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THE "PENSIVE" BODHISATVA FROM UDDIYĀNA (SWAT VALLEY) TO PATTIKERA (MAINAMATI) — A UNIQUE EXAMPLE FROM MAGADHA (SOUTH BIHAR)

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In the Buddhist theogony the concept of the Bodhisatva Padmapāṇi/Avalokiteśvara¹ is of utmost importance, and of the various forms of this deity the "Pensive" form is unique. For the use of the term pensive² (because the Bodhisatva is shown in a thoughtful gesture), we have not found an appropriate nomenclature of the deity from any literary Buddhist source. The well-known Buddhist iconographic text *Sādhanamālā* (c. 11th century A.D.) mentions thirty-eight *sādhanas* describing the different forms of Avalokiteśvara, but in none of them the pensive form of the deity is referred to. And in the late paintings on the wooden panels in the Macchandar Vahal Vihara of Kathmandu, one hundred and eight varieties of this deity have been illustrated giving in the Newari script the various names of the deity, but none of them corresponds to the form of the pensive deity. See Bhattacharyya 1958, Appendix, pp. 394-431. In the various descriptions of Saraswati 1977, pp. XXVI-XXXIII and their illustrations no mention is made of this type of Avalokiteśvara.³

But in the large volume on the *Eastern Indian Bronzes* Khandalavala and Gorakshkar have illustrated a damaged bronze image of this deity from Nalanda calling it "Chintāmaṇi Chakra, Mainamati style at Nalanda, 8th century A.D., Ht. 12 cm., National Museum, New Delhi. (No. 47.37)". (Plate 9.1). Perhaps they had no information of the presence of this type of deity in Magadha or South Bihar, hence they called it Mainamati style. See Khandalavala and Gorakshkar 1986, p. 112, No. 39. The authors describe, "The deity is seated in *mahārājilīāsana* on a lotus placed on a rectangular *pīṭha* with a plain plate *prabhā* which is more characteristic of Mainamati, but also seen at Nalanda." And to corroborate their assumption they comment further, "On a stone plaque discovered from the excavations at Mainamati there is a similar representation of this deity which suggests a possible Mainamati Provenance. The bronze votive *stūpa* from Ashrafpur also has a representation of this particular deity. It may be that the present image was brought to Nalanda from Mainamati and not cast at Nalanda. The Nalanda plaque now in the Ashutosh Museum, which Pratapaditya Pal refers to, may also have come from the area of Mainamati where this iconographic type seems to have been favoured. In any event the finding of this image at Nalanda affords evidence to account for the interaction of styles from different areas of

Eastern India resulting in certain similar stylistic features being borrowed by the one centre of casting from another."



Plate 9.1 Damaged bronze image of two-armed seated Avalokiteśvara from Nalanda, now in National Museum, New Delhi (No. 47.37), ht. 12 cm, 8th century

This is rather an ignorant statement. The concept and representation of this type of Avalokiteśvara was strongly prevalent at Nalanda, or rather in Magadha. There was no need to import this type of images from Mainamati to Nalanda. Following Pal (1967-68: 39-48) the authors called this type of Avalokiteśvara "Chintāmaṇi Chakra", a term which needs further corroboration and explanation. Against this nomenclature see the remarks made by Prangopal and Debjani Paul (2001, p. 359), "In this context it may be interesting to look into a relatively less familiar type of Bodhisattva images. These, at a first glance, may well look like one but in reality cannot always and necessarily be labelled as the Cintāmaṇi-chakra form of the deity in a literal sense of the term. For, as the nomenclature itself would suggest, a gem (*maṇi*) and a wheel (*cakra*) constitute two of the mandatory attributes of the multi-armed Cintāmaṇicakra Avalokiteśvara. It is further stated that, one of his right hands should 'invariably' touch 'the right side of the face in the gesture of meditation' (Pal 1967-69: 39)."⁴ Both the authors comment further

(pp. 359-360), "The lack of the pair of patent attributes and, more importantly, the radical departure from the tradition of letting the right hand be placed on the corresponding side of the face are characteristics that distinguish a type of Bodhisattva images with which we are concerned here. Indeed the singularity of this type of Avalokiteśvara icons ensues from the way the deity supports his leftward-tilted head with the normal arm on that side. In order not to mix these up with the usual ones which are generally referred to as Mahākāruṇika or the Great Compassionate One, and just for the sake of convenience we may call such images Karuṇāghana-mūrti of the Bodhisattva. This is a type of image in which the tender sentiment of kindness, sympathy and compassion, inherent in the very concept of Avalokiteśvara seems to have taken a more crystallized form." Unfortunately we are unable to accept the poetical nomenclature of the deity suggested by the two authors.

That Nalanda was a centre for worship of this unique form of Avalokiteśvara is evidenced from an inscribed terracotta plaque found in the Bargaon village closed to Nalanda. Bhattacharyya illustrates a six-armed seated figure of a Buddhist deity (Bhattacharyya 1951: 43-47, fig. 1), and describes (pp. 43-44), "It is six-armed and is seated in the *sukhāsana* pose on a *mahāmbuja*. Although the two of the upper left hands do not clearly show the weapons or objects held by them, partly on account of bad execution on that portion and partly on account of some corrosion, one can easily discern the objects held in most other hands and poses shown by these. Of the three hands (right!) the lowest i.e., the normal one resting on the right knee is shown in the *varada*, the next upper one has a rosary held by means of the fore-finger and the thumb with the little finger stretched out, the hand-pose thus resembling very much the pose known as *siṃhakarṇahasta*, while the hand nearest the head is *in the abhaya shown in profile*;⁵ of the three left hands the lowest i.e., the normal one, has the palm resting on the lotus seat itself in the *nidrita* pose and holds probably the stalk of the lotus which rises straight above; the middle hand which is badly disfigured has the faint traces of an object looking like a pitcher (*kuṇḍī* and the third or the uppermost hand which is also equally disfigured, has a staff-like object (the handle of *tridaṇḍi*?) may be a book. Traces of *vrata-sūtra* (Sacred Thread) are visible down on the left breast. The figure wears a *hāra*, *aṅgada* or ornaments for the upper arms and *kuṇḍalas* for the ear. The *jaṭā-mukuṭa* that the deity bears shows a big knot at the top with traces of parted hair at the front. The expression is characteristically serene." Bhattacharyya further comments (pp. 44-45), "While, however, the *āyudhas* in the six hands so far as discernible leave no doubt as to its identification as the Avalokiteśvara known as Sugatisandarśana, the seated pose of the deity is rather rare." Bhattacharyya dates this image to the 9th-10th centuries A. D. on the basis of the script of the pedestal inscription. The two-line much corroded inscription perhaps contains the so-called Buddhist creed. (Plate 9.2).

But Bhattacharyya is absolutely wrong in his identification of the deity. He wrongly described the right uppermost hand as "in the *abhaya* shown in profile", it supports the head of the deity in a pensive attitude. Bhattacharyya appears not to have seen any image of the Bodhisatva Padmapāṇi/ Avalokiteśvara in this attitude.

The same terracotta plaque is published by Pratapaditya Pal who designates the image with a different nomenclature, see Pal 1967-68: 43, fig. 7. Pal comments, "Some years ago the Asutosh Museum (University of Calcutta) acquired a clay plaque from Nalanda (Pl. XIII, Fig. 7), which certainly represents Cintāmaṇi Cakra Avalokiteśvara and is probably *the only example that has come to light so far in India*.⁵ It shows a figure seated in *mahārājalilā* on a lotus and with six arms. His hair is tied in a chignon and a pearl necklace is the only ornament adorning his otherwise bare torso. His head is emphatically inclined to the right and rests against the palm of the uppermost right hand. The second right hand seems to carry the rosary, while the third hangs down from his knee and displays the *varadamudrā*. It may also

have held a jewel which is now not discernible.⁵ Of the three left hands only one is clearly distinguishable and this rests on the lotus seat. The two others seem to have been damaged or the mould from which the plaque was cast may have been defective, and hence the imperfect impression. Below the lotus is an illegible inscription in two lines. Stylistically, the plaque may be assigned to about the ninth century."

Pal, however, was not aware of the presence of a copper *caitya* from Ashrafpur, Dhaka Dist., Bangladesh, now in the Indian Museum, Kolkata (I.M. No. 6301), published by R.D. Banerji in 1933, Pl. LXXV(b). (Plate 9.3). In this *caitya*, along with other Buddhist deities, the two-armed Padmapāṇi/Avalokiteśvara is seated in *sukhāsana* or *mahārājālāsana*, perhaps holding the stem of a lotus with the right hand and his head inclined towards the palm of his left hand. It may be of bronze (p.154). Banerji comments (p. 142), "A medallion attached to the side of the parasol bears the creed in characters of the 9th century A.D." He informs (p. 142), "The next votive *stūpa* of metal was discovered in the village of Ashrafpur in the District of Dacca along with two copper plates of king Devakhadga of Eastern Bengal. (*Memoirs, Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol. I, pp. 85-91*)." Also Proc. Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1891, pl. III.



Plate 9.2 Inscribed terracotta plaque depicting six-armed seated Avalokiteśvara from Bargaon near Nalanda, now Asutosh Museum, University of Calcutta. 9th-10th century

In 1963 F.A. Khan had published the extremely interesting stone image of this deity from Mainamati, East Pakistan, although the deity is four-armed. (Plate 9.4) Since then several scholars have published this image. Mainamati (now in Bangladesh) was also a centre for the cult of this type of Padmapāṇi/Avalokiteśvara. In 1976 A.K.M. Shamsul Alam published this stone sculpture along with a similar one from Kutila Mura site about three miles north of the Salban Vihara. See Alam 1976, *Mainamati*, p. 48, pl. X. He has no description of the stone plaque excepting the short remark, "Two of the stone sculptures found inside the stupa-shaft, representing the *Dharmachakra*, bear some inscriptions on their pedestals. Palaeographically they may be dated around seventh century A.D. ..." See also Alam 1985, p. 78-79, fig. 17. The stone plaque has also been published by Abu Imam (2000) in *Excavations at Mainamati: An Exploratory Study* (The International Centre for Study of Bengal Art, Dhaka, Bangladesh). Imam (p. 53) writes, "We are very fortunate in

getting certain artifacts from Kutila Mura which on the one hand throw light on the earliest art tradition of south-east Bengal and on the other give some clue to the possible date of the shrine. The box-chambers of the *Dharmacakra stūpa* and the shafts of the other *stūpas* have yielded various clay votive *stūpas* and sealings (Plates 3.6 & 3.7), but more importantly, in the box-chambers two votive sculptures were found. The sculptures, alto-relievo plaques of soft stone, one depicting Avalokiteśvara (Plate 3.4) and the other Buddha (Plate 3.5), have features of earliness in the treatment of their subjects and also both of them bear a line of inscription -- the Buddhist creed—written, as the palaeographers think, in the *nagri* of c. 7th century A. D."

The palaeographers should know that the *nagri* script did not originate as early as the 7th century, and that it was never used in Bengal. The script is known as *Siddhamāṭṛkā*.



Plate 9.3 Bronze *caitya* depicting two-armed seated Avalokiteśvara on one side from Ashrafpur, Dhaka Dist., Bangladesh, now in Indian Museum, Kolkata (No. 6301), 9th century



Plate 9.4 Inscribed stone image of Avalokiteśvara from Kutila Mura, Mainamati, now in Mainamati Museum, Comilla, Bangladesh, ht. 75.5 cm, 8th century



Plate 9.5 Gray stone relief of Padmapāṇi-Lokeśvara, Bodhgaya region, Bihar, now in Neumann Collection, Switzerland, ht. 1.02 m, c. 9th century.

Fortunately enough Debala Mitra described in meticulous detail this important relief sculpture. See Mitra 1997: 71-72. It is very unfortunate that Abu Imam did not take any notice of Debala Mitra's valuable description of the relief which was published from Dhaka. Mitra writes (p. 71), "Among the published sculptures, three specimens (Plates 6.7, 6.8 and 6.9) representing the maṇḍala of eight Bodhisattvas⁶ can be identified. Two of them were recovered from the shaft of the central one (wheel-shaped core) of a row of three imposing *stūpas* at Kotila Mura or Kutila Mura. Bearing a short inscription (almost defaced), both of them are of soft grey shale and are ascribable to about the eighth century A.D. The projecting (downward) tenon at the middle part of their base would indicate that they were originally enshrined and their tenons were fixed within pedestals. One (Acc. no. 2558) of the two stone sculptures is 75.5 cm. high (excluding the tenon which is slightly more than 5 cm. high). It represents the four-armed Avalokiteśvara with other figures on three sides (Plate 6.7). The sparsely-bejewelled Bodhisattva (wearing *valayas*, armlets, a *hāra* and *jaṭābhāra*) is seated with his left leg bent and the right one stretched on a double-petalled lotus with a long perpendicular stumpy stalk; parallel to this stalk are two flanking stumpy stalks ending each

in a lotus-bud. Against the stem of the three stalks is a two-armed female figure with the foot of the bent left leg on a splayed-out stem and the right foot on the pedestal; the palm of her raised right hand is in the pose of giving a slap (*capetadānābhinayī*) and the left palm showing *tarjanī*. Behind her is a halo with a semicircular top. She may be identified with Aparājitā. One of the two right palms of Avalokiteśvara rests on the lotus-seat, the other holding an indistinct object placed against the chest. Of his two left hands, one carries possibly the stalk of a lotus and the other palm supports the head which is inclined towards his left. The *mahākāruṇika* (all compassionate) Bodhisattva appears to be in a pensive mood, as if immersed in anxious thoughts for the well-being and salvation of mankind." Her description goes on and she identifies the other accompanying deities. Finally she comments (p. 72), "The raised pedestal above the tenon of the sculpture is inscribed with the Buddhist creed in characters of not earlier than the eighth century A.D."

A few years back the sale catalogue of Sotheby's New York, Indian and Southeast Asian Art, offered for sale an exquisite at the same time very interesting relief-sculpture describing, "A Pala Speckled Gray Stone Stele of Cintamani Lokeshvara, Eastern India, Bodhgaya Region, Circa 9th century, H. 1.02 m. (see Sotheby's New York, Thursday, June 17, 1993, lot 111). I am very thankful to Carlton Rochell, the former director of the Asian Section of the Sotheby's New York, for kindly sending me an excellent photograph of the sculpture without any delay (Plate 9.5). In the meantime, I was kindly informed by Claudine Bautze-Picron, who has published the image, that the stone sculpture is now in a private collection of Switzerland. I immediately wrote to the owner for his kind permission to speak on this piece and to publish it. He kindly agreed to my request.

This unique piece leaves no doubt that Magadha or South Bihar (if not Nalanda) was the centre of this Bodhisattva cult during the Pala period. The uniqueness of the figure is that the two-armed pensive deity clearly holds a jewel in his right hand and sits under the flowery branch of a tree, at the root of the tree there is a water jar, a snake (*nāga*) encircles the trunk of the tree and a jewel or *maṇi-ratna*, just above the snake, and a *cakra* or rather *cakra-ratna* on a stand, are shown on the branch. The oval-shaped back-plate is slightly damaged. Claudine Bautze-Picron has already published this image in the *Journal of Bengal Art* 5, 2000, p. 111, Plate 7.18. She describes, "Stone images illustrate the same iconographic topic, eventually combined with another aspect of the Bodhisattva seated in a "pensive mood" (Plate 7.18), which might be identified with the form known as Cintāmaṇi Cakra; the Bodhisattva owns the seven jewels of the Cakravartin, but more important his characteristic attributes are the *cakra* and ... the *maṇi* ...". For her identification of this pensive Bodhisattva as Cintāmaṇi Cakra, she refers to Pal (1967-68) and Chapin (1932). In this image besides the *cakra* and *maṇi* we see the illustration of the other five jewels of a Rājacakravartin above the branch. The Bodhisattva seated in *mahārājalilāsana* holds with the left arm the stalk of a full-blown lotus, the fingers of the slightly damaged left hand touches his "pensive" face, while there is a *maṇi*, jewel-like object in the cavity of his right hand. He wears various ornaments, but a tall *jaṭā-*

makūṭa in the middle of which an effigy of Amitābha is shown. His two male companions, Hayagrīva and Sudhanakumāra are shown to his proper left. At his proper right a water-pot with a lid is placed. It is difficult to explain the presence of a snake with the jewel-producing(?) tree.⁷ An umbrella is shown above his head. Below in the recess of the pedestal the donor couple and two other adorants are shown seated.



Plate 9.6 Stone image of Avalokiteśvara under a flowery tree with Seven Jewels and accompanied by Sudhanakumāra, Hayagrīva, Sūcīmukha and a Yakṣa, from Bandarhati, Hooghly Dist., West Bengal, now in Asutosh Museum, University of Calcutta, c. 11th century

The famous and sacred six-syllabled (*ṣaḍakṣarī*) salutation formula *oṃ maṇi-padme hūm* invokes the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara as *Maṇi-padmā* a female notion of the male deity holding *maṇi*, a jewel and *padma*, a lotus. According to us this image perhaps from Bodhgaya represents the *Maṇi-padmā* manifestation of Avalokiteśvara.

For another illustration of Avalokiteśvara, standing under a similar tree we should refer to the well-known stone image from Bhandarhati, Hooghly Dist., West Bengal, now in the Asutosh Museum, Kolkata (Plate 9.6). See Saraswati 1977, fig. 91;⁸ Anasua Sengupta 1983: 61-62, pls. I-II; Susan L. Huntington 1984: 175, fig. 221;⁹ Janice Leoshko 1997: 80, plate 7.12; also Bhattacharya 2001: 30-31, plate 2.8. Janice calls the tree "wish-fulfilling" tree. She refers to an interesting twelve-armed Avalokitesvara image under a similar tree showing the Seven Jewels, see Leoshko 1997: 79, plate 7.1, (the tree has no snake), and Debala Mitra 1991: 325-337, photo 34. Debala Mitra who meticulously describes the image of the 10th-11th century, refrains from naming the deity.

In his article, 'Four Times Avalokiteśvara in Orissa' in the *Journal of Bengal Art* 6, 2001, pp. 47-53), A.J. Gail has illustrated a nice stone sculpture from Ratnagiri, Orissa, p. 51, with the caption "Meditating Lokeśvara in niche of votive stūpa, Ratnagiri, Orissa, 10th-11th century A.D." (plate 3.11 and plate 3.12 detail). What Gail does not mention is the fact that

Lokeśvara sits under the branch of a tree with flowers and jewels, and there is a large pot at the proper left. Nevertheless, from this solitary example, we know that the cult of this type of Avalokiteśvara was known in Orissa. However, Gail fails to refer to Debala Mitra who had already published this image and had described it, see Mitra 1983, pl. CCLXVII-A, p. 333. Mitra describes, as usual, in detail, "The figure, in high relief, of Avalokiteśvara (pl. CCLXVII A) in the niche of Stūpa 97 (extant height being 66.7 cm.) is singular on account of a rather unusual posture.⁵ With his right foot resting on the left thigh and left leg pendant, the two-armed Bodhisattva, with half-closed eyes and pensive facial expression, is seated on a double-petalled lotus under the canopy of a foliated *aśoka* tree. His slightly-bent head rests against his right palm, the thumb and the ring-finger of which touch each other. He holds in his left palm the stalk of a full-blown lotus which has issued from a *ghaṭa*. Clothed in an *antariya* held by a girdle and a folded *uttariya* worn in an *upaviti* fashion, he is richly adorned with beaded anklets, two bangles around each wrist, a beaded *upavīta* of two strings, two kinds of *hāras*, ear-rings, ornate armlets and a short *mukuṭa*. The high *jaṭā-mukuṭa* contains perhaps a miniature effigy of Amitābha, his spiritual sire. Below the seat is a lamp, apart from a bowl with offerings." Perhaps the tree mentioned by Debala Mitra as *aśoka* tree, may be the *kalpavṛkṣa*, and the lotus in the hand of Avalokiteśvara perhaps does not come out of the *ghaṭa*, it is the *kalpavṛkṣa* the trunk of which comes out of the *ghaṭa*, as is the case with several other images.¹⁰

Donaldson (1992) refers to several images of Avalokiteśvara from Orissa standing under a *kalpavṛkṣa*. One such figure is from Badagada¹¹ (on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar), now lying in the Orissa State Museum and belonging to the 10th century. He remarks (p. 135), "A unique feature which suggests this is more than a conventional image of Lokanātha is the huge stalk rising up from a *ghaṭa* on the left side of the back-slab. It is possible that this is the trunk of a *kalpavṛkṣa* which may have arched over his head, suggesting that this could have been an image of Lokeśvara dispensing riches. This seems substantiated by the grouping of five *pretas* on the right of the pedestal beneath the hand displaying *varada*." Donaldson nevertheless convincingly says (p. 134), "Contrary to the view of P. Pal, however, there are also some earlier Indian examples which were precursory to the later Nepalese concept of the two-armed Cintāmaṇi Lokeśvara." Referring to another image Donaldson describes in detail (pp. 135-136), "More developed in respect to its iconographic program, and better preserved, is the image now placed on one side of Mārīcī in the sanctum of the modern Khuṭiā (Jayadurgā) temple at Ayodhyā. Lokeśvara stands in a more relaxed contrapposto pose with his right hand lowered in *varada*. His left arm, bent at the elbow, is raised above his head where it holds the stem of a full-blown lotus, the flower hanging slightly down. He is richly adorned and wears a tall *jaṭā-mukuṭa*. He is flanked at the lower left by an image of Cintāmaṇicakra Avalokiteśvara seated in front of a huge *ghaṭa*. Rising up from the *ghaṭa* is large *kalpavṛkṣa* which arches over the head of Lokeśvara and hangs half-way down the other side. The lotus held by Lokeśvara issues from the stalk. Dispersed along the meandering

kalpavṛkṣa are the *sapta-ratnas*, i.e. *cakra*, *maṇi*, royal consort, horse, elephant, minister (treasurer) and general, the latter represented by a sword. In addition, jewels drip from the tips of the foliage. Beneath the branches on the right are five impatient *pretas* with one or both hands uplifted to receive the gems falling from the *kalpavṛkṣa*."



Plate 9.7 Gray schist stele of Padmapāṇi, Swat Valley, ht. 40 cm, c. 8th century. Reproduced from Sotheby's New York, Thursday, June 17, 1993, lot 76.

Pal (1967-68) prefers to call all the pensive forms of Padmapāṇi/ Avalokiteśvara Cintāmaṇi Cakra Avalokiteśvara, and most of the modern scholars accept his nomenclature. We have certain reservation to accept this nomenclature. Pal says (p. 40), "There are several texts in the Chinese Buddhist tradition concerning Cintāmaṇi Cakra Avalokiteśvara. In the year A.D. 709 Bodhiruci translated a dhāraṇi of his six-armed manifestation. The *Taisho Tripiṭaka* lists several others translated by Gijo, Śikṣānanda, Ratnacinta, Amoghavajra and Vajrabodhi. Of these scholars, Śikṣānanda was a Khotanese and Ratnacinta a Kashmiri, while the others were associated with central and eastern India. All these scholars seem to have been more or less contemporaries of each other and the fact that they were from as far apart as Khotan and Nalanda (where Vajrabodhi was ordained) would indicate the popularity of Cintāmaṇi Cakra Avalokiteśvara in India by the beginning of

the eighth century. Yet neither his representation nor a sūtra concerning him is known prior to that date. According to the sūtra translated by Vajrabodhi, Cintāmaṇi Cakra should be of a golden complexion and should have six arms. He should be seated on a lotus on Mount Potalaka and on his crown should be depicted the Tathāgata Amitābha. His first hand displays the meditation *mudrā* as he is contemplating on the causes of all suffering. The second holds the wishing gem (*cintāmaṇi*) which can fulfil all desires, while the third holds the pearls (or beads) of meditation, evidently a literal Chinese rendering of the word *japamālā*. Of his left hands the first rests on Mount Potalaka, which he is said to support, the second carries the lotus which can purify all non-believers; and the third holds the wheel which is the wheel of the Dharma that has no superior. The sūtra further states that this six-armed Bodhisattva can roam the six roads of transmigration (*rikudo*) in order that the means (*upāya*) of great mercy (*mahākaruṇā*) can end all suffering."



Plate 9.8 Bronze image of Padmapāṇi, Swat region, ht. 14 cm, c. 8th century. Reproduced from Sotheby's New York, Thursday, September 19, 1996, lot 140.

Surprisingly the well-known Buddhist iconographic text *Sādhnamālā* does not mention or describe a form of Avalokiteśvara as Cintāmaṇi-cakra-lokeśvara in its list of thirty-eight forms of the deity. Lokesh Chandra in his *Dictionary of Buddhist Iconography*, Vol. 3, refers to Cintāmaṇi-cakra Avalokiteśvara beginning with the two-armed form of the deity and ending with the twelve-armed form. But none of the forms of the deity occurs in the Indian Sub-continent. See Lokesh Chandra 2001, p. 809.

For the origin of this type of "Pensive" Bodhisatva Padmapāṇi/ Avalokiteśvara we have to go to the Gandhara region because the early stone or bronze images of only two-armed Bodhisatva in this peculiar gesture originates in that region. And he is not associated with any jewel (*maṇi*) or disk (*cakra*), neither conceived as the *Rājacakravartin* possessing the well-known

Seven Jewels (*sapta-ratna*). Many scholars have referred, discussed and tried to find out a correct interpretation of this type of Padmapāṇi/ Avalokiteśvara, but unfortunately nothing concrete has been said so far. Although many early sculptures of this type of image are mentioned as from Gandhara, there is no doubt of the present author that the origin of this pensive form of Padmapāṇi/ Avalokiteśvara is the Swat Valley, the ancient Uddiyāna or Udyāna of the Buddhist literature. (Plate 9.7). While describing a bronze image of "Padmapani Seated in Meditation" from the "Swat Valley region (or Kashmir), 7th century A.D." (Metropolitan Museum No. 1974.273), Martin Lerner remarks (No. 4, Plate 4), "This superb sculpture, one of the finest Swat Valley bronzes brought to light so far, ... The deity is identifiable as the Bodhisattva Padmapani Lokeshvara, the lotus-bearing manifestation of the Lord of Infinite Compassion -- Avalokitesvara. The small Buddha in his hairdo is Amitabha, the "spiritual Father" of the Bodhisattva. ... His raised right hand, with one finger pointed to the cheek, makes the distinctive gesture usually identified as one of meditation. This identification, however, is still problematic. ... It is clear that the contemplative Bodhisattva eventually was elevated to the position of an important cult image. The famous seventh century Chinese pilgrim Hsüan-tsang found a temple with an image of this deity when he visited Swat, in what is to-day northern Pakistan. Judging from stone sculpture still *in situ* in

Udegram in the Swat Valley, a cult developed there specifically dedicated to the worship of this Bodhisattva in this unusual posture." (See Tucci, G. 1958: 279-328, figs. 4, 10, 13, 18, 19, 22). For a similar bronze figure from the Swat Valley dated in c. 8th century, see Plate 9.8. For similar type of Avalokiteśvara/ Padmapāṇi from the Greater Swat Region compare the bronze images in Schroeder 2001, pls. 7, 8, 48A, 50A, 50B, 51D-E, 53A, 53B-C, 56A. Schroeder carefully refrains from calling these images Cintāmaṇicakra-Lokeśvara.¹²

Notes:

1. We use the term Padmapāṇi for Avalokiteśvara with certain reservation, because there is no textual support for this term.
2. The expression "pensive" has been coined by different scholars while describing this form of an image from the Gandhara region.
3. There are several irregularities in Saraswati's volume which have been carefully pointed out by Claudine Bautze-Picron which should be published in a separate article.
4. The reference is slightly wrong, it should be Pal 1967-68: 39.
5. Italics ours, because we are unable to accept this remark.
6. The term has been wrongly printed as Bodhissattvas.
7. In her recent lecture at the Seventeenth International Conference on South Asian Archaeology held in Bonn Claudine Bautze-Picron referred to the Buddhist text *Kāraṇḍavyūha* as regards the presence of *kalpavṛkṣas* around Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, compare *Mahāyāna-sūtra-saūgraha*, 18. *Kāraṇḍavyūha*, *prakaraṇa* 6, p. 266.
8. Saraswati wrongly calls the place Bhadrakali.
9. Huntington also wrongly calls the place Bandarhati. Donaldson refers to the image (1992, p. 136), but wrongly gives the place name as "Badarhati in the Hooghly district of Bengal". He follows Susan Huntington in dating the image to the first-half of the 11th century.
10. The Ratnagiri image betrays evidently a Magadha connection as regards this special type of Padmapāṇi-Avalokiteśvara.
11. No diacritical mark has been used in this article with the modern place names.
12. I am thankful to Gerd Mevissen for drawing my attention to the images published by Ulrich von Schroeder.

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