images therefore he experienced to carve images with great concept of life and tries to breathe life and movement into his creations. These were the aesthetically rich forms, which the carvers delineated with great interest and affection. During Kushana period the said content has been sculpted remarkably with great artistic skill, ability and perfection to define the feminine beauty. In Sanghol the carvers created some of the most beautiful imagery of lesser Godlings in various types of attractive poses. The Kushana style represents not only mastery of the subject, but also it is expressing all the skill under the stable purpose of creating worldly and heavenly beauty. That's why all the mortal and spiritual conceptual images are idealized. The rendering of the imagery is naturalistic and inscribed in order to create physical beauty and sacred perfection.

These lovely stambha yośitas are sculpted standing on a vama Yakshas on Vedika of Sanghol Mahastupa. The calmly faced yośitas are smiling well-adorned and beautifully decked with veiled drapery. In case of Buddhist concept, art and its presentation, at first is merely a humble manifestation of worship that everyone heartily accepted around the Mahastupa. The veneration of life is shown through these images in Buddhist architecture. These images are biographical characters, which adorned the Sanghol Mahastupa and are adored by the rite of circumambulation of it. Hence In that way Sanghol Vedika art is again presenting the truth about society and its cultural outlook. Kushana art by the IIInd century and IIIrd century A.D. has expressed a unique classical skill and artistic perfection.

There is no longer a secret remains unrevealed about life and its relation to the society of that period through these images. In this chain of expressions Sanghol art
has contributed a relation and connectivity of idea and concept of Buddhist philosophy to the beholder. These images with the truth of life bring awareness and change the expression and behaviour of the spectator or worshipper. All these forms are not only spiritual and sacred, but also virtually modeled as profane and worldly to convey the secret of life. The beholder attained the real experience of life through these forms.

Interesting factor is this; these images are of charming young damsels with the notion to educate the philosophy of life. These images are idealized and having the set concept of formation to define the manifold truth about humankind. That's why these forms neither create any monotony nor leads toward any other world of fancy but contribute the truth of life. Sanghol imagery according to Indian philosophical ideas, all living beings cannot achieve worth of life unless they attain salvation. It is nothing else than the last escape from the circle of transmutation.

Another fact is this; there is no inscription on the Vedika stambha to talk about its patron in particular. It means during Kushana period, royal personage fully devote their faith toward the Buddhist sect to grace the Sanghol Mahastupa as representation of moral law of Karma. That's why the selection of such imagery for Stupa contributed a vital role to delineate their interest in figurative plastic art of life and at the same narrative and religious concepts also. Henceforth the Sanghol art is associated to Kushana Buddhist faith rather than to particular royal male or female donor”. The imagery of Sanghol sum up in Vedika art, exhibit immense and varied expression of the original Indian system and concept of the cosmos.

The images of Sanghol Vedika stambha yośita are true interpretation of the concept of Buddha Charita by all means. It is the interesting contribution made by the carvers of Kushana period in the pretext of Sanghol art with more original and better expression. In certain cases, the subjects of the stambha yośita, are the same compare to Kushana Mathura school. But here at Sanghol some concepts are well defined in original and an individual expression that made the Sanghol Mahastupa art wonderful in Indian art stream. For example Parrot Yakshi, Nati, Prasadhika, Khadghadharini and Darpanndharini are the similar examples of Mathura and Sanghol sites. The concept and thought are same behind these examples but they are treated with individual uniqueness as meant for their placement. That's why the Sanghol Kushana art was delineated in particular style for the Sanghol Stupa site.
Though the rendering and material is very much associated to Kushana Mathura idiom. Where the carver for the first time has attempted to create exceptionally alive human figures in material like stone. In that way Kushana Mathura carver was a unique master of tangible human imagery into durable material for Sanghol Stupa. It shows the quality of material has been brush aside and an expression of great mastery and unique composition with skill and conceptual mannerism has exhibited the aesthetically rich physical beauty.

Soma Dohada or lady taking wine is one of the forms that were delineated for the Sanghol site. It is the subject so far not seen in the imagery of other places even of the Kushana stature. In this pretext Sanghol art contributes a lot in the Indian art to express social and cultural connectivity in relation toward Mathura and Gandhara as well. It was the expression of contemporary life and experience that desired to be sculpted here by the Kushana period's carvers.

Kushana Sanghol art further contributed to convey Jataka tales through single image concept compare to their predecessors, those who used multi figure narrative art concept to define the same. The concept of sole imagery adds analytical explanations to allow the beholder to understand the meaning and to relish the flavors of Jataka tales and the images also. On the whole one must not despair of appreciating these images in stone carried into life by the carvers and making one to understand the concept and message, which was the purpose to transmit. Often society seems to influence the ways in which art is delineated. Society is often reflected in the works of art itself as here at Sanghol with deep reverence. The outer expression of Vedika pillar art is decorated with such imagery to express the mortal world under sacred concepts and rear side of the pillar is carved with the same ornamentation of the lotuses to express the cosmic truth of the Buddhist paradise. Artistically everything that Kushana carver touched in these two centuries, from about 1Ind century A.D. to third century A.D is delineated into an idealized and conceptual beauty. Sanghol Vedika art contributed grace and dignified charming beauty through these examples of feminine attractiveness that is seen either as spiritual or very religious in expression.

The images are carved in high relief and masterly expressed the empty space to avoid the feeling of crowding. The concept of Lotus form is in a fashion to show the religious version of human upliftment. It is the unique contribution of Sanghol art. It is the true baroque expression to explain the spiritual beauty and grace through
metaphorical impressions. The major contribution of Sanghol art to Indian art is the image of Buddha, which is neither seen nor delineated before in Pañcanada. The carver, who sculpted the Buddha image, was however a greater artist with sensitive feeling toward a conceptual truth about the form of Lord Buddha.

Another important fact related to the image of Buddha is that, it is free from the intrusion of Hellenistic impression. The portraiture loving Kushanas patronized to portray Buddha's image very much under the influence of Buddhist concept and philosophy as they marched towards Mathura via Sanghol through Uttarāpatha.

As soon as Kushanas become Buddhist, they seems to have desired for a figure of the Lord Buddha and guided the carvers of Mathura manufactory to delineate the image of Buddha. The perfectly imaginative portrait of the Lord is the invention of that period, which is carried by the Kushana rulers wherever they ruled. Sanghol Buddha image is the outcome of that thought with Indian elements. The stylistic development took place in the Kushana Buddhist art of Mathura idiom as it existed in all other parts of India. The only difference is that in Mathura manufactory there was an admixture of folk and traditionally artistic Yaksha elements. In that expression Sanghol art of Mathura idiom is showing artistic works of serene mastery with great dignity and nobility. Hence Sanghol art contributed a higher scale of idealization and exquisite skill. It proves that the Indian artist was a great master of portraiture. Sanghol art is represented with elegant bodies, which seems to be inscribe contentedly in their space over the Vedika part. In that way the beauty and dignity of form and above all serene expression of such calm conceptual portraiture is not disturbed by any other physical or material concepts. It is the subject which shows finest expressions of Sanghol art similar to the beautiful art carved anywhere in India at that time.

Kushanas initiated a new epoch in Buddhist art with their expressive style and inducted novel motifs by creating a large number of Buddhist imagery of their own expression they inspired the robust impressions of their own background, which are solely different from Greco-Roman art. It was again under the considerable local Indian tradition. Hence an image of Buddha or Bodhisattva type originally based on Indian standard was meant for Indian imagery free from impression of Kushana Gandhara art.

The unique novel expression of Mathura idiom at Sanghol and the Kushana impression related with the imagery upsurged from prevailing style and contributed a
harmonious elements particularly indigenous in style and expression. The Sanghol imagery expresses a particular realism and Kushana artistic style to balance the Buddhist concept, as represented in the Mahayana\(^1\) concept that is dedicated to the thought of spiritual freedom from the worldly affairs. In this pretext very ancient form of Lord Buddha that Sanghol site posses was inscribed under the Mathura idiom in north India (Pañcanada).

Another certainly a striking and important feature that is shown here the image of Buddha (Plate-111) carved with a halo, free from ornamental rim. It is very much visible in the form though the halo is broken above the neck part. It is the contribution of Sanghol art that the halo is circular and whole image is delineated out of the one red sandstone of Mathura origin. Such upward rim (suggested Nagahood) has neither appeared in the Gandharan art nor in those of the subsequent Guptā imagery. Here the concept of the Nāga is reduced merely to an expression. The Indian tradition and concept exhibit their impression at its best in Sanghol art to show sensitive expression of the human body.

Further in the earlier phase Yakshi imagery was shown here with sweet feminine beauty, which has diligently contributed female formation, its best at Sanghol. The art of Sanghol Mahastupa Vedika represented it as an evolution in the female form, which is decked with local metaphorical expressions. The blossoming physical expression of such forms filled with life force is shown with spiritual abundance, fertility concept and mortal life. In that way Sanghol art has contributed a concept of unending life beyond any measurement to change the thought and behavior of beholder. Thus Sanghol art contribute artistic ideals of Kushana period a lot through the art of Mahastupa Vedika.

Sanghol art has further contributed the sculptural beauty in voluminous expression in high relief forms. Next it is shown with reduced impression of mass. It has added serene, graceful indigenous expression of physical beauty with classical outfit at its height. In that way richness of form and tradition reflect the contemporary society at its best. The presence of Gandharan imagery neither influenced the local artistic tradition not it has represented the Gandharan School. Though there were artistic objects and carvers from Gandhara place associated to Kushana Mathura manufactory. The geographical situation of Sanghol added charm and beauty to

\(^1\) "It is a tradition of Buddhist thought which seems to have mature in Northern part of Āryāvarta during and following the first and second Century A.D. i.e. to say during Kushana period." In: Zimmer, Heinrich., (1968), The Art of Indian Asia-Its Mythology and Transformation, (Campbell, Joseph. ed) Hind edi., Vol-I Bollingen series., New York, Princeton University Press., P.8. n.5.
Kushana period art and provides to be filling place to Buddhist concept in north India (Pañcanda).

So for we have not came across any contemporary Buddhist site (metropolis in Punjab-Pañcanda) compare to Sanghol, with such beautiful imagery in durable material with architectural remains. Sanghol stands for a realistic approach toward visual expression of contemporary life, which has been stylistically delineated in Kushana Mathura idiom & lineage.

**Sanghol and Mathura:**

Kushana art and architecture pertained a variety of religions and folks, such as Zoroastrian, Greek and Indian with multicultural heritage, first influenced western reigns of their empire and later on extended toward Mathura. The discovery of artistic remains of Buddhist metropolis represented with monasteries and Stupas at Sanghol rated as one of the most significant artistic archaeological example of the IIInd A.D. It was a metropolis with Buddhist stronghold and place of interaction on the way to Gandhara from Mathura. It is well-recorded sacred metropolis as described by Hiuen Tsiang during his pilgrimage to India. He praised a lot about Sanghol (She-to-t'u-lu) in his travel record as Si-Yu-Ki. Further its archeological finds establish its close political and cultural ties with the famous metropolis of Mathura, which sticks it with Indian culture. These links were at its climax during the Kushana rule in India.

The contribution of Sanghol art toward adjusting Mathura idiom in northern India is related to the establishment of Kushanas impact, which is apparent in case of Buddhist concept and philosophy. Both Sanghol and Mathura sites have yielded the same concepts and Buddhist philosophy as their best international aspect to express the Kushana influence. It is because of the artistic finds of both sites are of same scale and of socio-religious fervor during Kushana rule. The Sanghol archeological finds are deeply associated with Mathura manufactory and delineated out of the similar red sandstone of Sikri.

The geographical situation of Sanghol is well associated to Uttarapatha on which the rulers and traders mark their presence with their socio-cultural and trade links, to make the site as famous metropolis. The situation of Sanghol metropolis has been a gateway to many artistic and cultural expressions. Predominated with Mathura idiom, Sanghol served as a meeting place of different cultural flows and races those who marched toward Mathura via Sanghol. It is the reason and cause that played a vital role in connection between Sanghol and Mathura imagery.
Kushana rulers marched toward Mathura to satisfy their desire for an empire deep inside the India (Āryāvarta). The crave for portrait art to commemorate their victory through royal coinage of their kings further added a wish to create the form of Enlightened one the lord Buddha. The form of Stupa was already before them as a cult image. Particular thought and concept of personality cult appears, after a gap of more than four centuries to delineate Lord's image. It was because of the conversion of Kushana rulers toward Buddhism. In that way when Kushana approached to Mathura metropolis of Indian culture. They adopted the social merits and artistic culture of Mathura's metropolis of India.

As a result Mathura art abruptly changed its artistic expression from Yaksha concept to the royal and religious portraiture art. The Mathura centre is known for its use of red sandstone as material, expressing Indian folk features in anatomical expression. Impact of Mathura's artistic tradition and Kushana's own crave for a new expressive form, resulted in the creation of Lord's Image.

The Yaksha and Yakshi imagery of earlier period blended with the physical expression and depiction of mortal life is the result of Kushana's love for the newer forms. Under the impact and love for Lords form, a true Indian image of Buddha was carved at Mathura manufactory for Sanghol metropolis. In that way Mathura imagery, which was delineated and carved by the local sculptors, express the true Indian concept of religions and mortal they established their supremacy.

Mortal and religions images were exported from Mathura to central Asia via Sanghol through Uttarapatha. During Kanishka's period new Stupa were erected with great zeal and the old Asokan Stupas were as well. In the said sequence during Kushana period Sanghol Stupa was with red sandstone sculptural art, in the architectural structure. Free standing Buddha imagery and architrave parts were installed with deep reverence at Sanghol. It is the reason that Sanghol metropolis is recognized as major centre of Mathura idiom art in the north. It's clear that Kushana Mathura art is deep rootedly associated with Sanghol.

The important Mathura features travelled toward Pañcananda and can be noticed in Sanghol. Those features were prevalent at Sanghol keeping one shoulder bare, while depicting the image with drapery (Uttariya). Its coiffure is of Indian style different types of postures as seen at Mathura School. Here we see use of single image to express the Jataka tales, as well as use of the lion throne as pedestal of the Buddha image. Yaksha image to expose the Bodhisattva concept and use Yakshi images to
materialise the concept of Mayadevi, Śri Laksīmi, and to show the mortal world around the Stupa. Bare feet images are depicted here to enhance the sanctity of Stupa. These features played novel role to prove the socio-religious connection between Sanghol and Mathura beside political supremacy of Kushana.

Metaphorical motifs of Mathura's Buddhist imagery are incorporated in the Uṣṇīṣha (copingstone) part at Sanghol Vedika. It shows that during Kushana period Mathura manufactory delineated all sort of images particularly fit to Mahastupa Vedika of Sanghol. These carved images are neither reproduction of the Mathura imagery nor interpret any dissimilar idea. But all these images are the artistic presentation of Mathura idiom during Kushana period, which enhance the beauty of spiritual emblem- the Stupa.

The art of Sanghol and Mathura is equally related with the same concept and philosophy of their contemporary Sarvastivadin cult. At the same time it interpreted the mortal world with full zeal, as written by Aśva Ghośa in Buddha Charita. Each image is associated with the Buddhist narration and symbolic representation of Lord's presence. In that way, from the iconographic point of view both centers are full of artistic expression and one must admit that these are neither cleric nor layman impression of art.

It is the contribution of Kushana Empire to bring out time spiritual and mortal concepts out of the same crucible in which the formula of this unique compromise was celebrated. Both centers are decked with the female beauty that clad in the same fashion of higher aesthetic. In that way there is great connection between Sanghol and Mathura art first because of the conceptual reality secondly because of the material in use. Thus the relation of Sanghol and Mathura centers matured on the socio-religions ground under the patron of Kushana rulers.

The likeness of form between the Sanghol and Mathura imagery is difficult to distinguish either the forms belongs to Sanghol or to Mathura. It is because of all the concepts are the out come of one thought and one manufactory. The images of Sanghol Vedika stambhas closely resemble to the stambha yośita of Kankali mound, Sonkh and Gobindnagar sites of Mathura metropolis.

Even then Sanghol imagery is saying of its own by virtue of expression of its forms. In that way Sanghol equally contributes its artistic impression in Indian art history like Mathura during Kushana period. It is because of the Kushana rulers, who established their supremacy over the Uttarapatha and spread socio-religious art

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delineated at Mathura manufactory toward northern part (Pañcanada) of Āryāvarta, where stone, as a material was neither used nor easily available to carve artifacts. It was in the Kushana period, during 1st century A.D. to IIIrd century A.D., when the greater part of Pañcanada (East of Punjab) was following the Sarvastivadin concept and that played a vital role to establish Buddhist metaphorical art with great respect Sanghol is the major metropolis, as per with Mathura artistic expression during Kushana period. The art of Sanghol expresses a vast experience that transforms the solid stone material into luminous beautiful forms decked with inner light of perfection.

**Sanghol and Gandhāra:**

Before the fag end of Uttarapatha on the northwest, Āryāvarta (India) was linked Gandhara with Sanghol metropolis when Kushanas (Yuch-Chi) became powerful under the leadership of Kadphis –I, who founded the Kushana dynasty from Bactria to Gandhara in the second century B.C. Later on his successors also pushed aside the Parthianas and extended their rule and empire towards Pañcanda and further encircled Mathura and other centers of high esteem. The distant Metropolis with different ethnic association and socio-religious believes united under the influence of Kushanas (Kanishka and his successors). The aesthetically rich artistic inclination exposed itself in far distinct schools of Kushana art that of Sanghol under Mathura idiom and different locations of the vast empire.

In case of Kushana Gandhara center of art-Taxila (Takshaśila) and Peshawar were its main metropolis. The geographical situation of Gandhara on the trade routes made it receptive of different cultures and philosophies. In that way, cultural currents from the Hellenistic Greco-Roman world, Persia and China were interwoven with the local elements to create a new style, which delineated imagery in stucco and stone. Above all in that situation Gandharan art shaped images on the Greco-Roman models.

The Empire of Kushana with its cultural and artistic tradition had marched toward Pañcanda through Uttarapatha to find new green pastures. In case of the present Punjab (Political map) we find their traces at Patti, Sunet and above all at Sanghol. They (Kushana) enjoyed the same concept and philosophy of Buddhist faith at Gandhara, which was prevalent date back to the time of Menander, (Menander appears to have supported Buddhist philosophy) who is known as Malinda in India (Āryāvarta). Even Sakas and Parthianas before them tried to enter Pañcanda, and their presence is confirmed at Sanghol with the numismatic proofs (coins of
Gondophares). It means, when Kushana marched toward Sanghol, they had already a concept about Buddhist philosophy. Sanghol and other centres of Pañcanada were also under the Buddhist sect and faith, date back time to the Aśokan period.

In that way Uttarapatha spread Buddhist philosophy and Sarvastivadin cult in the northwest of Āryāvarta. It is the biggest cause and link between Sanghol and Gandhara metropolis on the ground of Buddhist faith.

There is a well-established fact that Gandhara has close political and cultural relations with the Sanghol metropolis, which were at their climax during Kushana period. Kushanas were settled for a long time span at Pañcanada and left their artistic and cultural impact over there, particularly at Sanghol. Due to their Gandharan link and cultural upheavals here emerged a mixed school of plastic art.

Hence we have many examples of Greco-Roman Buddhist art from Sanghol metropolis. The material in particular here we enjoy is related to stucco. These artifacts are Buddha's heads. The detached head of Buddha clearly define the truth about Kushana Gandharan link and finding of these forms at Sanghol justify cultural and political link between Sanghol and Gandhara. The interesting fact is that these images neither dominated the prevalent style here nor motivated the Indian carver to follow the Gandharan traits. Gandharan Imagery is carved out of Schist stone but on the contrary the Sanghol Buddhist forms are delineated out of red sandstone quarried at Sikri near the Kushana capital-Mathura. However Sanghol site exhibited the truth about Kushana's faith with these forms of stucco, clay and terracotta (Gandharan style). It's our hard luck we have no complete form of Lord Buddha with full sculptural framework. Even then the Greco-Roman imagery was beautiful in expression but the terracotta figurines of Sanghol site are not yielded with any Grandhara influence over there in any way. It means we have only those images at Sanghol, which were carried by the monks & traders along with them to pay obeisance. Compare to the entire subject from Gandhara metropolis, Sanghol have more conceptual and idealized spiritual and mortal imagery. Gandharan site yielded more and more Buddhist statue art compare to Sanghol site. Meanwhile at the same represented least Vedika art form as we have seen at Sanghol. Moreover Gandharan images of Yakshini concept are of local traits that travel from Indian side but these images have neither represented the Indian impression in physical look nor designed like Kushana Mathura idiom. These Yakshi images are little bit heavy in expression
and fully draped with clothes. These images simply exhibited the concept of Yakshi cult without their vahanas.

Gandharan sculptural art motivated the Kushanas to accept the subject in physical reality. That's why as soon as they proved their supremacy in Āryāvarta (India) they desired to delineate the portraiture art, either for themselves or for the spiritual one. In that pretext Sanghol art is more near to the Indian conceptual form of the contemporary society with folk tradition. But Gandharan form represented the physical truth even in the case of spiritual one. Gandharan art left its impact on Mathura art in the beginning of the reign of Huvishka. But it incorporated no impression over the Sanghol imagery of Mathura idiom. Moreover many Sanghol and Mathura motifs are incorporated in the art of Gandhara i.e. narration in art, curly hair, Padma (Lotus) seat with Lion throne symbolic & metaphorical representations of Lord, images with sacred thread (yageyopavit), railing design and Yakshi concept.

Thus the artistic & cultural relation of Sanghol and Gandhara matured on the interchange of art motifs and artifacts. Further the material used in the Sanghol and Gandhara areas are the distinguished factors between them. The Hellenic Gandharan art did not left a mark that Gandhara metropolis was all the time in connection and related with Sanghol via Uttarapatha during Kushana period. In that way Buddhist concept and art proved as the builder of northwest Āryāvartā’s unity.

**Sanghol and Present Punjab (Trigarta of Pañcanada):**

The early art of Present Punjab was associated to fertility cult. Rest is the mounds so far excavated in Pañcanada, which are representing terracotta figurine art. Major sites fall in the region of Trigarta geographically in the present Punjab. These sites are artistically more associated to the imagery in terracotta i.e. Mithuna, Mother Goddess images and Animal figurines. It is the art meant for folks to satisfy their socio-religious feelings. As well as we have some specimen of decorative bricks to express their permanent settlement in present Punjab. When Kushanas enter in India via Uttarpatha they captured the towns of Greek speaking tribes and later on made their garrison centers in those areas. In that way Kushana dominance spread all over the present Punjab. The sites or towns having association with the Kushana supremacy are Ajaram (Hoshiarpur); Brass (Rajpura); Dera Baba Nanak (Amritsar); Gurdaspur (proper); Pathankot (Gurdaspur); Rohira (Malerkotla); Ropar (proper); Sunam (Sangrur); Sunet (Ludhiana) and Sanghol as fountainhead (Sirhind - Fategharh
Sahib). From all the above archaeological sites we have examples of terracotta figurines and animal images.

Ajaram (Hoshiarpur), Brass (Rajpura) Sunet (Ludhiana) are the archaeological sites with beautiful terracotta art of Kushana period. Compare to Sanghol archaeological findings the images from these site are of lesser mark. But having the quality to compare with Sanghol art and exhibit their existence during Kushana period. The Yakshi cult, monk images, Indo-Greek forms, seals and sealings are the major source to define the Kushana dominance in present Punjab and worthy enough to study in the pretext of Kushana art. Unfortunately presently nothing is left on the sites and artistic forms are now in the different collection, such as Deptt. of Cultural Affairs, Archaeology and Museums Punjab and in some private collections.

The artistic socio-cultural activities in Punjab seek their inspiration from Mauryan Śunga, Satavahana and Kushana terracotta art time to time. But interesting fact is that so far we got no terracotta Buddha statuette form of Indian origin in present Punjab.

In case of stone material we have clear idea about Mathura idiom sculptural art in formation of artistic Buddha form. From Sunet there is a broken arm piece of Yakshi in red sandstone of Mathura quarry, which is similar to Sanghol Vedika pillar art. It means after Sanghol metropolis Sunet was under the Buddhist influence and consist of the stone art with Mathura idiom of Kushana period.

Sanghol is one of the major archaeological site in present Punjab, compare to other prominent mounds with superb artistic examples. Anyhow the art of these mounds have the expression of Hellenistic and Indigenous character. It shows that Sanghol has road links to all prominent sites of the Punjab. Therefore the migration of artistic objects, all the time happened on Uttarapatha route, and its influence travelled toward other sites of Punjab as well. Further we have no example of Gandharan stucco imagery from these centers except Sanghol metropolis.

In case of terracotta figurines we have more and more forms of female tenon heads compare to male. Next we have enough good stock of animal imagery in terracotta from different sites in Punjab. In that pretext Sanghol imagery in terracotta medium have the same subject in the human and animal statuette form in terracotta medium. These are tenon images, which are well designed in pliable clay. Rest these tenon head forms from Sanghol and other sites of Punjab are found without body and limbs. It means during Kushana period fashion of such terracotta imagery was
common in socio-cultural use. It is because of the size of these images that they were easy to carry with and while representing socio-religious faith of common folk these images satisfied their moral feelings as well.

Certain forms carried their expression directly in the Kushana Indian style. The interesting features of these terracotta figurines is that even a single form neither resembled with another one and nor is decorated with same coiffure and ornamentation. Male forms are bold-headed and look alike monks.

Sanghol and other sites of Kushana imagery are the mixture of Greco-Roman Gandharan and indigenous features in their formation. The images with Hellenistic features and thoughts exist at Sanghol. The other sites in Punjab clears the idea that Gandharan concept was diligently flowing beside the Indigenous concept of Sanghol and other site imagery. We have no impression and record of costume (used for terracotta imagery), compare to stone sculpture art of Mahastupa Vedika. In case of female terracotta forms, we have examples of Greco-Roman drapery like cloth (costume) from Sanghol, Sunet and Pathankot sites. Thus the contribution of Sanghol towards the development of Indian terracotta art is that it gave birth or inspired other schools (sites) of terracotta art in Punjab as well.

It proves that the terracotta figurines either modeled or moulded at Sanghol during the Kushana period was represented as the ideal form of art. In that pretext Sanghol is represented as the main archaeological site with artistic artifacts compare to contemporary sites of antiquarian discovery in present Punjab.

**Sanghol and The Uttarapatha (The Northern Highway):**

It is a route and a cause in progression of the cultural and historical expression of different sites situated on it. Sanghol metropolis has enjoyed a special place in the artistic and cultural history of India on the Uttarapatha. After its scientific archaeological excavation in 1985, the findings of the Vedika art of Sanghol added superb expression of the rich cultural and religious morals, which prevailed during Kushana period in Pañcanada.

It has been represented as a perfect Buddhist site on the Uttarapatha that exposed imagery of higher stature. The artistic expression is corroborated with aesthetically rich examples traced from Sanghol since 1933 when Sh. Madho Sarup Vats\(^2\) reported about the antiquarian discovery at the site. It is all because of Sanghol

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geographical situation that it raised to be known as a metropolis of northern India, which was once known as Uttarapatha country. Sanghol is situated on the junction point of land route of Uttarapatha and different roads radiate from it. Sanghol, which joined the two prominent places of ancient India viz Mathura and Gandhara via Uttarapatha has been developed into the Buddhist site of Heenyana and Mahayana sect.

The ideal geographical situation further designed Sanghol's stature into a melting pot of several cultural currents through Uttarapatha. In that way Uttarapatha played vital role in the artistic, cultural and religious development during Kushana period.

The Uttarapatha passed through the ancient cities of Pataliputra, Kausambhi, Mathura, Indraprastha (Delhi), Rohitaka, Sthanesvara (Kurukshtetra), Prithudaka (Pehova), Satadru (Sanghol), Sunetra (Sunet-Ludhiana), Phalakapura (Phillaur), Jalandharayana (Jalandhara), Chinapati (Patti-Taran Tāran), Sakala (Sialkot), Takshasila (Taxila) Gandhara (Lower Kabul valley) and at the flag end at Kapisi the road divided into two directions, one marked toward Kushan pass and another directed toward Panjshir.

Sanghol and its artistic enrichment are associated to the Uttarapatha. The Buddhist art and its subjective approach is delineated with Buddhist Sarvastivadin content and form that travelled from one site of the Uttarapatha to another. It is because of those entire major archaeological sites on the Uttarapatha were linked culturally with each other. That’s why Sanghol Vedika art has different concepts represented from those via Uttarapatha.

Sanghol site had been flooded with the different concepts and ideas of the other Buddhist sites situated on Uttarapatha, but even after that it developed a unique style of its own under the Kushana Mathura idiom. The indigenous buff sculpture both religious or mortal imagery and the image of Lord Buddha travelled from Mathura to Sanghol via Uttarapatha. At the same time the Gandharan style of art such as painted stucco, painted clay head, terracotta medallions and terracotta images also reached at Sanghol by the route Uttarapatha.

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We can observe that the artistic material travelled towards Sanghol from Gandhara and Mathura created a cultural link between these sites, therefore it can be stated that Sanghol was a junction point on the famous route Uttarapatha. This was the route along which Kushana provided facilities like Viharas, wells for the pilgrims, traveler and artistic landmarks as well.

Later on the kings of white Huns made consecutive invasions and like other foreign invaders they converted the whole Uttarapatha route of North India (Pañcanada of Āryāvarta) in to a plain of ruins and ashes along which the Buddhist pilgrims traveled from Central Asia to India in search of wisdom.

When Buddhism spread from one end to another via Sanghol by the missionaries and rulers with Buddhist philosophy and faith during the golden age of Kushana period. Sanghol art was able to express lasting beauty and cultural unity to a considerable part of northwest India.