

## **Transition of modes of transportation from pre-modern to modernized Ceylon; Representations in Murals of the Buddhist Image Houses of the Upcountry Kandyan and Low Country Maritime Regions**

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### **Abstract**

Modernized Ceylon under Dutch and British occupation marks paradigm shifts of transportation in three phases: Elephant-Horse-Palanquin- Sailing Ships through Bullock Cart-Horse Drawn Carriage to Train-Automobile -Steam Ship revolutionizing communication and transport systems locally and internationally. This presentation will sketch the methodology to gather information from main scenes of Buddhist narratives: The speedy delivery of the new born Prince Sidhartha Gutama from Lumbini to Kapilavastu, the journey out of the palace to view the “Four precursors to Renunciation of Worldly Pleasures” (Satara Peta Nimithi) and King Vessanantara’s Departure to Vangagiriya. These three scenes will be compared in the Upcountry and Low Country traditions. With the help of photographs of the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, we shall identify some of these modes of transport, which are also on display at the Martin Wickramasighe Museum in Koggala. The next section of the presentation will view development of Scenes from Srilankan History as seen in the paintings of Solias Mendis in the Kelaniya Rajamahaviharaya and the lithographs of the Buddha Caritaya by M. Sarlis and his school of painters demonstrating the historicizing modes of transport, questioning why the automobile did not enter to the repertoire of modes of transport in the temple murals.

**Key Words:** *Buddhist narratives, Modes of transport, Temple murals*

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