

THE COMMENTARY ON  
*WANG DÜ:*  
*THE GREAT CLOUD OF*  
*BLESSINGS*  
BY KHENPO SODARGYE



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## The Background of Khenpo's Teaching on this Prayer

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At Larung Gar, in February 2013 (the Miracle Month of January in the Tibetan calendar), Khenpo Sodargye Rinpoche gave the teaching on *Wang Dü: The Great Cloud of Blessings - The Prayer Which Magnetizes All that Appears and All that Exists*, during the annual Dharma Assembly of the Awareness Holders. There were two reasons he gave this teaching. The first is that when Khenpo visited Mount Wutai on June, 2012, he aspired to chant this prayer 10,000 times, and also promised to give a teaching on it. The second reason is that, because of its powerful blessings, many dharma practitioners had been chanting this prayer for many years, but some of them had still not fully grasped its meaning. So Khenpo felt it necessary to explain its deep meaning in a thorough way. As he said, "Although this prayer is short and consists of a mere seven stanzas, its content is most excellent and profound."

Before giving the teaching, Khenpo said, "Wang Dü is a practice of Vajrayana Buddhism. Usually, the prerequisite for receiving such a teaching is an empowerment. But because it is a prayer, and does not contain explicit Vajrayana practice instructions, and furthermore because many people in Tibet, Han-China and overseas are already chanting this prayer, I think there is no harm to be had from you listening to this teaching. For this reason, I authorize those who have not received an empowerment, if you promise to recite the Vajrasattva mantra 100,000 times, you are permitted to receive this teaching."

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## The Great Benefits of this Prayer

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Even though Wang Dü is not identified as a terma, it is generally understood to have come from Ju Mipham Rinpoche's wisdom mind, from the great Bodhisattva Manjushri. Wang Dü is an extraordinary prayer that brings within one's power, all phenomena in the entire universe, while at its most powerful, it bestows the ability to tame one's mind. Therefore, it can be said to have two main effects: an outer and an inner one. By relying on the prayer, one gains in the outer sense, the ability to benefit all living beings; while its inner effect offers one the ability to control discursive thoughts, and thereby attain unrestrained control of the body and the mind.

### a. The Outer Effects

As a person who has already generated bodhicitta, you should devote your best efforts to the welfare of all sentient beings. This is not always easy however, and in fact, if one is relying completely on one's own abilities, it can be quite difficult. One must, on the one hand, remain personally diligent; while on the other hand, one must pray for the blessing of the personal deities, Dakini and the Dharma protectors.

Sometimes the influence of deities is more important than our own efforts. Of course, atheists might not agree with this, as they believe that the origin of success depends upon one's own diligence and nothing more. While it is true that one's own efforts are important, one also

needs beneficial outer circumstances. It is only when inner and outer conditions harmonize that success will follow.

Some people think that propagating the Dharma and benefiting sentient beings is such a large a project that individual efforts of an ordinary person make little or no difference. However, this is an incorrect way of thinking. Although our activities to benefit sentient beings might not have a great impact in this life, if we persist in reciting Wang Dü, we can create a wonderful karmic origination for the benefit of sentient beings in our next life.

#### b. The Inner Effects

Through recitation of this prayer, we gain unrestrained control over the body and the mind. In essence, all afflictions of sentient beings come from the fact that they are not the masters of their own body and mind. The inability to control discursive thoughts is what causes the mind of all beings in samsara to become constantly perturbed by every changing situation, which causes immeasurable suffering. If we recite this prayer often, we will gain command of our own mind, and eventually realize its nature. Then, not only will mental afflictions cease to exist, but we will be able to master all external phenomena as well.

#### c. An Importance Practice at Larung Gar

Because of these incredible effects, Wang Dü is a highly valued Dharma practice at Larung Gar. Every teaching and every tutorial begins with the recitation of this prayer three times. H. H. Jigme Phuntsok Rinpoche once said, “If I and my future lineage holders want to benefit sentient beings for all future lives, recitation of this prayer is the most effective means.” In order to create favorable conditions for his students to benefit sentient beings, His Holiness made offerings to the sangha at Larung Gar so that they would recite Wang Dü three times every day. This was later increased to five times a day. After His Holiness passed away, Lama Mumtso also made offerings to the sangha to continue the daily recitation.

The practice of Wang Dü can also remove obstacles and enables one to influence ordinary adverse circumstances and transform them into positive ones. At Larung Gar, often people ask the sangha to chant Wang Dü in order to do something smoothly and successfully. For example, when there is a shortage of water supply at Larung, a driver from Serta will volunteer to transport water to us. In order for him to be successful without encountering obstacles, the sangha will be asked to all recite Wang Dü together.

This prayer is not only popular at Larung Gar. Even outside the institute, one can often see old, white-haired and toothless Tibetans, unfamiliar with even the most basic sadhana, reciting Wang Dü fluently with great vigor. This must surely be a sign of successful magnetizing! As Khenpo Sodargye said, “Although we never made any effort to promulgate the prayer, it has grown spontaneously and is now recited by many domestic and overseas practitioners.”

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### **The Title of the Prayer**

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## A1. Opening: The Title

### ***Wang Dü: The Great Cloud of Blessings - The Prayer Which Magnetizes All that Appears and All that Exists***

Wang Dü is short for “*The Great Cloud of Blessings - The Prayer Which Magnetizes All that Appears and All that Exists*”. Here “*all that appears*” refers to the outer world that appears, and “*all that exists*” refers to all living beings who exist within the outer world. Briefly speaking, there are three things we need to know regarding this prayer. 1) That the purpose of this prayer is to accomplish the activity of magnetizing. 2) That we should chant this prayer if we want to accomplish the activity of magnetizing. 3) And that the prayer is directed to the ocean-like countless magnetizing beings of the Three Roots, who are represented by the nine deities of magnetizing.

#### a. The Four Tantric Activities

In Vajrayana Buddhism, there are four types of activities<sup>1</sup>: pacifying, enriching, magnetizing and subjugating. A prerequisite to accomplishing these activities is having achieved a certain level of realization in one’s own Vajrayana practice.

##### 1. Pacifying

Eliminating disease, hindrance and negative karma of oneself and others. For example, the Vajrasattva practice is a pacifying activity. Through Vajrasattva’s purification practice, one can eradicate all of one’s negative karma that has accumulated since beginningless time.

##### 2. Enriching

Enriching fame, wealth, social status, wisdom and so on. There are many practices of enriching. Those who want to increase their intelligence can practice Manjushri, those who want to increase their compassion can practice Avalokiteshvara and those who want increased wealth can practice Zambala.

##### 3. Magnetizing

First gaining complete control of one’s own body and mind, then gaining the power to magnetize and conciliate all other humans and non-humans. Some people are met with difficulties wherever they go. They are in conflict with their parents, non-humans seek to inflict harm upon them; even the dog they pass on the street barks at them. In fact, all our external disharmony is fundamentally caused by a loss of control over our own body and mind. If we can practice magnetizing activity well, we can gain control over our body and mind, and consequently are able to have greater influence over all external conditions.

##### 4. Subjugating

When a person has perfected the power of his great compassion and is free of the last thread of selfishness, he can forcefully transfer the consciousness of certain barbarous beings to the pure land through the practices of wrathful deities such as Hayagriva<sup>2</sup>, and Vajrakilaya<sup>3</sup>,

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Four\\_activities](http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Four_activities)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Hayagriva>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Vajrakilaya>

etc. On the surface, it may appear as if subjugating is killing, but the two actions are radically different. Killing is a heinous deed that harms sentient beings, while subjugating is an expedient means of benefitting them.

If one does not understand Vajrayana Buddhism, or if one is prejudiced against it, one might find it difficult to accept these tantric activities. From this perspective it would be a normal reaction. Just as the sunshine cannot reach a north-facing cave, a person without faith can never understand the teaching and receive the blessings of the Vajrayana.

#### b. The Power of Magnetizing Activities

For those who want to spread the Dharma to benefit sentient beings, it is very important to accomplish magnetizing activity. Otherwise, no matter how determined your efforts, people will dismiss you. If you have perfected the activities of magnetizing, your efforts are combined with the power of the deities of magnetizing, which can give an added push to your activities, even if you are just an ordinary person. With the help of magnetizing activities, you do not need to engage in extraordinary efforts with your dharma activities, nor does it require that you petition people around you to take refuge in the Three Jewels or to take the Bodhisattva vows. In fact, all of these can be accomplished without any difficulties.

H.H. Jigme Phunstok Rinpoche is the perfect example of someone who obtained this power. His Holiness revived the Dharma after the Cultural Revolution in China. In that dark period, His Holiness single-handedly accomplished something that many others had failed to achieve. He resurrected the banner of Dharma in this world by calling upon the power of magnetizing.

Khenpo Sodargye also feels a strong personal affinity towards the activity of magnetizing as well. In 1985, when he was newly arrived in Larung, the first Dharma assembly he took part in was the Dharma Assembly of the Awareness Holders, then called the Dharma Assembly of the Nine Deities.

There is an unusual reason why the name of the Dharma assembly was changed. In 1995, many monks and nuns gathered in Larung Gar to attend the Dharma assembly. At that time, His Holiness Jigme Phunstok Rinpoche stated, “This Dharma assembly is not only being attended by human beings; many awareness holders from different Buddha Realms have come to join us as well. There are gathered here a total of 100,000 human and non-human awareness holders. For this reason, this Dharma gathering should be called the Dharma Assembly of the One Hundred Thousand Awareness Holders.” Ever since that time, the Dharma Assembly of the Nine Deities has been called the Dharma Assembly of the Awareness Holders.

As a matter of fact, whatever our practice, the right condition for interdependent arising is very important. Observing the conditions from many different aspects, one will find that Larung Valley is a place where the activity of magnetizing is easily achieved. A Tertön once made this prophecy<sup>4</sup> for His Holiness Jigme Phuntsok Rinpoche:

*The Lotus blossoms in the valley of magnetizing activity,  
The golden eagle of Loro soars in the sky.*

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.khenposodargye.org/2013/03/biography-of-h-h-jigmey-phuntsok-dharmaraja/28/>

*Its call resonates loud and clear in ten directions,  
All birds gather under his wings.*

“*The Lotus blossoms in the valley of magnetizing activity*” indicates Larung, a valley whose mountain ridges form the shape of a lotus blossom; “*The golden eagle*” is a symbolic reference to His Holiness, who was born in the year of the bird; “*All birds*” refers to the disciples of His Holiness. This prophecy is very clear about Larung valley being a suitable place to practice magnetizing.

Actually, the practice of magnetizing is more significant to people living out in the world compared to its significance for practitioners living in seclusion. Living in the world, one is inevitably confronted with problems of relationships, money and social status, etc., and so there is great suffering and unhappiness in people’s hearts. The activity of magnetizing will have positive effects in dealing with these daily issues. His Holiness once said: “In addition to benefiting sentient beings, those who have accomplished the activities of magnetizing will improve their own lives as well.”

Khenpo Sodargye also jokingly said in his teaching, “When you find yourself in financial difficulties and every day, you have to borrow money, first from the left and then from the right, and even if you have reached the point where others avoid you out of fear of having to lend you money; this would be a good time to start practicing magnetizing. Once you have accomplished the activity of magnetizing, you will never find yourself in this kind of situation again.”

So generally speaking, if one can practice magnetizing, and receive the blessings of deities, Dakinis and Dharma protectors of the magnetizing activities, one will find that both the body and the mind gradually come under control and one’s problems change for the better.

### c. The Great Cloud of Blessings

The subtitle of this prayer is “*The Great Cloud of Blessings*”. This makes reference to the blessings of the Three Roots of magnetizing which will descend like the great rains of summer, and bring an uninterrupted flow of Siddhi to whoever earnestly recites it.

Those who consistently recite Wang Dü will not only receive blessings from the Three Roots, but will also form a bond with His Holiness Jigme Phuntsok Rinpoche, who personally promised that even after his passing he would not abandon those disciples who had formed a karmic bond with him. Those who recite Wang Dü, even if they have never seen or heard His Holiness personally, will be counted among his disciples and be received into his sphere of influence.

The blessing of His Holiness is indeed incredible. Khenpo Sodargye recalled his personal experience in his teaching saying, “I thought back to my decision to come to Larung Gar and realized that it must have been the result of His Holiness’ blessing. I hadn’t even graduated from school yet, but for an unexplainable reason, I felt the irresistible impulse to come to Larung and learn Buddhism. It was as if I had been pulled by an uncontrollable force.”

The fact that the Dharma has reached such levels of prosperity at Larung Gar, is also the result of H.H. Jigme Phuntsok Rinpoche’s great blessing. People from other monasteries have

attempted to spread the Dharma out of a sense of compassion, but their activities have seldom been fully effective. This is not the case at Larung Gar. It is common knowledge that His Holiness is the reincarnation of Dorje Dudjom<sup>5</sup>, a great siddha who accomplished the activity of magnetizing. While His Holiness was still alive and even after his departure from this world, Larung Gar has continued to be a holy site of the prosperous Dharma.

In his teaching, Khenpo said, “I used to think that once His Holiness passed away I would no longer wish to live at Larung; that without His Holiness, Larung would be like a land of ruins. I thought that even if some people remained, their number would be few. I never suspected that due to the benevolent influence of His Holiness, so many Buddhists would remain gathered together at Larung, or that Larung would continue to play such an important role in today’s Buddhism. This is not an exaggeration. As Mipham Rinpoche said, ‘Never use untruthful language, even if the subject of your praise is your root guru.’ For those who live in worldly society, speaking the truth is a crucial quality, and it is even more so for those who are committed to Buddhist practice.”

Throughout his life, His Holiness always had the highest regard for Wang Dü. Regardless of which holy site he visited, he would recite this prayer at least three times. Khenpo Sodargye also chants this prayer when on pilgrimage, or anytime he sees a victorious Buddha statue. If he doesn’t have the time to recite a longer prayer of aspiration, he will chant this prayer a minimum of three times. In the same way, Khenpo Sodargye always encourages all his students to understand the importance of Wang Dü and to keep it as an important prayer that they practice throughout their entire lives.

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### Symbolized by the Mantra

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#### **A2: Middle: Main Text**

##### **B1: The Mandala to Which One Prays**

##### **C1: Symbolized by the Mantra**

##### ***OM AH HUNG HRIH***

###### a. The Meaning of the Mantra

“Om Ah Hum” is the all-encompassing mantra of the Buddhas of the Three Times. “Om” represents the vajra body of the Buddhas of the Three Times; “Ah” represents their vajra speech; and “Hum” represents their vajra mind. Therefore, by reciting “Om Ah Hum”, you receive the blessings of all Buddhas.

“Hrih” is the core seed syllable of the Three Root magnetizing deities of the Lotus Family<sup>6</sup> and represents the natural radiance of the wisdom of discernment. Because this prayer is dedicated to the deities of the Lotus Family, which consist primarily of the nine principal

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<sup>5</sup> [http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Nanam\\_Dorje\\_Dudjom](http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Nanam_Dorje_Dudjom)

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Five\\_buddha\\_families](http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Five_buddha_families)

deities, we must recite “Hrih”.

Mantras are the unparalleled, creative means by which the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas benefit sentient beings. Whichever Buddhist mantra that you recite, you are immediately brought into resonance with its associated deity. While it is true in the ultimate sense, the primordial nature of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas transcends concept and form, in relative terms, when sentient beings recite mantras with devotion, Buddhas and Bodhisattvas will descend and appear to them. Similarly, just as a child cries for its mother, the mother quickly comes to its aid. And so, when we recite “Om Ah Hum Hrih” with diligence and devotion, we receive the blessings of all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, and more specifically we receive the blessings of the nine principal deities of the Lotus Family and their extensive retinues.

#### b. The Nine Deities of Magnetizing Activity

There are many different ways of visualizing the nine deities of magnetizing activity. Wang Dü, composed by Mipham Rinpoche represents one of these. The sadhana that is recited during the Dharma Assembly of the Awareness Holders, *Profound Practice of the Illusory Lasso of Avalokiteshvara’s Nine Principle Deities*, a terma revealed by Lerab Lingpa, is another one. In these two practices, the descriptions of the nine deities are slightly different.

H.H. Jigme Phuntsok Rinpoche once asked an artist to draw the nine deities according to the description in Wang Dü. In the drawing, the Dharmakaya Buddha of Boundless Light (Amitabha)<sup>7</sup> is located at the top in the center. Amitabha is equivalent to Samantabhadra with the exception that Samantabhadra is generally identified by his blue color, whereas Amitabha is red. Positioned directly below Amitabha is the Sambhogakaya Buddha, Vajradharma<sup>8</sup>, the equivalent of Vajradhara. Below Vajradharma is the Nirmanakaya Padma Gyalpo<sup>9</sup>, an emanation of Padmasambhava. At the top left is red Avalokiteshvara<sup>10</sup>; below that is Guhyajñāna<sup>11</sup> and at the bottom left is Kurukullā<sup>12</sup>. On the top right of Vajradharma is Hayagriva<sup>13</sup>, below that is Vajravarahi<sup>14</sup> and then Mahadeva<sup>15</sup> is on the bottom right.

If Vajrayana practitioners place this picture on their shrine, over time, they will certainly receive blessings from these deities. However, this only applies to practitioners of sincere devotion to Vajrayana Buddhism. Those without much understanding of Vajrayana might develop bad feelings towards these deities. Although there are no images of deities in sexual union, there are figures wearing only bone ornaments.

It is important to keep in mind that if one prays to the nine magnetizing deities with joy, it is easier to resonate with them. The instructions to practitioners for the sadhana practiced in the Dharma Assembly of the Awareness Holders states: “Commence your practice with a pure

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Amitabha>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Vajradharma>

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Guru\\_Pema\\_Gyalpo](http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Guru_Pema_Gyalpo)

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Padmapani>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Guhyajnana>

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Kurukulla>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Hayagriva>

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Vajravarahi>

<sup>15</sup> [http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=D%C3%B6p%C3%A9\\_Gyalpo](http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=D%C3%B6p%C3%A9_Gyalpo)

and joyful mind.” Naturally, even when in a bad mood, chanting Wang Dü and receiving the blessings of the nine deities might lift your spirits. Some people start with a sad countenance, but after chanting Wang Dü a few times, they show no more signs of negative emotion, and their enunciation becomes loud and clear and even their prayer wheel spins faster. This is a sign of receive the blessings of the deities through chanting this prayer.

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## The Qualities of All the Magnetizing deities

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### C2: The Mandala Itself

#### D1: The Qualities of All the Magnetizing Deities

*In the magnetizing palace where great bliss is ablaze  
Are the bodies of discerning wisdom - union of bliss and emptiness.  
Blissful is their lotus nature, yet free from all attachment--  
The splendor of the vajra sun's great brilliance.*

This stanza summarizes the qualities of the magnetizing deities. The descriptions are applicable to each deity introduced in the following text.

##### a. The Support of the Magnetizing Deities

“*The magnetizing palace where great bliss is ablaze*” refers to the dwelling place, or the support for the magnetizing deities. “Great bliss” is not bliss in the ordinary sense, but the immaculate wisdom that transcends all conceptual thoughts. In appearance, these deities reside in a magnetizing palace, blazing with the fire of blissful wisdom.

Residences of Buddhas can be classified into three categories: the Dharmakaya palace, the Sambhogakaya palace and the Nirmanakaya palace, corresponding to the three kayas<sup>16</sup> of their manifestation. The Dharmakaya palace is in fact the primordial wisdom, which is beyond expression, transcending all duality, direction, language and thought. The Sambhogakaya palace is the boundless palace in the Sambhogakaya Buddhafield. In the Guhyagarbha Tantra, it is said that this boundless palace has five kinds of majestic qualities and is invisible to the ordinary human eye. It is exclusively visible to enlightened beings that have reached the first bhumi or beyond. The Nirmanakaya palace is a palace in the apparent pure realms. Its virtues are visible to ordinary human beings whose mind streams are not so contaminated. The Boundless Palace of Amitabha's Pure Land is an example of a Nirmanakaya palace.

##### b. The Basic Form of the Magnetizing Deities

“*Bodies of discerning wisdom - union of bliss and emptiness*” refers to the basic form of the magnetizing deities. Regarding “*union of bliss and emptiness*”, from the perspective of the perceiver, it is unchanging great bliss; and from the perspective of the perceivable, it is profound emptiness. The magnetizing deities have completely realized the non-duality of the perceiver and the perceivable, abiding in the perfect union of bliss and emptiness, and

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<sup>16</sup> [http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Three\\_kayas](http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Three_kayas)

irreversibly transform lust and desire into the wisdom of discernment.

The wisdom of discernment is one of the five wisdoms of the Buddhas<sup>17</sup>. By relying on the wisdom of discernment, the magnetizing deities are able to perceive all phenomena with perfect and precise discernment. The magnetizing deities possess the qualities of the Buddha's five kinds of wisdom, but this prayer specifically approaches it from the perspective of the wisdom of discernment.

c. The Family of the Magnetizing Deities

*“Blissful is their lotus nature, yet free from all attachment”* tells us to which Buddha family the magnetizing deities belong. In Dharmadhatu, each Buddha belongs to a particular Buddha family<sup>18</sup>. The Buddhas of the East belong to the Vajra Family; the Buddhas of the South belong to the Ratna Family; the Buddhas of the West belong to the Lotus Family; the Buddhas of the North belong to the Karma Family; and the Buddhas of the Center belong to the Tathagata Family. The magnetizing deities belong to the Lotus Family of the West.

The general characteristics of the Lotus Family are that they are red in color, and they reside in the West, or more specifically, Sukhavati<sup>19</sup>. It is for this reason that His Holiness used to say: “For those of us who aspire for rebirth in Sukhavati, whether from the perspective of practices of the Ground, Path or the Fruit, the practice of Wang Dū is very suitable.”

Why is this Buddha family called the Lotus Family? It is named after the symbol of the lotus that represents it. Like the lotus flower that grows from muddy water and yet whose blossom is untainted and pristine, the Buddha-figures of the Lotus Family appear to be overflowing with desire yet they are free from the constraints of desire, manifesting the pure wisdom of great bliss. This is why lotus is the metaphorical name of the deities of this Buddha family.

Because the symbolic color of the Lotus Family is red, the Dharma implements used to practice magnetizing should preferably be red. Khenpo Sodargye also advises students to chant Wang Dū using red malas.

Once there was a lama in Palyul<sup>20</sup>, who pursued a variety of different practices. He designated a different mala for each practice and carried a dozen of malas with him at all times. Because of his advanced age, his eyesight had become quite poor. So before he could begin a practice, he had to search through his pockets for quite a while, trying to determine which one was the right mala. On the surface, this may appear to be grasping, but it actually shows how important dharma practice is to him.

If we can pray often to the magnetizing deities, we can free ourselves from the constraints of desire. People are driven by burning desires during these times of degeneration. When faced with temptation, most people are not able to control their bodies or their minds. Some even transgress or abandon their vows. To address this problem, His Holiness said, “As a practitioner

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<sup>17</sup> [http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Five\\_wisdoms](http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Five_wisdoms)

<sup>18</sup> [http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Five\\_buddha\\_families](http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Five_buddha_families)

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Sukhavati>

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Palyul>

who wants to maintain his precepts untainted throughout future lives, you should recite Wang Dū or pray to Kurukullā with diligence. If you can do so, you will be transforming your impure thoughts into immaculate wisdom, which is like transforming iron into gold.”

d. The Activities of the Magnetizing Deities

“*The splendor of the vajra sun’s great brilliance*” refers to the magnetizing deities’ activities. “*Vajra*” is a term used to describe their indestructible quality. The “*vajra sun’s great brilliance*” is a metaphor for the indestructible wisdom of the magnetizing deities. What are these activities? With the sun-like brilliance of their indestructible wisdom, they can dispel wrong views, negative thoughts and all the darkness of ignorance that hinders sentient beings from attaining enlightenment.

The minds of people are deeply afflicted by the darkness of ignorance. Many do not have the power to tame their own mental afflictions, nor do they possess the ability to benefit sentient beings through the Dharma. If these people can devoutly pray to the magnetizing deities, by virtue of the blessing that they receive, the darkness of ignorance in their mind stream can be swiftly dispelled and their dharma practice, along with their other Dharma propagating activities, can progress smoothly.

There are different ways of understanding Mipham Rinpoche’s vajra words. Some think that this line refers to the dharmakaya Buddha of Boundless Light. Khenpo Sodargye personally thinks that this verse is a summary of all the qualities of the magnetizing deities. Their residence is the boundless magnetizing palace, their basic form is the wisdom of discernment, their Buddha family is the Lotus Family and their activity is dispelling obstacles to enlightenment.

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## The Magnetizing Deities

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### D2: The Magnetizing Deities

*Dharmakaya Buddha of Boundless Light and Vajradharma,  
Sovereign of the world, Avalokiteshvara -- embodiment of great compassion,  
The Lotus King -- he who reigns over all of samsara and nirvana,  
The overpowering Heruka -- Formidable subjugator of all that appears and exists,  
Dakini Secret Wisdom and Vajravarahi,  
Mahadeva, King of Desire, supreme bliss, reservoir of great passion,  
Kurukullā -- enchantress of all creatures without exception,*

a. Dharmakaya Amitabha

Dharmakaya means the union of emptiness and wisdom, which is beyond all form and concept while possessing all kinds of merit. The deities of the Lotus Family manifest in three kayas. Buddha Amitabha is the dharmakaya representation. His body is red in color; he is completely naked without any adornment. He appears like the primordial Buddha, Samantabhadra, except that he is red instead of blue.

In Vajrayana, naked representations of Buddha figures symbolize the intrinsic nature of all phenomena. In this samsaric world, normally, a person depicted without clothes is considered shameful. However, in this case, as the nature of all phenomena is devoid of intrinsic existence and the nature of mind is bare naked, from this standpoint, any adornment is not necessary.

According to *the Tantra of Liberation through Contact*, “The non-changing light body of the primordial Tathagata is naked, unadorned, red and yellow in color and abiding in the meditation posture.” Clearly, Amitabha is unadorned, his body is of reddish yellow color, his hands form the mudra of meditation, and he is seated in the vajra posture.

The fact that the first deity in Wang Dü is Buddha Amitabha, gives rise to a special origination for rebirth in the pure land. His Holiness Jigme Phuntsok Rinpoche once said, “All of you should aspire for rebirth in Sukhavati upon death. Reciting Wang Dü creates a karmic origination that will lead to rebirth in the Pure Land.” Therefore, those who practice Pure Land Buddhism should also recite Wang Dü often.

Among the nine principal magnetizing deities, apart from Amitabha, a few of the dakinis appear naked as well. From this perspective, Vajrayana is indeed the practice of those with sharp natural capacities. If a person still holds on to the notion of shame, Buddhas and Bodhisattvas merely assume graceful and majestic forms. But if a person has realized the bare naked nature of the mind, where all conceptual thoughts and attachments have ceased to exist, then Buddhas and Bodhisattvas appear in another form. Therefore, if a person thinks that Vajrayana’s naked representations of the Buddhas are inappropriate, it is a sign that they are not yet ready for Vajrayana practice. Therefore, in order to protect the minds of such people, the images of naked Buddhas or Buddhas in sexual union, along with certain practices, are disclosed with caution.

Buddhas and Bodhisattvas approach us in boundless ways. In addition to imparting dharma to us by means of language, they also use unique ways to demonstrate the true nature of all phenomena. Regarding the images of Buddhas in sexual union, from an ordinary perspective it does appear that the Buddha father and mother are embracing each other. However, such an embrace is symbolic of the union of emptiness and appearance, emptiness and luminosity, and emptiness and bliss.

Sexual union can also be explained as the mind and phenomena dissolving into non-duality. An average person may have difficulty grasping the meaning of emptiness as taught in the second turning of the Dharma wheel and the concept of tathagatagarbha luminosity taught in the third turning of the wheel. This same person may not see how one is not different from the other. Therefore, the imagery of the Buddhas in sexual union serves as a visual aid to demonstrate this notion. Upon seeing a Buddha embracing a consort, a person with sharp natural capacities, might instantaneously realize the innate wisdom that emptiness and luminosity are inseparable, and be able to transform all negative emotions into the great wisdom of the union of emptiness and bliss.

Nowadays, due to its increasing popularity, many people study the Vajrayana, but very few people really understand it. Most people are simply curious. When they see a naked

representation of the Buddha, or a Buddha with consort, they immediately take a snapshot with their smart phone. They believe that what they are seeing is an artistic image of the human body; but even graver misunderstandings about the Vajrayana can sprout from such uninformed conclusions. A person who understands the Vajrayana, especially a person who has experience with its advanced practices, knows that such imagery does not represent ordinary lust; and that Vajrayana Buddhism would never advocate attachment of this nature.

b. Vajradharma

According to the Esoteric Buddhism of the Tang Dynasty, Vajradharma is a Bodhisattva of the Lotus Family. He is a member of the retinue of the Buddha Amitabha. In certain sadhanas of Tibetan Buddhism, Vajradharma and Amitabha are two different entities. But in this text, Vajradharma and Amithabha are not different. Vajradharma is the sambhogakaya emanation of Amitabha. He is depicted almost identically to Vajradhara<sup>21</sup>: He stands in a vajra posture, arms crossed in front of the chest, holding a vajra in one hand and a bell with the other. The only difference between them is that Vajradhara is blue, and Vajradharma is red.

His Holiness once mentioned that the red Vajradhara also appears in certain sadhanas composed by Mipham Rinpoche. But in Wang Dü, Vajradharma is the sambhogakaya of Amitabha. So in this thangka, commissioned by His Holiness, compliant to the secret meaning of Mipham Rinpoche, dharmakaya Amitabha is depicted above, sambhogakaya Vajradharma is in the middle, and nirmanakaya Padmasambhava is below.

There is plenty of reliable scriptural evidence supporting the claim that Vajradharma and Amitabha are the same entity. In the tantras, it is explicitly stated that Vajradharma is the manifestation of Amitabha; “The red light beaming from Amitabha’s forehead transforms into the red Avalokiteshvara; red light beaming from his throat takes the form of Padmasambhava; the red light from Amitabha’s heart turns into Heruka and the red light beaming from the tip of his nose becomes Vajrapani<sup>22</sup>.” Some masters have explained that Vajrapani here is Vajradharma, and that Vajradharma is the sambhogakaya of Amitabha, just as Vajradhara is the sambhogakaya to Samantabhadra.

c. Avalokiteshvara

Normally, it is better to follow the sequence of dharmakaya, sambhogakaya, and nirmanakaya. But this practice is fundamentally a practice of Avalokiteshvara. Furthermore, it is very difficult for ordinary human beings to embark on the path of the dharmakaya and sambhogakaya Buddhas. To do so, we need to receive the blessing of Amitabha and Vajradharma through Avalokiteshvara. Therefore, here we first introduce Avalokiteshvara before introducing Padmasambhava.

Avalokiteshvara assumes many different forms: Avalokiteshvara with two arms, four arms, eleven faces, a thousand arms, a thousand eyes, etc. The Avalokiteshvara here is very special. He is red in color and is holding a lotus flower in his left hand, symbolizing compassion towards all sentient beings. His right hand forms the mudra of offering, symbolizing the

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<sup>21</sup> <http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Vajradhara>

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Vajrapani>

removal of affliction and suffering for all sentient beings.

The tantras state that red light radiating from Amitabha transforms into Avalokiteshvara. It is also said in Karma Chakmé Rinpoche's *Aspiration to be Reborn in the Pure Realm of Sukhavati*<sup>23</sup> that light emanating from Amitabha takes the form of Avalokiteshvara. Therefore, by praying to the red Avalokiteshvara, both the Sutrayana practice and the Vajrayana practice can be achieved. On the one hand you can accomplish the magnetizing activity, and on the other hand you can attain rebirth in the realm of Amitabha.

In Han Buddhism, the practice of red Avalokiteshvara is rare, but in Tibetan Buddhism it is quite common. In Larung, every 30<sup>th</sup> day of the Tibetan lunar month, the sangha recite the Gyalwa Gyamtso Sadhana, in which Gyalwa is depicted as a four-armed red Avalokiteshvara. Reciting his name and mantra are tremendously beneficial to the dead.

We need to clarify that although Wang Dü and Lerab Lingpa's *Profound Practice of the Illusory Lasso of Avalokiteshvara's Nine Principle Deities* are both practices of the magnetizing activity, and both supplicate the nine magnetizing deities, that they are different from one another. In Wang Dü, the principle deity is a single-figure Padmasambhava, whereas in *Profound Practice of the Illusory Lasso of Avalokiteshvara's Nine Principle Deities*, Padmasambhava is absent. There the main deity is red Avalokiteshvara in the posture of sexual union. In his right hand he is holding a copper hook while in his left hand he holds a string of lotus flowers. He is embracing the Secret Wisdom Dakini. His Holiness also commented, "Typically, Lerab Lingpa's sadhana of nine deities should include Padmasambhava. The reason why Padmasambhava is absent in this sadhana is unclear."

In Wang Dü, it is very easy to count the nine deities. But in Lerab Lingpa's sadhana, they are not as obvious. According to Khenpo Sodargye's teaching, one could count the nine deities of Lerab Lingpa's sadhana as follows: Amitabha, Vajradharma, Padmasambhava, Red Avalokiteshvara, Guhyajñāna, Heruka, Vajravarahi, Kurukullā, Mahadeva. Amitabha, Vajradhara and Padmasambhava, are present in an imperceptible way. Firstly, Amitabha, as chief of the Lotus Family, is positioned above the head of Avalokiteshvara. Secondly, Vajradharma, transformed from Amitabha, is visible to the Bodhisattvas whose perceptions are pure. Thirdly, for ordinary sentient beings with tainted perceptions, the emanation of Amitabha is as the Lotus King.

d. Padma Gyalpo: The Lotus King Padmasambhava

"*He who reigns over all of samsara and nirvana*" expresses that Padmasambhava has attained the ultimate accomplishment, and therefore, has control over all of samsara and nirvana, and all animate and inanimate phenomena.

Padmasambhava is white in color with a hint of red, holding a vajra and a skull cup, with a khatvanga or three-pointed trident tucked under his arm. Usually, Padmasambhava is depicted with a consort, but it was the instruction of His Holiness not to include a consort. Instead, the khatvanga serves as a symbol of the dakini consort.

The Lotus King, Padma Gyalpo, is one of the many epithets of Padmasambhava.

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<sup>23</sup> [http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Aspiration\\_to\\_be\\_Reborn\\_in\\_the\\_Pure\\_Realm\\_of\\_Sukhavati](http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Aspiration_to_be_Reborn_in_the_Pure_Realm_of_Sukhavati)

According to his biography, when Indrabhuti of Orgyen was on his way back home from a treasure-hunting voyage, he passed by a lake. At the center of the lake, he saw a noble-looking boy sitting atop a lotus flower. This boy was Padmasambhava. The king was very delighted by what he saw, and brought the boy to his palace, where he was adopted as the king's own son and thus, became a prince. Later, Padmasambhava granted empowerment to the king, and imparted secret teachings to him. Extremely delighted, the king offered all his wealth and retinue to Padmasambhava, and honored him with the name, Lotus King.

Padmasambhava belongs to the Lotus Family of the west. According to the tantras, Padmasambhava is the emanation of Amitabha and Avalokiteshvara. It is also said in Karma Chakmé Rinpoche's *Aspiration to Be Reborn in the Pure Realm of Sukhavati*, that Padmasambhava originated from a beam of light that radiated outward from Amitabha's heart. Because he has gained control of samsara and nirvana, we should offer him our most devout prayers. Through invoking him, demonic forces and obstacles will be removed, and we will gain control of our body and mind.

Padmasambhava displayed incredible power and benefited countless beings across India, Tibet and China. His deeds are so great and so numerous that they are beyond recounting. This is especially true in Tibet, where without Guru Rinpoche's influence, the harmonious merging and flourishing of Sutrayana and Vajrayana Buddhism could not have succeeded to the extent that it did. Tibetan Buddhism's prosperity in the world and the blessings of Padmasambhava are inseparable. In this dark age, Padmasambhava's teachings are showing their incredible power more than ever. In terms of the effects of transforming our mental afflictions, no other spiritual body of knowledge, can compare to the teachings of Padmasambhava. To be more specific, if it were not for the blessings of Padmasambhava, even you, the reader, would not be able to benefit from Tibetan Buddhism. Therefore, we should all be grateful to Padmasambhava.

e. Hayagriva: The Overpowering Heruka

The overpowering Heruka refers to Hayagriva, and his power to subjugate the entire world. Hayagriva is a wrathful manifestation of Amitabha. While some Hayagriva practices can be found in Tang Esoteric Buddhism, it is in Tibetan Buddhism, that one finds the greatest variety of these practices. Throughout the history of Tibet it has been recorded that many people reached the ultimate accomplishment through Hayagriva practices. In Dudjom Rinpoche's *The Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism: Its Fundamentals and History*, it is documented that Galwa Choyang, one of Padmasambhava's twenty-five heart sons, reached enlightenment by following the practices of Hayagriva. Later, the great siddha, Thangtong Gyalpo<sup>24</sup>, who is considered to be the emanation of both Avalokiteshvara and Hayagriva, also attained the ultimate accomplishment through this practice.

Hayagriva is extremely powerful. Wondrous signs of accomplishment accompany the attainment of enlightenment through Hayagriva. For example, a horse's head may grow from the crown of your own head and make a loud neighing sound which resounds into the space above you, conquering the demons of heaven; the space below you, where it conquers all the

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<sup>24</sup> [http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Thangtong\\_Gyalpo](http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Thangtong_Gyalpo)

demonic forces of the realm of the nagas; the space to the right where all male demonic beings are destroyed; and the space to the left, where all female demons are destroyed. In an age such as this, when the Dharma is in decline, it is very necessary to practice Hayagriva.

Even as a child, Khenpo Sodargye had very strong faith in Hayagriva. He said during the teaching, “Back in those days, I would lead the yaks out to pasture every day. As I walked barefoot in the mountains, I would spin a small prayer wheel while reciting the mantra of Hayagriva: *Om Vajra Krodha Hayagriva Hulu Hulu Hum Phat*. Anyone seeing me would think that I was a Hayagriva yogi. We also had a few horses in our household. The local Tibetans believed that if we recited the Hayagriva mantra, the horses would be safe from attack by wild animals. When my father entrusted these horses to my care, he asked me to recite the Hayagriva mantra with diligence. I felt that since I had been entrusted with such an important responsibility, I had better recite the mantra as often as I could. In retrospect, I believe that although at that time I recited the mantra out of self-interest, I also sowed the seed of a good habit.”

f. Guhyajñāna: Secret Wisdom Dakini

The next deity is Guhyajñāna, also known as the Secret Wisdom Dakini, or Vajrayogini. She is red in color, and has one face with three eyes. In each of her four arms she is holding a flaying knife, a skull-cup full of nectar, a trident and a sword of wisdom. In the yabyum practices of Avalokiteshvara, she is his consort.

Guhyajñāna is a very important Buddha figure in Tibetan Buddhism. Tibetan masters have said that no matter to which Buddha-figure you practice, it is important to choose Guhyajñāna as a parallel practice. In the guru yoga practice in Patrul Rinpoche’s text *The Words of My Perfect Teacher*, it instructs the practitioner to visualize themselves as Guhyajñāna.

Historically, many people have attained achievement through Guhyajñāna practice. Most of the eighty mahasiddhas of India practiced Guhyajñāna. In Tibet, Guhyajñāna was practiced in the strictest secrecy and even then, only by practitioners of the Sakya and Nyingma traditions. It was not until later that this practice passed to other sects. In the Sakya tradition, Guhyajñāna practice was passed on to only one person at a time. Later, the requirements were lifted to allow from seven to twenty-one people of each generation to receive it through oral transmission. Today, the transmission of this practice is still very rare.

We should attach great importance to Guhyajñāna practice. If we can pray earnestly to Guhyajana, then her specific blessing will help us swiftly transform our lust into discerning wisdom and, as such, it will manifest itself in all worldly and non-worldly accomplishments.

g. Vajravarahi

Vajravarahi is also red in color, with one face, two arms and three eyes. On the right side of her face is a swine’s head. She holds a flaying knife in her right hand and in the left hand at her chest she is holding a skull-cup. A khatvanga is tucked under her left arm.

Vajravarahi is portrayed with the head of a swine, which symbolizes the absence of dualistic labeling of phenomena as being either pure or impure. As pigs cannot tell clean from

filthy, and are indifferent to whether the food that they eat is clean or dirty. The swine's head symbolizes that Vajravaraḥi has obliterated all conceptual thoughts of cleanliness and filth.

Vajravaraḥi has many different forms. In addition to the red Vajravaraḥi, there is also a blue Vajravaraḥi and a black Vajravaraḥi. Vajravaraḥi is a practice common to each Tibetan lineage and in particular to the Kagyu tradition. Many Tibetan masters have personally seen Vajravaraḥi herself. The biography of Venerable Longchenpa mentions that Vajravaraḥi appeared to him quite often. Once, Longchenpa even asked Vajravaraḥi why she would appear to him, even though prayers to her were not a specific part of his practice. Vajravaraḥi also appeared to Jigme Lingpa on many occasions.

#### h. Mahadeva: Reservoir of Great Passion

The next deity is Mahadeva. Also red in color, Mahadeva is depicted with one face and two arms, with his left hand holding a skull-cup in front of his chest, and his right hand brandishing a trident.

We may wonder why the expressions “*supreme bliss*”, “*King of Desire*”, and “*reservoir of great passion*” are used to describe Mahadeva. This is because this deity can benefit all sentient beings by means of his great wisdom in which bliss and emptiness are inseparable.

In the tantras, there are two Mahadevas: one is a worldly god, and the other is a manifestation of Avalokiteshvara. Some tantras document that Buddha Shakyamuni has in the past, also taken the form of Mahadeva. Therefore, Mahadeva is not an ordinary god but is a manifestation of an enlightened being. Relying on him, you can ripen your abilities to benefit beings and your abilities to magnetize. In order to benefit sentient beings, Buddhas and Bodhisattvas will manifest themselves in the forms of celestial gods. As such, it is difficult for ordinary beings like ourselves, to tell the difference. So, it is better not to jump to hasty conclusions when you hear the name of a celestial god.

Historically, many people attained enlightenment through the Mahadeva practice. In the biography of Guru Chowang<sup>25</sup>, a treasure revealer of the Nyingma tradition, there are many fascinating stories of his personal encounters with Mahadeva.

#### i. Kurukullā: Enchantress of the Minds of All Living Beings without Exception

“*Enchantress of all living beings without exception*” means that Kurukullā can captivate the minds of sentient beings with creative methods. Kurukullā has a beautiful and majestic body that enchants those who behold her. She is red in color, with one face and four arms. She holds a bow and arrow with her two upper arms; and in her two lower arms she holds an iron hook and a lasso made of lotus flowers.

Kurukullā, an emanation of Tara, is an enlightened manifestation of discerning wisdom. The power that she possesses is very uncommon. A Buddhist monk or nun who wants to maintain their precepts untainted, should pray to Kurukullā devoutly, for she has the power to transform desire into the wisdom of great bliss and ensure that the practitioner's precepts remain immaculate. His Holiness gave very clear teachings in this regard, “Monks and nuns,

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<sup>25</sup> [http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Guru\\_Ch%C3%B6kyi\\_Wangchuk](http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Guru_Ch%C3%B6kyi_Wangchuk)

in a time when Dharma is in decline, may choose to exchange their extremely precious precepts for a moment of physical pleasure. This would be extremely shameful. By praying to Kurukullā devoutly, hardships of this kind can be completely dispelled.”

For lay people who are experiencing difficulty finding a spouse, Kurukullā can be of help as well. It is for this reason that Kurukullā, is known to some as “the personal deity of love”. There are many single men and women who are having difficulty finding a partner. Many of them ask for help from their Tibetan Rinpoches. These Rinpoches out of compassion for them suggest that they recite the Kurukullā mantra, *Om Kurukulle Svaha*.

People who seek matrimonial harmony can also solicit help from Kurukullā. There is a story about a once beautiful, but aging queen in ancient India, who had over time, lost the affection of her king. Determined to regain the king’s affection the queen sent a maid out on a mission to find an elixir that could re-ignite her husband's love. The maid searched far and wide for the elixir with no result, until one day she met a beautiful red-skinned woman. After learning of the maid’s mission, the red-skinned woman quickly prepared a particular type of food and gave it to the maid, telling her that if she could get the king to eat it, all of the queen’s problems would be solved.

The maid returned to the palace and repeated the red-skinned woman’s words to the queen. Afraid of the consequences of feeding this unidentified food to the king, the queen threw it into a nearby lake. (Another account of the story is that the queen having lost the king’s affection completely, was exiled and therefore couldn’t give the food to the king.) A naga who lived in the lake ate the magical food, was transformed into an image of the king, and in this disguise impregnated the queen.

When the king heard the news of the queen’s pregnancy, he became enraged, and decided to punish her. The queen saw no alternative but to confess to everything. Dubious, the king demanded that the maid summon the red-skinned woman to the palace. As she stood before him, the king immediately realized that this red-skinned woman was none other than the goddess Kurukullā herself, and prostrating before her asked for teachings that could help him surpass all desire. Through diligent practice, the king was eventually able to attain enlightenment, and thus it is said that the king was the first in the human realm to hold the lineage of Kurukullā’s teachings.

It is hoped that this story may encourage your faith in Kurukullā. In Tibetan Buddhism, there are many different practices related to Kurukullā. His Holiness Jigme Phuntsok Rinpoche has written a liturgy and praise of Kurukullā. When he visited the holy mountain of Chimpu, he revealed a terma that contained a liturgy for Kurukullā practice.

The previous paragraphs have introduced each of the nine magnetizing deities. Each of them have extraordinary qualities and if you pray to any one of them you will receive incredible blessings. His Holiness once said, “If you don’t have wealth, Wang Dü can bring you wealth; if you want position, Wang Dü can help you get position. Relying on this prayer, you can gain everything that your heart desires. If however, due to having no control over your mind, you are unable to give rise to bodhicitta, emptiness and other non-worldly accomplishments, reciting Wang Dü with diligence will allow you to gain these qualities with ease.” Therefore,

whether it is to achieve your worldly or transcendent goals, you can pray to the nine deities and by relying on their blessings all your wishes will come true.

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## Visualize the Qualities of the Vajra Body

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### B2: How to Pray

#### C1: Visualize the Qualities of the Vajra Body

*Dancing in effortless bliss and emptiness with supreme and ordinary mudras,  
An assembly of vajra warrior dakas and dakinis attract and magnetize.  
Remaining always within the state of great equality of appearance and emptiness,  
The dances of their vajra bodies shake the three realms of existence.*

This verse means that because the magnetizing deities have accomplished all supreme and ordinary mudras, they have the ability to display dances in dharmadatu. The dance itself is a manifestation of the non-duality of appearance and emptiness. Residing in the great equality of the perfect union of appearance and emptiness, the dancing of innumerable vajra bodies cause the three realms of existence to shake.

Here the word “*mudra*” contains many layers of meaning; in this stanza it should be interpreted as quality and accomplishment. “*Vajra dakas*” indicate the male Buddhas and bodhisattvas, namely Amitabha, Avalokiteshvara, Hayagriva, while “*vajra dakinis*” indicates the female Buddhas and bodhisattvas, such as Vajravara, Guhyajñāna, etc.

Each sentient being has their own predisposition and capacity. To benefit sentient beings of different dispositions, enlightened beings manifest as dakas and dakinis. The reason they can assume different forms is due to the fact that the nature of phenomena is the inseparability of appearance and emptiness. Otherwise, this would be impossible to achieve, regardless of how powerful they are.

“*Dance*” is a figurative term, which in this case refers to the manifestation of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. For instance, Avalokiteshvara can manifest in thirty-two different forms. Hayagriva sometimes appears with one face and two arms, and sometimes with one face and four arms and so on. The deities assume different appearances in front of sentient beings, much like a skillful dancer performing different dances for his or her audience.

“*Shaking the three realms of existence*” means benefiting sentient beings in the three realms of existence. The magnetizing deities manifest themselves in various ways to accommodate the perception of sentient beings in the worlds of desire, form and formlessness. It should be noted that although the text only mentions nine magnetizing deities, in reality there are countless magnetizing deities, each with an unlimited number of manifestations. For instance, though some deities may manifest with skin that is red in color, they may also manifest themselves as white, or as green and so on.

So, to visualize and merge with the vajra bodies of the magnetizing deities, you should first understand the enlightened qualities of their bodies. In the realm of dharmadatu that has no boundaries, the magnetizing deities display countless manifestations that cause the three

realms to tremble, captivating sentient beings of the three realms and granting them temporary well-being and ultimate enlightenment.

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## Visualize the Qualities of the Vajra Speech

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### C2: Visualize the Qualities of the Vajra Speech

*The sounds of laughter of your unimpeded speech reaches the three worlds.  
You radiate red lights that spread throughout samsara and nirvana,  
Luminous essence of existence and cessation, do you tremble and gather.*

#### a. The Basic Meaning of the Verse

Vajra speech is a very broad term. In a narrow sense, it means the sound that the magnetizing deities make. In a broader sense, it means the sound of earth, water, fire, wind, and the sounds of all sentient beings. It can be said that all sound is the vajra speech of the magnetizing deities.

The magnetizing deities' vajra speech makes the sounds of laughter, such as "ha ha, he he, hey hey, and ho ho". With these sounds, they summon beings of the three realms; they are particularly able to call forward and subdue the demonic beings of the three realms.

"*Existence*" indicates deluded beings' three impure states of existence in samsara. "*Cessation*" indicates enlightened beings' pure states in nirvana. "*Luminous essences*" indicates the essences of the four elements of the inanimate world, and the essences of living beings, such as the qualities of compassion and wisdom. The last two lines indicate that the mantra wheels at the throat (or heart) of the magnetizing deities radiate red light, which shines upon every corner of samsara and nirvana, vibrating and calling forth all the vital essences of both mundane and supermundane phenomena.

#### b. The Essence of All Worldly and Non-Worldly Existence

Magnetizing has a wondrous effect. Through the practice of magnetizing, the essence and merit of all worldly and supreme existence is gathered and dissolved into one's own mind stream. For example, if you lack wisdom, through the practice of magnetizing you can gain it. Of course, magnetizing is different from what certain non-Buddhist sects describe as "harvesting energy". Some people believe that the reason that they are particularly skinny is because their "qi" has been sucked away by someone else. This however, is not what magnetizing means. Although you will benefit from the magnetizing practice, no harm will be inflicted on others. Similarly, if we light a candle and hold it in our hand, its flame will not cause any other candle to be extinguished.

There is no need to mystify magnetizing. Worldly things can have very similar "magnetizing" effects. For example, some people are seduced by love, social status, wealth, fine food and so on. Similar to the art of magnetizing, these are also means to entice people.

However, one must be aware that Buddhists do not magnetize for personal acquisition of fame or power but rather for the welfare of sentient beings. You cannot benefit sentient beings

if you lack the necessary powers of enticement. Some lamas possess qualities of wisdom, compassion and eloquence, but seem to have great trouble expanding their religious influence. In spite of being very motivated to benefit beings, they fail to gather disciples around them. This is because they have not mastered the activity of magnetizing. A person who has accomplished the art of magnetizing will spontaneously captivate others wherever he goes. Therefore, if you wish to benefit sentient beings, not only should you possess the qualities of wisdom, precepts and noble character, you should also be skilled in magnetizing.

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## Visualize the Qualities of the Vajra Mind

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### C3: Visualize the Qualities of the Vajra Mind

*With your enlightened mind of great vajra passion,  
You bestow the two-fold victorious accomplishments,  
With your vajra iron hooks and lassoes,  
You bind all that appears and exists in supreme bliss.*

#### a. Great Vajra Passion

The magnetizing deities, utilizing the great vajra passion of their enlightened minds, bestow all the supreme and ordinary siddhis that sentient beings desire. With their vajra iron hooks and lassoes, they bind the world of appearance and existence in the wisdom of great bliss.

Great vajra passion means the wisdom of discernment that is transformed from lust and it is a commonly used term in Vajrayana. In *Chanting the Names of Manjushri*<sup>26</sup>, it is written, “Vajra passion, great passion.” Passion in its ordinary sense is a kind of attachment. If you haven’t realized the nature of your own mind, you can become entangled by it. When you have realized the primordial nature of the mind, passion is transcended into great vajra passion, which does not cause harm to oneself or to others. The same principle applies to the transcendence of anger, ignorance and so on. As soon as you understand the true nature of these things, they can be turned into untainted wisdom.

The relationship between mental afflictions and wisdom has also been addressed by certain Mahayana sutras that convey the ultimate meaning. In the *Sutra Requested by Kashyapa*, it says: “Just as poison can be transformed into an elixir by the power of mantras, with creative means, passion can be transformed into wisdom.”

Ordinary beings are constantly bound by desire, and constantly wanting something or someone, which causes a substantial degree of mental suffering. Such suffering is caused by not understanding the nature of the mind. If through pith instructions, you can understand the true nature of your mind, then all suffering and pain will dissolve into dharmadatu. Therefore, everybody should devote his, or her best efforts to realizing the true nature of the mind.

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<sup>26</sup> [http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Chanting\\_the\\_Names\\_of\\_Manjushri](http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Chanting_the_Names_of_Manjushri)

b. Vajra Hooks and Lassoos

The magnetizing deities hold in their hands, tools like iron and copper hooks, lotus lassoos, etc. This can sometimes be misinterpreted. The magnetizing deities do not literally hook, tie up and pull their subjects toward them like fishermen. You must understand that these instruments are merely symbolic of the deities' power to compel and enchant their subjects.

The implicit power of magnetizing can create skepticism among some. In reality, when a person who has never been interested in Buddhism meets a lama, he is often immediately captured by the hook of his compassion and wants to take refuge in the Three Jewels, and ultimately becomes a person who is of benefit to Buddhism. This is the force of magnetizing.

When we interpret the Dharma, it is important that we hold the right view. For example, the sword in the hand of Bodhisattva Manjushri is not used to harm or kill but is a symbol for the wisdom with which he eradicates the ignorance of sentient beings. The lotus blossom in Avalokiteshvara's hand is a symbol for his residing in samsara while remaining untainted by its defilements, much like the lotus that sprouts from the mud but whose blossom remains pristine. Therefore, the objects that Buddhas and Bodhisattvas carry are not random but are all symbols that each give rise to a specific karmic origination.

One important thing that needs to be understood is that magnetizing is a practice for the purpose of benefitting sentient beings. When benefitting sentient beings, Bodhisattvas magnetize those who are drowning in the depths of samsara by using their wisdom and compassion. Bodhisattvas dissolve sentient beings' minds into their wisdom of great bliss, transforming them from an untamed and rigid state into one of being docile and capable. Eventually sentient beings are guided to realize the true nature of their minds.

c. The Practice of Wang Dü

Because of the aforementioned reasons, we should practice magnetizing with diligence. When you chant and practice Wang Dü, you can follow the instructions of the common or advanced tantric practices. Of course, uninitiated practitioners, or practitioners who are foreign to tantric practice can practice Wang Dü using the Sutrayana method. Mipham Rinpoche did not require people to strictly practice this prayer in the way of the generation or perfection stages. As long as we pray to the magnetizing deities with devotion, all animate and inanimate worlds will resonate. This will allow the essence of samsara and nirvana to be gathered into oneself.

For people who are new to dharma practice, the practice of magnetizing would definitely be of benefit. In this degenerate age, people have difficulty truly absorbing the Dharma because they lack inner strength; their path in learning the Dharma is filled with obstacles. If you are one of these people, by practicing magnetizing you will develop inner strength, and be able to bring the Dharma into your mind more easily. Then, no matter what kind of obstacle you encounter, you will be capable of handling it.

If you want to accomplish magnetizing, you should first establish a connection with the magnetizing deities, which is to say, that you should merge your body, speech and mind with theirs. To merge with the deities' vajra bodies, Buddhist masters visualize their own body as

the body of the magnetizing deity. This is the most effective method. If you are unfamiliar with such advanced practices, an alternative would be to carry the image of the nine deities with you and to make offerings to them.

In terms of speech, you should recite the mantra of the nine deities often, and Wang Dü in particular. The Wang Dü prayer consists of the vajra words of Mipham Rinpoche. Reciting them even once brings forth vast merit. When you recite Wang Dü, it is best to visualize as you chant. You can visualize a boundless red light emanating from the magnetizing deities, shining upon all sentient beings, and benefiting them with the Dharma. You don't need to get too complicated with your visualization. Some people's imagination is overly active. They create unnecessary details in their visualization and may imagine a red lotus flower blossoming from the heart center of the magnetizing deities, with a hrih on top in red letters, emanating light... even though there is no description such as this in the sadhana.

In terms of mind, you can visualize that your mind is inseparable from the wisdom of the magnetizing deities. Then you can observe the nature of your mind, directly understanding that the magnetizing deities are exactly the nature of your mind at this present moment. There are no other magnetizing deities apart from your own mind at this moment. If you can meditate like this, you will be able to swiftly and truly merge with the magnetizing deities.

The reason is as below. The minds of sentient beings are no different from that of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. Ignorant of this fact, people cling to the notion that they and the Buddhas are separate entities. The different levels of practice in Buddhism are designed to break such a discriminating notion. First, one visualizes oneself and the Buddha-figure in a vertical relationship like that between a disciple and a lama. Then, in a more advanced stage of practice, we visualize that we are the equals of the Buddha-figure, like the relationship that exists between friends. Last, we visualize that we are no different from the Buddha-figure, like water that is poured into water.

Through such a visualization practice, we can eventually perceive our minds as the same as that of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. It is very important to follow the gradual steps of visualization. Training our minds, much like refining gold, is a gradual process.

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## Pray for the Accomplishments

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### **B3: Pray for the Accomplishments**

*Dancers in the play of a boundless web of illusions,  
Who fill space to overflowing, like a vast outpouring of sesame seeds,  
To the countless Three Roots, deities of magnetizing activity,  
Devoutly, I pray for your blessing to come down.  
May you grant me all of my heart's desires--the supreme and common siddhis!  
May you grant me the accomplishment of unobstructed magnetizing activity!*

a. An Infinity of Magnetizing Deities

“A boundless web of illusions” describes an infinity of magnetizing deities in

dharmadatu. When describing the mandalas in Vajrayana Buddhism, we often count Buddhas and Bodhisattvas in units of hundreds, thousands, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands, millions, and billions. These numbers are figurative. In reality, Buddhas and Bodhisattvas are innumerable.

In the limitless Dharmadatu abide innumerable Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. *The Amitabha Sutra* states that there are countless Buddhas in each direction. “Nine” is only a symbolic number for the countless magnetizing deities.

“*A vast outpouring of sesame seeds*” illustrates just how many magnetizing deities there are. The magnetizing deities inhabit and fill all of space, one next to the other, conveying an image that is very much like an open sesame pod full of sesame seeds. Relatively speaking, magnetizing deities reside in the west; ultimately however, they reside in every direction. Even in the tiniest molecule, there abides countless numbers of magnetizing deities.

We must keep an open mind when learning about Dharma. Only by doing so can we understand its incredible breadth. Even the common vehicle teachings depict states of infinity. For example, the sixteen arhats that protect Buddha Shakyamuni’s Dharma each possess both a limitless worldly and transcendent entourage.

b. Pray for Achieving Accomplishments

“*To the countless Three Roots, deities of magnetizing activity, devoutly I pray for your blessing.*” In praying to the Buddhas, the more devout we are, the stronger the blessings we receive. We should be so invested in our prayers that our hairs stand on end and tears stream from our eyes. Of course, it goes without saying that such devotion should be long lasting. Some people are strongly motivated by the Dharma in the beginning, but when their initial enthusiasm cools, they grow more and more indifferent and unable to appreciate the merit of the Three Jewels and the Guru. Though indifferent when hearing about the sufferings of samsara, they brighten up immediately when the subject of delicious food comes up. This is not ideal and we should develop a lasting conviction towards the Dharma over a preference for delicious food.

“*May I be granted all of my heart’s desires--the supreme and common siddhis!*” The supreme siddhi here indicates transcendent qualities such as the fruit of Buddhahood. The ordinary siddhi refers to the eight worldly accomplishments, increased wealth, good health, longevity and so on.

These days it seems as though most people practicing Buddhism are rarely looking for supreme siddhis, with most after ordinary benefits that can be useful in this life. One thing that Khenpo reminds everyone of is that when one befriends a very powerful person, one should ask him to help only with the most important issues; trivial matters are not worthy of their time; similarly, when reciting Wang Dü, if you are not looking for supreme benefits, but instead recite it for the ordinary purpose of dressing better, eating better, or sleeping better, this is not a worthwhile reason.

For those who have received the Mahayana teachings, these worldly qualities are as unreal as dreams and illusions. Regardless of how rich, how famous, or how high on the social ladder you are, everything will fall apart eventually. If you need more proof, just look at history.

Worldly prosperity is transitory. Only transcendent merits have ultimate value. Therefore, we should seek transcendent qualities. Of course, there are many kinds of transcendent qualities. Each one of us has his or her own wish. Whatever you wish for, as long as you are diligent in your prayers, your wishes will come true.

Wang Dū is the true wish-fulfilling jewel. If you recite this prayer diligently, not only will you gain all the qualities that you wish for, you can also remove all obstacles from your path. However, if you are faced with unavoidable karmic retribution that is the result of actions from previous lives, it would be difficult to expect immediate removal of such obstacles.

Once Khenpo was asked whether Buddhas and Bodhisattvas could save people from every kind of distress. If not, the questioner asked, then what is the use of praying? Khenpo told him, when given the same dosage of the same medication, some patients are cured of their illness and others are not. Because the medication has no effect on some people, should it be rejected entirely? The same is true for the blessings of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. Nobody says that they can solve each and every problem of every sentient being. The intricacies of karmic effect are extremely complex. By relying on the blessings of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, some problems can be immediately solved, but other problems might not be. For problems such as these, praying is still the way that we can do our best.

Therefore, when we recite Wang Dū, we are best advised to heed the teaching of His Holiness, “May the blessings of the magnetizing deities allow me to possess the quality of the trainings<sup>27</sup> throughout all future lives. Bless me so that I can benefit sentient beings through compassion in life after life!” Or those of Samantabhadra: “With this merit, may I crush all mental afflictions, perfect all beneficial qualities, and benefit all sentient beings.”

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## The Background of Composition

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### A3: Ending: The Background of Composition

*This was composed on the first day of the seventh month of the Earth Hare year (1879) by one named Dhīḥ. Anyone who prays in this way will, without any doubt, accomplish all magnetizing activities exactly according to their wishes. This prayer may be written on red flags and flown in the air, or used in prayer wheels powered by heat or wind. Mangalam!*

#### a. The Achievements of Chanting this Prayer

This text was written by Mipham Rinpoche in 1879, when he was 34 years old. “Dhīḥ” is the seed letter of Manjushri, and is the name by which Mipham Rinpoche refers to himself in this text.

It is made very clear here that, not only accomplished masters, but anyone who prays in this way will accomplish magnetizing activities. His Holiness, Jigme Phuntsok Rinpoche also said, “Only people with sharp faculties can reach enlightenment by the profound tantric practices. Ordinary people might not succeed. But Mipham Rinpoche’s Wang Dū is different.

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<sup>27</sup> [http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Three\\_higher\\_trainings](http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Three_higher_trainings)

As long as you have faith in the nine magnetizing deities, anybody can accomplish magnetizing activities.”

b. Hanging up Red Prayer Flags of Wang Dü

When His Holiness was with us, prayer flags with Wang Dü printed on them were flying on every roof in Larung. Nowadays, one can easily find Wang Dü flags in Tibetan areas. Even in some big cities in Han areas, people have the walls of their homes covered with Wang Dü prayer flags. This is an auspicious origination.

Khenpo Sodargye advises everyone to recite Wang Dü diligently in the future and to hang up many Wang Dü prayer flags. This will help in spreading the Dharma and also benefit local sentient beings. Many people today are suffering from paranoia, worry and depression. If you can recite Wang Dü or hang up Wang Dü prayer flags, your body and mind can enjoy greater freedom, and happiness will spontaneously arise in you.

Be careful when hanging prayer flags. It is best to hang them somewhere high off the ground such as a roof top or on a mountain. Don't hang them in your yard where people come in and out. Prayer flags are no different from the deities themselves. If they are hung in an inappropriate place and people step over them, this would be a considerable mistake.

Before you hang up the flags, they must be consecrated. If you can't find someone to consecrate them for you, sprinkle some rice left over from a previous consecration ceremony. If you don't have that either, recite the mantra of dependent origination seven times, which also counts as consecration.

c. Turning Prayer Wheels of Wang Dü

It has also been explained by Mipham Rinpoche that apart from being made into prayer flags, Wang Dü can also be made into prayer wheels powered by wind or fire. This will also help in accomplishing magnetizing activities. Of course, we can also make prayer wheels with Wang Dü prayers that are hand-spun.

Incidentally, there is a specific protocol to follow when making prayer wheels. You should not make prayer wheels without consulting the sutra reference. His Holiness Jigme Phuntsok Rinpoche once commented: “When some people get hold of the mantra of a Buddha, they immediately put it in a prayer wheel. This is unreasonable. If you want to make prayer wheels, it would be good to make them with the Mani mantra because numerous scriptural evidences tell us that prayer wheels made with the Mani mantra are extremely beneficial.”

Not long before His Holiness passed away, he repeatedly instructed his students to turn the prayer wheels often, and he said with a strong sense of assertion that when a person is about to die, even if there is no one to recite prayers for them, as long as they have a prayer wheel next to them, they will not fall into the lower realms.

Anyway, we can make Wang Dü widely known by means of prayer flags or prayer wheels. In this way, not only would our own body and mind become freer with many of our obstacles removed, but it will also help the Dharma to become more prosperous.

d. The Practice of Magnetizing at Larung Gar

Some dismiss this magnetizing activity as nothing more than a myth or a fiction, but the very example of His Holiness Jigme Phuntsok Rinpoche demonstrates how tangible the effects of magnetizing can be. All of his many great accomplishments would not have been possible without his accomplishment of the art of magnetizing. The very fact that so many people come to Larung Gar for dharma study and practice, is the result of his magnetizing activity. No one would come and settle in this freezing land of snow for no reason. As Khenpo Sodargye said in his teaching, “I have personally experienced the effect of magnetizing on myself. Each time I go on a trip, I miss Larung very much. As soon as I finish my business, I am eager to head straight back. This is inseparable from His Holiness’ magnetizing activity.”

So this is a true reflection of the power of magnetizing. At Larung Gar we practice magnetizing every year at the Dharma Assembly of the Awareness Holders. During this time of the year, the mantra of the nine deities will be chanted by the full sangha for half a month. Such a practice taking place in such a large assembly is extremely powerful. Khenpo Sodargye once half-joked about shortening the duration of the Dharma Assembly, lest the Larung Valley run out of room for people to sit.

Before His Holiness passed away, he said, “In the future, if my disciples recite Wang Dū often, the heart transmissions of the guru will continue.” In Bodhicaryavatara, there is a story about a celestial being who cured a disease caused by the nagas by building a large garuda tower. Many years after this celestial being had passed away, people still circumambulated the stupa to cure the disease caused by nagas. Similarly, even if you have never seen His Holiness Jigme Phuntsok personally, by practicing Wang Dū, you can still receive the blessings of his mind transmission. When you have received his mind transmission, your own suffering will be dispelled and whatever kind of obstacle you encounter, you will face it with more ease and poise. You will be happy in your present life, and, it goes without saying, in your future life, as well.

Since 2011, Khenpo Sodargye has aspired to concentrate on practicing magnetizing activity. He said, “My motivation is simple. His Holiness Jigme Phuntsok had completely mastered the enlightened activity of magnetizing. I dare not say I want to achieve the same level of mastery as His Holiness, but as his disciple, I should at least follow the steps of the activities that he has created. As a disciple of a guru who has mastered the art of magnetizing, it does not seem right to neglect this practice. As His Holiness’ disciple, I must endeavor with all my efforts to continue his traditions.” So in recent years, Khenpo Sodargye again and again encourages his student to recite Wang Dū 10,000 times, as a short-term target of their dharma practice and an aspiration of contributing Khenpo’s activities of spreading the Dharma.