

## Abstract No 39

### **Influence of Mahayana Buddhism in Sri Lanka; Depicted in *Buduruwagala* Archeological Site**

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Buddhism introduced to Sri Lanka in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC and it was established as Theravada or *Vibhajjavādi*, based on *Mahavihāra* at Anuradhapura. A number of monks separated from Mahavihāra and started a new tradition as *Abhayagiriya* with the royal patronage of King *Valagambā* in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC. *Mahayana* Buddhism existed in the late 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC with the arrival of *Vaithulyavāda* from India. The aim of this abstract is to explain the influence of Mahayana Buddhism into Sri Lankan people, referring *Buduruwagala* site. The concepts and iconographies of various Buddhas, *Bodhisattva*, and the strength of *Bodhisattva*, region gods, and gods of *Hinduism* were introduced by *Mahayana* tradition. On the behalf of worshipping Buddha, people used to worship and believed in *Bodhisattva* and gods introduced by Mahayana tradition. It is clearly depicted in the *Buduruwagala* site how *Mahayana* Buddhism influences to Sri Lankan. *Buduruwagala* is situated in *Wellavaya* district. It consists of seven statues sculptured on relief of the rock during the 9th -10th c A.D. are seen in a single rock face. Of the seven *Mahayana* statues, three smaller statues each are sculptured on either side of the main Buddha statue. It is believed that these statues were created by Mahayana Buddhist in *Rohana*, *Anuradhapura*. The Buddha is in the *Samabhanga* posture and has the right hand gesturing the *Abhaya Mudra*. On the right of the Standing Buddha image are the sculptures of *Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva*, Goddess *Tārā*, and Prince *Sudhana* and on the left are the sculptures of *Maitre Bodhisattva*, *Vajrapāni Bodhisattva* and an unidentifiable deity. These sculptures could be identified as a collection of the Buddha and Bodhisattva figures with Mahayana influence. This research has been done with field visiting and collecting literary sources.

**Key words:** *Avalokitesvara, Buduruwagala, Iconographies, Mahayana Buddhism,*