

**ORIGIN AND THE EVOLUTION OF SRI LANKAN BUDDHA IMAGE
INDEPENDENT OF THE INDIAN PROTOTYPE**

by

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Dissertation

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ABSTRACT**ORIGIN AND THE EVOLUTION OF SRI LANKAN BUDDHA IMAGE
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This dissertation focusses to examine the independent origin and the evolution of the Sri Lankan Buddha image of its Indian prototype.

The scholars studying the development of the Buddha image in the Indian sub-continent assume that it was originated in India from the aniconic form to the anthropomorphic form during the period of Kushans in the first century CE, and influenced the origin and evolution of the Buddha image in neighboring regions, in that, Sri Lanka was not an exception.

Contrary to this assumption, there are sufficient facts and evidence that testify to the independent evolution of the Sri Lankan Buddha image from at least second century BCE, despite the fact that Buddhism was introduced to the country from India. Literary and archaeological evidence has been analyzed in detail to ascertain which theory is acceptable. In addition, the vast number of images found from various locations in Sri Lanka demonstrates indigenous iconographical and iconometric characteristics to establish that Sri Lankan Buddha image originated and evolved independently of Indian prototypes.

Although, the scholars have highlighted the authentic nature of the Sri Lankan Buddha image, none of them have attempted to conduct a detailed examination, and, as a result, have concluded that the Sri Lankan Buddha images was an influential outcome of those of India, simply underlining the constant socio-cultural and political relationships between India and Sri Lanka.

The questions of how, when, and where it was originated is to be addressed alone, the present study, thus, aims to examine the constantly highlighted authentic characteristics of the Sri Lankan Buddha image without prejudice, to identify its independent evolution.