



The Manjushri Mantra

Om A Ra Pa Ca Na Dhih is the mantra associated with Manjushri.

The Manjushri mantra is the mantra for the bodhisattva Manjushri, who is representative of wisdom. His mantra is also symbolic of the wisdom that Manjushri offers.

Illustrations and statues of Manjushri depict him clutching a flaming sword in his right hand, held above his head; this is symbolic of his ability to use wisdom in order to cut through any types of delusion and suffering that sentient beings might be struggling with. In his left hand, held at the height of his heart, he is holding the stem of the lotus. The lotus contains a book called the Perfection of Wisdom.

He is shown to be a young prince, perhaps no more than sixteen years of age. It is thought that the freshness of his youth, and his true beauty are representative of the way in

which an awakened mind is able to view the world. The unenlightened mind is typically only able to see an ordinary life, which those who are awakened can see it as being full of magic and extraordinary potential.

Manjushri's name means "Gently Voice One." This is often considered to be representative of the idea that true wisdom does not need to shout or draw loud attention to itself in order to be the truth.

The Manjushri mantra, like many mantras, does not have an easy literal English translation. The mantra is as follows.

ཨོཾ་ཨ་ར་པ་ཅ་ན་ཧཱི།

Om A Ra Pa Ca Na Dhih

One of the translations for this mantra could include the following.

- Om – Not only can Om be considered to be the essence of the five wisdoms, but it can also be reflective of an awareness of the surrounding universe. It is used at the start of many mantras and should be considered to mean "My mind and heart are open to the truths that follow."
- A – Is often in references to the ideal that the essence of nature is unproduced.
- Ra – This is often reflective of the ideal that all things are free from defilements.

- Pa – This leads to the ideal that all dharmas have been “expounded in the supreme sense.”
- Ca – Is often in reference to the ideal that the arising and cessation of things cannot be wholly understood because, in reality, there is no arising and cessation to start with.
- Na – This is representative of the belief that while the names for things may change, the true nature of them cannot be changed.
- Dhih – This is often defined with the meaning of “prayer” or “understanding” or “reflection.”

These concepts are all an important part of the Perfection of Wisdom. In truth they are less concepts are more they are attempts to put a description of the nature of reality.

Not only is Manjushri a bodhisattva who is representative of wisdom, but he also belongs to the trinity of family protectors. The family that he is known for protecting includes the first supreme Buddha – Shakyamuni. Of all of the known and recognized bodhisattvas, Manjushri is the individual who is known for having the closest association and relationship with the Buddha.