

## 64. BUDDHA

Sri Lanka (findspot, Dong Duong), late 8th–9th century

Bronze, H: 119 cm × W: 38 cm × D: 38 cm

Museum of Vietnamese History, Ho Chi Minh City, BTLS 4419

32

For a recent discussion of the dating, see Zephir in Baptiste and Zephir, eds., *Trésors d'art du Vietnam*, 207–9.

33

For comparative material, see Ulrich Von Schroeder, *Buddhist Sculptures of Sri Lanka* (Hong Kong: Visual Dharma Publications, 1990), 198–203 for Late Anuradhapura examples, and 107–9 for Amaravati examples.

34

As Fontein has pointed out, though these Southeast Asian finds exhibit basic similarities, variations in the manner of depiction (such as the technical delineation of the drapery) indicate that neither their provenance nor date may be shared; therefore they should be considered separately; Fontein, *The Sculpture of Indonesia*, 179.

35

Golzio, ed., *Inscriptions of Campa*, 72.

Large bronze Buddha images, which originated in either Sri Lanka or Amaravati in eastern India, have been found at a number of sites in Southeast Asia, including Pong Tuk, Thailand; Sulawesi and Java, Indonesia; and this example, at Dong Duong, Viet Nam. The question of the provenance and date (as early as the third century, if from Amaravati, or as late as the ninth, if Sinhalese) of these various pieces has provided fodder for scholarly debate for decades.<sup>32</sup> This author believes this bronze compares most closely with Late Anuradhapura Sinhalese Buddhas dating to the late eighth–ninth centuries.<sup>33</sup>

These Buddhas offer a clue to the transmission of styles, and suggest the widespread importance of certain types of images that were transported far and wide.<sup>34</sup> In Champa, no documentation for the export or import of pieces exists, although we have a documented instance of a Cham mission taking a stone sculpture to China and gifts of metalwork being given in return (see Introduction, p. 10). It is impossible to know whether this Buddha was carried by a monk bringing

it to his home monastery, or if he carried it as an object of worship on the long journey, or if an enterprising merchant recognized its worth as a commodity. In any event, though the piece was undoubtedly cherished, its impact on ninth–tenth century Buddhist sculpture at Dong Duong was limited to the treatment of the string drapery of the large Buddha found at the site, as the other sculptures at the site have quite a different, distinctive bold style.

The Dong Duong inscription states: “He, Indravarman, by means of his own command, erected [the image of] Svabhayada [Buddha].”<sup>35</sup> Whether the inscription refers to this Buddha or to one of the large stone Buddhas is unknown.

### LITERATURE

Pierre Baptiste and Thierry Zephir, eds., *Trésors d'art du Vietnam: la sculpture du Champa v–xv siècles*, 2005.