
Symbolized by the Mantra

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 Family¹ 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 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)² 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

¹ http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Five_buddha_families

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

is red. Positioned directly below Amitabha is the Sambhogakaya Buddha, Vajradharma³, the equivalent of Vajradhara. Below Vajradharma is the Nirmanakaya Padma Gyalpo⁴, an emanation of Padmasambhava. At the top left is red Avalokiteshvara⁵; below that is Guhyajñāna⁶ and at the bottom left is Kurukullā⁷. On the top right of Vajradharma is Hayagriva⁸, below that is Vajravarahi⁹ and then Mahadeva¹⁰ 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 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.

The Qualities of All the Magnetizing deities

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

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

⁴ http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Guru_Pema_Gyalpo

⁵ <http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Padmapani>

⁶ <http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Guhyajnana>

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

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

⁹ <http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Vajravarahi>

¹⁰ http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=D%C3%B6p%C3%A9_Gyalpo

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 kayas¹¹ 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 irreversibly transform lust and desire into the wisdom of discernment.

The wisdom of discernment is one of the five wisdoms of the Buddhas¹². 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 family¹³. 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, Sukhavati¹⁴. 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 Dü 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

¹¹ http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Three_kayas

¹² http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Five_wisdoms

¹³ http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Five_buddha_families

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

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 Dü using red malas.

Once there was a lama in Palyul¹⁵, 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 who wants to maintain his precepts untainted throughout future lives, you should recite Wang Dü 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.

¹⁵ <http://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Palyul>