Five Taras or Goddess Tara



Thangka depicting White Tara with 21 Taras and Amitabha

This exceptional altar cover depicts the goddess Tara, different manifestations of which are represented by different colors – white, green, yellow, blue, and red.

Many myths surround the creation of the goddess Tara. According to one of them she was born from a beam of light emanating from the eyes of Avalokitesvara; in another, she was born from a lotus floating in a tear on his face. In all the creation myths of Tara, Avalokitesvara figures prominently. Avalokitesvara is the Buddhist diety whose infinite love and compassion is always available to teach and rescue all practitioners from danger. The Dalai Llamas are said to be the descendants or reincarnation of Avalokitesvara. Whereas Avalokitesvara might be considered a masculine diety, Tara is known as the “Saviouress,” the female counterpart of Avalokitesvara, the vehicle through which Avalokitesvara’s love and compassion are delivered.

There are five Taras, each corresponding to a different color. They represent the following:



Thangka depicting White Tara with 21 Taras and Amitabha

White Tara: symbolizes transcendent knowledge and perfect purity.

Green Tara: the original Tara who gave rise to all others. When shown with the other Taras she is considered to be the goddess of good fortune.

Yellow Tara: she is said to have been born from a frown on the face of Avalokitesvara and represents his wrathful form; thus she can be viewed as the guardian of loving and compassionate beings.

Blue Tara: the fierce assistant of the Green Tara, she is typically represented in paintings and can be viewed as protecting the Taras as well as all good beings.

Red Tara: represents the power of love of the original Tara.