

THE DIAMOND MANDALA OF RADIANT LIGHT

DIAMOND THUNDERBOLT BANISHING RITUAL:

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Ver. 1.0

- 1.) Stand facing the East in the Diamond Thunderbolt stance (standing upright, eyes focused on the distant horizon. Left hand closed, left index finger extended—Right hand gripped around left index finger, right hand thumb covering the top of left index finger, hand level at the heart center).
- 2.) Eyes opened or closed. Drawing in a deep breath visualize the light of the Adi-buddha: Mahavairochana pouring down into your being, flooding every cell with incandescent white light. Exhale, vibrating the sacred pranava: **A-O-M**
- 3.) Bring Left hand down to left side. With the Right hand, right index and middle fingers draw these up the Crown of your Head and vibrate **OM** (*visualize a radiant white lotus giving off radiance with the intonation of the bija*), then down to the throat and vibrate **AH** (*visualize a radiant red lotus giving off radiance with the intonation of the bija*), then down to the heart and vibrate **HUNG** (*visualize a blue lotus lotus giving off radiance with the intonation of the bija*). And last bring both right and left hand together at the center of the heart (*Gassho*) vibrating **HRI**.
- 4.) Assume the Double Diamond Thunderbolt (*Karma Vajra*) stance: (Right and Left hands drawn across chest, hand in the Mudra of Warding—in the Western Tradition of the Golden Dawn this would be known as the *Sign of Osiris Risen* and intone the bija for Vairochana: **OM** (*Visualize in English letters a White OM shooting off into the distant horizon sending forth a stream of radiant white light*))
- 5.) Next move to the circumference of the circle to the East. Extend the Mudra of Warding (*Right hand, right and middle finger rolled into the center of the palm, the index and pinky extended upward with the thumb crossing over right and middle finger*). Extend the arm with the hand in the Mudra of Warding while intoning the bija of Akshobhya: **HUM** (*Visualize in English letters a Blue HUM shooting off into the distant horizon sending forth a stream of radiant blue light*))
- 6.) Next move to the circumference of the circle to the South. Extend the Mudra of Warding (*Right hand, right and middle finger rolled into the center of the palm, the index and pinky extended upward with the thumb crossing over right and middle finger*). Extend the arm with the hand in the Mudra of Warding while intoning the bija of Ratsnasambhava: **TRAM** (*Visualize in English letters a Yellow TRAM shooting off into the distant horizon sending forth a stream of radiant Yellow light*)).

- 7.) Next move to the circumference of the circle to the West. Extend the Mudra of Warding (*Right hand, right and middle finger rolled into the center of the palm, the index and pinky extended upward with the thumb crossing over right and middle finger*). Extend the arm with the hand in the Mudra of Warding while intoning the bija of Amitabha: **HRI** (*Visualize in English letters a Red HRI shooting off into the distant horizon sending forth a stream of radiant Red light*).
- 8.) Next move to the circumference of the circle to the North. Extend the Mudra of Warding (*Right hand, right and middle finger rolled into the center of the palm, the index and pinky extended upward with the thumb crossing over right and middle finger*). Extend the arm with the hand in the Mudra of Warding while intoning the bija of Amoghasiddhi: **AH** (*Visualize in English letters a Green AH shooting off into the distant horizon sending forth a stream of radiant green light*).
- 9.) Coming back to the East, move back to the center of the circle facing East. Stand facing the East in the Diamond Thunderbolt stance (*standing upright, eyes focused on the distant horizon. Left hand closed, left index finger extended—Right hand gripped around left index finger, right hand thumb covering the top of left index finger*)

Say the following (*visualizing the Dhyani Buddhas on their thrones: see: Qualities Chart of the Five Dhyani Buddhas*):

Before me (*vibrate*) **AK-SHO-BHY-A**
Behind me (*vibrate*) **A-MI-TA-BHA**
On my Right (*vibrate*) **RAT-NA-SAM-BHA-VA**
On my Left (*vibrate*) **A-MO-GHA-SID-DHI**

Then say:

For about me radiates the Victors... Conquerors of the Diamond Light.

(Allowing everything to leave your immediate attention, bark):

PHAT!

10.) Finish as in 1-3.

MANDALA OF THE FIVE DHYANI BUDDHAS

To the initiate, the mandala of the Five Dhyani Buddhas is at once a cosmic diagram of the world and of himself. It is a tool for spiritual growth and mystical experience—a map to enlightenment alive with divine possibilities.

The Five Dhyani Buddhas: Guides to Spiritual Transformation

The Five Dhyani Buddhas are Vairochana, Akshobhya, Ratnasambhava, Amitabha and Amoghasiddhi. Tibetan Buddhists believe that the Adi-Buddha, the primordial and highest being, created the Dhyani Buddhas by his meditative powers.

The Five Dhyani Buddhas are celestial Buddhas visualized during meditation. The word Dhyani is derived from the Sanskrit dhyana, meaning “meditation.” The Dhyani Buddhas are also called Jinas (“Victors” or “Conquerors”) and are considered to be great healers of the mind and soul. They are not historical figures, like Gautama Buddha, but transcendent beings who symbolize universal divine principles or forces. They represent various aspects of the enlightened consciousness and are guides to spiritual transformation.

Each Dhyani Buddha is associated with certain attributes and symbols. Each one embodies one of the five wisdoms, which antidote the five deadly poisons that are of ultimate danger to man’s spiritual progress and keep him tied to worldly existence. Buddhists teach that the Dhyani Buddhas are able transmute the five poisons into their transcendent wisdoms. The Tibetan Book of the Dead recommends that the devotee meditate on the Dhyani Buddhas so that their wisdoms will replace the negative forces he has allowed to take hold within.

Each Buddha rules over one of the directions of space and one of the cosmic realms of ether, water, earth, fire and air. The Dhyani Buddhas also personify the five skandhas, components that make up cosmic existence as well as human personality. These components are consciousness, form, feeling, perception and volition.

In addition, each Dhyani Buddha is associated with a specific color, mudra (hand gesture), symbolic animal that supports his throne, sacred symbol and bija (seed syllable). The bija represents the essence of the Dhyani Buddha. It can be used along with the sacred syllable Om and the Buddha’s name to create a mantra, a series of mystic syllables that have an esoteric meaning. In Hinduism and Buddhism, disciples recite mantras to evoke the power and presence of a divine being. In some traditions, devotees use mantras in meditation to help them be one with the deity they are invoking.

"By repeating the mantra and assuming the mudra of any Buddha," writes Buddhist monk and teacher Sangharakshita, "one can not only place oneself in correspondence or alignment with the particular order of reality which he personifies but also be infused with its transcendental power."¹

Mandalas: Maps to Mystic Union

Buddhists often depict the Dhyani Buddhas in a mandala. Mandala is a Sanskrit word meaning "circle," translated in Tibetan texts as "center" or "what surrounds." Some say the word derives from manda, meaning "essence." The mandala a circle denotes wholeness, completeness and the perfection of Buddhahood. The mandala is also a "circle of friends"-a gathering of Buddhas.

Traditionally mandalas are painted on thangkas (scroll paintings framed in silk), drawn with colored sand, represented by heaps of rice, or constructed three dimensionally, often in cast metal.

A Dhyani Buddha is positioned in the center as well as on each of the cardinal points of the mandala. Mandalas were originally composed on the ground in front of the meditator and are therefore oriented toward the person who is contemplating them. The point nearest the contemplator, at the bottom of the mandala, is the east. The mandala continues clockwise, following the course of the sun, with south to the left of the contemplator, west at the top and north to the right. Lama Anagarika Govinda, one of the foremost interpreters of Tibetan Buddhism to the West, explains: "In the same way as the sun rises in the east and thus begins the day, the practitioner enters the mandala through the eastern gate, the door in front of which he sits."²

A mandala is a sacred, consecrated space where no obstacles, impurities or distracting influences exist. Buddhists use mandalas to aid them in meditation and visualization. "All mandalas," writes Tibetologist Detlef Lauf, "originate from the seed-syllables, or bija-mantras, of the deities. During meditation upon these mantras, an elemental radiance of light develops, from which comes the image of the Buddhas."³ Mandalas are rich in symbolism. The series of circles on the periphery of a mandala symbolizes protection from external influences. The outermost circle of flames signifies knowledge that destroys ignorance or symbolizes the phenomenal world the devotee abandons as he enters the mandala. The flames can also represent the Mountain of Fire that prohibits the uninitiated from receiving the mysteries. The ring of lotus petals inside the circle of fire signifies the spiritual world, spiritual rebirth, the unfolding of spiritual vision, or the purity of heart that is necessary for effective meditation.

The central part of a mandala (signified by the square inside the circle) represents a palace or temple with four gates at the four cardinal points. Outside the palace walls are propitious and victorious symbols. In this mandala each gate is flanked by a banner of victory and a precious

parasol (or umbrella). They are two of the Eight Auspicious Symbols, which commemorate the gifts Gautama Buddha received after he attained enlightenment.

Buddhists believe these eight symbols bring good fortune. The banner of victory symbolizes the victory of spirituality or the victory of body, mind and speech over all obstacles.

The parasol symbolizes royal dignity and protection from obstacles, harm and evil.

The four gates of the palace lead to the innermost circle, the focus of the mandala. "Mandalas appear as circles around a holy center," write authors Blanche Olschak and Geshe Thupten Wangyal. "These depictions are the ground plan of the visionary heavenly abodes, at whose center is manifested the holy power that is to be invoked. The entire mandala is a fortress built around this Buddha-force."⁴ In his meditation the disciple circles the focus at the center of the mandala until he can finally integrate with that powerful nucleus.

The disciple uses the mandala to find its elements within himself. "As soon as he has entered the mandala," writes religious historian Mircea Eliade, "he is in a sacred space, outside of time; the gods have already 'descended' into the...insignia. A series of meditations, for which the disciple has been prepared in advance, help him to find the gods in his own heart. In a vision, he sees them all emerge and spring from his heart; they fill cosmic space, then are reabsorbed in him....By mentally entering the mandala the yogin approaches his own 'center.'. The yogin, starting from this iconographic 'support,' can find the mandala in his own body."⁵

Thus with all its symbolism, a mandala is no mere external image of heavenly power. Buddhists believe a mandala is the receptacle of the holy power it portrays. Its purpose, and the goal of every one of its symbolic images, is to help the meditator realize the divine power within himself and achieve his own inner perfection.

"The whole external mandala is a model of that spiritual pattern which the meditating individual sees within himself and which he must endeavour to experience in his own consciousness," says Lauf. "[The Dhyani] Buddhas are looked upon as beings whose activity will manifest itself through man himself. The mandala thus becomes a cosmic plan in which man and the world are similarly ordered and structured..The meditation Buddhas develop their beneficial activity only in the measure to which the initiate succeeds in recognizing and realizing these characteristics and symbolized forces within himself."⁶

As renowned orientalist Giuseppe Tucci explains, "The five Buddhas do not remain remote divine forms in distant heavens, but descend into us. I am the cosmos and the Buddhas are in myself. In me is the cosmic light, a mysterious presence, even if it be obscured by error. But these five Buddhas are nevertheless in me, they are the five constituents of the human Personality."⁷

The Dalai Lama teaches: "Mandala, in general, means that which extracts the essence...The main meaning [of a mandala] is for oneself to enter into the mandala and extract an essence in the sense of receiving blessing. It is a place of gaining magnificence."⁸

For the disciple who knows how to use it, a mandala is therefore a map of the progressive steps to self-transformation and mystic union. It represents the growth of the seed of Buddhahood within him. "The meditator," says Lama Govinda, "must imagine himself in the center of the mandala as an embodiment of the divine figure of perfect Buddhahood." And that Buddhahood, he says, "can only be found in the realization of all those qualities which, taken all together, form the richness of the mandala."⁹

The Sacred Art of Tibet: Bringing Heaven to Earth

This lithograph is based on traditional Tibetan Buddhist mandalas. The images of the Five Dhyani Buddhas are photographs of finely crafted Tibetan and Nepalese statues that were sculpted during the thirteenth to early fifteenth centuries, when depictions of these Buddhas were popular. Because they are celestial not historical beings, the Dhyani Buddhas are often portrayed with jewels and a crown rather than the simple robes of a Buddha.

To the Tibetan, creating a work of art is a religious act. At each stage, the artist or a monk or lama offers certain prayers and rituals. He will often place scrolls of religious texts, votive offerings and grains inside statues. When the work is completed, the monk or lama performs a ceremony of consecration.

Tibetans use art as a method of bringing heaven to earth and raising man out of his earthly confines to a realm of peace and harmony. They believe that a statue of a Buddha, for instance, is the living presence of that Buddha, who becomes one with his icon. As in other Tibetan works of art, the figures portrayed here convey elegance yet power. This is the singular character, charm and mission of Tibetan sacred art. The real is wed to the transcendent. Grace and purity are fused with vitality and power. Careful detail and precision are united with spontaneity. The result is that the otherworldliness and perfection of enlightened realms comes through with an immediacy that inspires the observer to realize his own divine potential.

NOTES

(1) Bhikshu Sangharakshita, *A Survey of Buddhism*, rev. ed. (Boulder, Colo.: Shambhala with London: Windhorse, 1980), p. 372.

- (2) Lama Anagarika Govinda, *Insights of a Himalayan Pilgrim* (Berkeley: Dharma Publishing, 1991), p. 128.
- (3) Detlef Ingo Lauf, *Secret Doctrines of the Tibetan Books of the Dead*, trans. Graham Parkes (Boston: Shambhala, 1989), p. 105.
- (4) Blanche Christine Olschak and Geshe Thupten Wangyal, *Mystic Art of Ancient Tibet* (Boston: Shambhala, 1987), p. 36.
- (5) Mircea Eliade, *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom*, 2d ed., trans. Willard R. Trask, Bollingen Series, no. 56 (1969; reprint, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1970), p. 225.
- (6) Detlef Ingo Lauf, *Tibetan Sacred Art: The Heritage of Tantra* (Berkeley: Shambhala, 1976), pp. 120, 122, 123.
- (7) Giuseppe Tucci, *The Theory and Practice of the Mandala*, trans. Alan Houghton Brodrick (1961; reprint, New York: Samuel Weiser, 1970), p. 51.
- (8) *The Fourteenth Dalai Lama His Holiness Tenzin Gyatso, Kindness, Clarity, and Insight*, ed. Jeffrey Hopkins and Elizabeth Napper (Ithaca, N.Y.: Snow Lion Publications, 1984), p. 82.
- (9) Lama Anagarika Govinda, *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism* (1960; reprint, New York: Samuel Weiser, 1969), p. 181; *Insights of a Himalayan Pilgrim*, p. 178.

QUALITIES CHART OF THE FIVE DHYANI BUDDHAS

DHYANI BUDDHA	VAIROCHANA	AKSHOBHYA	RATNASAMBHAVA	AMITABHA	AMOGHASIDDHI
MEANING OF NAME	He Who Is Like the Sun, The Radiating One	Immovable, Unshakable	The Jewel-born One, Origin of Jewels	Infinite Light	Almighty Conqueror, He Who Unerringly Achieves His Goal
DIRECTION/ COLOR/ ELEMENT	center white ether	east blue water	south yellow earth	west rose(red) fire	north green air
SKANDHA	consciousness	form	feeling, sensation	perception	volition, mental phenomenon
SYMBOL	wheel of the Teaching, or Law (dharmachakra)	thunderbolt or diamond scepter (vajra)	jewel (ratna) or wish fulfilling jewel (chintamani)	lotus (padma)	double vajra (vishvavajra)
THRONE-BEARER	lion	elephant	horse	peacock	garuda
WISDOM	All Pervading Wisdom of the Dharmakaya, Wisdom of the Dharmadatu	Mirrorlike Wisdom	Wisdom of Equality	Discrimination Wisdom	All-Accomplishing Wisdom, Wisdom of Perfected Action
POISON ANTIDOTED BY WISDOM	ignorance	hatred and anger	spiritual, intellectual and human pride	the passions-all cravings, covetousness, greed and lust	envy and jealousy
MUDRA	teaching, or turning the wheel of the Law (dharmachakra)	earth-touching (bhumisparsha)	giving or charity (varda)	meditation (dhyana)	fearlessness and protection (abhaya)
BIJA/MANTRA	Om/ Om Vairochana Om	Hum/ Om Akshobhya Hum	Tram/ Om Ratnasambhava Tram	Hrih/ Om Amitabha Hrih	Ah/ Om Amoghasiddhi Ah
DHYANI BUDDHA	VAIROCHANA	AKSHOBHYA	RATNASAMBHAVA	AMITABHA	AMOGHASIDDHI

VAIROCHANA

The name Vairochana means "He Who Is Like the Sun" or "the Radiating One." Vairochana represents either the integration of or the origin of the Dhyani Buddhas. His wisdom is the Wisdom of the Dharmadhatu. The Dharmadhatu is the Realm of Truth, in which all things exist as they really are. Vairochana's wisdom is also referred to as the All-Pervading Wisdom of the Dharmakaya. The Dharmakaya is the Body of the Law, or the absolute Buddha nature. Vairochana's transcendent wisdom reveals the realm of highest reality and overcomes the poison of ignorance, or delusion. His wisdom is considered to be the origin of or the total of all the wisdoms of the Dhyani Buddhas.

Vairochana is usually located in the center of mandalas of the Dhyani Buddhas. According to some texts, he is positioned in the east. His color is white (or blue), symbolizing a pure consciousness. He rules over the element of ether and embodies the skandha of consciousness. In some systems, he is associated with the skandha of form.

His symbol is the dharmachakra, the wheel of the Teaching, or the wheel of the Law. It denotes the teaching of the Buddha. Its eight spokes represent the Noble Eightfold Path, which Gautama revealed in his first sermon after his enlightenment. This symbol is printed around the border of the lithograph. Vairochana's lotus throne is supported by the lion, symbol of courage, boldness and an eager, advancing spirit.

Vairochana's mudra is the dharmachakra mudra, the gesture of turning the wheel of the Teaching. Because he embodies the wisdom of all Buddhas, Vairochana's bija is the universal sound Om. His mantra is Om Vairochana Om.

AKSHOBHYA

The name Akshobhya means "Immovable" or "Unshakable." Akshobhya's Mirrorlike Wisdom reflects all things calmly and uncritically and--reveals their true nature. One text says,"Just as one sees one's own reflection in a mirror, so the Dharmakaya is seen in the Mirror of Wisdom."

Mirrorlike Wisdom antidotes the poison of hatred and anger.

In the mandala of the Five Dhyani Buddhas, Akshobhya is usually positioned in the east (which is at the bottom) but he is sometimes placed in the center. His color is blue. He rules over the element of water and personifies the skandha of form. In some systems, he is associated with the skandha of consciousness. Akshobhya's lotus throne is supported by the elephant, symbol of steadfastness and strength.

His symbol is the vajra, also called the thunderbolt or diamond scepter. It is depicted in this mandala above his head, directly below Vairochana. The vajra denotes enlightenment, the indestructible, adamant nature of pure consciousness, or the essence of Reality. In some traditions the vajra signifies the union of man and the Buddha; one end of the vajra symbolizes the macrocosmic realm of the Buddha and the other end the microcosmic realm of man. Akshobhya's mudra, shown here formed by his right hand, is the bhumisparsha mudra, the earth-touching gesture. It denotes unshakability. This is the mudra Gautama Buddha used to summon the earth to witness to his right to attain enlightenment when he was challenged by the Evil One, Mara.

Akshobhya's paradise is Abhirati, the Land of Exceeding Great Delight. Buddhists believe that whoever is reborn there cannot fall back to a lower level of consciousness. Akshobhya's bija is Hum and his mantra is Om Akshobhya Hum.

RATNASAMBHAVA

The name Ratnasambhava means "the Jewel-born One" or "Origin of Jewels." The Three Jewels are the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha.

The Buddha is the Enlightened One, the Guru, the hub of the wheel of the Law. The Dharma is the Teaching, or the Law. The Sangha is the Community.

Ratnasambhava transmutes the poison of pride (spiritual, intellectual and human pride) into the Wisdom of Equality. Tibetan Buddhists teach that with the Wisdom of Equality one sees all things with divine impartiality and recognizes the divine equality of all beings. One sees all beings and the Buddha as having the same nature--a condition we need, says Tucci, "to spur our spiritual ascension and to acquire the trust to realize in ourselves the status of a Buddha."

Ratnasambhava is the Dhyani Buddha of the south. His color is yellow, the color of the sun in its zenith. Ratnasambhava rules over the element of earth and embodies the skandha of feeling or sensation.

He is sometimes shown holding his symbol, the ratna (jewel) or chintamani (wish-fulfilling jewel that grants all desires). The chintamani is a symbol of the liberated mind. The ratna is often depicted in a threefold form as the triratna signifying the union of Buddha, Dharma and Sangha.

In the mandala the triratna is positioned between Ratnasambhava and Vairochana. The animal that upholds Ratnasambhava's throne is the horse, denoting impetus and liberation. Ratnasambhava's mudra, formed here by his right hand, is the varada mudra. It is the gesture of giving, or charity, which portrays him offering compassion and protection to his disciples. His bija is Tram and his mantra is Om Ratnasambhava Tram.

AMITABHA

The name Amitabha means "Infinite Light." Amitabha's Discriminating Wisdom conquers the poison of the passions--all cravings, covetousness, greed and lust. With this wisdom, the disciple discerns all beings separately yet knows every being as an individual expression of the One. In the mandala of the Dhyani Buddhas, Amitabha is positioned to the west. His color is rose (red), the color of the setting sun. He rules over the element of fire and personifies the skandha of perception. Thus, the eye and the faculty of seeing are associated with Amitabha. The peacock, with "eyes" on its plumes, is his throne-bearer. The peacock symbolizes grace.

Amitabha's symbol is the padma, or lotus, placed between him and Vairochana in this mandala. In Buddhism, the lotus can symbolize many things, including spiritual unfoldment, purity, the true nature of beings realized through enlightenment, and compassion, the purified form of passion.

Devotees aspire to be reborn in Amitabha's Western Paradise, known as Sukhavati, where conditions are ideal for attaining enlightenment. His mudra is the dhyana (meditation) mudra. His bija is Hrih and his mantra is Om Amitabha Hrih.

Some consider Amitabha to be synonymous with Amitayus, the Buddha of Infinite Life. Others honor Amitayus as a form of Amitabha or as a separate Buddha. Amitayus is usually depicted holding a vessel of the elixir of immortal life. As shown in this statue, a tiny ashoka-tree often sprouts from the cover of his vessel, representing the union of the spiritual and the material.

AMOGHASIDDHI

The name Amoghasiddhi means "Almighty Conqueror" or "He Who Unerringly Achieves His Goal." Amoghasiddhi's All-Accomplishing Wisdom, or Wisdom of Perfected Action, anti dotes the poison of envy and jealousy. This wisdom confers perseverance, infallible judgment and unerring action.

Amoghasiddhi represents the practical realization of the wisdoms of the other Dhyani Buddhas. He is described as the Dhyani Buddha of the realization of the Bodhisattva Path. A Bodhisattva is one who has forgone the bliss of nirvana with a vow to first liberate all beings. Amoghasiddhi is the Dhyani Buddha of the north. His color is green, signifying the sun at midnight. He rules over the element of air and embodies the skandha of volition, also called the skandha of mental phenomena or tendencies of mind. His symbol is the vishvavajra, or double vajra, depicted between Amoghasiddhi and Vairochana in this mandala. It is made of two crossed vajras and symbolizes the highest comprehension of truth and the spiritual power of a Buddha. The throne of Amoghasiddhi is supported by garudas. A garuda is a mythical figure, halfman and halfbird. In relation to Amoghasiddhi, Lama Govinda says the garuda symbolizes "man in transition towards a new dimension of consciousness,...the transition from the human to the superhuman state, which takes place in the mysterious darkness of the night, invisible to the eye.

Amoghasiddhi's mudra, formed here by his right hand, is the abhaya mudra. It is the gesture of fearlessness and protection. Amoghasiddhi's bija is Ah and his mantra is Om Amoghasiddhi Ah.