The Original Formation and Performance of the “Secret Assembly” (guhyasamāja), an Integration of the Guhyasamāja-tantra into the History of Tantric Buddhism in India

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Preface

The present paper is originally the fifth of a course of ten lectures entitled in toto “The Thought of Early Buddhism and its Tantric Evolution” delivered at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), the University of London, under the Bukkyō Dendō Kyōkai Visiting Professorship 1995. The titles of each lecture are as follows:

Lecture One: Buddhism of the Buddha and Buddhism of Puruṣa: An Introductory Remark on “the Buddhist Study of the Open System”.

Lecture Two: Practical Philosophy of Early Buddhism.


Lecture Four: Two Types of Esoteric Buddhism: Mahāyānic Esoterism of the Vairocanābhisambodhi-Sūtra and the Genuine Esoterism of the Sarvatathāgatatattvasamgraha-tantra.

Lecture Five: The “Secret Assembly”, a Tantric Attempt to Attain Enlightenment Instantaneously.

Lecture Six: Tantric Buddhism as a “Cult of Cemetery”.

Lecture Seven: Double Truth of the Hevajra-Tantra and its Historical Meaning.

Lecture Eight: New Emergence of Puruṣa at the End of the History
of Tantric Buddhism in India.

Lecture Nine: “Criticality” of Kūkai, the Foundation of Japanese Esoteric Buddhism.

Lecture Ten: From Esoteric Buddhism to the Pure Land Buddhism: Evolution of Theistic Buddhism in Japan.

I intended through these lectures to convey an idea of my own on the history of Buddhist thought reconstructed on the basis of a new principle, which I named “the open system”; though the fifth lecture itself, as an attempt to recover the historical coherences of the Guhyasamāja-tantra with its antecedent, the Sarvatathāgatātattvasaṃgraha-tantra, and its successor, the Hevajra-tantra, has little immediate connection with this principle.

My “open system” interpretation of the history of Buddhist thought emerges when we interpret that body of history that I reconstructed before as the process of the theistic principle of “the God of the open system” revealing himself. The notion of “the God of the open system” was given to us early in the “Hymn of Puruṣa” in the Rg-Veda with its complete conceptual framework. The whole process of the evolution of the factual history of Buddhist thought, which I call that of the “closed system” in contrast to “open system”, was in fact only the process of the conceptual framework of Purusa, the original gigantic anthropos of the Rg-Veda, filling with its real substance inside.

This process shows its completion at the last “critical” turn of the history of tantric Buddhism which occurs between the system of the Havajra-tantra and that of the Saṃvara Tantrism and consequently presents to us the following “proposition of the open system” which I call, half jestingly, “the truth of six thousand years of mankind”:
A: "You are of yourself (svayam) your own father."

and still,

B: "You should by yourself (svayam) become your own father."

Formula A of this "proposition", "pitā te tvam asi svayam" in its original Sanskrit, occurs actually at the very end of the Hevajra-tantra as the "word" of the fourth consecration, that is, the final formula of the truth of Tantric Buddhism given in India; and this formula, being connected paradoxically by the connective "and still" with the formula B, informs us of the final mode of the relation between man and "the God". In passing, formula B is that which is duly required from the fact that the notion of durative practice, that is, the life-long pilgrimage of pithas (pilgrim places), a correspondence to the Buddha's notion of the practice, i.e., life-long maintenance of chastity (dṛṣṭadharma-brahmacaryā), revived in the system of the Saṃvara Tantrism, the successor of the Hevajra-tantra, tiding over the tantric principle of attaining enlightenment instantaneously without any durative practice.

It is true that the whole process of the evolution of Japanese Buddhist thought was a coherent flow along the course of this "proposition of the open system", and that it carried us to the presence of "the thought of the open system" itself which is "open" to the world and to ourodings today. I take it as my next task to provide this thought with a concrete Buddhistic expression on the basis of my own positive, historical understanding of Buddhist thought.

I would acknowledge my great debt of gratitude to Mr. Chishū Numata, the president of the Bukkyō Dendō Kyōkai, the sponsor of the visiting professorship on which I had the chance to deliver those lectures mentioned above; to Dr. Tadeusz Skorupsky of the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in the University of London, who, as the head of the
board of the foundation of the visiting professorship in SOAS, nominated me to the visiting professorship 1995; and to all the staff of SOAS with whose kind support I narrowly fulfilled my heavy obligations to deliver ten lectures together with ten seminars on the Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra in English within my ten weeks stay in London.

I also acknowledge my gratitude to Ms Anne Ogawa, a participant of my class in ICABS, who kindly helped me in checking the English of this lecture which was prepared rather hastily in London. I am thinking of publishing further lectures in due course.


For a student beginning the study of Tantric Buddhism, nothing is more astonishing than the following strange expression which appears at the beginning of the Guhyasamāja-tantra:

\[
evaṁ mayā śrutam ekasmin samaye bhagavān sarvatathāgatā-kā-yavākcitahṛdayavajrayoṣidbhageṣu vijahāra.
\]

“Thus have I heard at one time. The Reverend Lord dwelt in the female organs of the adamantine ladies who are the hearts of the bodies, speech and minds of all the tathāgatas.”

“To dwell in the female organ” simply means that a man is in the state of sexual union with a woman; and in this case, the word “female organ” (yoṣidbhaga) is given in the plural (yoṣidbhageṣu). The expression evaṁ mayā śrutam ekasmin samaye bhagavān (Thus have I heard at one time. The Reverend Lord) shows, in usual sūtras, the situation in which the Reverend Lord Śākyamuni Tathāgata is about to preach the truth to the audience of śrāvakas or bodhisattvas; here in this Guhyasamāja-tantra (abbrev. GS), however, “the Reverend Lord ” is at the time in the state
of sexual union, and moreover, with women plural in number contemporaneously.

This "strange" expression appears also at the beginning of the Hevajra-tantra (abbrev. HV), which occupies the crucial position of the last critical turn of the history of the thought of Tantric Buddhism. It appears, furthermore, in the Saṃputodbhava-tantra (abbrev. SPU), which comes after the Saṃvarodaya-tantra (abbrev. SU), the fundamental scripture of the Saṃvara literature and shows a syncretism with HV. This expression is assumed to have appeared in the unextant mūla-tantra (the "root" scripture of the system) of the Māyāsaṃvara-tantra (in its full name, the Sarvabuddhasamāyoga-ṭākini-māyāsaṃvara-tantra, abbrev. MS), which is to be positioned between GS and HV, and likewise, in the mūla-tantra of the Saṃvara literature if it had existed at all.

In short, this strange expression worked as the leitmotiv suggesting to us the Tantric "place" of the truth and the real state of the Tantric life which is restricted by the truth throughout the whole course of the historical evolution of the thought of Tantric Buddhism after GS.

This expression, especially the word yośidbhaga which is the key-word in the expression, was almost certainly what led people of the time to regard the GS text as one of crucial importance. We find evidence of this in the Kongō-chō-yuga-jūhatte-shiiki (金刚頂瑜伽十八会指帰, "The summaries of eighteen sessions of the Vajraśikhara-sūtra, Taishō, No. 869), a text familiar in the tradition of Esoteric study in Japan.

Amoghavajra (不空三蔵 Fukū-sanzō, 705—774), who is said to be the translator of the Jūhatte-shiiki is thought to have gone to Ceylon at the end of the year 743 or in the beginning of 744; he studied the newest form of Tantric Buddhism of the time in Ceylon and South India and came back to Chang-an (長安) in 746. We imagine from the total impression
of the text that it was composed by Amoghavajra himself later on the basis of his knowledge obtained during his stay in Ceylon or South India; anyway it cannot be denied that the text reflects the actual state of Tantrism of the first half of the eighth century in India to some extent.

The *Juhatte-shiiki* is the treatise which enumerates all the sessions of the vast *Vajraśikhara-sūtra* of one hundred thousand verses composed of eighteen sessions, and summarizes the contents of each session; the names of the sessions assumed from Chinese and the names of the places where they are said to have been preached are as follows:

(1) Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha-tantra-rāja

(2) Sarvatathāgata-guhyādhhipati-yoga

(3) Sarvanāttrasaṃgraha-yoga

(4) Trailokyavijayavajra-yoga

(5) Lokalokottaravajra-yoga

(6) Mahāsukhāmoghasamayatattva-yoga

(7) Samantabhadra-yoga

(8) Paramāśya-yoga

(9) Sarvabuddhasamāyogaḍākinijālasamvara-yoga

(10) Mahāsamaya-yoga

(11) Mahāyānābhismamaya-yoga

(12) Samayaparama-yoga

(13) Mahāsamayatattva-yoga

(14) Tathāgatasamayatattva-yoga

(15) Guhyasamāja-yoga

(16) Advayasamatā-yoga

(17) Khasama-yoga

(18) Vajramukutā-yoga

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Some of these eighteen sessions remind us of the names of extant tantras. However, this does not mean that these texts were really extant at the time when Amoghavajra was in Ceylon or South India. We imagine that the number of sessions and places was increased to eighteen by Amoghavajra himself, if he could be identified as the author of the *Jūhatte-shiiki*.

We can duly assume that the fifteenth session, the *Guhyasamāja-yoga*, corresponds fairly closely to the extant *GS*, as does the first session, our *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha-tantra* (abbrev. *STTS*). Amoghavajra may have learned the text in India if he wasn’t able to take it back to Chang-an.

Amoghavajra writes about the *Guhyasamāja-yoga* as follows:

"The fifteen session is named the *Guhyasamāja-yoga*. It was preached at "the secret place". It is the so-called "place of *yosidbhaga*" (喩師婆伽処). It is also called the palace of *prajñā-pāramitā*. In this session, appear words which resemble words connected with love or sexual affairs of the world in explaining theories, platforms (of *homa*), *mudrās*, *mantras* and *samvaras* (prohibitions). The *bodhisattva* Sarvanivaraṇaviṣkambhin, who was attending the session, stands up from his seat, salutes the Reverend Lord and says:

‘O Reverend Lord! The great man (大人, *dai-nin*) shouldn’t utter such indecent words, should he? ’

The Reverend Lord says:

‘What is the use of the attribute of your words which are connected only with pure, clean things? These words of mine add powers to the characters (文字) and work as efficient means to lead people, in accordance with their situations, into the way of the Buddha.

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Even if they do not have (virtuous) attributes, they are actually greatly benefitting living beings. Have no doubt about this. ’”

We find the corresponding passage to this in the extant GS. In the fifth chapter of GS (Samantacaryāgра-pаṭa-la, the chapter of universal, highest deeds), the Reverend Lord preaches the attainment (si-ddhi, 悉地 shitsu-ji) of the families of lust, wrath and stupidity (rāgа, dveśа and moha, 貪瞋痴 ton-jin-chi), that is, the Tantric practices for attaining the Tantric ideals based on the three big anguishes (kleśа, 煩惱 bon-nō) which are vices to be strictly prohibited or conquered in usual Buddhism as follows:

prāṇātibātinaḥ sattvā mṛṣāvādaratāś ca ye // 4 //
ye paradravyābhīratā nityaṁ kāmaratāś ca ye /
vīṃmuṭhārakṛtyā ye bhavyās te khalu sādhane // 5 //
māṭṛbhaṅginiputriś ca kāmayed yaś tu sādhakaḥ /
sa siddhiṁ vipulāṁ gacchen mahāyānāgradharmatām // 6 //
mātaraṁ buddhasya vibhoḥ kāmayed na ca lipyate /
sidhyate tasya buddhatvam nirvikalpasya dhimataḥ // 7 //

“Those who are killing living beings, telling lies (4), those who are covetous to the properties of others and are always delighted in amorous desires, those who are eating feces and urine as (sacred) foods and drinks, they are really suited for the practice (5)
If he, who wishes the attainment, loves his own mother or his own daughter, he will attain the state of the truth which is the highest (attainment) of Mahāyāna Buddhism (6), because he is loving the mother of the universal Lord Buddha; the wise man who practises (these deeds) without any considerations will (certainly) achieve the state of being a buddha (7).”

It was in fact the expectation of the “author” of GS that this Tantric
attitude of assuming intentionally the appearance of extreme obscenity by removing the worldly distinctions of good and evil or purity and defilement would be looked on with astonishment or abhorrence by the people of the world or the people of commonsense. He subsequently makes the bodhisattvas such as Sarvanivaraṇaviśkambhin etc., who had been the heroes of the usual Mahāyāna Buddhism or Esoterism until then, appear on the stage.

atha khalu sarvanivaraṇaviśkambhiprabhṛtayō mahābodhisattvā āścaryaprāptā adbhutaprāptāḥ / kim ayaṁ bhagavāṁ sarvatathāgatasvāṁi sarvatathāgataparśanamanḍalamadhye dur-bhāṣītavacanodāhāram bhāṣate / atha te sarvatathāgatāḥ sarvanivaraṇaviśkambhiprabhṛtīnāṁ mahābodhisattvānāṁ āścaryavacanam upaśrutyaitān bodhisattvān evam āhuḥ
alam kulaputra mā evaṁ vocata /
iyaṁ sā dharmatā śuddhā buddhānāṁ sārajñānīnāṁ /
sāradharmārthasambhūtā eṣā bodhicaripadām // 8 //
atha khalu anabhilāpyānabhilāpyabuddhakṣetrasumeruparamā-nurajaḥsamā bodhisattvā bhiṭāḥ sanrastā mūrcchitā abhūvan /
“(Hearing these words,) the great bodhisattvas commencing with Sarvanivaraṇaviśkambhin were very much astonished and (said) in surprise:

‘Why should the Reverend Lord, the lord of all the tathāgatas, deliver, in the middle of the complete assembly of all the tathāgatas, a speech with these obscene words that should not be uttered?’

Then, all the tathāgatas, hearing the words of surprise of the great bodhisattvas such as Sarvanivaraṇaviśkambhin etc., said to the bodhisattvas:

‘Stop! O Sons of good families, don’t say so!'
It is nothing other than the pure essence of the truths of buddhas of firm understandings.

It is what has occurred from the meaning of the firm truth and is the basis of deeds (of you bodhisattvas who are striving) for enlightenment.

Hearing this, the bodhisattvas, who could be counted by the number of particles of dust of Mt. Sumerus of the inexpressible-inexpressible buddha-lands, were terrified, fell to the earth and fainted.

Here, it is said that the obscene words of "the Reverend Lord" which surprised people of a traditional, commonsense standpoint and caused them to fall down to the earth, are, from the point of view of "all the tathāgatas" who are inside the assembly and are able to understand the essence of the Tantric truth, really nothing other than "pure" words expressing the "pure essence" of the truths of buddhas of firm understanding; and only the "pure words of buddhas" (of this kind) expressing the "firm truth", the firm, immovable essence or the substance of the truth, can be the basis of the right "deeds" which allow people attain enlightenment.

The "author" of the Jūhatte-shiiki is rightly grasping the essence or the substance of the "firm truth" as prajñāpāramitā; and he is also conscious of the uniqueness of GS in the fact that "the palace" or the place where this firm truth dwells is yosidbhaga. And when he says the place where the Guhyasamāja-yoga was preached is "the secret place" or "the place of yosidbhaga", he means that the truth exists in the bhagas of women and was attained by "the Reverend Lord" through sexual union with these women and was preached by him after he rose from the union.
Who was “the Reverend Lord”, then?

The word vajrayoṣid suggests that the women who made “the Reverend Lord” attain the truth through union with them are a special kind of women. How are these women special, then?

Who are “all the tathāgatas”?

How and what kind of truth was the truth attained by “the Reverend Lord”? 

Once attained and preached, how did the truth restrict the practice of the followers of GS?

Did the practice really bring about enlightenment in them?

Now, we have come to the stage of reconstructing the actual Tantric practice of the followers of GS, or the actual state of the “secret assembly”.

2. The First Chapter of the Guhyasamāja-tantra which should indicate the Structure of the “Original Secret Assembly”.

We assume that there existed a Tantric practice which was performed by the group of people behind the compilation of the extant GS; and call it provisionally the “original secret assembly”. We will first reconstruct the form of the assembly from the description in the first chapter of GS, and then give an outline of the practice by comparing the description of the first chapter with that of the last chapter, chapter seventeen.

The text shown below was extracted from the critical edition of Yūkei Matsunaga (Osaka, 1978) which is far more reliable than the editions of B. Bhattacharyya (Gaekwad’s Oriental Series, No. 55, Baroda, 1931)
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(1) evaṁ mayā śrutam / ekasmin samaye bhagavān sarvatathāgata kāyavākṣīttahṛdayavajrayoṣīdhagesu vijahāra /
(2) anabhilāpyānabhilāpyaiḥ sarvabuddhakṣetrameruparamāṇurajaḥsamair bodhisattvair mahāsattvaiḥ / tad yathā / samayavajreṇa ca nāma bodhisattvena mahāsattvena /.....
(3) ākāśadhātusamādhmātais ca tathāgataiḥ / tad yathā / akṣobhya vajreṇa ca nāma tathāgataena / vairocana vajreṇa ca nāma tathāgataena / ratnaketu vajreṇa ca nāma tathāgataena / amitāvajreṇa ca nāma tathāgataena / amogha vajreṇa ca nāma tathāgataena / evampramukhaiḥ sarvākāśaṣadhātusamādhmātais ca tathāgataiḥ / tad yathā / tilabimbam iva pariṇāṇaḥ sarvākāśaṣadhātuḥ sarvataathāgataiḥ samādhyate sma /
(4) atha bhagavān mahāvairocanas tathāgataḥ sarvatathāga tamahārāgavajraṁ nāma samādhiṁ samāpannas tāṁ sarvataathāgatavyūhaṁ svākāṣyavākṣittavajreṇuḥ praveśayāmāsa /
(5) atha te sarvatathāgataḥ bhagavantaḥ sarvatathāgatakāyavākṣittavajraḥ paritoṣaṇārthaṁ svābimbāni stribimbāni abhinirmāya bhagavato mahāvairocanasya kāyaṁ abhinirkrāntaḥ abhūvan / tatra kecit buddhalocanākāreṇa kecin māmakākāreṇa kecit pāṇḍaravāsīnyākāreṇa kecit samayatarākāreṇa saṃsthītā abhūvan / tatra kecit rūpasvabhāvākāreṇa kecit śabdavabhāvākāreṇa kecit gandhasvabhāvākāreṇa kecit rasavabhāvākāreṇa kecit sparśavabhāvākāreṇa saṃsthītā abhūvan /
(6) atha khalu akṣobhyaḥ tathāgataḥ sarvatathāgatakāyavākṣit tahṛdayavajrayoṣīdhagesu caturasṛam virajaskam mahāsamaṇḍalam adhiṣṭhāpayāmāsa /
svacchāṁ ca tattsvabhāvaṁ ca nānārūpam ca samantataḥ /
buddhameghasamākīraṇūṃ sphuṅgagahanaṣvalam //
svacchādīmaṇḍalair yuktāṃ sarvatāthāgataṃ puram //

(7) atha bhagavān sarvatathāgataṃ kāyavācittavajrārdhipatiḥ sarvatathāgatamaṇḍalamadhye pratiṣṭhāpayāmāsa // atha khalv aksobhyas tathāgato ratnaketus tathāgato 'mitāyus tathāgato 'moghasiddhis tathāgato vairocanas tathāgato bodhicittavajrasya tathāgatasya hṛdaye vijahāra //

(8) atha bhagavān bodhicittavajras tathāgataḥ sarvatathāga-
tābhībhavānavaṃkāraṃ nāma samādhiṁ samāpannaḥ // sama-
nantarasaṃpānpanasya ca sarvatathāgatadhīpipater athāyaṁ sarvākāśadhatukāḥ sarvatathāgatavajraṃkāraḥ saṁsthito 'bhūt / atha yāvantāḥ sarvākāśadhātusaṃsthitāḥ sarvatathāgataś ca tena vajrasattvādhiṣṭhānena sarvatathāgatasukhaṃsaṃyamasyalabhino 'bhūvan /

(9) atha bhagavān bodhicittavajras tathāgataḥ sarvatathāgata-
kāyavācittavajrasamayodbhavaṃkāraṃ nāma samādhiṁ samāpadyemāṃ mahāvidyāpurusamūrtiṁ sarvatathāgata-
sattvādhiṣṭhānam adhiṣṭhāpayāmāsa // samanantarādhiṣṭhitamātre sa eva bhagavān bodhicittavajras tathātatas trimukhākāreṇa sarvatathāgataḥ saṁdṛṣṭyate sma /

(10) athāksobhyapramukhāḥ sarvatathāgataḥ bhagavato bodhi-
cittavajrasya hṛdayāḥ abhiṣṭkramyedam udānam udānayāmā sa /

aho hi sarvabuddhānāṃ bodhicittapravarttanam /
saratathāgataṃ guhyam aprataṅgyam anvāvilam /iti //

(11) atha bhagavantaḥ sarvatathāgataḥ punar samājam āgamya bhagavantaṃ bodhicittavajraṃ sarvatathāgataśphara-
ṇasamayasattvataratnameghāḥ saṃpūjya praṇipatyaivam
āhuḥ /
bhāṣasva bhagavan tattvāṁ vajrasārasamuccayam /
sarvatāthāgataṁ guhyāṁ samājaṁ guhyasambhavam /
iti //3 //

(14) atha bhavavān sarvatāthāgata-kāyavākcittavajras tathā-
gataḥ sarvatāthāgataḥdhyeṣaṇāṁ viditvā jñānapradipavajraṁ
nāma samādhiṁ samāpadyedaṁ dveṣakulaparamasārahṛda-
yāṁ svakāyavākcittavajreḥhyo niścārayāmāṣa /
vajradhṛk /
athāsmin bhāṣītāmātre sa eva bhagavān sarvatāthāgata-
yavākcittavādyāpuruṣo 'kṣobhyamahāmudrāsamyogapara-
mapadaīḥ kṛṣṇasitaraktākāreṇa sarvatāthāgata-kāyavākcitta-
vajrasya sarvatāthāgata-kāyavākcittavajre niśiṣṭayāmāsa /

(15) ... sarvatāthāgatasamayasyasambhavavajrāṁ nāma samādhiṁ
...... mohakula-------
jinajik /
...... vairocana mahāmudrāsamyogaparamapadaīḥ......
...... purato......

(16) ... sarvatāthāgataratnasambhavavajraśriyaiṁ......
...... cintāmanikula...... ratnadhṛk /
...... ratnaketumahāmudrāsamyogaparamamadaiḥ......
...... dakṣine ......

(17) ... sarvatāthāgataḥmahārāgasambhavavajram......
vajraraṅgakula...... ārorik /
...... lokeśvaramahāvidyādhipati...... prṣṭhato......

(18) ... sarvatāthāgataḥmoghasamayasyasambhavavajram...... samā-
yākarsaṇakula ......
prajñādhṛk /
...... amogha-vajramahāmudrāsamyogaparamapadaīḥ......
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...uttare ......

dveṣamohas tathā rāgaś cintāmaṇiṣamayas tathā /
kulā hy ete tu vai pañca kāmamokṣaprasādhakaḥ / iti // 4 //

(19) atha bhagavān sarvatathāgatavajradharānurāgaṇaṇasamayaṁ
nāma samādhim samāpadya sarvavajradharāgramahīṣīm
svakāyavākcittebyo niścārayāmāsa /
dveṣarati /

athaśyāṁ vihiṣṣrtamātrāyāṁ sa eva bhagavān sarvata-
thāgatakāyayāvākcittavidyāpuruṣaḥ strīrūpadharo bhūtvā
pūrvakoṇe niśidayāmāsa /

(20) ... sarvatathāgatānurāgaṇavajraṁ ......
moharati /

... dakṣiṇakoṇe ......

(21) ... sarvatathāgata-rāgadharānurāgaṇavajraṁ ......
rāgarati /

... pāścimakoṇe ......

(22) ... sarvatathāgatakāyayāvākcittavisarhvadanavajraṁ
vajrarati /

... uttarkoṇe ......

(23) ... vairocanavajraṁ ......
yamāntakṛt /
..............

(27) sarvatathāgatakāyavākcittasāṁbhāṣaṇamaṇḍalasamayasat-
tvāḥ /

(transliteration)

(1) Thus have I heard at one time. The Reverend Lord dwelt in the
female organs of the adamantine ladies who are the hearts of the
bodies, speech and minds of all the tathāgatas.

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(2) (At that time,) the whole sphere of the empty sky, being filled with bodhisattva-mahāsattvas to be counted by the number of particles of dust of all Mt. Surerus of the inexpressible-inexpressible buddha-lands, such as the great bodhisattva Samayavajra, ……

(3) (and so many) tathāgatas (as are) swelling up like a sesame husk the (whole) sphere of the empty sky, being headed by Akṣobhya-vajra, Vairocana-vajra, Ratnaketu-vajra, Amita-vajra and Amogha-vajra appeared together with (these) all the tathāgatas.

(4) Then, the Reverend Lord Mahāvairocana, (first) entered into the meditation named Sarvatathāgata-mahārāgavajra (the universal lust of the Sarvatathāgata as firm as adamant) and made the whole of these tathāgata-ornaments enter into his own adamant-firm (existence being complete with) body, speech and mind.

(5) At that time, all these tathāgatas, so as to make the Reverend Lord Sarvatathāgatakāyavākcittavajrādhipati (the Lord of adamant-firm aggregate of bodies, speech and minds of all the tathāgatas) rejoiced, tranforming their own figures into figures of ladies, came out of the body of the Reverend Lord Mahāvairocana. In that case, some (tathāgatas) appeared with the figure of Buddhalocana, some with the figure of Māmaki, some with the figure of Pāṇḍaravāsini and some with the figure of Samayatārā. In that case, some (tathāgatas) appeared with the figure of Rūpasvabhāvā, some with the figure of Śabdasvabhāvā, some with the figure of Gandhasvabhāvā and some with the figure of Sparśasvabhāvā.

(6) Then, the tathāgata Akṣobhya put on the female organs of the adamantine ladies who are the hearts of the bodies, speech and minds of all the tathāgatas the grand samaya-maṇḍala, which is square and free from dirt, very transparent and of the essence of "it", assuming variour figures and (has entrances) on all its sides, surrounded by buddha-clouds, scattering sparks and

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flaming brightly, the castle of all the *tathāgatas* equipped with *manḍalas* transparent etc.. (verse 1)

(7) Then, the Reverend Lord *Sarvataḥtathāgatakāya-vākcittādhipati* placed himself in the middle of the *maṇḍala* of all the *tathāgatas*. At this time, the *tathāgata Akṣobhya*, the *tathāgata Ratnaketu*, the *tathāgata Amitāyus*, the *tathāgata Amoghasiddhi* and the *tathāgata Vairocana* dwelt in the heart of the *tathāgata Bodhicittavajra*.

(8) Then, the Reverend Lord, the *tathāgata Bodhicittavajra* entered into the meditation named *Sarvatathāgata-bhibhavananavajra* (the adamantine “overpowering” of all the *tathāgatas*). As soon as the Lord of all the *tathāgatas* entered into the meditation, the whole sphere of the empty sky was established as (the world) composed of all the adamantine-*tathāgatas*; and all the living beings existing within the sphere of the empty sky attained the happinesses and pleasures (the same as those) of all the *tathāgatas*.

(9) Then, the Reverend Lord, the *tathāgata Bodhicittavajra* entered into the meditation named *Sarvatathāgata-vākcittavajrasamaya-vodbhavavajra* (the adamant occurred from the *samaya* of adamantine bodies, speech and minds of all the *tathāgatas*) and put the figure of *mahāvidyāpuruṣa* (the great husband of *vidyā* =women) (on the *samaya-maṇḍala*) as a (link of the process of) putting all the *tathāgatas* (in the *maṇḍala*) as the deities; as soon as being put (in the *maṇḍala*), he, who was none other than the Reverend Lord, the *tathāgata Bodhicittavajra*, became visible with the figure of a three-faced (deity) together with all the *tathāgatas*.

(10) Then, all the *tathāgatas* headed by *Akṣobhya*, withdrawing from the heart of the Reverend Lord *Bodhicittavajra*, pronounced the following verse:

The activity of the *bodhicittas* of all the *buddhas* is truly the secret of the *Sarvatathāgata*, difficult to imagine and is free
from dirt. (verse 2)

(11) Subsequently, all the tathāgatas again came to the assembly, worshipped the Reverend Lord, the tathāgata Bodhicittavajra with the clouds of the jewels of the truths of samayas which diffuse the worships of all the tathāgatas, saluted him and said as follows:

‘Tell! O Reverend Lord! the truth, which is the aggregate of adamantine-firm creams (of truths), the secret of the Sarvatathāgata, the assembly (of all the tathāgatas) which has occurred from the “secret”. ’ (verse 3)

(14) Then, the Reverend Lord, the tathāgata Sarvatathāgatakāyavāk-cittavajra, knowing the solicitation of all the tathāgatas, entened into the meditation named Jñānapradīpavajra (the adamantine lamp of wisdom) and emitted the most excellent and the firm hrdaya-spell of the wrath-family:

Vajradhrk.

As soon as (the hrdaya-spell was) pronounced, it, which is nothing other than the Reverend Lord Sarvatathāgatakāyavākcittavajra, assuming the highest position of Akṣobhya in union with his mahāmudrā, with features of black, white and red, sat in (the position of) sarvatathāgatakāyavākcittavajra of (the Reverend Lord) Sarvatathāgatakāyavākcittavajra.

(15) Then, the Reverend Lord··· ···entered into the meditation named SarvatathāgataSAMAYASAṂBHĀVAVAIRA (the adamant originated from the samayas of all the tathāgatas ) and emitted the hrdaya-spell of the stupidity-family:

Jīnajik.

···assuming the highest position of Vairocana in union with his mahāmudrā····sat in front of (the Reverend Lord) ····.

(16) Then, the Reverend Lord··· ···entered into the meditation named
Sarvathāgataratnasamāṁbhavavajraśri (the splendour of the adamant originated from the jewels of all the tathāgatas) and emitted the hrdaya-spell of the cintāmaṇi-family:

Ratnadhṛk.

...assuming the highest position of Ratnaketu in union with his mahāmudrā...sat to the right of (the Reverend Lord)...

(17) Then, the Reverend Lord...entered into the meditation named Sarvathāgatamahārāgasamāṁbhavavajra (the adamant originated from the great lust of all the tathāgatas) and emitted the hrdaya-spell of the vajra-lust-family:

Ārorik.

...assuming the highest position of Lokesvara-mahāvidyādhipati in union with his mahāmudrā...sat behind (the Reverend Lord)...

(18) Then, the Reverend Lord...entered into the meditation named Sarvathāgatāmoghasamayasamāṁbhava (the adamant originated from the amogha-samayas of all the tathāgatas) and emitted the hrdaya-spell of the samayākaraśaṇa-family:

Prajñāntakṛt.

...assuming the highest position of Amoghavajra in union with his mahāmudrā...to the north of (the Reverend Lord)...

Wrath, stupidity and likewise lust, cintāmaṇi and samaya, these five are families which allow (people) accomplish liberation through amorous desires. (verse 4)

(19) Then, the Reverend Lord entered into the meditation named Sarvathāgatavajradharanurūgaṇasamaya (the samaya making all the tathāgatas as vajradharas attached) and emitted (the following hrdaya-spell of) the first wife of all the tathāgatas:

Dveṣarati.

As soon as this (hrdaya-spell) was pronounced, it, which was nothing other than the Reverend Lord Sarvatathāgatakāyavākcitta-
vidyāpuruṣa, assuming the figure of a lady, sat in the (south-) east corner.

(20) Then, the Reverend Lord entered into the meditation named Sarvatathāgatānurāgaṇavajra (the adamant making all the tathāgatas attached) and emitted (the following hrdaya-spell of) the first wife of all the tathāgatas: Moharati.

... assuming the figure of a lady, sat in the south (-west) corner.

(21) Then, the Reverend Lord entered into the meditation named Sarvatathāgatārāgaṇadharāṇurāgaṇavajra (the adamant making all the tathātatas as rāgadharas attached) and emitted (the following hrdaya-spell of) the first wife of all the tathāgatas as rāgadharas: Ragarati.

... assuming the figure of a lady, sat in the (north-) west corner.

(22) Then, the Reverend Lord entered into the meditation named Sarvatathāgatakāyaavākācittavisāñvādanajra (the adamant deceiving the bodies, speech and minds of all the tathāgatas) and emitted (the following hrdaya-spell of) the first wife of all the tathāgatas as prajñādharas: Vajrarati.

... assuming the figure of a lady, sat in the north (-east) corner.

... (27) (These are) the samaya-sattvas constituting the (samaya-) maṇḍala (created through pronouncing) the watchwords of bodies, speech and minds of all the tathāgatas.

This is the outline of the contents of the first chapter of the Guhyasamāja-tantra, in its full title, Sarvatathāgatasamādhimaṇḍalā-dhiṣṭhāna-paṭala; and as is duly assumed from the meaning of the title, i.e., the chapter of the Sarvatathāgata putting (the significance of) the
maṇḍala (on the assembly of the group of all the tathāgatas) through his meditations, it reflects the formation of the original "secret assembly".

3. The cult of the Guhyasamāja-tantra in the connection with the Sarvatathāgatasattvasaṁgraha-tantra.

The formative principle of the maṇḍala of the Guhyasamāja-tantra (GS) shown in its first chapter belongs to the common motif, which is to be observed in the Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra, going back from the Vairocanābhi-
saṁbodhi-sūtra (VA), not to speak of the Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṁgr-
aha-tantra (STTS) directly antecedent to the GS, that the actual assembly of people surrounding the "Reverend Lord" is transformed into the world of reality, or, the world as a maṇḍala being contained in the meditation (samādhi, 三昧 san-mai) of the "Lord". The title of the first chapter of the GS, that is, Sarvatathāgatasamādhimaṇḍalādhiṣṭhāna -paṭala (the chapter of the Sarvatathāgata putting the significance of the maṇḍala on the assembly of the group of all the tathāgatas through his meditations) clearly shows the fact that it is the chapter that describes the transformation.

The "Reverend Lord" first enters into the "universal" meditation, which, in its archetype, corresponds to the "Lion-Yawning" meditation (ŚrīmHAVIJRMHBHA-saMADHI, 師子奮迅三昧 Shishi-funjin-zanmai) through which, in the introductory part of the Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra, the Reverend Lord (Śākyamuni=Vairocana) transforms himself into the universal buddha of the body of reality (dharma-kāya, 法身 hosshin), that is, the world of reality consisting of "dense ornaments" (gaṇḍavyūha). The state of this "universal" meditation is nothing other than the state indicated with the above-mentioned "strange" expression "vajrayoṣid-
bhageṣu vijahāra"; and the name given to this universal meditation is "sarvatathāgatamahārāgavajra" (the universal lust of the Sarvatathāgata as firm as adamant) (paragraph 4). The word rāga (lust, 貪欲 ton-yoku) means, of course, amorous desire between man and woman; therefore, it means the fact that there exists a state of sexual union there. The word mahārāga (universal lust) means that the place covered with the sexual union of the “Reverend Lord” as the Sarvatathāgata, a tathāgata of a higher rank than most tathāgatas, is “universal”. In short, the “Reverend Lord” is probably in the state of union with all the female members of the “original secret assembly”; and the “universal” pleasure that occurred through the union includes as the matrix all the male members of the assembly, that is, the five tathāgatas headed by *Aksobhya. The word sarvatathāgatavyūha (4) means that these five *tathāgatas who are the vyūhas ("ornaments", or, individual existences) constitute the whole maṇḍala ("dharma of neuter singular" in our terminology) or fill the matrix ("dharma of feminine singular").

* We attach * to show a person who assumed the role of the deity; for example, *Aksobhya indicates a man who plays the role of the tathāgata Aksobhya in the performance of the “original secret assembly”.

Subsequently, the “Reverend Lord” enters into “individual” meditations such as Jñānapradīpavajra (the adamantine lamp of wisdom) (14) etc., and emits hṛdaya-spells (heart-spells, 心咒 shin-ju) which are the hearts (hṛdaya) of these individual meditations. These hṛdaya-spells (or, saṃbhāsaṇa, the “watchwords” of paragraph 27) transform themselves into samaya-sattvas (27) and consequently form the samaya-maṇḍala (6), the maṇḍala constituted of samaya-sattvas. Samaya-sattvas are deities constituting the maṇḍala with which Esoteric Buddhists or Tātric Buddhists should unite themselves through the symbolistic practice of svādhidaivata-yoga (本尊瑜伽 honzon-yuga) to enter
into the *maṇḍala* and attain enlightenment while in their actual physical bodies (即身成仏 *sokushin- jōbutsu*).

This *samaya*-maṇḍala, however, was still, at that time, nothing more than something ideal which was to be imitated through the symbolistic procedure of *svādhidaivata*-yoga, or, to be substantialized through the *svādhidaivata*-yoga of each of the members of the "original secret assembly". How did they practise the *svādhidaivata*-yoga in the performance of the "secret assembly", then?

Besides the formative principle of the *maṇḍala*, the *GS* also owes the structure of the *maṇḍala* to that of *STTS* in its fundamental elements of five *tathāgatas*, four *pāramitā*-ladies and the four inner "worshipping" ladies (内四仏像 *nai-no-shi-kuyō*). However, in recreating the actual performance of the "original secret assembly" which was to be performed on the basis of the *maṇḍala*, it is necessary for us to notice two more factors existing behind the static structure of the *maṇḍala* of *STTS*, that is, the phenomenon of an "exchange of consorts" and the existence of the "visiting leader".

It is duly assumed, from the process of formation of the *Vajradhātu-mahāmaṇḍala* (金剛界大曼荼羅 *Kongō-kai-dai-mandara*) of thirty-seven deities, that the followers of the cult of *STTS* must have formed, in practice, an assembly or a kind of "living-*maṇḍala*", literally the *mahā*-maṇḍala or the *maṇḍala* constituted of *mahā*-mudrās, playing the roles of their own corresponding deities (*svādhīdevatā*, 本尊 *honzon*) and that this cult had already included sexual yogic elements from the first, so as to experience an unusual feeling which should make themselves feel that they were actually *tathāgatas* as the logic of *STTS* says. In other words, sexual relations between members was the means by which they integrated themselves into the actual, living *Vajradhātu*—
manḍala, as is suggested in the section of the originations of thirty-seven deities (三十七尊出生段 sanjūshichi-son-shusshō-dan) of the text.

The “exchange of consorts” which is presupposed for the existence of sexual relations between the members can be assumed from following evidence shown in the text of STTS:

As soon as the bodhisattva Sarvārtha-siddhi (一切義成就菩薩) attains enlightenment and becomes the buddha Vairocana through the teaching of all the tathāgatas of the “five-stepped process of attaining enlightenment” (五相成身観 gosō-jōjin-gan), especially, of the fifth mantra of “making the body of the buddha completed” (仏身円満眞言 busshin-enman-no-shingon) which is “the truth of all the tathāgatas” (sarvatathāgatatattva) or the universal formula through which anyone can attain enlightenment instantaneously, all these tathāgatas shift to “the pavilion with the pinnacle of the adamantine jewel situated on the top of Mt. Sumeru” (須弥山頂金剛摩尼宝頂楼閣 Shumisen-chō-kongo-manihō-chō-rokaku) surrounding the newly-enlightened Vairocana (= Śākyamuni) and enthrone him as the Sarvatathāgata (singular in number), the representative of them, all the tathāgatas. Subsequently, they, all the tathāgatas to be counted by the number of grains of sand of the River Gaṅgā, reduce themselves into four sarvatathāgatas, that is, Aksobhya, Ratnasambhava, Lokeśvararāja and Amoghasiddhi and sit on all sides of “the Reverend Lord Śākyamuni tathāgata”; and here the “exchange of consorts” takes place.

The four sarvatathāgatas who each shoulder a quarter of the whole substance or existentiality of the Vajradhatu (“adamantine realm of reality”, 金剛界 Kongō-kai) offer to Vairocana, the new leader or architect of their world, their own “four pāramitā-ladies” (四波羅蜜菩薩 shi-haramitsu-bosatsu), who are nothing other than the four quarters of the
whole substance of the world ("dharma of feminine singular") shouldered by these four sarvatathāgatas. In return for these offerings of the legal wives of the four sarvatathāgatas, Vairocana gives them "the four inner worshipping ladies", that is, Vajralāṣyā, Vajramālā, Vajragītā and Vajranṛṣṭyā, who are "the great goddesses of the family of the Sarvatathāgata", and makes these ladies the "lovers" (dayitā) of these four sarvatathāgatas.

The state of the "assembly" of the members of this "living maṇḍala" together with the existence of the "visiting leader" of the assembly is shown in the section of STTS describing the ritual of entering into the "drawn-maṇḍala" through svādhidaivata-yoga (Horiuchi 191f.) as follows:

First, the Reverend Lord, for the sake of putting (the state of) the "assembly" (samāja) on the group of "all the tathāgatas", snaps his finger and pronounces the hrdaya-spell Vajrasamāja! ("adamantine assembly!"). At the moment, "all the tathāgatas" who are suggested by the snap of the fingers of the Sarvatathāgata (= Vairocana), together with bodhisattvas who are the followers of them, assemble and come near to the Reverend Lord Vairocana, aslude and praise Vairocana, and then, they, all the tathāgatas solicit, with "one hundred and eight names" (百八名動請 hyakuhachi-myō-kanjō), "the Reverend Lord, the Lord of all the tathāgatas (Sarvatathāgatādhipati), the Vajrasattva himself, the Mahāvajradhara without beginning or end". According to the solicitation, "the Reverend Lord, the Vajradhara" preaches the "drawn-maṇḍala" which is "similar to the Vajradhatu, and (therefore,) is thought to be the Vajradhatu itself", and teaches tathāgatas the ritual of initiation (abhiṣeka, 濾頂 kanjō) to be performed in the maṇḍala into which the "Vajrācārya" ("adamantine master") enters and initiates the disciple.
4. The structure of the "original secret assembly".

Given the structure of the maṇḍala of the STTS and the ritual performed on it, the structure of the "original secret assembly" of the GS can be recreated as in figure i.

![Diagram]

fig. i: The structure of the "original secret assembly" to be recreated from the Guhyasamāja- tantra itself.

This structure, however, differs in some important points from the traditional, authoritative understanding of Nāgārjuna shown in his Piṇḍikrama-sādhana (figure ii). We can duly conclude that the understanding of Nāgārjuna is wrong; however, his mistakes help us in recreating the cult of the "original secret assembly".
The main reason which led him to his misunderstanding was that he didn’t recognize the existence of the phenomenon of the “exchange of consorts” behind the text of the GS. Mention of this first appears in his positionning of the goddess Māmaki (= Dveśarati) and Locanā (= Moharati).

In the “original” GS text, Māmaki (= Dveśarati) is located in the (south-) east “corner” (pūrva-kōṇa) and Locanā (= Moharati) in the south (-west) “corner” (dakṣiṇa-kōṇa) as is shown in the critical edition.

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**fig. ii**: The structure of the *manḍala* of the *Guhyasamāja- tantra* to be recreated from the *Piṇḍikrama- sādhana* of Nāgārjuna.
of the GS by Yūkei Matsunaga, Nāgārjuna, however, located Locanā (verse 131) in the (south-) east “corner” (135) and Māmaki (135) in the south-west (nairṛtyāṁ, verse 138).

This distortion was caused by a shift in position of the tathāgata Akṣobhya, the master of the dveṣa = wrath family. In the STTS maṇḍala he was located to the east of Vairocana, who occupied the centre position, and who was the master of the moha = stupidity family. In the GS maṇḍala, though, Askobhya had been shifted to the centre and Vairocana, accordingly, shifted to the east and entered into the new relationship with abandonata Māmaki, the mistress of dveṣa = wrath family.

Nāgārjuna, who thought that the old relationship between Vairocana and Locanā of the moha-family was still preserved in GS, ignored the text and preserved the well-known relationship of Vairocana and Locanā so as to keep the distortion to a minimum.

* B. Bhattacharyya made his critical edition following this distortion of Nāgārjuna by changing the reading of MSS; and S. Bagchi adopted Bhattacharyya’s reading without criticism.

This misunderstanding or distortion of Nāgārjuna, however, makes us conscious of the importance of the phenomenon of the “exchange of consorts” in recreating the cult of the “original secret assembly”.

The fact that he located these goddesses, ignoring the meaning of the word “corner” (koṇa), in the intermediate quarters of the inner circle, which correspond to the locations of “the four inner worshipping ladies” (內四供養) of STTS, implies that Nāgārjuna thought that
they were still in relation with the four *tathāgatas*, who are their husbands in usual life, in the unusual situation of the secret assembly.

Nāgārjuna's reconstruction of the form of the *GS maṇḍala* is decisively misleading for a description of the cult of the "original secret assembly", firstly as a result of this misunderstanding and also of another misunderstanding — that he (appears to have) thought that the five women (*Rūpavajrā*, etc.) in the first chapter of GS were nominated in paragraph 5 but were subsequently not shown their positions. Actually, the locations of these five women are shown in paragraphs 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18.

My disagreement with Nāgārjuna occurs from interpretations of the compound word - *mahāmudrāsāmyogaparamapadiḥ* (· · · · · · assuming the highest position of · · · · · · in union with his *mahāmudrā*) which occurs in each of these five.

In usual usage of the word in usual Esoteric Buddhism, *mahāmudrā* means a deity of *maṇḍala* imagined or drawn as a deity assuming a total or actual figure. And in this usual meaning, for example, paragraph 15, the case of *Vairocana*, is to be understood as follows: the "Reverend Lord" who is situated in the middle of the *maṇḍala*, first enters into the "universal" meditation and consecrates the *maṇḍala* therewith. Then, he enters into the "individual" meditations, the "sarvatathāgata samayasambhava", in this case, and pronounces the *hrdaya*-spell "Jinajik", which is the essence (*hrdaya*) of the "individual" meditation. The *hrdaya* transforms itself into the "figure" = *mahāmudrā* of *Vairocana* and sits in front of the "Reverend Lord".

In the Tantric context, however, *mahāmudrā* refers to a beautiful
sixteen year-old maiden as the partner of the sexual yogic practice; and we think that this Tantric notion of mahāmudrā is to be applied in this case. It means the following fact: as soon as the "Reverend Lord" pronounced the hrdaya-spell, it transformed itself into the figure of Vairocana who was in union with his mahāmudrā and sat in front of the Lord.

Who is the mahāmudrā, then? As long as the phenomenon of the "exchange of consorts" exists, it should be not Māmaki who is the legal wife of Viṣṇu in their usual life, but Rūpavajrā whose position Nāgārjuna thought was not explained in the GS.

Accordingly, Nāgārjuna, who didn’t understand the importance of the five women (Rūpavajrā, etc.) or in other words, who thought these five women were less important than the four women (Locanā, etc.), positioned them in the four corners of the square which form the outer or second zone and made them, except the case of Sparśavajrā, the partners of bodhisattvas (Maitreya, etc.) who are essentially followers of the tathāgatas and are not the regular members of the assembly.

In the pīṇḍikrama-sādhana (edit. by de la Vallée Poussin), Nāgārjuna says:

\[
dvitiye tu puṭe yogi rūpavajrādikāṁ śṛjet // 146 //
agnikoṭe śṛjed deviṁ rūpavajrāṁ manoramāṁ /
trimukhāṁ śaḍbhujāṁ śvetāṁ śrīvairocanamaulikāṁ // 147 //
gṛhitadarpaṇāṁ dvāḥhyāṁ šeṣāṁ moharater iva /
.......... 
vajrasattvaṁ samāliṅga vahnimadhye vyavasthitāṁ /
\]
cintayet sparsavajraṁ tu patitulyāṁ mukhāḍībhīḥ // 153 //
dvitiye tu pūte pūrve paṭṭikāyāṁ śṛjed vrati /
maṁthlimbijaviniśpannau maitreyakṣitigarbhakau // 154 //

"The yogin should, in the second zone, position Rūpavajrā, etc. (146).

In the corner of fire (south-east), he should imagine the agreeable Rūpavajrā; she is white, three-faced, six-armed, having (the figure of) auspicious Vairocana on her crest of hairs (147), and is holding a mirror with two hands. Other (features) are the same as those of Moharati (= Locana).

............

(The yogin should imagine) Sparśavajrā who is embracing Vajrasattva and is located in the middle of the sacrifice-fire, the woman whose face etc. are similar to those of her husband (153).

And in the (same) second zone, the vowee should imagine Maitreya and Kṣitigarbha who came out from the seed character Māṁ and Thlim on the eastern platform."

This mispositionning by Nāgārjuna led to a confusion for him. At the second sexual union to be performed by all the members of the assembly, four women (Māmaki, etc.) who are excluded from the union with their original consorts, that is, the four tathāgatas who are to be united with Rūpavajrā, etc. in the phenomenon of the "exchange of consorts", stand up alternatively and ask the "visiting leader", who is now free from the union, to do sexual union with them. In chapter seventeen of GS, we find, for example, in the case of Māmaki, the following:

atha sā sarvatathāgata-cittadayitā māmaki bhagavantaṁ sarva-
tathāgatādhīpatiṁ mahāvajradharam ebhir vajradharakāmaratipūjāgrākṣarapadaṁ prityā saṁstūyāmāsa /
tvam vajracitta bhuvaneśvara sattvadhāto /
trāyāhi māṁ ratimanojña mahārthakāmaiḥ /
kāmāhi māṁ janaka sattvamahāgrabandho /
yadicchase jivitum adya nātha // 72 //

*For vajracitta, MSS give vajrasattva.

"Then, Māmaki, the lover of the mind of the Sarvatathāgata, praised the Reverend Lord, the Lord of all the tathāgatas, the Mahāvajradhara with the following sentences of the highest worship of Vajradhara through the pleasure of love with delight:
'O You! The (God of) adamantine mind (or, Vajrasattva MSS)!
The (whole) world (of living beings)!
You (who are) delighted in the pleasure of love! Save me if you want great profit!
O Father! love me! O The great and the highest kinsman of (all) the living beings!
O Lord! if you like to be alive again now!'"

The existence of these verses must certainly have been embarrassing for Nāgārjuna, who was thinking that these four women were still in union with their original consorts, that is, the four tathāgatas. This is the reason why he couldn't help concealing the names of these four women when he quoted these verses in the Piṇḍikrama-sādhana. His quotation corresponding to this verse goes as follows:

maṇḍalaśṭhāś caturdevyo na paśyantaṁ tataḥ patim /
gāthācatusṭayenettham bodhayanti mahāsukham // 205 //
tvam vajrasattva bhuvaneśvara sattvadhāto /
trāyāhi māṁ ratimanojña mahārthakāmaiḥ /

—279—
kāmāhi māṁ janaka sattvamahāgrabandho /
yadicchase jivatu mahya nātha // 206 //

"Then, the four goddesses who are located in the maṇḍala thus made the Lord who was not looking (at them) perceive great pleasure through the following four verses (of solicitation):
'O You! Vajrasattva! ..........'"

These are reasons we cannot rely on the form of the maṇḍala of the GS recreated by Nāgārjuna in restoring the actual state of the "original secret assembly".

5. The realities of the "original secret assembly".

On the basis of the structure of the GS maṇḍala suggested not by Nāgārjuna in the Piṇḍikrama-sādhana but by the text of the GS itself (fig. i), we imagine the outline of the cult of the "original secret assembly" as follows:

*Akṣobhya, the sponsor of the assembly or donor (dānapati, 施主 seshu), who is probably a wealthy gentleman of the district, giving generous donations to the "visiting leader", perhaps a well-known yogin, who occasionally comes to the district, prepares five mahāmudrā-girls (*Rūpavajrā, etc.); they are beautiful maidens of sixteen years old. *Akṣobhya also invites "all the *tathāgatas" who are actually four sarvatathāgatas (*Vairocana, etc.); these gentlemen, who are the regular members of the assembly, accept the invitation and come to the place accompanying their own wives (*Māmaki, etc.) and bodhisattva-followers (*Maitreya, Kṣitigarbha, etc.), who are thought to be their followers in actual life. The five girls (*Rūpavajrā, etc.) and the four wives (*Māmaki, etc.), in total nine women, are
“adamantine ladies” (*vajrayośīd) who form the “matrix” or the basis of the assembly on which the truth is to be realized, being consecrated through the sexual union with the “visiting leader”. *Akṣobhya solicits the “visiting leader”, the “*Reverend Lord, the *Sarvatathāgata-kāyavākcittavajradhipati”, for administering the assembly; the “leader” comes and “places himself in the middle of the maṇḍala of all the *tathāgatas” (paragraph 7).

In this assembly, sexual yoga takes place twice in two sessions: firstly, between the “visiting leader” and the nine “adamantine ladies” (*vajrayośīds), and secondly, between the five *tathāgatas (*Akṣobhya etc.) and the five mahāmudrā-girls (*Rūpavajrā, etc.), and between the “visiting leader” and the four wives (*Māmaki, etc).

The “strange ” expression which was referred to at the beginning of this paper indicates the first instance of sexual yoga and is more definitely shown by the expression “the Reverend Lord Mahāvairocana, (first) entered into the meditation named Sarvatathāgatamahārāgavajra (the universal lust of the Sarvatathāgata as firm as adamant)” (paragraph 4 ); this is of course the “universal” samādhi the archetype of which can be traced to the “Lion-Yawning” samādhi of the Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra.

The “visiting leader” adds the sacredness of the samādhi to the “assembly” ; and the “assembly” which had been only the coming together of the members is transformed thereby into the “grand samaya-maṇḍala”, the ground on which the truth is to be realized (paragraph 6).

The “visiting leader ” subsequently gives a secret teaching and grants
a special initiation to *Aksobhya, the donor. This abhiṣeka which makes *Aksobhya a vajrācārya is assumed to be not the usual “ācārya-abhiṣeka” (阿闍梨灌頂 ajari - kanjō), i.e., the “pitcher-abhiṣeka” (瓶灌頂 byō- kanjō), but the “secret-abhiṣeka” (guhya-abhiṣeka, 秘密灌頂 himitsu- kanjō) which is the second of the system of four initiations of HV or the Samvara Tantrism.

The “secret-abhiṣeka” is the initiation in which the bodhi-citta (菩提心 bodai-shin), in the Tantric meaning, is seeded in the disciple. In the case of the “original secret assembly”, the “visiting leader”, the original ācārya, unites himself sexually with the mahāmūra *Sparśavajrā who was offered to him bya the donor *Aksobhya, picks up the bodhi-citta, which is actually the mixture of the menstrual fluid of the mahāmudrā and his own semen that originated in the sexual yoga, with his thumb and ring-finger (the fourth finger) and drops it in the mouth of the disciple, who is actually *Aksobhya himself.

The efficacy of this “secret-abhiṣeka” granted to *Aksobhya is argued, in chapter seventeen of the text, between “all the tathāgatas” who are in assembly and the bodhisattva Maitreya who is watching it from outside; we find a profound meaning in the fact that the questioner is none other than the bodhisattva Maitreya who was a hero of the Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra. The passage goes:

“Then, the great bodhisattva Maitreya saluted all the tathāgatas and asked them as follows:

‘How should the Reverend Lord Vajra-ācārya who was initiated in the secret assembly of adamantine bodies, speech and minds of all the tathāgatas be seen by all the tathāgatas and all the bodhisattvas?’
All the tathāgatas answered:

'O son of good family, the bodhi-mind (bodhicitto, masculine singular) is to be seen like adamant (vajra). Because, the bodhi-mind (bodhicittas, m. sg.) and the ācārya (阿闍梨 ajari = *Aksobhya) are non-dual and are not to be divided into two.

O son of good family, in short, all these buddhas and bodhi-sattvas who are living, existing and spending days in (all) the worlds of ten directions will come three times to the ācārya (every day), worship him in the same way as they worship the Sarvatathāgata and go back to their own buddha-lands. And there, they pronounce the following sentences of adamantine speech:

He is the father of all of us, all the tathāgatas, and is also the mother of all of us, all the tathāgatas.

The (meaning of these sentences) is as follows: If we can use a simile, the whole aggregate of all the merits (punya-skandha 福聚) which are bone from the bodies, speech and minds of all the reverend Buddhas who exist in (all the worlds of) ten directions can narrowly match (in its vastness) with the size of the hole of the point of a hair of the body (romakūpāgravivara) of the ācārya.

It is because, O son of good family, the bodhi-mind (bodhi-cittaṃ, neuter singular) is the cream of (all) the wisdoms of all the Buddhas, is that which makes (all the wisdoms of all the Buddhas) arise and is the origine of "the wisdom of the omniscient" (sarvajñajñāna, 一切智智 issai-chi-chi ).'

Hearing these words, the bodhisattva Maitreya was terrified; his mind trembled, and he became silent.
In this passage, the word “bodhi-mind” (bodhicitta, 菩提心 bodai-shin) appears three times; the first two cases which are shown in masculine singular form refer to the “visiting leader” who is to be identified with the Reverend Lord, the Tathāgata Bodhicitta-vajra of chapter one (paragraphs 7 8 9 10 11 and 12); he is none other than the personification of the universal, ultimate reality, that is “the dharma of neuter singular” in our terminology, as he is united with the whole substance of the sphere of dharma (dharmadhātu, 法界 hokkai), which is the aggregate of five or nine “adamantine ladies” as “the dharma of feminine singular”. He is the dharma-kāya (法身 hosshin) in his theistic aspect, and at the same time, the “wisdom of the omniscient” (sarvajñajñāna), the pantheistic reality of the “world” itself. And *Aksobhya who has been initiated by the “visiting leader” is said to be “non-dual and is not to be divided into two” with the “visiting leader” himself who is the universal bodhi-mind (m.sg.) here.

In the third case where the word “bodhi-mind” appears, it is in neuter singular form (bodhicittam), and this shows the ground of the tantric truth of the GS. It is because *Aksobhya was “seeded” by the “visiting leader” with the bodhi-mind of neuter singular that the former is “non-dual and is not to be divided into two” with the latter. The bodhi-mind (n.sg.), which is nothing other than the mixture of the menstrual fluid of the mahāmudrā and the semen of the “visiting leader”, is said to be “the cream of (all) the wisdom of all the buddhas”, “that which makes all the wisdoms of all the buddhas arise” and “the origin of sarvajñajñāna”, the term which was used to express the pantheistic reality of the Māhāyanic world of the Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra or the Vairocanābhisambodhi-sūtra.

This tantric truth of the GS, however, cannot but make the bodhisattva
Maitreya, who had been the preacher of the Māhāyānic truth of the bodhi-mind in the Gaṇḍavyūha-sūtra, which is a remote ancestor of the GS, terrified. The Tantric bodhi-mind of the GS and the Mahāyānic bodhi-mind of the GV are truly “critical” (incompatible with each other) as the “author” of the GS rightly noticed.

In the GV, the bodhisattva Maitreya teaches Sudhana-śreṣṭhidāraka (善財童子 Zenzai-dōji) the final truth of the Mahāyānic bodhi-mind which expresses the śūnyatā-manner (空性 kū-shō) of existence and the actual becoming of the Mahāyānic, ideal world of Samantabhadracaryā-maṇḍala (the complete aggregate of all the deeds of the bodhisattva Samantabhadra), which is, in other words, sarvajñajñāna, as follows:

\[
\text{ataḥ prabhavati sarvabodhisattvaaryaśamandalam (Suzuki, p. 496)}
\]

“From this (bodhi-mind) appears the whole aggregate of all the deeds of (all) the bodhisattvas”

or

\[
yenānuttarāyāṁ samyaksaṁbodhau cittam utpāditaṁ so 'pramāṇaṅgusamudito bhavati sarvajñatācittādhyāśayasusamgrhit-\]
\[\text{atvāt (ibid.)} \]

“At the instant that a man starts the bodhi-mind seeking for the highest and complete enlightenment, he comes to be possessed of (all the) immeasurable merits as he is well protected by the mind aiming to be the omniscient.”

The main point of these words of Maitreya exists in the following fact:

If a man understands and consents to the idea of the world of the GV (信 shin), resolves to cast himself practically into it (願 gan) and sets his first step to the eternal process of constructing it by
himself as was actually done by the bodhisattva Samantabhadra (普賢菩薩 Fugen-bosatsu), the ideal world of the whole aggregate of all the deeds of Samantabhadra (samantabhadracaryā-maṇḍala, 普賢法界 Fugen-hokkai), i.e., the whole aggregate of all the deeds of all the bodhisattvas (sarvabodhisattvacaryā-maṇḍala), or, in another word, the world of "immeasurable merits" appears at the same instant, in its completeness, in conformity with the first step of his practice (行 gyō).

This state of things is exactly reflected in the teaching of bodhi-mind in the GS in the point that the "whole aggregate of all the merits" or sarvajñajñāna, the world of reality as the maṇḍala occurs from the bodhi-mind, or, the bodhi-mind is the "origin" of sarvajñajñāna. However, the bodhi-mind which Maitreya defined in GV as the whole-existentialistic Entwurf to the ideal world of infinite deeds of bodhisattvas which are essentially the direct communications to others according to the principle of universal mercy (大悲 tai-hi) to remove their afflictions is actually replaced, in GS, with a drop (bindu, 滴) of the mixture of the menstrual fluid and the semen of the two sexes.

My concept of "criticality" is based of the surmise that the practice benefitting others or removing the afflictions of others should, in its essence, direct; Mahāyāna was the position which consciously confines itself within the limitation of this directness of practice.

The Tantrism of the GS consciously replaced this Mahāyānic concept of bodhi-mind of benefitting others directly with a drop of the mixture of the menstrual fluid and the semen that occurs at the sexual union of both sexes; it was quite natural that this replacement made Maitreya, who is the personification of the Idee of Mahāyāna, terri-
fied. The secret teachings or “the truth” (paragraph 11) preached by the “visiting leader” at the “original secret assembly” were actually of this kind.

The actual state of the second stage of the sexual yogic practice to be performed at the “original secret assembly” can be assumed retrogressively from the *praṭīṇḍa-abhiṃṣaka* (般若灌頂 hannya-chi-kanjō) of the *Hevajra-tantra* (HV).

*Ākṣobhya* who had been “seeded” with the *bodhi*-mind from the “visiting leader”, united himself, in his turn, with the *mahāmudrā* of the “visiting leader”, *i.e.*, *Śparśavajrā*; the four *tathāgatas* (*Vairocana*, etc.) united with the four *mahāmudrā*-girls (*Rūpavajrā*, etc.). This situation is reflected in an expression found in chapter seventeen, which corresponds with the “strange” expression at the beginning of chapter one:

*atha bhagavantaḥ sarvatathāgataḥ sarvatathāgatakāyavākcittavajrayośidbhageṣu vijahāruḥ.*

“Then, all the *tathāgatas* dwelt in the female organs of adamantine ladies who are the hearts of the bodies, speech and minds of all the *tathāgatas*."

The four ladies (*Māmaki* etc.) who are deprived of their original consorts (*Vairocana*, etc.) ask the “visiting leader” who is now withdrawn from the *yoga* with *Śparśavajrā*, to perform sexual union with themselves. The “visiting leader” of course accepts the solicitation of *Māmaki* etc. and unites himself with them.

Thus all the members of the “original secret assembly” obtain happily their own partners and practise sexual yogic practices simultaneously; this situation is mentioned in the passage following the verses of
solicitations of *Māmaki etc. mentioned before as follows:

"Thus, the Reverend Lord, the Tathāgata Vajrapāṇi, having entered into the *samādhi* named "Sarvakāmopabhogavajraśrī" (the splendour of the adamant enjoying of all the amorous desires), loving the wife of all the tathāgatas (sarvatathāgatadayitā. sg.) with the circle of *samayas*, become silent.

Then, the whole sphere of the empty sky, being filled with semen which is the *samaya* of bodies, speech and minds of all the tathāgatas, became like a water-pot filled with "adamantine water". Accordingly, all of these living beings who have originated from the *samayas* of three (kinds of) bodies in this whole sphere of the empty sky, being touched by the splendour of three (kinds of) vajras, become tathāgatas, arhats, samyaksambuddhas and holders of three (kinds of) adamantine wisdoms.

After that, all the living beings have become initiated with adamantine bodies, speech and minds of all the tathāgatas, being called by the (abhiṣeka-) names 'Samantabhadras! Samantabhadras!' Then, the Tathāgata Vajrapāṇi said to all these tathāgatas:

‘O Reverend Lords! All the Tathāgatas! The oneness of (all the) truths of all the Buddhas was seen (by you, wasn’t it?)’

Answering to this, all the tathāgatas said to the Lord of all the tathāgatas Vajrapāṇi as follows:

‘Seen, O Reverend Lord! seen, O Sugata! was the oneness of (all) the adamantine wisdoms. (Seen) was the practice of the adamantine wisdom.’

—270—
Then, all the reverend *tathāgatas*, coming out of the female organs of the adamantine ladies, said to the Reverend Lord, the great *Vajrapāṇi*, the *Tathāgata*, the Lord of all the *tathāgatas*:

‘It is very rare, O Reverend Lord! It is very rare, O *Sugata*! that, through the words or expressions of lust, the (state of) enlightenment of the *Buddha* is to be attained.’

6. The inevitable degeneration of the Guhyasamāja-tantra into the “cult of cemetery”.

Thus, a scheme to participate, through *svādhidaivatayoga* (本尊瑜伽), in the sphere of reality and realize thereby enlightenment instantaneously with one’s actual, physical existence was proposed in the *GS*.

Was the scheme really successful then? Or, more particularly, was the secret teaching to replace the notion of the Mahāyānic *bodhi*-mind with the Tantric notion of the *bodhi*-mind as a “drop” (*bindu*, 滴) really testified to be true?

Of course not. The members may have experienced some kind of unusual ecstasy during the sexual yogic practice performed in the “original secret assembly”; however, the fact that they couldn’t but find themselves still “common men” the next morning had not changed in this stage of Tantric Buddhism. This situation made them look for further “intensity” in their sexual yogic practice, accelerated their inclination to the “cult of śmaśāna” and consequently caused the history of the thought of Tantric Buddhism to evolve to the next stage, the stage of the *Hevajra-tantra*, which was the “Buddhism
of śmaśāna” or the “Buddhism of cemetery”. However, I would like to pose some questions here:

What, then, was the significance of the existence of the GS?

Was the GS nothing more than a text of transitional character or a text that was merely trial and error? In other words, was the GS nothing more than a small cog in the wheel of the historical evolution of Tantric Buddhism?

It is true that the GS was really a cog in the wheel of the necessary process of the evolution of the history of Tantric Buddhism; however, once we look over it again from the eye-level of the “open system”, we notice the fact that it was truly an epoch-making stage of the “self-notification” of the “God of the open system” as the “teleological reason”.

We find in the fantastic, astonishing “secret” of the GS replacing the Mahāyānic notion of bodhi-mind with the Tantric notion of a “drop” (bindu) the fact that the mechanism of the actual becoming of the “God of the open system” or what Nishida Kitarō (西田幾多郎) calls “contra-correspondence” of the whole-including God and our own individual existence (逆対応 gyaku-taiō) is expressed therewith, if symbolically, in its utmost limit.

When does the “God of the open system” uncover the veil of the symbolistic expression and show us directly the real mechanism of his own becoming actual then?

To meet with the final context of this self-notification of the “God of the open system” and recover his “secret” as our own “thought”, we have to be patient to follow the further process of evolution of the
history of Tantric Buddhism to its completion in the *Saṃvara* Tantrism obeying the teleological intention of the "God of the open system" who is also the *Genius* of the history of the thought of Buddhism.