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The iconography of Avalokiteśvara in Java

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Chapter 9

Conclusion

9.1 Introduction

Avalokiteśvara had a unique place in Buddhist worship in Java. The surviving images of the Bodhisattva show that he was a popular Buddhist figure, in particular during the Central Javanese period (c. 750-930 CE). As the power centre shifted to East Java in the early tenth century, we see a strong drop in the number of Avalokiteśvara depictions in stone or metal and no more images can be dated with certainty to the eleventh and twelfth century CE. The few bronze statuettes that may be dated up until 1100 CE, have quite a broad dating of approximately 900-1100 CE (Cat. nos 82-83, 106, 109, 111). It is not until the end of the thirteenth century CE that a new, but limited, production began with the Amoghapāśa Lokeśvara *maṇḍala* at Candi Jago and its associated images.

While we have plentiful Avalokiteśvara images as material evidence of ritual worship dedicated to him in Javanese society, there remain few inscriptions and Buddhist texts mentioning the Bodhisattva from Java. The dearth of these sources, as well as the general lack of understanding of the worship of Avalokiteśvara in Java led to the first aim of the thesis: to create a comprehensive corpus of Avalokiteśvara images. Therefore, as many images of Avalokiteśvara as possible were collected and made available. They have been documented in the catalogue, forming an appendix to this thesis. Apart from stone relief images on Borobudur and Candi Mendut, as well as three-dimensional stone statues at Candi Mendut, the Plaosan Lor complex, and Candi Jago, I have also included metal-cast images that were once found in Java, but entered museums and private collections in Indonesia, Europe and the United States.

The second aim of this thesis was to discuss these images art historically in meaningful iconographic groups, in order to gain more insight into the popularity of certain iconographic forms of Avalokiteśvara in Java as well as into the connections between Java and the rest of the Buddhist world. When confronted with the iconographic richness of the imagery, I decided to group the stone and metal images differently. Since the stone images all formed part of religious building projects and most of them are still *in situ*, I took advantage of this circumstance and discussed them within the context of these buildings and their associated stone or metal images.

These buildings are:

- Borobudur, with two-, four- and six-armed standing and seated Avalokiteśvara in narrative reliefs (Chapter 5, Cat. nos 120-131).
- Candi Mendut, with a two-armed *lalitāsana* Avalokiteśvara as an attendant in a triad, a four-armed standing Avalokiteśvara at the centre of a triad and a two-armed standing Avalokiteśvara as part of the Aṣṭamahābodhisattva (Chapter 7, Cat. nos 181-183).

- The two main temples of Candi Plaosan Lor, each with a two-armed *lalitāsana* Avalokiteśvara as an attendant in a triad (Chapter 7, Cat. nos 184-194).
- Candi Jago with the Amoghapāśa Lokeśvara *maṇḍala* (Chapter 8, Cat. nos 199-203, 205).

Unlike the stone images, most of the metal images were found as single statuettes that had lost their original context. These were grouped according to their iconographic forms.

- Among the images from Java, I discussed two standing forms: an ascetic form with two arms (Chapter 2, Cat. no. 1); and a six- to twelve-armed form (Chapter 8, Cat. nos 195-198, 207-218) that provides a link with the later Amoghapāśa Lokeśvara images connected with Candi Jago and described in the same chapter.
- Furthermore, I considered three types of seated images: one in *lalitāsana* with two to eight arms (Chapter 3, Cat. nos 40-84); the sorrowful Avalokiteśvara supporting his head with one hand, most often in *mahārājālīlāsana* and with two to six arms (Chapter 4, Cat. nos 85-115); and a uniquely Javanese form in *sattvaparyāṅkāśana* with two or four arms (Chapter 6, Cat. nos 132-180).
- A further two groups, a standing princely form with two or four arms (Cat. nos 225-266) and a form seated in *padmāsana* with two or four arms (Cat. nos 279-282) are presented in the catalogue, but not explicitly discussed in the text. They are referenced in Chapter 5 in relationship with the Borobudur reliefs.

Thirdly, it was my aim to understand when and how an iconographic form came into being in Java, and how long it persisted. With this in mind, I tried to date iconographic forms based on stylistic variations within each iconographic group and by making comparisons with other Asian art traditions.

In this final chapter, I intend to pull information from the various chapters together, in order to get a deeper insight into the development of Avalokiteśvara imagery and what this can tell us about the cult of Avalokiteśvara during the Hindu-Buddhist period in Java.

9.2 Avalokiteśvara's popularity in Java

The sheer number of metal Avalokiteśvara images warrants some comments. In Java, more than a thousand bronzes of all kinds of Hindu and Buddhist figures have been found, which sets Java apart from the rest of Southeast Asia. No other area in this region of Asia can boast such a large number of surviving metal statuettes manufactured in such an early period, i.e. mostly before the start of the second millennium. Within this early Javanese metal production, Avalokiteśvara seems to have been one of the most popular figures. No other Bodhisattva was as frequently produced in bronze, and even bronze statuettes of the Buddha Śākyamuni and the Buddha Vairocana do not seem to have been as numerous.

The Catalogue

This catalogue includes 283 Avalokiteśvara images and a further 14 in the addendum. Of these, 189 are metal statuettes, 27 are stone images and one is a clay tablet from Java. Possibly, a further 18 metal statuettes come from Java, which would make a total of at least 235 Javanese images of Avalokiteśvara, of which 207 in metal. The metal statuettes were primarily made in bronze, but a few are in silver and gold.

Apart from the Javanese images, I have also included Avalokiteśvaras from Sumatra (16 bronzes and 3 in stone), Bali (1 clay tablet and one possible Amoghapāśa Lokeśvara in stone), Borneo (6 in metal), Sulawesi (1 bronze eight-armed Avalokiteśvara), Thai-Malay Peninsula (15 bronzes and 3 stone images) and a few from Thailand (5 bronzes and 5 clay tablets), Myanmar (1 clay tablet) and Cambodia (2 bronzes and one stone images) as reference material. There are also a further three bronzes that have been broadly ascribed to Insular Southeast Asia (Cat. nos 32, 226 and 276), but may originate from Thailand.

The profuse production of metal Avalokiteśvara during the Central Javanese period is illustrated by the fact that out of 207 statuettes, I suggest that 133 date to the period 750-900. Of these, 24 are *lalitāsana* Avalokiteśvaras, 21 sorrowful Avalokiteśvaras, 12 Amoghapāśa Lokeśvaras or six/eight-armed standing Avalokiteśvaras, 36 two/four-armed standing Avalokiteśvaras (not ascetic), and 40 *sattvaparyāṅkāśana* Avalokiteśvaras. A further 20 metal statuettes can be dated to 700-800 CE and only 12 bronzes have a date range into the East Javanese period, including the bronze plaques of the Amoghapāśa Lokeśvara *maṇḍala*.

Avalokiteśvara's place at Borobudur

The popularity of Avalokiteśvara in Central Java even filters through at Borobudur, a monument focusing on the Buddha and his manifestation as Vairocana. There the sculptors highlighted Avalokiteśvara whenever possible, even though he was not the main figure. They depicted Avalokiteśvara in three reliefs in the second round of the *Gaṇḍavyūha* relief series, where one would have sufficed. In the *Bhadracarī* reliefs, Avalokiteśvara is shown at least seven times, even though he is not mentioned in the text. This suggests two things: first, that the sculptors, or those who instructed them, were familiar with Avalokiteśvara and secondly, that he appealed to them more than any other *bodhisattva*.

Southeast and South Asia

To highlight the uniqueness of the large number of 207 surviving images of Avalokiteśvara in metal from Java, primarily Central Java, we may look at neighbouring Sumatra, where only 19 images of Avalokiteśvara in total have been found. These also date over a wider range of time than the majority of the Javanese images. In Mainland Southeast Asia, Nandana Chutiwongs found 109 images of Avalokiteśvara in metal and stone, as well as a number of votive tablets in which the Bodhisattva cannot be identified with certainty (1984). However, her corpus included Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam,

whereas Central Java is a much smaller geographical area. Chutiwongs' dating of the Avalokiteśvara images is also broader.

As discussed in Chapter 3, many Avalokiteśvara bronzes were produced in Northeast India and Bangladesh. However, this occurred over a longer period of time than 150 years and within a larger area than Central Java. Despite the evidence for the production of many images, there appears to have been a difference in Avalokiteśvara's popularity when compared with Central Java. One particular archaeological find appears to illustrate this, by way of an example, viz., the bronze hoard found at Nalanda, first extensively discussed by A.J. Bernet Kempers (1933b). The hoard, of over 200 metal objects, shows a great variety of figures, with Buddhas, *bodhisattvas* and various female deities, but Bernet Kempers only identified ten bronze statuettes of Avalokiteśvara (1933b: 9, 27-29). This limited percentage of c. five percent of Avalokiteśvaras in the hoard, indicates that the Bodhisattva was not as popular in metal imagery in Nalanda at the time that the hoard was buried, as he was in Central Java. Similar results are seen from an overview of the available Pāla bronzes from the Huntington Archive or the Kurkihar hoard of 150 images (Huntington 1984: 141). Thus, the large number of surviving images in bronze of Avalokiteśvara, from before 1000 CE, manufactured over a period of 150 years in a limited area, makes Central Java unique in the Buddhist world of South and Southeast Asia. It should be noted that this is particularly true for metal images and not stone. Stone statues and reliefs of Avalokiteśvara are found in Bangladesh, Bihar and Odisha, as well as in other parts of India.

9.3 Iconographic and stylistic variation

Java not only stands out for its large number of relatively early surviving images of Avalokiteśvara in metal, but also because of the great degree of iconographic and stylistic variety among these images. I did not come across a similar diversity in any other region, either in Southeast Asia or in Northeast India. Not only are there various iconographic groups, there are even further variations within these groups. These include iconographic features such as the number of hands, the hand gestures they form and the attributes they hold (Tables 1-14, 16-33), the amount and style of the jewellery and the styles of hair, garments, *yajñopavītas*, back pieces, halos, parasols and pedestals.

The example of the sorrowful Avalokiteśvara

The sorrowful Avalokiteśvara images (Chapter 4) show him seated in either *mahārājālīlāsana* or in *lalitāsana*; he can have two or four arms and lean his head to either the left or the right. The back piece may have various forms, such as a solid round shape (Cat. nos 85, 90), a solid petal shape (Cat. nos 96-98, 103, 112), a solid rectangular shape (Cat. nos 99), a solid square topped by a circular halo behind the head (Cat. nos 101-102, 111), an open worked round shape (Cat. no. 104) or an open worked pear shape (Cat. no. 110).

These back pieces are decorated with a variety of rims, for example: flames at regular intervals (Cat. nos 90), densely placed flames (Cat. no. 113), simple leaf-like forms (Cat. nos 96-98) and more dense foliage (Cat. no. 111). The figure may be seated on a round or oval lotus seat (Cat. nos 85, 87-88, 91- 93, 108) or on a lotus seat placed on a rectangular moulded pedestal (e.g. Cat. no. 90). The rectangular pedestal may have openings (Cat. nos 95, 104-105, 110) or be decorated with lions (Cat. no. 98).

The figure's garment may be plain or decorated with double lines (Cat. no. 90), rows of dots between double lines (Cat. no. 86), circular dot patterns between lines of dots (Cat. no. 94) or a circular dot pattern (Cat. nos 95, 98-99, 104-105). The *cintāmaṇi* may be held in the palm of the hand displaying the *varada-mudrā* (Cat. nos 87, 94, 101, 115), in front of the body (Cat. nos 88, 91-93, 95-100, 104, 107-108, 112-113) or resting in the palm of a hand in the figure's lap (Cat. nos 102-103, 105-106, 109-111). A few of the figures wear chest-belts (Cat. nos 87, 106, 108, 111), but most of them do not.

The example of Amoghapāśa Lokeśvara

Similar kinds of variations are seen among the other iconographic groups. One such remarkable example concerns the images of Amoghapāśa Lokeśvara, showing the figure seated in *lalitāsana* (Cat. no. 52) or standing (Cat. nos 195-203). Among the bronze statuettes of Amoghapāśa Lokeśvara, there appears to have been flexibility in the placement of attributes and gestures. For instance, no specific hand held the rope (*pāśa*) that helps identify this form of Avalokiteśvara. We encounter the rope in the second lowest right hand (Cat. no. 195) or in the middle left hand (Cat. no. 196). The rope itself also takes on different shapes, such as a braided rope (Cat. nos 195, 197-198) or a noose twisted into the shape of an eight (Cat. no. 196). Other attributes such as the water vessel, lotus or three-pronged staff are also shown in different hands.

Iconographic variations between stone and metal Avalokiteśvaras

A major difference between the metal and stone images is that the group with metal works of art has yielded mostly solitary images, while the stone images occur in groups. At Candi Mendut, Avalokiteśvara is depicted in three separate groups: a triad inside the temple where he sits in *lalitāsana* as an attendant of the Buddha in a triad; the group of eight *bodhisattvas* (Aṣṭamahābodhisattva) on the outside of the temple; and a triad on the rear side of Candi Mendut, in which Avalokiteśvara stands as the central deity and is flanked by two sitting female figures.

At the Plaosan Lor complex, he is once again depicted as part of a triad, but now there are three triads in separate cellas with different pairs of *bodhisattvas* who once flanked a central Buddha image (Chapter 7). I suggested that these three cellas represent the Buddha's existence outside our linear time. While the Buddhist worshipper can only exist in the present as part of time ever moving forwards, the Buddha can exist in the past, present and future simultaneously.

There are exceptions in both stone and metal. In the four stone reliefs depicting part of the *Gaṇḍavyūha* at Borobudur, where Avalokiteśvara teaches the pilgrim Sudhana, he is depicted as a solitary figure. There are also a few metal images that show Avalokiteśvara in a group. Thus, he is seen as an attendant to the Buddha in a number of bronze triads (Cat. nos 47, 67, 83, 144, 145, 151, 173, 245). Three metal triads also show Avalokiteśvara as the central figure between two seated female deities. Two of these were made in bronze (Cat. nos 261 and 278), while the third is in silver (Cat. no. 228). One of these statuettes is from Java, whereas the second image originated from Sumatra; it carries a date equivalent to 1039 CE. In two dyads Avalokiteśvara is joined by Vasudhārā (Cat. nos 139 and 168), a combination that is not found outside of Java in Southeast Asia. Such forms add to the iconographic variety that characterises the bronze imagery from Java.

We must keep in mind that a number of Avalokiteśvara bronzes that survived singly could once have been used in a group context together with other statuettes, such as those of the Buddha or Vajrapāṇi. For instance, one of the small shrines around Candi Sewu shows tripartite niches for smaller figures, which could have been used to display bronze images in triads (Pl. 3I). But the sheer volume of Avalokiteśvara statuettes, compared with those of other Buddhist figures in bronze, leads us to conclude that groups were likely limited in number. Thus, the majority of Avalokiteśvaras in metal should be considered as complete in their own right, together displaying a unique iconographic variety.

Iconographic variation in Java compared to Southeast Asia

Iconographic variation appears to have been the maxim among Javanese bronze casters, with the surviving bronze statuettes standing as a testament to it. A similar degree of iconographic diversity did not develop in other regions of Southeast Asia. Outside of Java, the seated poses such as *sattvaparyāṅkāśana*, *mahārājālīlāsana* or *lalitāsana* are not used for Avalokiteśvara imagery. Thus, we do not see examples of the sorrowful Avalokiteśvara or the *sattvaparyāṅkāśana* Avalokiteśvaras, which was so popular between 825-850 CE in Java. Once the ascetic Avalokiteśvara had entered Southeast Asia, it remained the most popular form of representation in Mainland Southeast Asia. There is one notable exception, the so-called Radiant Avalokiteśvara who became popular in Khmer art of the late twelfth to early thirteenth century CE (Chutiwongs 1984: Pls 151-153). While it is difficult to understand why there is such a difference in iconographic choices for Avalokiteśvara between Java and the rest of Southeast Asia, I do consider it evidence of Avalokiteśvara's unique popularity in Java and Java's openness to the outside world. It seems that the bronze casters were well aware of the various iconographic possibilities to represent the Bodhisattva. Apparently, they drew on whatever sources were available to them, from different regions in Southeast Asia, India, Bangladesh and China. Most of this iconography appears to have been in place in Central Java by 800 CE. Eventually, Avalokiteśvara's popularity also led to local developments of iconography.

Previous scholars have not found a strong relationship between the stone and metal imagery from the Central Javanese period. Yet, we sometimes see a cross-over from one medium

to the other, as for instance in the triads discussed in Chapter 7. The metal triads with either the Buddha or Avalokiteśvara as the focus show iconographic and stylistic similarities with the stone triads at Candi Mendut (Cat. nos 181-182) and the Plaosan Lor complex (Cat. nos 184-185). Further examples include solitary bronze statuettes, such as the bronze Avalokiteśvara seated in *lalitāsana* on a royal throne (Cat. no. 66) which can be compared to the stone *lalitāsana* Avalokiteśvara from inside Candi Mendut (Cat. no. 181). While we cannot say that one was copying the other, these examples illustrate that there was some shared knowledge of iconography and style between the craftsmen working in the two media. Both media also share the tendency towards standardisation in the second quarter of the ninth century CE (Chapter 6, p. 102).

9.4 Important periods for the development of Avalokiteśvara imagery in Java

The iconographic study of the Javanese Avalokiteśvara images has allowed us to distinguish between different periods of image development for Avalokiteśvara in Java, that have some overlap.

Introductory period – the ascetic form

The first period of the introduction of Avalokiteśvara imagery is that in his ascetic form; it lasted until the end of the seventh century CE (Chapter 2). One of the attributes developed for Avalokiteśvara in Southeast Asia during this period was the tiger skin, which is part of many of the images discussed in Chapter 2. I suggested that the ascetic Avalokiteśvara demonstrates a cultural connection between the Buddhist caves in Maharashtra and Southeast Asia. This theory disagrees with the idea that the earliest Avalokiteśvara images in Southeast Asia were actually inspired by the Gupta art of North India (Cat. no. 227, Lee 1956, Chutiwongs 1984: 484, 2010: 10). Gupta art did indeed inspire art of other regions and times, such as that in Northeast India during the post-Gupta and Pāla period. The art of the Pāla period, in its turn had an impact on Southeast Asian culture, but at a later time than the introductory period.

The period of ascetic Avalokiteśvara imagery, linking the coastal areas of Mainland and Insular Southeast Asia, ended in the late seventh century CE. At this stage we begin to see different Southeast Asian regions developing their own types of Avalokiteśvara imagery. In Mainland Southeast Asia, we notice a continued production of standing Avalokiteśvaras, with mainly two arms, often with various ascetic features. However, in Java, the development of Avalokiteśvara imagery took a distinct turn away from that of the rest of Southeast Asia. While production of ascetic Avalokiteśvaras continued for a while up to around 800 CE, simultaneously many new iconographic forms were introduced.

Period of new iconographic information

The next period shows a strong influx of new Avalokiteśvara iconography (c. 700-800 CE). During this period, there must have been different cultural connections between Java and South Asia as well as Java and other parts of Southeast Asia. In Java, the ascetic form

continued for a while, but also developed into the standing form with a princely iconography. Also, further new iconographic traits began to be incorporated: new poses such as *lalitāsana*, *mahārājalīlāsana* and *sattvaparyāṅkāśana*, along with the sorrowful Avalokiteśvara form as well as the eight-armed Amoghapāśa Lokeśvara.

While a specific cultural origin for the use of the *lalitāsana* pose for Avalokiteśvara's image cannot be determined, we clearly notice a stylistic relationship with metal images from Northeast India and Bangladesh, as was also noted by S. Huntington (1994: 66) as well as Lunsingh Scheurleer and Klokke (1988: 27-30). This relationship is evidenced in the style of the early group of Javanese *lalitāsana* Avalokiteśvara in bronze (Chapter 3, Group 2, pp. 45-46; Cat. nos 43-56, Table 15). The notable stylistic elements that show a link with Northeast India include a pearl-rimmed back piece, flames along the outside of the back piece and a pearl-rimmed lotus seat.

This group of images is similar to Lunsingh Scheurleer's Group 2 in her study of Javanese bronzes (1994). Her analysis involved a much wider range of imagery, as she examined all Javanese bronzes in Dutch collections, while I focused on Avalokiteśvara. Another important difference between her interpretation and the one offered in this thesis, is that Lunsingh Scheurleer interpreted the influx of iconographic information in this second period as a process of importation and copying. In terms of the Avalokiteśvara bronzes from this period, I suggest that it was not a matter of importation of bronzes, but that these bronzes with new iconographies were produced in Java. That is why they also include local stylistic features.

Despite this strong stylistic similarity between the early *lalitāsana* statuettes found in Java and those from Northeast India and Bangladesh, we have not been able to trace a specific Avalokiteśvara statuette that can be identified with certainty as an image made in South Asia and transported to Java. Each of the statuettes have one or more Javanese stylistic elements, including a longer style of dress, the lack of feet for the base or specific facial features. This brings us to the question of how the stylistic and iconographic information reached Java, if not through imported statuettes. It is possible that the stylistic information was transmitted through drawings, perhaps as part of a palm-leaf manuscript, through verbal instructions or through the travel of bronze casters.

Even though Java was open to new roles for Avalokiteśvara, judging from his new iconographies, there are types that either did not make it to Java or that were not adopted as an accepted part of the iconographic repertoire. Examples include the eleven-headed and thousand-armed forms of Avalokiteśvara, which were popular in the Mogao caves in China, next to Amoghapāśa Lokeśvara and Cintāmaṇi-cakra Avalokiteśvara.

Period of local development and standardisation

The next important period shows a consolidation of the iconographic forms that had been accepted and applied in imagery manufacture in Java along with new local developments. This period starts towards the end of the eighth century and the beginning of the ninth

century CE. This period shows a consolidation of the earlier iconographic forms with contemporary style. Among the popular iconographic features in the iconographies showing local development are the *sattvaparyāṅkāśana* pose (Chapter 6), the four-armed sorrowful Avalokiteśvara leaning his head to his right (Chapter 4) and the use of three triads in one temple building (Chapter 7). The local stylistic elements for the Avalokiteśvara bronzes that stand out are the plain circular halo attached at the shoulders (e.g. Cat. no. 16), the parasol which extends out over the figure, and an oval lotus seat (e.g. Cat. no. 136).

During this period, specifically between 825-850 CE, we may notice a fair degree of standardisation in both the iconography and the style of Avalokiteśvara bronzes, particularly the *sattvaparyāṅkāśana* Avalokiteśvaras discussed in Chapter 6. We see the repeated use of an oval-shaped lotus seat along with the petal-shaped back piece with a herringbone rim.

It is also during the period of 825-850 CE that we have evidence of a cultural connection between China and Java, even though the relationship with China is less evident than that with India regarding Avalokiteśvara imagery. There is, however, one interesting piece of evidence that shows iconographic exchange with China rather than with India. This is the form of the sorrowful Avalokiteśvara specific to China that is known as Cintāmaṇi-cakra Avalokiteśvara. At least one sorrowful Avalokiteśvara from Java represents this specific iconographic form including the *cakra* besides the *cintāmaṇi*.

Based on the style of the sole surviving statuette of the Cintāmaṇi-cakra Avalokiteśvara in bronze, the influx of this iconography likely occurred after 800 CE, possibly between 825-850 CE, thus after the period of new iconographic information. There are several sorrowful Avalokiteśvaras that can be dated to this period (Cat. nos 96-98, 103 and 112), but the majority have a broader dating of approximately 750-850 CE. In any case, this specific form of the sorrowful Avalokiteśvara does not appear to have become popular in Java. Instead, it was the locally developed four-armed sorrowful Avalokiteśvara, often with a *cintāmaṇi* but without a *cakra*, that was repeatedly produced. The origin of the sorrowful gesture can be traced to the Indian subcontinent, where it is first found in Gandharan art. It was used in stone imagery depicting Siddhartha, Maitreya and Avalokiteśvara. Thus, we may trace the origins of the Javanese sorrowful Avalokiteśvara to South Asia. Java appears to stand at the crossroads of cultural exchange accepting and adapting iconographic information from both India and China.

From 850 CE onwards, we do not observe any new iconographic forms or combinations, but the style of the bronzes continues to develop towards including ever more details. Further stylistic developments can be noticed on the bases that are now decorated with apertures and the back pieces become more elaborate (i.e. Cat. nos 95, 104-105, 109-111, 141, 168, 175-176). The top of the parasols also has added details (Cat. no. 282). From this point onwards, Avalokiteśvara will wear more jewellery, particularly a second armband (Cat. nos 83, 106, 109, 111 and 282), and his limbs become noticeably more elongated.

These stylistic changes coincide with a reduction in the number of bronzes that were produced.

The period of reduced production of Avalokiteśvara imagery

After approximately 900 CE and perhaps even more so after the move of the power centre from Central Java to East Java in 930 CE, few Avalokiteśvara images were made. The surviving bronzes include two *lalitāsana* Avalokiteśvaras, of which one was found in Puger Wetan in the Jember region, East Java (Cat. nos 82-83). Three sorrowful Avalokiteśvaras may also belong to this final period, but one of these was found in Central Java (Cat. nos 106, 109 and 111).

As one of the eight *bodhisattvas*, Avalokiteśvara may have been part of bronze *maṇḍalas* with the Buddha in the centre, such as those found in Surocolo in Central Java (Lunsingh Scheurleer and Klokke 1988: 32) as well as in Nganjuk and Ponorogo in East Java. Unfortunately, there are no surviving images of Avalokiteśvara from these particular *maṇḍalas*, that can be dated to the late tenth to the eleventh century CE (Lunsingh Scheurleer and Klokke 1988: 35).

Last period of Avalokiteśvara imagery

It was not until the second half of the thirteenth century and the beginning of the fourteenth century that we notice a short period of renewed interest in Avalokiteśvara images in connection with the Amoghapāśa Lokeśvara *maṇḍala* (Cat. nos 199-203, 205). Here we have the standing eight-armed Amoghapāśa Lokeśvara from the eighth and ninth centuries CE, but now with the addition of a twelve-figure retinue. It is during this period that the focus of constellations with the Buddha in the centre, as in Central Java, moved to Avalokiteśvara as the central deity in a royal temple context.

9.5 Some notes on South and Southeast Asian connections

Considering how open Java had been to Buddhist cultural input from the Indian subcontinent, it is remarkable that the same cultural information did not reach other parts of Southeast Asia, neither directly nor indirectly via Java. The iconographic forms of Avalokiteśvara that were popular in Java, such as the *lalitāsana* Avalokiteśvara, the sorrowful Avalokiteśvara and the *sattvaparyāṅkāśana* Avalokiteśvara, apparently did not find any response outside of Java in Southeast Asia. Those statuettes that show a Javanese style but that have been found outside of Java, such as the few Avalokiteśvara images in the Sambas hoard (Cat. nos 17, 22, 23 and 277), were probably produced in Java and then transported there. The only exception to such a scenario involves the four-armed sorrowful Avalokiteśvara made in clay, which was found in Yala, southern Thailand (Cat. no. 117). Still, even in this case, the original mould may have been produced in Java.

Southeast Asian iconographic developments

Even though Javanese Avalokiteśvara imagery did not have a recognisable impact on the imagery of the Bodhisattva in the rest of Southeast Asia, some of the Southeast Asian iconographic developments are reflected in Javanese imagery. These developments include for instance the addition of a tiger skin wrapped around the Bodhisattva's hips. This feature is specific to Southeast Asia, as discussed in Chapter 8, and can be traced in various standing Avalokiteśvaras manufactured in Java (Cat. nos 15, 17, 195, 198, 199, 215, 216, 218, 236, 260, 263).

The eight-armed Amoghapāśa Lokeśvara is first seen in Insular Southeast Asia, where the earliest images date from the middle of the eighth century (Cat. nos 195-196, 223). This form does not appear on the Indian subcontinent until much later, even after the manufacture of Amoghapāśa Lokeśvara at Candi Jago. Instead, up to that time, the Amoghapāśa images manufactured in India or Nepal have four, six or twelve arms.

Transfer of Southeast Asian iconographic developments to South Asia

The tiger skin as an attribute of Avalokiteśvara and the portrayal of the eight-armed Amoghapāśa Lokeśvara in Southeast Asia certainly pre-date the *Amoghapāśa-sādhana* written by Śākyaśrībhadrā (1127-1225), in which both elements are referenced. Neither the tiger skin, nor the eight-armed Amoghapāśa Lokeśvara are mentioned in the influential Indian text *Niṣpannayogāvalī* (*Niṣpannayogāvalī*, ed. Bhattacharyya 1949). We can only speculate how the iconography of the tiger skin attribute and the imagery of the eight-armed Amoghapāśa Lokeśvara travelled from Insular Southeast Asia to South Asia, specifically Sri Lanka for the tiger skin and Northeast India where Śākyaśrībhadrā wrote the *Amoghapāśa-sādhana*. Considering that the journeys of monks travelling between China and South Asia passed through Southeast Asia, it is possible that such knowledge spread via travelling monks on their way from east to west. We have Sri Lankan imagery demonstrating this knowledge transfer dating from the 700s, but we do not have any eight-armed Amoghapāśa Lokeśvaras from India, instead we have a text referencing the iconography.

9.6 Workshops

A metal statuette would likely have been costly for anyone outside of the ruling class, yet many were produced by different workshops in Java. While I have demonstrated that variation among Avalokiteśvaras in metal is prominent, with many different hands being involved in their production, we must note that a number of images have strong similarities in terms of style suggesting a specific workshop. One example discussed in Chapter 2 concerns the four silver standing ascetic images, one of which was found in the top *stūpa* of Borobudur and a second was found as part of the Sambas hoard in West Kalimantan (Cat. nos 15-18, see Chapter 2, p. 30). To this group of similar Avalokiteśvara statuettes can be added a triad from Sumatra (Cat. no. 20), along with two eight-armed standing Avalokiteśvaras in metal (Cat. nos 207-208, Chapter 8, p. 134) and a twelve-armed

Avalokiteśvara found in Semarang in Central Java (Cat. no. 218). In total, eight Avalokiteśvara statuettes can be traced to this workshop that tended to work in silver.

The *sattvaparyaṅkāśana* group of Avalokiteśvara in bronze (Chapter 6) forms a special case. They illustrate the same iconography and style, and can all be placed in a relatively brief period (Cat. nos 132-142, 144-145). To these can be added further statuettes based on stylistic traits such as the back piece design (Cat. nos 71, 96-98, 103, 112, 115, 146-149, 230 and Pl. 6B) They belong to a period characterised by standardisation. These bronzes also demonstrate that one workshop produced both Buddhist and Hindu images (Chapter 6). Further examples of stylistic similarities can be seen in Cat. nos 52, 66 and 68 (Chapter 3, p. 54). The similarities between the three bronzes include the style of hairdo, the general physical form of the figures and how the *yajñopavīta* is portrayed.

9.7 Meaning of Avalokiteśvara and his multiple roles in Java

The ascetic Avalokiteśvara, radical asceticism and the maritime routes

In Chapter 2 I suggested, inspired by Gregory Schopen (2005), that the ascetic form of Avalokiteśvara in the caves of western India was possibly connected with a ‘radical asceticism’ that seems to have developed there. I also noted that the Astamahābhaya Avalokiteśvara manifestation, with the inclusion of the *abhaya-mudrā*, may have specifically appealed to travelling monks. This was a period when monks began to use sea routes passing through Southeast Asia and Buddhist centres started to develop in that region. For the travelling monks, the Astamahābhaya Avalokiteśvara would have been a source of protection from all the dangers they would face during their travels. I argued that the stone and bronze ascetic Avalokiteśvaras from Southeast Asia, which I dated to the seventh century CE, may be connected with such religious developments in the caves of India and the use of the sea road for the transmission of Buddhist ideas by monks. I therefore suggest that monks spread this first type of Avalokiteśvara image in Southeast Asia. While none of the Southeast Asian images show the *abhaya-mudrā*, the breakage of the right arm could in some cases suggest that this was the hand gesture for a few of them (Cat. nos 2, 4, 8 and 11).

Pieces associated to the ascetic Avalokiteśvaras in bronze have been found in the coastal areas of Southeast Asia and date from around the same time. Among these images are the clay tablets depicting a triad with the *bhadrāsana* Buddha in the centre, displaying the *vitarka-mudrā*, and accompanied by two standing ascetic *bodhisattvas*. Some of these have been found in Buddhist caves, supporting the idea that early Buddhist material culture functioned in a monastic and ascetic context.

In Mainland Southeast Asia, the ascetic form of Avalokiteśvara remained the most common form of Avalokiteśvara, also in the later context of royal temple building. In Java, on the other hand, a variety of new iconographic forms were introduced and most of these present the Bodhisattva in a princely form bedecked with jewellery and seated on a throne.

Avalokiteśvara's princely form, the Gaṇḍavyūha and royal temple building

Avalokiteśvara quickly began to be adopted in the context of royal temple building in Java. In particular, he was depicted in a triad consisting of the Buddha and two attendant *bodhisattvas*, one of which is Avalokiteśvara. Examples of these triads can be seen at Candi Mendut (Cat. no 181) and Plaosan Lor (Cat. nos 184 and 185) as well as in most of the *Bhadracarī* reliefs on Borobudur (Cat. nos 126, 127, 129-131). Within this context, Avalokiteśvara takes on the outward characteristics of a prince and his preferred sitting posture is *lalitāsana*. This adoption of the princely form may have been impacted by Mahāyāna texts such as the *Gaṇḍavyūha*, which was of great importance in the depictions at Borobudur. The text describes *bodhisattvas* as covering “their bodies with gold and jewels” along with wearing “crowns of wish-fulfilling gems” (*Avataṃsakasūtra*, ed. Cleary 1993: 1141). The triad form may also have been affected by this text, which describes the *bodhisattvas* as attendants to the Buddha, “endowed with the acute ears to hear the ocean of teachings of all the Buddhas” (*Avataṃsakasūtra*, ed. Cleary 1993: 1145).

The iconography of some of the stone images is also reflected in a few metal images. Thus, the Candi Mendut triad with the *bhadrāsana* Buddha showing the *dharmacakramudrā* has variants in bronze (Cat. nos 83 and 296), as have the Plaosan Lor ones, which probably showed a Buddha in *padmāsana* (Cat. no. 47). The two-armed Avalokiteśvara seated in *lalitāsana*, now in the British Museum (Cat. no. 66), is also similar to the Candi Mendut Avalokiteśvara statue. A further triad found in bronze shows the Buddha seated in *padmāsana* and the *bodhisattvas* in *sattvaparyaṅkāśana* (Cat. nos 144, 145 and 151) as on Borobudur's fourth main wall (Cat. nos 130-131). A few of the bronze images may have been used in a temple setting as well. Among these is the tall, standing four-armed Avalokiteśvara found at Tekaran (Cat. no. 259).

At Candi Mendut, we also see Avalokiteśvara take on a more central role between two female attendants (Cat. no. 182). There are metal examples of this iconography as well (Cat. nos 228, 261). Although these statuettes suggest some interchange between stone sculptors and metal casters, it is not clear how exactly these metal triads were used. Were they placed in temple niches as donations for the accumulation of merit or were they kept in private homes to remind people of such powerful images connected with certain places? They must have been quite costly and therefore presumably not available to all.

Avalokiteśvara as a teacher

Avalokiteśvara also continues to develop as a single important deity. At Borobudur he takes on the role of a *kalyāṇamitra*, one of the ‘good friends’ that instruct Sudhana on his path towards full enlightenment. As part of one of the *Gaṇḍavyūha* reliefs, Avalokiteśvara is seated with his legs crossed, instructing his pupil Sudhana with one hand in *vitarka-mudrā*, the gesture of teaching (Cat. no. 120). In other reliefs, he sits in *padmāsana* with the focus being on Avalokiteśvara as a spiritual benefactor bestowing his knowledge on Sudhana as indicated by the *varada-mudrā*.

Possibly, such associations with Avalokiteśvara as a teacher bestowing his knowledge are also implied in the stone images in a Plaosan-style (Cat. nos 184-185) and the metal statuettes that show the Bodhisattva in *sattvaparyāṅkāśana* with a book resting on the lotus flower held in the left hand and with the right hand displaying the *varada-mudrā* (Cat. nos 142, 176).

Avalokiteśvara's protective functions

Most of the Javanese bronze statuettes of Avalokiteśvara are less than 15 cm tall. The height of these statuettes could indicate that they were used in a private setting, and possibly as a form of protective talisman or amulet. These bronzes may have been used in a similar way to *dhāraṇīs*, the protective texts, that were sometimes deified in the form of an image (Crujisen, Griffiths and Klokke 2012). We know from the examination of ascetic Avalokiteśvaras that the Bodhisattva could take on a protective role. Part of this role could also have been his capacity to aid in the case of illness or childbirth. It appears that this role was associated with the display of the *abhaya-mudrā*, or gesture of fearlessness, but most of the Javanese statuettes in metal show Avalokiteśvara displaying the *varada-mudrā*, a gesture indicating the Bodhisattva's compassion and generosity.

Avalokiteśvara is also a part of the Aṣṭamahābodhisattva at both Borobudur and Candi Mendut. The group's protective function is described in *Aṣṭamaṇḍalaka-sūtra*, which can also secure the "fulfilment of one's wishes" (Granoff 1968-69: 92). I argue that the eight *bodhisattvas* have this role on Candi Mendut.

Avalokiteśvara's universal compassion

Although the Bodhisattva is referred to in his protective capacity against perils in Buddhist texts, his powers of compassion and bestowing of boons of prosperity and good fortune are also noted. We know from texts such as the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra* that Avalokiteśvara was petitioned in order to have a male or female child. He could also be petitioned for other things, such as world rulership, in other texts.

The four-armed sorrowful Avalokiteśvara demonstrated the Bodhisattva's compassion for the world's suffering with its incorporation of the *cintāmaṇi* – the wish fulfilling jewel. Two other attributes are often present in this iconographic form: the book and the rosary. The use of the book attribute could be a way of connecting the image to the Buddhist texts, possibly *dhāraṇīs*. The rosary could symbolise the recitation of a *mantra* or *dhāraṇī*. Despite being popular, we have little evidence of specific Avalokiteśvara *dhāraṇī* being known in Java. Yet, the meaning of the four-armed sorrowful Avalokiteśvara may have been affected by the *Padmacintāmaṇidhāraṇīsūtra* or a similar text, which described the Cintāmaṇi-cakra Avalokiteśvara who can give magical power to those who complete his ritual (Chapin 1932: 40).

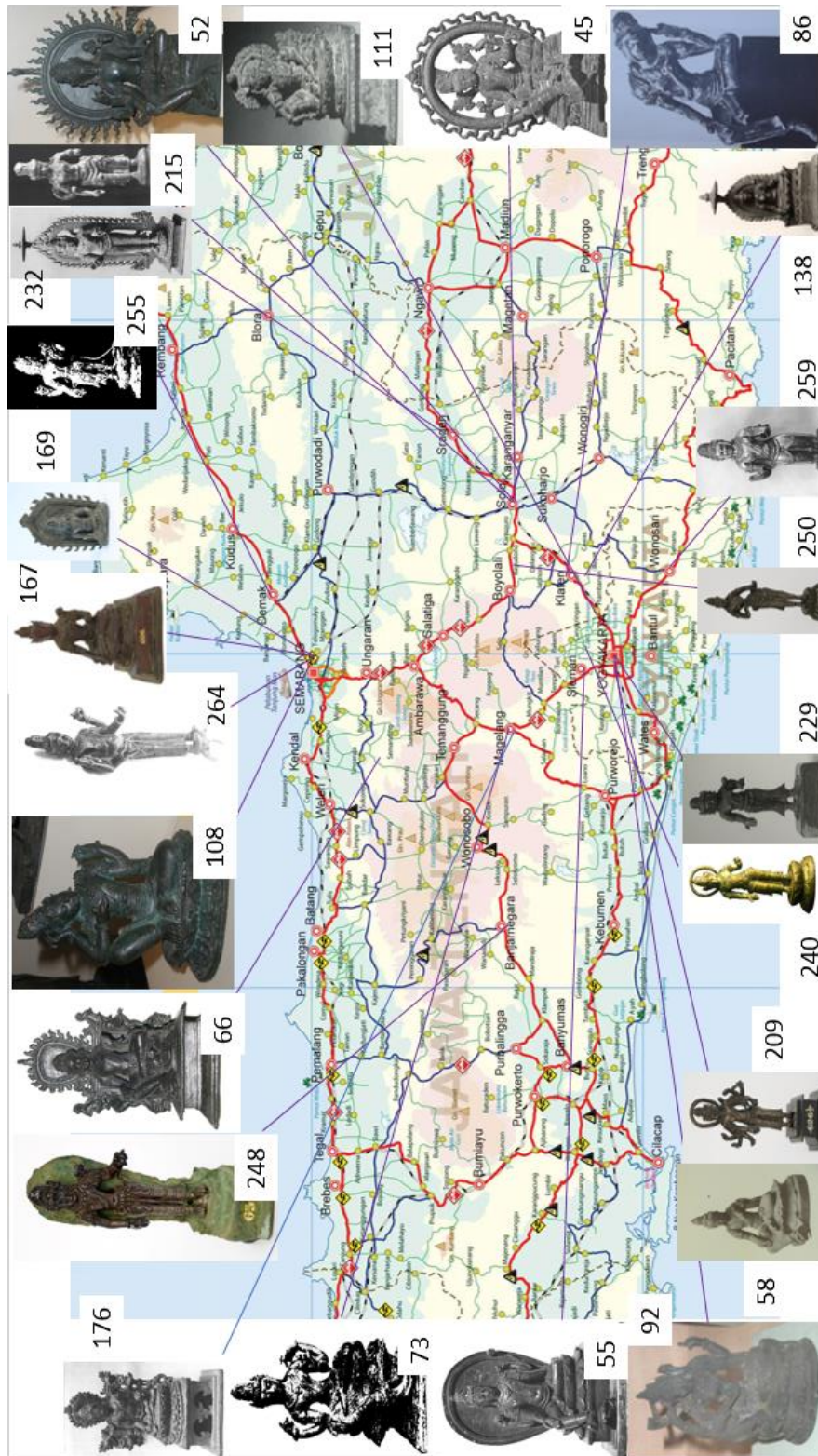
Amoghapāśa Lokeśvara and his maṇḍala

After the long pause in Avalokiteśvara image production, the construction of the Amoghapāśa Lokeśvara at Candi Jago and the associate images show a development in Avalokiteśvara's role in a temple setting. While he had previously been an attendant figure, he was now at the centre of a *maṇḍala*, in a major royal temple. Later Javanese texts have referred to Candi Jago and the use of the Amoghapāśa Lokeśvara *maṇḍala* as a way of deifying Kṛtanagara's father, however, this is not supported by the contemporary texts. From the bronze plaques we can see that the production of Amoghapāśa Lokeśvara and his *maṇḍala* was an attempt at gaining merit, in part for Kṛtanagara's parents.

The Amoghapāśa Lokeśvara *maṇḍala* was also connected with the seven jewels of a *cakravartin* on the statue sent to Sumatra. Earlier Buddhist texts, such as the *Amoghapāśa-dhāraṇī-sūtra* or *Amoghapāśa kalparāja-sūtra*, show that the worship of Amoghapāśa Lokeśvara was simple and gave easy access to merit, cleansed *karma* and could help one become a *cakravartin*. While there is no evidence of these specific texts being present in Java, the concept of the *cakravartin* and his seven jewels was known in Java, both during the Central Javanese period and during the reign of Kṛtanagara. From the available inscriptions on the bronze versions of the Amoghapāśa Lokeśvara *maṇḍala* we know that these images were part of Kṛtanagara's attempt to gain merit for his parents and teachers. The *maṇḍala* was also used as a way of strengthening the political bond between Java and Sumatra. The combination of the Amoghapāśa Lokeśvara *maṇḍala* with the seven jewels of the *cakravartin* in the gift for Sumatra indicates that there was a known connection between Amoghapāśa Lokeśvara and the *cakravartin* during this period in East Java. Therefore, the construction of Candi Jago, with its Amoghapāśa Lokeśvara *maṇḍala*, could also have been Kṛtanagara's way of demonstrating his world rulership.

The variety in iconography for the Javanese Avalokiteśvara images seems to reflect a range of roles that he could fulfil for his worshippers. Apart from providing merit in general, he could help with all kinds of daily problems, help to reach higher levels of spiritual development and even help to claim world rulership.

Map 3. Avalokiteśvara statuettes with known find sites in Central Java, with catalogue numbers.



Map 4. Avalokiteśvara images with known find sites in East Java and Bali, with catalogue numbers.

