

## AESTHETIC TRADITIONS: A CASE STUDY OF PAINTINGS IN SUBODHARAMA IMAGE HOUSE

U. Hettige<sup>1</sup>, A. Sudasinghe<sup>2</sup>

University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

<sup>1</sup>uda.hettige@gmail.com; <sup>2</sup>apsudasinghe@gmail.com

Situated in Dehiwla, the Subodharama temple which is also known as "Little Kelaniya" has a collection of paintings that date back to over 300 years. This temple is also famous for art, statues and mosaic art and it is believed that in 1780 A.D. during the Kandian period, King Kirthi Sri Rajasinghe has sponsored to build this temple. The most important paintings of this collection are found in Image-house (Shrine room). The objective of this study was to examine the musical instruments and dancing figures with special emphasis on style, European cultural and social influence, Sri Lankan traditional cultural and social influence. In addition to archeological evidence, data was collected from field observations and personal interviews and analysis was based on qualitative research methodology in order to compare each costumes and figure forms. The data revealed an influence of Sri Lankan, Tamil, and European cultural influences where these paintings reveal the history of civilization and the cultural belonging. Furthermore, it was apparent that the instruments and classical dance forms revealed through these paintings are associated with the performance of various rituals and ceremonies which date back to the folk religion and beliefs some going as far as before the advent and acceptance of Buddhism in Sri Lanka.

**Keywords:** *cultural, dancing forms, musical instruments, social, style*