

Acchariya Watcharayon 2009: The Origin of the Buddha Image in the Gandhara School and Plato's Greek Aesthetics. Master of Arts (Philosophy and Religion), Major Field: Philosophy and Religion, Department of Philosophy and Religion.  
Thesis Advisor: Assistant Professor M.L.Nipada Devakul, Ph.D. 155 pages.

This research is aiming at studying the explanation between the Buddha image in the Gandhara school and Plato's aesthetic theory. The researcher starts with the origin and styles of the Buddha image which are regarded as the first school in the world and the Plato's aesthetic theory by using the primary and the secondary documentary sources which are the Tripitaka and the Plato's dialogues particularly aesthetics, religion, history and art

The result of this study is that we can interpret the Gandharan Buddha image by Plato's aesthetic theory in two different ways. Firstly, the imitation theory can be explained the making of the Gandharan Buddha image under the influence of Greco-Roman art by the Gandharan craftsmen who were the Greek descendants of Alexander the Great's soldiers since we find that the Buddha image is influenced by imitating nature at the particular period like the nature human form and the way of normal life without making the Buddha image in the idealistic form. Secondly, dharma of the Buddha can be compared with Plato's ultimate reality of the World of Idea that is man should not be attached to only the beautiful form of the Buddha image in this sensible world but he should go beyond to the ultimate reality of the Buddha teaching which will lead man to the Nirvana in the same way that man should not be attached only to beautiful forms in the sensible world but should go beyond to the Intelligible world or the World of Idea which is the real world, eternal and changeless.

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