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DEVELOPMENT OF BODHISATTVA  
CONCEPT IN SRI LANKA:  
A HISTORICAL STUDY



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## ABSTRACT

There is a significant difference between the *Theravāda* and the *Mahāyāna* with regard to the notion of *Bodhisattva*. Hence, the concept of *Bodhisattva* is not the privilege of *Mahāyāna* Buddhism, as might have been expected. In this research, I will examine and survey carefully the notion of ‘*Bodhisattva*.’ The origin and development of the concept of *Bodhisattva* in both *Theravāda* and *Mahāyāna* will be examined. As we know the concept of *Bodhisattva* in *Theravāda* is not similar to that of *Mahāyāna* tradition. In *Mahāyāna*, the theory of *Bodhisattva* is a powerful religious concept, but in *Theravāda* it is not so much emphasized. Hence, the aim of my dissertation is to make a close investigation in order to find out if there are any differences between *Theravāda* and *Mahāyāna* regarding their traditions. Consequently, I will figure out what similarities and dissimilarities could be observed between *Theravāda* and *Mahāyāna* texts of the two traditions and from what points of view are they different and similar.