

Special 9th century lavastone Buddha statue

- Material : lavastone
- 110 cm high
- From Central Java
- Bhumisparsha mudra
- Original from the 9th century
- Including taxation report
- Including restauration report
- Very special !
- Originating from Indonesia
- Nr: RL-01

Rielerweg 71-73
7416 ZB Deventer
The Netherlands
originalbuddhas.com
info@originalbuddhas.com
+31-6-22192241





A VOLCANIC STONE FIGURE OF BUDDHA SHAKYAMUNI
Indonesia, Central Javanese period, 9th century
Height 110 cm

By the seventh century Buddhism was established in most parts of the Indonesian archipelago as attested by inscriptions and archaeological remains. The rise of the Shailendra dynasty in the eighth century resulted in the spread of Buddhism over Java that prevailed in the entire region during the eighth and ninth centuries. During this period many important Buddhist monuments, like Candi Borobudur, were erected in Central Java. All these candi's were adorned with free carved Buddhist figures.

Most of the Buddha's in public and private collections around the world cannot be assigned with certainty to a present existing monument. They indeed could have belonged to temples that have been destroyed or perhaps even still buried in the ground. However it is known from texts that these stone images were not necessarily designed for such a candi but sometimes simply placed in a peridop or an open wood structure and situated at specific holy places. Most likely most known examples, including the presented one, were designated for such a purpose.

The Buddha is seated in meditation posture. His right hand is damaged but originally rested on his right foot sole. In fact that section shows stronger wear suggesting that once his right lower arm was placed there, since long missing. He is dressed in a monastic robe with a pleated section falling over his shoulder along his back. His voluminous face displays a serene expression and still shows stylistic elements of North India Gupta artistic ideals, like the rounded curls. The round facial line does reflect however the Javanese physiognomy. The combination gives the Buddha a definite softer and more introvert feeling than many of its Indian counterparts.

Tentoonstelling:
- 'Goad der Goden: uit het oude Java', Wereldmuseum Rotterdam, 2 oktober 2014 – 4 juli 2015.

- Colin Bowles, London: Restoration and condition report on Javanese stone Buddha, 17 december 2009
- Wim J. Lusterhouwer, Laboratory of Microanalysis, Department of Earth Sciences – FALW, Vrije Universiteit: Visual examination of the alteration state of a live-size sitting Buddha statue, 15 december 2009

Aldus gedaan naar beste kennis en wetenschap en getekend te Amsterdam op 24 oktober 2017.

W. Lusterhouwer
Drs Hugo E. Kaelijer
Gereguleerd Register Restaurator Aziatische Kunst



vrije Universiteit amsterdam



Visual examination of the alteration state of a live-size sitting Buddha statue,
110 cm high, sculptured from a dark grey porous lava rock.

Laboratory of Microanalysis
Department of Earth Sciences – FALW
Amsterdam, 15 december 2009
W.J. Lusterhouwer

Visual examination of the alteration state of a live-size sitting Buddha statue, 110 cm high, sculptured from a porous lava rock.

Recently a live size sitting Buddha statue, missing its right arm, sculptured from a dark grey porous volcanic rock, has been brought to my attention.

The knees have been joined during a recent restoration and a section of the nose is new.

The rock consists of a fine-grained matrix partly of dark volcanic glass and few coarser, almost black pyroxene and lighter, somewhat translucent feldspar crystals.

The sculptured surface shows characteristic traces of alteration like rounding of the sharp rock surface between the pores, weathering and rounding of a few feldspar grains and deep weathering of the glassy rock matrix. If recently carved, the surface would display a fresh, flat and less porous surface with sharp rims along natural pores.

Between the separate curls of the hairdress are residues of a fine sandy soil and traces of plant roots and moss have been observed.

Traces of recent working of the surface or toolmarks have not been found. All traces of original sculpturing and finishing have been overprinted by weathering or have disappeared completely by surface attrition.

From these observations it is allowed to draw the conclusion that the sculpture is ancient.



COLIN BOWLES

19 Bowlands Road, London SW18 8
Tel: 020 7498 3431
Fax: 020 7498 4123
Email: c.bowles@conservationcentre.co.uk



Restoration and condition report on Javanese stone Buddha
Released on 17-12-09 (our ref: 13776)

As you can see in the photo there is a crack from the left side of the rock to the waist which travels across the chest, the crack carries on through to the back, there is also a crack across the left arm at the elbow, the left and right knee were repaired and the nose was rebuilt.
The repairs were carried out using steel pins and epoxy resin to join the knees, the breaks were all filled with a plaster and pigment mix which was then treated and coloured, with water colour and acrylic paints, to match the surrounding stone.
The surface was dry cleaned and some moss and lichen were removed.
Although it is not our company's policy to make statements as to whether a statue is ancient in origin, I can say that there seemed to be nothing suspicious about the surface to me as I worked on it.

Yours Sincerely
Colin Bowles
Colin Bowles Conservation Restorer

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