



Caryā being performed by Tara Manandhar,  
Head of the Department, Music and Dance, SCoFA

## *Mudrā of Vajrayāna – Caryā*

Arun Shrestha

### Abstract

*Mudrā as a divine sign language of the spiritual kind applied in religious rituals is essentially a means of communication and a bridge between physical existence and ultimate emancipation from non-existent existence envisaged in vajrayāna thought process. A pragmatic solution for final release from rebirths. It is a means of visualization for eventual realization. Interaction of sādhana, sādhyā and sādḥaka paves the way for nirvāṇa through the formation of mudrās.*

**Keywords:** mudrā, ṣaṇmudrā', pañcamudrā, mantra, maṇḍala, sādhanamālā, guhyasamājatantra, mañjuśrīmulakalpa, caryāgītīnṛtya .

### Introduction

#### *Mudrā defined*

*Mudrā* is a silent language vibrating the space most eloquently. It is a divine language of communication with divinity visualized in a *sādhana*.

*Mudrā* is by which supreme spirits are pleased.<sup>1</sup>

*Mudrā* indicates the ecstasy or *sukha* thus it is said ‘*mudam sukhaviśeṣam rāti dadātīti mudrā*’.<sup>2</sup>

It is further elaborated saying that karma mudra leads to *akṣara sukha*, *gyāna mudrā* leads to *spanda sukha*, *samaya mudrā* to *svachittapratibhāsa sukha*

and *mahāmudrā* bestows *paramākṣara sukha*.<sup>3</sup>

To explain the application and usage of *mudrā*, it is narrated that *mudrās* (hand gestures) are formed by fingers of the hand and it is equated with ‘*pancamahābhūta*’, which are earth, sky, water, fire and air.<sup>4</sup>

From the first finger (*kaniṣṭhā*) to the last finger (*anguṣṭha*) in a sequence, fingers symbolically represent the placement of five elements or ‘*pancamahābhūta*’. To please the supreme spirit connected with the specified element, relevant finger is used. This brings *sādḥaka* or worshiper closer to the supreme spirit meditated upon and that is the common application of *mudrā*.

In Buddhist tantric literature application of *mudrā* has been explained in four different context and meanings –

- in decorative meaning
- in philosophical meaning
- in the context of worship of supreme spirits expressed by different formations of fingers
- in the context of specified supreme spirits with specified objective at specified time

### In decorative meaning

For the explanation of the form of ‘*pañcabuddha*’, ‘*pañcamudrā*’ is used which is specified thus-

*cakrī kuṇḍala kaṇṭhī ca haste rucakam mekhalā* 1

*pañcabuddhaviśuddhayā ca etā mudrāḥ prakīrtitā* 11 (*hevajra*. 1.3.14)

In the same way ‘*ṣaṇmudrā*’-

*kaṇṭhikārucakakuṇḍalāni śiromaṇivibhuṣitam* 1

*yagyopavitam bhasmeti mudrāṣatkam prakīrtitam* 11

We find *mudrā* being mentioned as ornaments in decorative meaning in *caryāgīti* - *pañca mudrā* and *ṣaṇa mudrā*:

*pañcakapāladhāritamaulī pañcagyāna pañcamudrābharaṇa* 2

*narasiramālā grīvyasobhā vyāghracarmakaṭiḥbhūṣitaracanā* 11<sup>5</sup>

*vyāghracarmaṣaṇamudrā gāḍhālingana advaya-samādhi-vajraghaṇṭha-āliḍhapa-da* 11 dhu 11<sup>6</sup>

### In philosophical meaning

This is of four kinds –*karmamudrā*, *dharmamudrā*, *mahāmudrā* & *samayamudrā*. It is hinted at by *ācārya nāgārjuna* in his manuscript named *mudrābandha*. It is explained thus:

#### ***karmamudrā*:**

*karmakāyavākcittac-ettāprādhānyamudrākalpanāsvrupā* 1 (*iyam dharmamudrāyā hetubhūhūtā*)

#### ***dharmamudrā*:**

*dharmadhātusvarupā niṣprapancā nirvikalpākṛtiḥ mohamadarahitā karuṇāsvabhāvā paramānandaikasundaropāyabhūtā pravāhanityatvena sahasvasabhāvāyāḥ pragyāyāḥ sahajodayatvena bhinnā yā sā dharmamudrā* 1 (*iyam समयamudrā hetubhūtā*)

#### ***mahāmudrā*:**

*mahato cāsau mudrā ceti mahāmudrā, nisvabhāvā gyānacchāyāddhāvaraṇavivarjitā śaranmadhyānhāntagagana-sankāśā sakalasampadādharabhūtā bhavanirmāṇaikaṛupā anālabhānkaruṇāśarīramahāsukhaikaṛupā* 1 (*iyam mahāmudrāyā hetubhūtā*)

#### ***samayamudrā*:**

*sambhoganirmāṇakāyākārasvabhāvena svacchāyākāreṇa ca satvārthāya ca vajradharmarahasyaherukākāreṇa visphāraṇam समयamudrā* 1

(*mudrābandha*, *paṭṭa* 3, *advayasangraha*, *pr̥ṣṭha* 32)

In the third and fourth category mentioned above, the Buddhist tantric literature puts forward explanatory hints of 123 *mudrās* in which 83 *mudrās* are those commonly used for supreme spirits and 40 *mudrās* are those specifically used (*samaya mudrā*) to denote specified supreme spirits. 46 *mudrās* are from *sādhnamālā* and 37 are from other texts out of 83 commonly used *mudrā*. *Manjśrīmulakalpa* has 37 *mudrā* of commonly used for supreme spirits.

These *mudrās* are taken from *vajrayāna* tantric literatures like *sādhnamālā* and *yogāmbatantra* and Buddhist literatures like *sāradātīlakatīkā* and *parśurāmkalpasūtra*.

In some of the documents certain symbolic words are being used for five different fingers, which runs thus: *tārā* = *tarjanī*, *tālah* = *anguṣṭha*, *dhārā* = *anāmikā*, *śikhī* = *madhyamā* & *kanyā* = *kanīyasī* *itī paryāyāh* 1 (*sādhnamālā*, pṛ.69)

In the ritual *pancagrāsa bhojan*, the ritual of eating is performed through the act of eating with finger in different combinations, as if in a *mudrā*. The act of eating in different combination of fingers used derives a name according to the combination of fingers used in the act of eating. If the thumb gets the number one and the subsequent fingers number up to five in sequence, the combination of the use of finger number two and five is called ‘*prāṇāya*’, use of finger number three and five combination derives the name ‘*gyānāya*’, number four and five is

‘*aprāṇāya*’ and finally the combination of the use of all the five fingers is known as ‘*samānāya*’.

## ***Mudrā in vajrayāna texts***

### ***Mudrā in guhyasamājatantra:***

*Guhyasamājatantra* establishes a clear relationship of *mudrā*, *mantra* and *maṇḍala* and clarifies on three different meanings of *mudrā*- hand gesture, ornament and woman.

In *guhyasamājatantra*, *mudrā* does not intend to mean ornament as is found in *caryāgīti* in the form of *ṣaṇmudrā*. Though there is a reference to *mudrā* in the sense of a woman:

*yoṣitam sfārya navadhā sādhyāya vimahenyaset* 1

*parivartya caturmudrām maṇḍalam tatra kalpayet* 11 165 11 GT 18

Here *caturmudrā* indicates at *yoṣitam* or woman.

Relationship of *mantra* and *maṇḍala* with *mudrā* is clearly established in the passages of *guhyasamājatantra*:

*daddhāt pratidinam prāgyo dānārbdhisiddhikāṅdkṣhayā* 1

*arcipati mudrām samādāya buddhamaṇḍalamadhyatah* 11 21 11 GT 8

The learned or *prāgyo* present or *daddhāt* every day or *pratidina* shower or *samādāya mudrā* on *buddhamaṇḍala*:

*locanāpadasambhogi vajracinham tu bhāvayet* 1

*mudrāmantravidhānagyo mantratantra-*  
*suśikṣhitām* || 92 || GT 16

By *mudrā* and *mantra vidhāna* or prescribed practice of hand gestures and spells, *mantra* and *tantra* is taught, so it says. Prescribed practice (*vidhāna* or *vidhi*) for the execution of hand gestures is repeatedly emphasized, as above, which by its nature is *abhyantara* and *guhya* or full of secrecy, be it *mudrānyāsa* or *mudrāvajrapada* :

*tasyābhyantarataścakamālikhetpari-*  
*maṇḍalam* 1

*mudrānyāsam tatah kuryāt vidhidrṣṭena*  
*karmaṇā* || 10 || GT 4

*tasyābhyantarataścakramālikhedvidhir-*  
*vajrayā* 1

*mudrāvajrapadam kuryānmantrāṇām*  
*guhyaṃuttamam* || 3 || GT 16

*Mudrā* suggested for *pañca buddha* is named or called *mahāmudrā* targeting or *lakṣhitam kāyavākacitta* or *triakṣhara* or *trivajra*:

*bhāvayitvā samāsenā bimbamadhye*  
*vibhāvayet* 1

*vairocanamahāmudrām kāyavākacittal-*  
*akṣhitam* || 3 || GT 3

So has been put forward for remaining  
*pañca buddha*:

*kāyavākacittavajrasya mudrām vātha*  
*vibhāvayet* 1

*akṣhobhya pravarām mudrām sambhār-*  
*advayayogatah* || 4 || GT 3

*ratnaketumahāmudrāmamitāyuh pra-*  
*bhākarim* 1

*amoghasiddhimahāmudrām bhāvayet*  
*buddhamaṇḍale* || 5 || GT 3

*Kāyavākacitta* aimed at by the practice of formation of hand gesture or *mudrā* is being referred to as *trayakṣhara* and *trivajra*:

*vāgvajrāgracittebhya idam pujayati*  
*sarvathā* 1

*svamudrām vā athavā cinteddhyānam*  
*trayakṣharavajrinām* || 97 || GT 16

*kāyavākacittavajrāṇām mukuṭe dhyānam*  
*vicintayet* 1

*trivajrasamayaih sarvaih krudhai rjetum*  
*na śakyate* || 34 || GT 17

Realization of the state of *dharmodaya* is linked to the execution of *mudrā*:

*japamityatra kim geyam*  
*kimāmudraṇamucyate* 1

*dharmodayam katham bhāvvyam sam-*  
*baram kidrśam tathā* || 15 || GT 18

*ādarśa vīṇām śaṅkham ca pātram bim-*  
*bapaṭāmstathā* 1

*dharmodayākhyā mudraiṣā vajrādhipati-*  
*vajrinām* || 103 || GT 18

Relationship of *pada*, in the ritualistic practice of the religion (GT 16 / 3 & 92 *locanāpada* and *vajrapadam*), and the doctrine adhered to for the emancipation of the sentient beings (GT 18 / 15 & 103 and 3 / 4 *dharmodaya* and *kāyavākacitta*) is also established in *guhya* *samājatantra*.

Further on, *dveṣamoharāga* is linked to *mudrānyāsa*:

*dveṣamohamaaharāgaih sattvārtha kurute katham* |

*maṅḍaleti kimucyeta mudrānyāsam katham bhavet* || 16 || GT 18

So has *skandha* or *pañca skandha*, a basic doctrine inherent in the concept and formulation of *pañca buddha*:

*mudritam mudrayā sarvam skandhāyatanadhātunā* |

*tena mudrā sadā nyastā maṅḍaleti vinirdiśet* || 100 || GT 18

### ***Mudrā in Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa :***

*Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* : *mudrā*, *mantra* and *tantra*

The mention of the *mudrā* in this *mantra* passage points to a significant aspect of the mantra as it is used in the *mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*. The hand gesture is an indispensable aspect of the type of ritual promulgated in the *vaiṣṇava pañcarātra samhitas*, *śaiva siddhānta āgamas*, as well as in the *mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*. By the early medieval era, the *mudrā* becomes an increasingly widespread element of the type of worship known as *mantracaryā* or *tantra*.<sup>8</sup>

The importance of the *mudrā* for the practitioners of the Buddhist form of *mantracaryā* is evident from the fact that ten of the fifty-five chapters of the *mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* are devoted to it. At *mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* 34 we read of a *mudrākośa*, a treasury of ritual gestures.<sup>9</sup>



*Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* 34-37 and 41-46 is an extensive compendium, a “text on gestures” (*mudrāntara*).<sup>10</sup>

In the *mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*, these gestures invariably accompany verbal actions. The two, *mudrās* and *mantras*, are in fact so closely bound that they can be said to form a single instrumental act:<sup>11</sup>

“The *mudrās* are the seals of the *mantras*’, and with the *mantras* they are well-sealed. There is no *mantra* without a *mudrā*; devoid of the *mudrā*, there is no seal.”<sup>12</sup>

In many instances, the *mudrās* seem to be bodily presentations of the object either invoked or offered by means of the mantra (e.g., the “three-headed” and “five-headed” gestures imitating the head

dress of *mañjuśrī*; “the spike,” and the “seat of the peacock”). Stephan Beyer calls these types of *mudrās*, “mimetic representations of the objects being offered simulacra that control the transmission of worship to the god, just as the mantras of offering enjoin its acceptance and response.”<sup>13</sup>

Stephan Beyer also mentions a “stereotyped gesture,” that is, a ritualized use of a common gesture for threat. Such *mudrās* correspond to mantras such as *phat* - i.e., the ritual use of sounds that are employed in everyday expression. Examples of this type of *mudrā* are gestures of “reverence, threat, welcome, or farewell.”<sup>14</sup> (No such gestures are prescribed at *mañjuśrīmulakalpa* 2.)

In sum, the *mudrā*, when employed by a serious initiate,<sup>15</sup> in conjunction with the proper *mantra*, creates quick and infallible results (*mudrā mantra- samopetā samyuktā kṣiprakarmikā; mudrā mantrasamopetā samyuktā sarvakarmikā*).<sup>16</sup>

There are 37 *mudrā* being mentioned in *mañjuśrīmulakalpa*.<sup>17</sup>

### ***Mudrā & siddhi of bodhisattva-caryā : mudrā of 10 fingers***<sup>18</sup>

Those who want to enter *samādhi* should keep away from all worldly affairs at the time of first learning. Alone, in a solitary place he should sit cross-legged. First make the *mudrā* for your protection. Combine the *dāna* (the little finger of the right hand) with the *prajñā* (the little finger of the left), raise *śīla* (ring finger of the right hand), *kṣānti* (middle finger of the right hand), *upāya* (ring finger of the

left hand) and *prañidhāna* (middle finger of the left). The two hands are in an interlacing position. Then *vīrya* (fore-finger of the right hand) and *bala* (fore-finger of the left) are joined and raised. Then open the heart (?) a little, and join the *dhyāna* (thumb of the right hand) and the *jñāna* (thumb of the left) and raise them. This makes the *mudrā* (complete). The first *mudrā* is made on the top of the head, the second on the forehead, the third on the right shoulder, the fourth on the left shoulder, the fifth on the heart, the sixth on the right knee and seventh on the left knee.

While making the *mudrās*, repeat each of the *dhāraṇīs*<sup>19</sup> mentioned below seven times in all the seven places, the last *mudrā*<sup>20</sup> being made on the top of the head. Then repeat the *dhāraṇīs* on the rosary. If you can repeat it from 200 or 300 times to 3000 or 5000 times at each sitting then repeat them fully for a *lakṣā* times. By doing so, you can attain various *siddhis*.

### ***Mudrā bhāvanā in guhyasamājatantra and sekodeśaṭīkā:***

*mudrā bhāvanā*: conception of a hand gesture

In conception one imagines, feels and emotes – imagines the form of the deity, feels the manifestation derived and emote the bliss bestowed. It is a contemplation leading to knowledge and to an ultimate bliss. It is a feeling of devotion towards *mudrā* and thus *sekodeśaṭīkā* सेकोदेशाटीका says:

*mudam sukhaviśeṣam ratim dadātīti*

*mudrā l ... mudam paramākṣarasukha-  
gyānalakṣaṇām rati sarvakālamādatte  
purvāvasthāyā acalanayogeneti mudrā l  
(sekodeśatikā, pr.56)*

*Mudrā* offers pure bliss (and) exceptional joy...

*Mudrā* is a pure respected bliss of letter, a sign of knowledge; bliss for all times; it takes you to the primary state of the firm yoga.

Here, ‘*purvāvasthāyā acalanayoga*’ means ‘*ādiyoga*’ referred to in *Guhyasamājatantra*:

*ākāśadhātumadhyastham bhāvayed  
ratnamaṇḍalam l*

*ādiyogam prayatnena tasyopari  
vibhāvayet ll 12 ll (GT Ch.VI)*

with reference to *vajradhara* and ‘*bhāvanā*’

*atha vajradharah śrīmān sar-  
vatathāgatānvitah l*

*sarvabuddhāgrasarvagyo bhāṣate bhāva-  
nottamam ll 7 ll*

(GT Ch.VI)

### ***Mudrā* used in *caryāgītīnṛtya*:**

A reference to *mudrā* can be found in esoteric rituals of *vajrayāna* rituals, in sculptural and pictorial iconography or in *caryā* dances performed in *vajrayāna* rituals which can be named *caryāgītīnṛtya* which has been proudly preserved by the *vajrācāryas* of Nepal.

The actual classification of these *mudrā*

took place as far as we know around the VI century A.D., and in what is probably the first sutra to codify them, that is to say the *Murimandarajukyo*, there are listed some sixteen gestures. Later, in the VII century along with the developing codification of Esoteric Buddhism there are listed more than 300.<sup>21</sup>

As for pre-Buddhist origins one may well look to the dance, for since most ancient times, the dance seems to have been, at all times and universally, the spontaneous expression of the magic and the mystery of primitive rites. In very remote antiquity, dance gestures seem to have evolved towards a religious usage. They became early integrated into a religious ritualism which, while depriving them of their former liberty, imposed on them a hierarchy, a ritual classification which tended to conserve them over the centuries. For the needs of the cult subsequent religions had only to adopt the choreographic gesture to their rites: the idea of a system of gestures as well as the forms had existed for a long time... The dance gesture was essentially rhythmic.<sup>22</sup>

Words of *ratnakājī vajrācārya guruju*, the most respected guru of *caryā* dance, are of prime importance as a concluding remarks on *vajrayāna mudrā*:

According to *hevajratantra*, *mudrā* paves the way to *mokṣa*. In *yoga ratna mālā*, *mudrā* has been equated with *vajra* which can never be destroyed. *Guhyasamājapradīpodhhyotaka vyākhyāna grantha* segregates *dharma mudrā* as the one which is a *bijāksara* of *mahāmudrā mantra pada*; likewise, *cinha mudrā* is



a *mudrā* of symbolism and *mahāmudrā* is a *mudrā* for *dhyāna* or meditation of deities. *Mudrā* is a symbolic language of wisdom, it is a sutra of different expression, it is a *vidhi* of acquiring mysterious knowledge and it is a path of enlightenment by focusing on *paramārth tattva*.

The dance gestures or 108 *mudrās* applied in *vajrayāna caryāgītīnṛtya* are:<sup>23</sup>

## Methodology

The research is based on the review of the Buddhist text *mañjuśrīmulakalpa* and

*sādhnamālā*, the main source of reference for *mudrā*, and its practical application by the *vajrācārya* priests and their disciples who have turned into performers of the art of dance of *caryā*. Close association and interaction with *vajrācārya* priests and participation in *bāhya* or outer rituals and observation of the *caryā* dances performed on stage by the artists has been a pathway to comparative analysis and understanding of the progress of the dance in its present state and form.

## Discussion

*Mudrā* used in *vajrayāna* rituals are the basis for the performers of the *caryānṛtya* to put in application for expression of words of *caryāgīti* as an aesthetic means of dance. Lack of treaty or *grantha* on dance in *vajrayāna* religious practice necessitates a synchronization between available material on *mudrā* in authentic *vajrayāna* text like *mañjuśrīmuklakalpa* and *sādhnamālā* and *mudrā* used for expression by the performers of the dance.

Dance as a religious component of the religion has led to its being overlooked as an art form. Practice of the dance in a ritual has been transmitted from one generation to other almost on verbal level. In a changing scenario, *caryānṛtya* is turning into a performing art based on the ritual practice by the *vajrācārya* priests. In this perspective, for performers of *caryānṛtya* in public, on stage, textual reference on *mudrā* remains a guiding force to be adhered to.

## Findings

Origin of *mudrā* as a symbolic gesture of expression of the mankind to inspiration for *mudrā* from initial letter of a mantra in Esoteric Buddhism, *caryāgītīnṛtya* of Nepalese *vajrācārya* has come a long way. Application of *mudrā* in a secret rituals to its use in an outer rituals has led it to being an expression for the dance of *caryā* as an art form to be performed on stage for the appreciation of the audience deep dawn conscious of the culture it represents. A leap from a ritual ceremonial need to artistic expression asks for coordination of the two for classification *mudrā* as an art form.

## Conclusion

Among two types of specified *mudrās* commonly applied in the context of worship of supreme spirits and another in the context of specified supreme spirits, the one commonly applied *mudrās* have found its way into *caryāgītīnṛtya* performed in public. *Mudrās* of specified supreme spirits or *samaya mudrā* are complex in construction and thus hinders

proper execution. *Mudrās* commonly used for supreme spirits calls for an apt interpretation and formation to apply in dance performed by the artists on stage.

## Notes

1. ‘yābhirviracitābhstu modante sarvadevatāh’
2. *amṛtakaṇikā* of *āryamañjuśrīnāmasaṅgīti* by *ācārya raviśrī bhikṣu* in *dhīh* vol.I p.113

3. *karmagyānamahāmudrāsamayākhyah prabhāsvarah* I

*heturbhāvvyā tathā prāpyā caturdhā cāvinaśvarāh* II

from *caturmudropadeśa* in *dhīh* vol.I p.113

4. *pr̥thivyādīni bhūtāni kañiṣṭhāddhah kramānmatāh* I

*teṣāmanyonyasambhedaparakāraistatprapancatā* II

*dhīh* p.113-114

5. *pañca kapāla: cacā munā* p.78

Other references are:

*caturvinśati piṭheśvararupam eka vadane trinetradhārī* 2

*pañcamudrā bhūṣitaaṅge grīvyē naraśīramālā* II

*ambījasambhava: cacā munā* p.41

*trinetra mukuṭakeṣī pañcamudrā sañsthitā* 2

*sadgurucaraṇe candravajragītā* II *dhu* II *ḍākinīdevī: cacā munā* p.55

6. *namāmi 2 śrī heruka candra śekhara cacā munā* p.71

Other references are:

*dvadaśa bhuvaneśvara mahāheruka ṣaṇmudrā ratnābharāṇabhūṣitā* 2 *sadgurupāda śīre namitā*

*bhanayi gītadhvani omkāravajra* II *dhu* II *aṣṭacatvārīnśata: cacā munā* p.30 (description of heruka)

*cakrīkuṇḍalakaṇṭhe rocakamekhalā* 2 *vibhūṣita ṣaṇmudrā alaṅkṛtā* II *dhu* II *khaṇḍorohādevī: cacā munā* p.46

*jaṭāyuta vyāghracarmaṣaṇmudrā* II *ālīdha praṭyā bhairava cāpayireśvarā* II *kālīrātrī bimbamudrā* II *viśvakuliśa ardhacandra* *jaṭāyuta vyāghracarma ṣaṇmudrā* II *gajajina: cacā munā* p.47

*bhūṣita ṣaṇmudrā grīve rudramālā* 2 *ṣoḍaśa hāthe dhāriyā kapālā* II *nīlakeyūra: cacā munā* p.75

*tr̥ṭīya bhujā ḍamaru khaṭvāṅga kapālā* 2 *ṣaṇmudrā muṇḍamālā vibhūṣitā* II *dhu* II *viśvasarorūha: cacā munā* p.89

*dahina ḍamaru vāme khaṭvāṅga ṣaṇmudrā muṇḍamālā bhaśmavibhūṣita kaṭiḡhyatavyāghracarma tribhuvananātha ānandaālīṅgana nairātmādevī* II *dhu* II *huñkārasambhava: cacā munā* p.112

*dhyānaprada sahasradala padmamājhe sthīā* 2

*nānā ṣaṇmudrā suśobhitā* II *śvetavarṇa: cacā munā* p.122 & 123

7. 82 *mudrās* are those commonly used for supreme spirits:

*adbhutā, argha, asahā, asīmā, astra, ākṣepa, āvāhana, āsana, utpalavikaca* (vikacotpala), *uṣṇīṣavijayā, kapāla, karūṇā, karma, kavaca, kāśikā, kroḍha* (krodha), *krodhāveśa, gandha, gīta, kṣatra, gyāna, tathāgatasambhava, toṣiṇī, trailokyaraṅjasādhana, trailokyavijaya, trailokyasāadhanī, digbandhana, dīpa, dharmacakra, dharmadeśanā, dharmamudrā, dharmodaya, dhūpinī, nṛtya, netra, naiveddha, pañcākṣara, patākā, padma, paramāśva, pāddha, pāpanāśana, puṣpa, pūrṇa, praṇavā, prāṇa, prokṣaṇī, bali, bhayānaka, bhūtadāmara, mahāmudrā, mūlamudrā, rūpa, lāsya, vajracakra, vajrapaṅjara, vajraprākāra, vajramaṇḍala, vajramudrā, vajrāṅkuśa, vajrāṅkuṣī, vajrāveśa, vajrāsana, vajroṣṇīṣa, vasudhārā, vitāna, visarjana, vīṇā, vyañjanā, śatākṣara, śikhā, śīromudrā, śṛṅgāra, satvasantāna, samayamudrā, sambodhana, siddhākaraṣaṇa, sfoṭa, svastika, svetā, hasitā and hṛdayamudrā.*

These *mudrās* are being explained with the help of a *śloka* for each *mudrā*. Constrain on space restricts further dwelling on the subject.

8. See Danial H. SMITH: 1980 S.V. *mudrā*; DAVIS 1991:32f; GONDA 1977:73.
9. Mmk 34.351.8 and 35.355.10.
10. Mmk 34.350.16.
11. See, for example, mmk 2.26.8-35.10, where numerous mantras and *vidyās* are given with their corresponding *mudrās*. The correspondences are made fairly explicit here.
12. Mmk 34.351.20-21: *mantrānām mudritā mudrā mantrāis cāpi sumudritā II na mantram mudrahīnam tu na mudrā mudravarjītā*.
13. Stephan Beyer 1973:146. See mmk 35.355.24ff. For obvious examples of this category of *mudrā*. Gestures given there include *utphala*, *svastika*, *dhvaja*, *chatra*, *ghata*, *mālā*, *śūla*, *kumbha*, and mmk 2.27.10 ff. for similar correspondences.
14. Stephan Beyer 1973:146.
15. See, for instance, mmk 34.350.10-21, a section on the requirements of the practitioner who receives *mudrā*: he must be adorned with bodhicitta, follow the buddhas path interminably, etc.
16. Mmk 34.351.9 and 22.
17. Mudra of *mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*: Common *mudrās* used for supreme spirits  
*agnikarmaprasādhikā: ankuśa: ardhacandra: utpala: ekaśikhā: kalaśa: kunta: kumbha: ketu: khaḍga: gaja: gadā: ghanṭā: cintāmaṇiratnamahāmudrā: chhatṛ: tadgatacāriṇī: tomara: trīśikhā: danṣṭṛ, vakra: dvilinga: dhanu: dharmacakra: dharmabherī: dhvaja: namaskāra: nārāca: pancaśikhā: pata: pataha: paṭīśa: padma: padmālayā: paraśu: paryanka: pāṭṛ: pāśa: pūṭha:*  
*Dhīh* 3 1987 p70-87  
*Mudrās* from *mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* :

2nd Edition published by *Mithilā Viddhyāpitha Darabhangā (Bihāra)* in 1964.

These *mudrās* are being explained with the help of a *śloka* for each *mudrā*. Constrain on space restricts further dwelling on the subject.

18. BSS/PCB/20-21 bodhisattva *śila* of Subhakarasiṃha by Prabodh Chandra Bagchi pdf p. 20-21
19. *dhāraṇis* 3 in number: 1. om *vajramaṇḍalam praveśāmi* 2. om *sudhā sudhā* 3. om *sarvavide svāhā*
20. *mudrā: mudrā* of fingers 10 in number: Names of Ten Fingers of *mudrā* of *bodhisattva caryā*: 1.*dāna*: दान, : the little finger of the right hand 2.*prajñā*: प्रज्ञा, the little finger of the left 3.*śīla*: शील, ring finger of the right hand 4.*kṣānti*: क्षान्ति, middle finger of the right hand 5.*upāya*: उपाय, ring finger of the left hand 6. *praṇidhāna*: प्रणीधान, middle finger of the left 7.virya: विर्य, fore-finger of the right hand 8. bala: बल, fore-finger of the left 9. *dhyaṇa*: ध्यान, thumb of the right hand 10.*jñāna*: ज्ञान. thumb of the left
21. E. Dale Saunders, *Symbolic Gestures in Buddhism*  
 Bhattacharyya, B., in the intro of *Two Vajrayāna Works*, places among the first Tantric texts containing numerous *mudrā*, *maṇḍala*, and mantra, (i) the *mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* (T. II9I) and (2) the *guhyaśamājatantra* (T. 885). The first dates probably from the II (?) century A. D. and the second from the III (?) century.
22. E. Dale Saunders, *Symbolic Gestures in Buddhism*  
 At the beginning of the Christian era, the role of the *mudrā* in Buddhist symbolism derives from traditional Buddhism, but it is to Tantrism that it owes its full development.
23. 108 *mudrā* of *caryāgītiṅṛtya* listed by *caryā*

exponent Raju Shakya are:

(\* denotes frequently used mudrā, (s) will denote single handed gestures and (d) will denote double handed gestures)

*bhūmi sparśa* (d), *varada* (d), *dhyāna* / *samādhi* (d), *abhaya* (d), *dharmacakra* (d), *bodhyāṅga* (d), *gyāna*\*(s), *padma*\* (d), *śakti* (s), *raktasañcārī* (s), *dhāraṇa*\* (s), *bindu* (s), *triśula* (s), *gaja* (d), *aśva* / *turaṅga* (d), *śikhī* / *mayura* (d), *garūḍa* (d), *siṅha* (d), *ṅṛtāñjalī* (d), *uttarābodhī*\* (d), *tarpaṇa*\* (d), *cakra* (d), *vajra ghaṇṭa* (s), *vara*\* (s), *varadāna*\* (s), *trailokya vijaya*\* (d), *tarjanī*\* (s), *dharmodaya*\* (d), *āvahāna*\* (d), *śihāpanī*\* (d), *āsana* (s), *karūṇā* (s), *krodha* (d), *grantha* (d), *khaḍga* (s), *gūta* (s), *vīṇā* (d), *nṛtya* (d), *mṛdaṅga* (d), *muraja* (d), *lāsya* (d), *dhupa* (s), *dīpa* (s), *gandha* (d), *rasa* (s), *vajradhātu* (d), *dharmadhātu* (d), *darpaṇa* (s), *vajramuṣṭī* (s), *śrīvatsa* (d), *puṇḍrikā* (d), *dhvaja* (d), *kalaś* (d), *cāmara* (d), *chhatra* (d), *matsya* (d), *śaṅkha* (d), *netra* (d), *naivaidhya* (d), *patāka*\* (d), *bhayaṅkara* (d), *toṣaṇa*\* (d), *bhūtaḍāmara* (d), *rūpa* (s), *vajracakra* (d), *vajāṅkūśa* (d), *vajrapāśa* (d), *vajrasfoṭa* (d), *vajrāveśa* (d), *vajrāsana* (d), *indrāsana* (d), *svastika*\* (d), *hṛdaya* (d), *ghoraḍākinī* (d), *nāga*\* (s/d), *pañca*\* (s/d), *ṣaṇa* (s/d), *candra* (s), *dhanu* (s), *śara* (s), *śikhī* (s), *mālā* (d), *musala* (s), *vajradaṇḍa* (s), *samaliṅgī* (d), *amogha* (d), *śānta*\* (d), *vyākaraṇa*\* (d), *patrasṭha amṛta kṣepana* (d), *vajracakra*\* (d), *jinapati*\* (d), *kuliśa* (s), *gajacarma* (d), *nupūra* (d), *jvālā* (d), *rāhu* (d), *nāṣeśvara* (d), *daṇḍa* (s), *ekavaktra* (s), *kartarī* (s), *kapāla* (s), *mahāmudrā* (d), *vyāghracarma* (d), *mahā* (d), *pāpanāśana* (s), *ratna* (d), *ratna*

*maṇḍala*\* (d) and *maṇḍala*\* (d).

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