



7362 A gilt copper repoussé half figure of Guanyin (Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara) draped in a flowing robe, tied at the waist with a bow. Jewel strings with florets and tassels adorn the garment and are inlaid with semiprecious stones

Sino-Tibetan 18th century Qing dynasty

Dimensions:

Figure and stand: H. 79cm x W. 47cm x D. 43.5cm (31¼" x 18¾" x 17¼")

Figure: H. 61cm x W. 47cm x D. 36.5cm (24¼" x 18¾" x 14½")

Avalokiteshvara is an esoteric form of the Bodhisattva who embodies the compassion of all Buddhas and became widely employed in tantric visualisations. This bodhisattva is portrayed in different cultures

as either female or male and corresponds to the Chinese Goddess of Mercy Guanyin and the Japanese Kannon.

According to Mahāyāna Buddhism, Avalokiteshvara is the bodhisattva who vowed to assist sentient beings in times of difficulty and to postpone his own Buddhahood until he has assisted every sentient being in achieving liberation from suffering.

The Lotus Sutra (3rd century) is generally accepted to be the earliest literature teaching about the doctrines of Avalokiteshvara and is the most popular and influential Mahayana sutra appropriated by many important Buddhist Doctrines such as the Tiantai, Tendai, and Nichiren amongst others. In its 25th chapter, Avalokiteshvara is described as a compassionate bodhisattva who hears the cries of sentient beings and works tirelessly to help those who call upon him. A total of 33 different manifestations of Avalokiteshvara are described, including female manifestations, all to suit the needs of various beings. This earliest source often circulates separately as its own sutra, called the Avalokiteshvara Sūtra and is commonly recited or chanted at Buddhist temples in East Asia and is considered good karma.

Provenance: Previously in the collection of Ross Levett, Maine USA and E. Van Vredenburg, Brussels, Belgium.



