



A Buddhist Bhairava? Kṛtanagara's Icons against the Backdrop of Pan-Asian Late Tantric Buddhism (13th–14th Centuries CE)

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This talk will discuss visual evidence (mainly statuary) associated with the East Javanese King Kṛtanagara (r. 1268–1292) of the Siṅhasāri dynasty, and its transregional maritime connections with coeval forms of tantric Buddhism practiced in northeastern India, Nepal, Tibet, and China. Kṛtanagara sponsored significant East Javanese artworks and monuments, like the Buddhist temple-mausoleum of Caṅḍi Jago, the Śaiva sanctuary of Caṅḍi Siṅhasāri, and the syncretic (Śaiva-Buddhist) royal mausoleum of Caṅḍi Jawi. While epigraphic and stylistic evidence suggests that he employed foreign (e.g., Nepalese) artists, little evidence survives regarding the tantric initiatory traditions (and their agents) that inspired those creations. Andrea Acri's presentation will attempt to interpret selected artworks, e.g. the colossal *Mahākāla-Bhairava* statue from Padang Roco in Sumatra (traditionally attributed to Adityavarman, fl. c. 1320–1378, but possibly associated with, or inspired by, Kṛtanagara's doctrinal and aesthetic paradigm), and the Cāmuṅḍī group from Ardimulyo in East Java, in the context of late Pan-Asian tantric Buddhism, and trace them back to prototypical icons and doctrinal configurations found in specific Indo-Tibetan traditions that were popular at that time. These icons, like the coeval epigraphic and textual evidence, highlight the cosmopolitan and highly mobile nature of the tantric networks of masters that offered their services to monarchs—most notably Kṛtanagara's arch-enemy Khublai Khan and his successors at the Yuan court—and allow us to tentatively reconstruct the movements of prominent religious personalities across the maritime routes of diplomacy and trade that connected the Indian Subcontinent with China via Southeast Asia.