

## MANTRA: MEANING AND ORIGIN

The Sanskrit word "mantra" comes from the root MAN-, which refers to the dimension of the mental and therefore to thought (understood as active thought, which leads to the state of spiritual awakening), combined with the suffix -TRA, which indicates an instrumental function ( and it is precisely the same suffix that is also found in the words TAN-TRA and YAN-TRA).

**The mantra is therefore a tool for the mental.**

Mantras are tools for the realization and conduction of thought, but of a particularly intense and effective thought, since the mantra condenses and carries the complete energy of the word.

Mantras serve to guide and lead the mental on very specific paths: the paths that lead towards the exact consciousness of Reality. Unlike the ordinary word that generates the wheel of life and the continuous becoming, the mantra is a purified, non-conceptual word, born from the

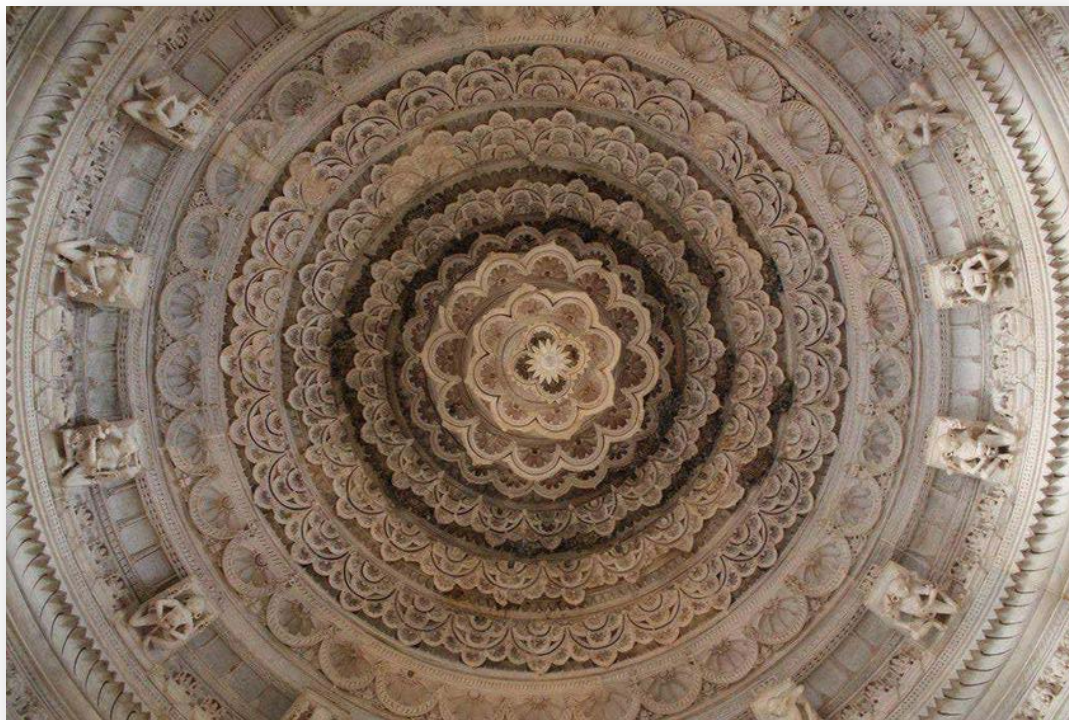
divine Heart, so it is a liberating word. It is pure vibrational energy, and therefore leads to divine Consciousness.

Mantra is a sound vibration in which sacred energy is embedded. To release this energy the mantra must be uttered: it can be chanted, muttered, mentalized (repeated mentally) or even written.

Mantras are syllables or sounds, isolated or grouped, with or without meaning, and such sounds are the highest and most powerful phonic form of divinity. These sacred sounds are charged with an effective potential energy only when they are used following precise rules by those who are competent and aware of these energies. Sound has a direct forming impact on matter, therefore the emission of the mantra produces consequences not only in the body of those who produce it, but also in the surrounding matter, which is literally formed or impressed by the wave form of the mantra. We could consider the mantra as a mold, capable of giving its shape and therefore its energy, to the vibrating molecules that form our five bodies or layers (kosha) and to the vibrating molecules external to our energy field.

Mantras are not the representation of a force, but they are this force itself, they are the phonic form of divinity.

Thus, mantras are instruments of contact with the profound Being and the source of Unity present in each of us, and they allow a direct, immediate knowledge. Their repetition, Japa, is a simple and effective technique of transformation.



*Sun Temple, Modhera (Gujrat), INDIA*

## THE MANTRA OM

OM is known to all as the MANTRA connected to cosmic energy in its pure state, as the primordial sound that arouses everything. As such, it represents the mystical syllable that can create contact between us and the supreme reality, with the very root of the Universe.

OM is in fact a seed-syllable or an embryonic-syllable (in Sanskrit *bija*) from which all the others are derived.

Every Indian philosophical-religious current uses it, from Vishnavite currents, for which the mantra OM is Vishnu, to those of Vedanta, in which OM is Atman, to tantra, to Brahmanic cults. But behind this universality it is necessary to focus on the way in which the OM mantra is emitted.

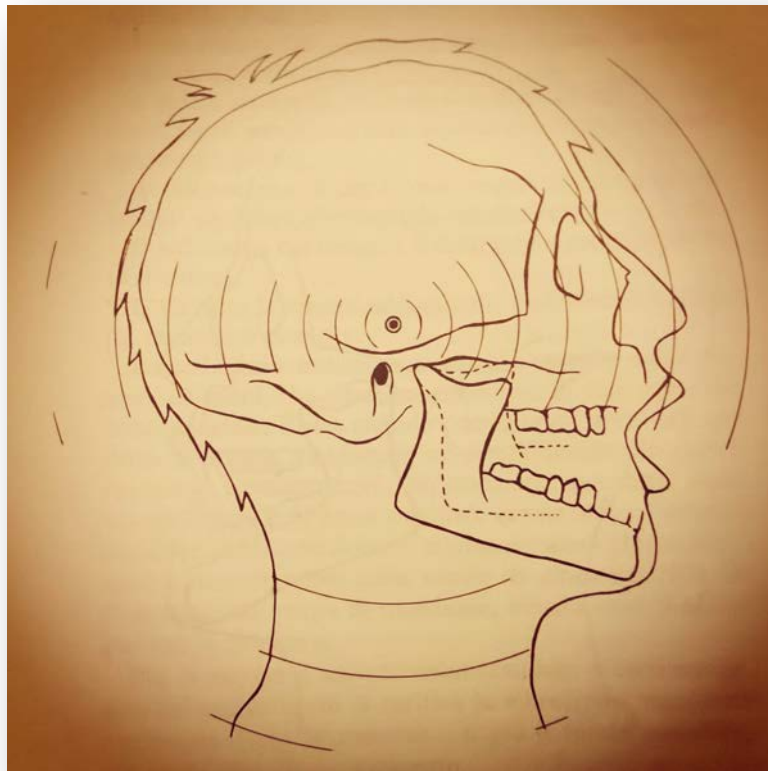
Brahmins and non-tantric gurus often emit a rapidly repeated OM like an OM-OM-OM in succession, with a single exhalation, like the gasp of a goldfish: I open my mouth on the vowel O and close it on the M.

The tantric OM, on the other hand, is emitted by keeping the mouth always open, for the entire duration of the O and M, and the mouth remains open even during inspiration.

### HOW TO PERFORM THE MANTRA OM, ACCORDING TO THE TANTRA

1. I open my mouth fully, in a relaxed way, as if yawning, gently dropping my jaw.
2. I begin to pronounce the vowel AAAA, as when the doctor asks us to look at our throats.
3. In the same way, as the doctor lowers our tongue with the stick, while we vocalize the A, we try to lower the bottom of the tongue, especially the back part of the tongue (and therefore the most extended one), to give space to the sound. I take this opportunity to gently retract the chin towards the chest: when the tail of the tongue sinks into the throat, the neck finally relaxes and the shoulders drop. The continuously stretched and protracted tongue often creates unnecessary cervical tension. In this new form of emission, I feel that the A becomes more guttural and deeper, creeping into the body: I then let the body vibrate, and listen to the vibrations in the chest and pelvis. The oral cavity closes slightly spontaneously and the A thus becomes a cross between an A and an O.
4. Keeping the mouth open, I gradually raise the back-center of the tongue upwards, with a wave movement, filling the upper cavity of the palate with the pulp of the tongue, as if by inflating the back of the tongue. Gradually from the O another formant is created, which is not a pure M, but rather a NG. This sound makes other points on the face vibrate (sinuses, nasal septum, nostrils...). I listen to the vibrations spreading through the skull, looking for a vibratory clarity.

5. At this point I begin to move the tongue a little forward and a little back in the position of the NG sound, feeling how the vibrations change and where they creep, trying to refine the sound more and more. When I search and above all listen while I move my tongue very slowly with patience like a wave in my mouth, I find a particular point, a point where I feel dazed by the resonance. That is the point where the standing wave was formed in me: the wave that is in perfect proportion with my shape and which therefore resonates perfectly in me, and is amplified to the maximum. The sensation is like that of being completely filled with sound, as if my bones fade and the boundaries of my body boil and become more blurred. I feel as if I resonate with the whole surrounding environment.



*La postura per aiutare l'emissione del suono OM*

## **TWO IMPORTANT TIPS:**

- I always remember not to keep the jaw and mandible tense, especially the hyoid muscle, under the chin in the throat, it must not be pulled, otherwise the larynx (the place where the sound is produced), remains as if stuck and not it can vibrate freely: it would be like trying to play a piano key with the mute triggered blocking the strings. To be able to open my mouth in the right way, **I follow the movement of the yawn**, which also guides me to make room in the soft palate, as if creating a resonance dome: natural and spontaneous movements are always the most correct ones.

- I proceed in all the steps as slowly as possible, even at the cost of feeling ridiculous, or self-suffocating (at first it may happen), or even completely losing my breath. **If I move slowly, I begin to perceive harmonic sounds.** The harmonic sounds are like whistles, like high-pitched white ultrasounds that are created by resonating with my particular and specific forms. The more relaxed, clean, purified I am, the more my harmonic sounds are crystalline and vibrant. They are pure sounds, like those of the tuning fork, which have the maximum forming capacity, pure energy condensed in the sound.



*BADSHAI MOSQUE, LAHORE, PAKISTAN*

**GIULIA MARIA MISCIOSCIA - VOICE OF PLENTY**  
*TRAVEL OUTSIDE, FOR DIVING INSIDE*

[WWW.VOICEOFPLENTY.COM](http://WWW.VOICEOFPLENTY.COM)  
[@VOICEOFPLENTY](https://www.instagram.com/VOICEOFPLENTY)