

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

Shin'ichi Tsuda

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 Three: “Critical” Evolution of Mahāyāna Buddhism.

Lecture Four: Two Types of Esoteric Buddhism: Mahāyānic  
Esoterism of the *Vairocanaḥisambodhi-Sūtra* and the  
Genuine Esoterism of the *Sarvatathāgatattvaśaṅgraha-*  
*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 His-  
torical 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 *Sarvatathāgatattvasaṃgraha-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 *Ṛg-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 Puruṣa, the original gigantic anthropos of the *Ṛg-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 *pīṭhas* (pilgrim places), a correspondence to the Buddha’s notion of the practice, i. e. , life-long maintenance of chastity (*dr̥ṣṭadharmabrahmacaryā*), 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 our thinkings 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.

#### 1. “Vajrayoṣidbhageṣu vijahāra” : the Tantric Place of Truth.

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* :

*evaṃ mayā śrutam ekasmin samaye bhagavān sarvatathāgatakā-yavākcittahṛdayavajrayoṣidbhageṣu 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 *evaṃ 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-ḍākinī-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 *yoṣidbhaga* 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* (金剛頂瑜伽十八会指帰, “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 *Jūhatte-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) Sarvatathāgatattattvasaṅgraha-tantra-rāja.....
- (2) Sarvatathāgata-guhyādhipati-yoga .....Akaniṣṭhadeva
- (3) Sarvatantrasaṅgraha-yoga .....the *dharma-dhātu* palace
- (4) Trailokyavijayavajra-yoga .....the top of Mt. Sumeru
- (5) Lokalokottaravajra-yoga .....the “sky-sphere” of Vārāṇasī
- (6) Mahāsukhāmoghasamayattattva-yoga..... the palace of Paranir-  
mitavaśavartin
- (7) Samantabhadra-yoga ...the palace of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva
- (8) Paramādya-yoga .....the palace of Samantabhadra
- (9) Sarvabuddhasamāyogaḍākinijālasaṅvara-yoga..... the *mantra* -  
palace
- (10) Mahāsamaya-yoga .....the palace of *dharma-dhātu*
- (11) Mahāyānābhisamaya-yoga .....Akaniṣṭha-deva
- (12) Samayaparama-yoga .....the *bodhimaṇḍa* of the “sky-sphere”
- (13) Mahāsamayattattva-yoga .....*Vajradhātu-maṇḍala-bodhimaṇḍa*
- (14) Tathāgatasamayattattva-yoga.....
- (15) Guhyasamāja-yoga .....the so-called secret place, *yoṣidbhaga*
- (16) Advayasamatā-yoga ..... the palace of *dharma-dhātu*
- (17) Khasama-yoga .....the palace of *bhūta-koṭi*
- (18) Vajramukūṭa-yoga .....the fourth *dhyāna*-heaven

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 durly 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 *yoṣidbhaga*” (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 *saṃvaras* (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.

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* (*Samantacaryāgra-ṣaṭṭha*, the chapter of universal, highest deeds), the Reverend Lord preaches the attainment (*siddhi*, 悉地 *shitsu-ji*) of the families of lust, wrath and stupidity (*rāga*, *dveṣa* and *moha*, 貪瞋癡 *ton-jin-chi*), that is, the Tantric practices for attaining the Tantric ideals based on the three big anguishes (*kleśa*, 煩惱 *bon-nō*) which are vices to be strictly prohibited or conquered in usual Buddhism as follows:

prāṇātipātinaḥ sattvā mṛṣāvādaratās ca ye // 4 //  
 ye paradravābhīratā nityaṁ kāmaratās ca ye /  
 viṣmūtrāhāraḥ kṛtyā ye bhavyās te khalu sādhanē // 5 //  
 mātṛbhāginīputrīḥ ca kāmayed yas tu sādhanā /  
 sa siddhiṁ vipulāṁ gacchen mahāyānāgradharmatām // 6 //  
 mātaraṁ buddhasya vibhoḥ kāmayed na ca lipyate /  
 sidhyate tasya buddhatvaṁ nirvikalpasya dhīmataḥ // 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 Sarvanivaraṇaviṣkambhin etc., who had been the heroes of the usual Mahāyāna Buddhism or Esoterism until then, appear on the stage.

atha khalu sarvanivaraṇaviṣkambhiprabhṛtayo mahābodhisattvā  
 āścaryaprāptā adbhutaprāptāḥ / kim ayaṃ bhagavān  
 sarvatathāgatasvāmī sarvatathāgataparṣanmaṇḍalamadhye dur-  
 bhāṣitavacanodāhāraṃ bhāṣate / atha te sarvatathāgatāḥ  
 sarvanivaraṇaviṣkambhiprabhṛtinām mahābodhisattvānām  
 āścaryavacanam upaśrutyaitān bodhisattvān evam āhuḥ  
 alaṃ kulaputrā mā evaṃ vocata /  
 iyaṃ sā dharmatā śuddhā buddhānām sārājñānām /  
 sāradharmārthasambhūtā eṣā bodhicaripadam // 8 //

atha khalu anabilāpyānabilāpyabuddhakṣetrasumeruparamā-  
 nurajaḥsamā bodhisattvā bhītāḥ santrastā mūrccitā abhūvan /  
 “(Hearing these words,) the great *bodhisattvas* commencing with  
 Sarvanivaraṇaviṣkambhin 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 Sarvanivaraṇaviṣkambhin 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 *yoṣidbhaga*. And when he says the place where the *Guhyasamāja-yoga* was preached is "the secret place" or "the place of *yoṣidbhaga*", 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)

and S. Bagchi (Buddhist Sanskrit Texts, No. 9, . Darbhanga, 1965).

- (1) evaṃ mayā śrutam / ekasmin samaye *bhagavān* sarvatathā-gatakāyavākcittahṛdayavajrayoṣidbhageṣu vijahāra /
- (2) anabhilāpyānabhilāpyaiḥ sarvabuddhakṣetrameruparamāṇu-  
rajaḥsamair bodhisattvair mahāsattvaiḥ / tad yathā /  
samayavajreṇa ca nāma bodhisattvena mahāsattvena /.....
- (3) ākāśadhātusamādhmātaiś ca tathāgataiḥ / tad yathā /  
*akṣobhyavajreṇa* ca nāma tathāgatena / *vairocanavajreṇa* ca  
nāma tathāgatena / *ratnaketu vajreṇa* ca nāma tathāgatena  
/ *amitavajreṇa* ca nāma tathāgatena / *amoghavajreṇa* ca  
nāma tathāgatena / evaṃpramukhaiḥ sarvākāśadhātusamā-  
dhmātaiś ca tathāgataiḥ / tad yathā / tilabimbam iva parip-  
ūrṇaḥ sarvākāśadhātuḥ sarvatathāgataiḥ saṃdrśyate sma /
- (4) atha *bhagavān mahāvairocanas* tathāgataḥ *sarvatathāga-  
tamahārāgavajraṃ* nāma samādhiṃ samāpannas taṃ sarva-  
tathāgatavyūhaṃ svakāyavākcittavajreṣu praveśayāmāsa /
- (5) atha te *sarvatathāgatā bhagavantaḥ sarvatathāgatakāya-  
vākcittavajrādhīpateḥ* paritoṣaṇārthaṃ svabimbāni strībim-  
bāny abhinirmāya *bhagavato mahāvairocanasya* kāyād  
abhiniṣkrāntā abhūvan / tatra kecid buddhalocanākāreṇa  
kecin *māmakyākāreṇa* kecit *pāṇḍaravāsinyākāreṇa* kecit  
*samayatārākāreṇa* saṃsthitā abhūvan / tatra kecid rūpasva-  
bhāvākāreṇa kecit śabdavabhāvākāreṇa kecid *gandhasvabh-  
āvākāreṇa* kecid *rasasvabhāvākāreṇa* kecit *sparśasvabhāvāk-  
āreṇa* saṃsthitā abhūvan /
- (6) atha khalu *akṣobhyas* tathāgataḥ sarvatathāgatakāyavākcit-  
tahṛdayavajrayoṣidbhageṣu caturasraṃ virajaskaṃ mahāsa-  
mayamaṇḍalam adhiṣṭhāpayāmāsa /  
svacchaṃ ca tatsvabhāvaṃ ca nānārūpaṃ samantataḥ /

buddhameghasamākīrṇaṃ sphuliṅgagahanajvalam /  
 svacchādimanḍalair yuktam sarvatāthāgataṃ puram //  
 1 //

- (7) atha bhagavān *sarvatathāgatakāyavākcittavajrādhīpatiḥ* sarvatathāgatamaṇḍalamadhye pratiṣṭhāpayāmāsa / atha khalv *akṣobhyas* tathāgato *ratnaketus* tathāgato 'mitāyus tathāgato 'moghasiddhis tathāgato *vairocanas* tathāgato *bodhicittavajrasya* tathāgatasya hṛdaye vijahāra /
- (8) atha bhagavān *bodhicittavajras* tathāgataḥ sarvatathāgatābhibhavanavajraṃ nāma samādhiṃ samāpannaḥ / samanantarasamāpannasya ca *sarvatathāgatādhīpater* athāyaṃ sarvākāśadhātuḥ sarvatathāgatavajramayaḥ saṃsthito 'bhūt / atha yāvantaḥ sarvākāśadhātusaṃsthitāḥ sarvatathāgatāś ca tena *vajrasattvādhiṣṭhānena* sarvatathāgatasukhasaumanasyalābhino 'bhūvan /
- (9) atha bhagavān *bodhicittavajras* tathāgataḥ sarvatathāgatakāyavākcittavajrasamayodbhavavajraṃ nāma samādhiṃ samāpadyemāṃ mahāvidyāpuruṣamūrtiṃ sarvatathāgatasattvādhiṣṭhānam adhiṣṭhāpayāmāsa / samanantarādhiṣṭhitamātre sa eva bhagavān *bodhicittavajras* tathātatas trimukhākāreṇa sarvatathāgataiḥ saṃdṛśyate sma /
- (10) athākṣobhyapramukhāḥ sarvatathāgatā bhagavato *bodhicittavajrasya* hṛdayād abhiniṣkrāmyedam udānam udānayāmā sa /  
 aho hi sarvabuddhānāṃ *bodhicittapravarttanam* /  
*sarvatathāgataṃ guhyam apratarkyam anāvīlam* /iti //  
 2 //
- (11) atha bhagavantaḥ sarvatathāgatā punar samājam āgāmya bhagavantaṃ *bodhicittavajraṃ* sarvatathāgatapūjāspharaṇasamayattvaratnameghaiḥ saṃpūjya praṇipatyāivam

āhuḥ /

bhāṣasva bhagavan tattvaṁ vajrasārasamuccayam /  
sarvatāthāgataṁ guhyaṁ samājaṁ guhyasambhavam /  
iti //3 //

.....

- (14) atha bhavavān sarvatathāgatakāyavākcittavajras tathā-  
gataḥ sarvatathāgatādhyeṣaṇāṁ viditvā jñānapradīpavajraṁ  
nāma samādhiṁ samāpadyedaṁ dveṣakulaparamasārahṛda-  
yaṁ svakāyavākcittavajrebhyo niścārayāmāsa /

vajradhṛk /

athāsmiṁ bhāṣitāmātre sa eva bhagavān sarvatathāgatakā-  
yavākcittavidyāpuruṣo 'kṣobhyamahāmudrāsamyogapara-  
mapadaiḥ kṛṣṇasitaraktākāreṇa sarvatathāgatakāyavākcitta-  
vajrasya sarvatathāgatakāyavākcittavajre niṣīḍayāmāsa /

- (15) ... sarvatathāgatasamayasambhavavajraṁ nāma samādhiṁ  
..... mohakula-.....

jinajik /

... vairocanamahāmudrāsamyogaparamapadaiḥ.....  
...purato...

- (16) ... sarvatathāgataratnasambhavavajraśriyaṁ.....

... cintāmaṇikula.....ratnadhṛk /

... ratnaketumahāmudrāsamyogaparamamadaiḥ.....

... dakṣiṇe .....

- (17) ...sarvatathāgatamahārāgasambhavavajraṁ.....

vajrarāgakula.....ārorik /

... lokeśvaramahāvidyādhipati-.....pṛṣṭhato.....

- (18) ... sarvatathāgatāmoghasamayasambhavavajraṁ.....sama-  
yākaraṣaṇakula .....

prajñādṛk /

... amoghavajramahāmudrāsamyogaparamapadaiḥ.....

...uttare .....

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

(19) atha bhagavān sarvatathāgatavajradharānurāgaṇasamayaṁ  
nāma samādhiṁ samāpadya sarvavajradharāgramahiṣim  
svakāyavākchittebhyo niścārayāmāsa /

dveṣarati /

athāsyāṁ vihiṣṛtamātrāyāṁ sa eva bhagavān sarvata-  
thāgatakāyavākcittavidyāpuruṣaḥ strīrūpadharo bhūtvā  
pūrvakoṇe niṣidayāmāsa /

(20) ... sarvatathāgatānurāgaṇavajraṁ .....

moharati /

... dakṣiṇakoṇe.....

(21) ...sarvatathāgatarāgadharānurāgaṇavajraṁ .....

rāgarati /

... paścimakoṇe.....

(22) ... sarvatathāgatakāyavākcittavisamvādanavajraṁ

vajrarati /

... uttarakoṇe .....

(23) ... vairocanavajraṁ.....

yamāntakṛt /

.....

(27) sarvatathāgatakāyavākcittasambhāṣaṇamaṇḍalasangamayasat-  
tvāḥ /

(translation)

(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.

- (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 *Sarvatathāgatamahārāgavajra* (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, transforming 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 Buddhālocanā, some with the figure of Māmakī, 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 various figures and (has entrances) on all its sides, surrounded by *buddha*-clouds, scattering sparks and



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

- (7) Then, the Reverend Lord **Sarvatathāgatakāyavākcittādhipati** 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 *Sarvatathāgatābhibhavanavajra* (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 *Sarvatathāgatakāyavākcittavajrasamayodbhavavajra* (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* **Sarvatathāgatakāyavākcittavajra**, knowing the solicitation of all the *tathāgatas*, entered into the meditation named *Jñānapradīpavajra* (the adamantine lamp of wisdom) and emitted the most excellent and the firm *hṛdaya*-spell of the **wrath-family**:

**Vajradhṛk.**

As soon as (the *hṛdaya*-spell was) pronounced, it, which is nothing other than the Reverend Lord **Sarvatathāgatakāyavākcittavidyā-puruṣa**, 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 *Sarvatathāgatasamayasaṁbhavavaira* (the adamant originated from the *samayas* of all the *tathāgatas*) and emitted the *hṛdaya*-spell of the **stupidity-family** :

**Jinajik.**

... 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

*Sarvatathāgataratnasambhavavajraśrī* (the splendour of the adamant originated from the jewels of all the *tathāgatas*) and emitted the *hṛdaya*-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 *Sarvatathāgatamahārāgasambhavavajra* (the adamant originated from the great lust of all the *tathāgatas*) and emitted the *hṛdaya* spell of the *vajra* -lust-family:

**Ārorik.**

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

- (18) Then, the Reverend Lord.....entered into the meditation named *Sarvatathāgatāmoghasamayāsambhava* (the adamant originated from the *amogha*-*samayas* of all the *tathāgatas*) and emitted the *hṛdaya*-spell of the *samayākaraṣaṇa*-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 *Sarvatathāgatavajradharānurāgaṇasamaya* (the *samaya* making all the *tathāgatas* as *vajradharas* attached) and emitted (the following *hṛdaya*-spell of) the first wife of all the *tathāgatas*:

**Dveṣarati.**

As soon as this (*hṛdaya*-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 *hṛdaya*-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 *Sarvatathāgatarāgadharānurāgaṇavajra* (the adamant making all the *tathāgatas* as *rāgadharas* attached) and emitted (the following *hṛdaya*-spell of) the first wife of all the *tathāgatas* as *rāgadharas*:

**Rāgarati.**

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

- (22) Then, the Reverend Lord entered into the meditation named *Sarvatathāgatakāyavākcittavisarṇvādananajra* (the adamant deceiving the bodies, speech and minds of all the *tathāgatas* ) and emitted (the following *hṛdaya*-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, *Sarvatathāgatasamādhimaṇḍalādhiṣṭhāna-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 *Vairocanābhīśambodhi-sūtra* (*VA*), not to speak of the *Sarvatathāgatasattvasaṁgraha-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 (*Simhaviṣṭhita-samādhi*, 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 \*Akṣobhya. 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, \*Akṣobhya indicates a man who plays the role of the *tathāgata* Akṣobhya in the performance of the “original secret assembly”.

Subsequently, the “Reverend Lord” enters into “individual” meditations such as *Jñānapradīpavajra* (the adamant lamp of wisdom) (14) etc., and emits *hṛdaya*-spells (heart-spells, 心呪 *shin-ju*) which are the hearts (*hṛdaya*) of these individual meditations. These *hṛdaya*-spells (or, *sambhāṣaṇa*, 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 Tatric Buddhists should unite themselves through the symbolic 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 (内四供養 *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 (*svādhidevatā*, 本尊 *hon-zon*) 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-*

*maṇḍala*, 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* Sarvārthasiddhi (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” (五相成身觀 *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*” (*sarvatathāgatattva*) or the universal formula through which anyone can attain enlightenment instantaneously, all these *tathāgatas* shift to “the pavillion with the pinnacle of the adamant jewel situated on the top of Mt. Sumeru” (須弥山頂金剛摩尼宝頂樓閣 *Shumisen -chō -kongō -manihō -chō -rōkaku*) 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, Akṣobhya, 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 *Vajradhātu* (“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



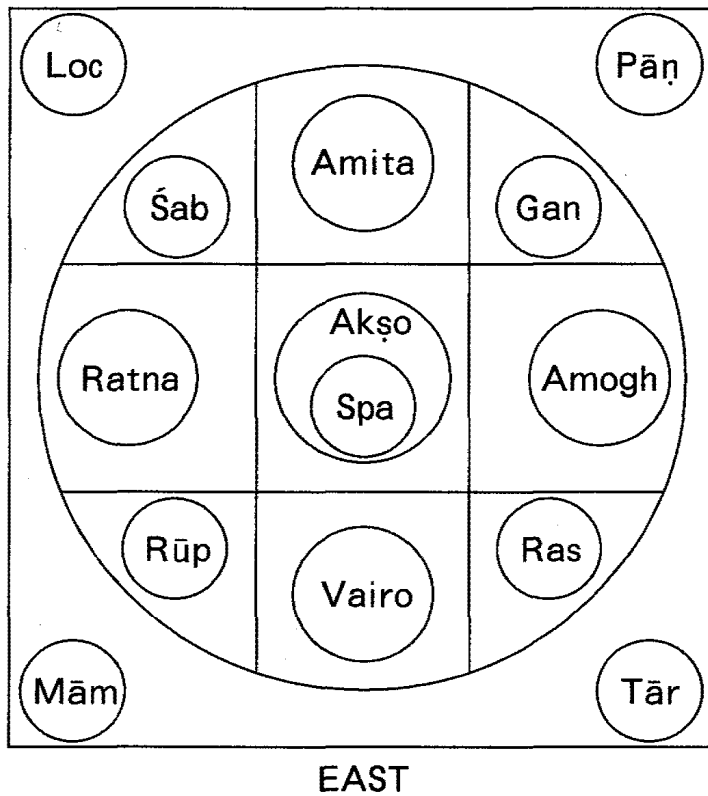
whole substance of the the world ( “dharma of feminine singular” ) shouldered by these four *sarvatathāgatas*. In return for these offerings of the legal wives of the four *sarvatathāgatas*, Vairocana gives them “the four inner worshipping ladies”, that is, Vajralāsyā, Vajramālā, Vajragītā and Vajranṛtyā, 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 *hṛdaya*-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, salute and praise Vairocana, and then, they, all the *tathāgatas* solicit, with “one hundred and eight names” (百八名勸請 *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 *Vajradhātu*, and (therefore,) is thought to be the *Vajradhātu* itself” , and teaches *tathāgatas* the ritual of initiation (*abhiṣeka*, 灌頂 *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”.

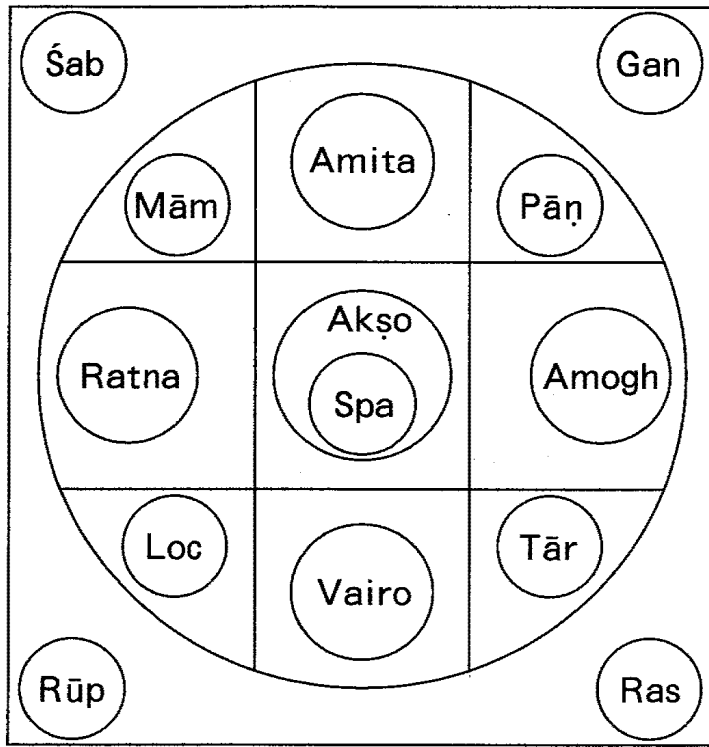
Given the structure of the *maṇḍala* of the *STTS* and the ritual performed on it, the structure of the “original secret assembly” of the GS can be recreated as in *figure i*.



- Akṣo : Akṣobhya (14)  
 Vairo : Vairocana (15)  
 Ratna : Ratnaketu (16)  
 Amita : Amitavajra (17)  
 Amogh : Amoghavajra (18)  
 Loc : Locanā (\*20)  
 Mām : Māmakī (\*19)  
 Pāṇ : Pāṇḍaravāsini (21)  
 Tār : Tārā (22)  
 Rūp : Rūpavajrā (??—15)  
 Śab : Śabdavajrā (??—16)  
 Gan : Gandhavajrā (??—17)  
 Ras : Rasavajrā (??—18)  
 Spa : Sparśavajrā (??—14)

*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 *Piṇḍīkrama-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” .



EAST

- Akṣo : Akṣobhya (107)  
 Vairo : Vairocana (116)  
 Ratna : Ratnaketu (119)  
 Amita : Amitavajra (123)  
 Amogh : Amoghavajra (127)  
 Loc : Locanā ( Moharati )  
 (131)  
 Mām : Māmakī (Dvesarati)  
 (135)  
 Pāṇ : Pāṇḍaravāsini  
 (Rāgarati) (139)  
 Tār : Tārā (Vajrarati) (143)  
 Rup : Rūpavajrā (???—147)  
 Śab : Śabdavajrā (???—148)  
 Gan : Gandhavajrā (???—150)  
 Ras : Rasavajrā (???—151)  
 Spa : Sparśavajrā (???—152)

fig. ii: The structure of the *maṇḍala* of the *Guhyasamāja*-tantra to be recreated from the *Piṇḍīkrama-sādhana* of Nāgārjuna.

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 positioning of the goddess Māmakī (= Dveśarati) and Locanā (= Moharati).

In the "original" *GS* text, Māmakī (= Dveśarati) is located in the (south-) east "corner" (*pūrva-koṇa*) and Locanā (= Moharati) in the south (-west) "corner" (*dakṣiṇa-koṇa*) as is shown in the critical edition

of the *GS* by Yūkei Matsunaga, Nāgārjuna, however, located Locanā (verse 131) in the (south-) east “corner” (135) and Māmākī (135) in the south-west (*nairṛtyāṃ*, 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, Akṣobhya had been shifted to the centre and Vairocana, accordingly, shifted to the east and entered into the new relationship with *abandonata* Māmākī, 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” (内四供養) 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 -*mahāmudrāsaṃyogaparamapadaḥ* (..... 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 *hṛdaya*-spell "*Jinajik*", which is the essence (*hṛdaya*) of the "individual" meditation. The *hṛdaya* 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 *Māmakī* who is the legal wife of \**Vairocana* 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 *piṇḍīkrama-sādhana* (edit. by de la Vallée Poussin), *Nāgārjuna* says:

dvitiye tu puṣṭe yogī rūpavajrādikaṃ sṛjet // 146 //

agnikoṇe sṛjed devīm rūpavajrām manoramām /

trimukhām ṣaḍbhujām śvetām śrīvairocanamaulikām // 147 //

gṛhītarpaṇām dvābhyām śeṣam moharater iva /

.....

vajrasattvaṃ samāliṅgya vahnimadhye vyavasthitām /

cintayet sparśavajrām tu patitulyām mukhādibhiḥ // 153 //  
 dvitiye tu puṭe pūrve paṭṭikāyām sṛjed vratī /  
 maim̐thlim̐bījaviniṣpannau 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 (= Locanā).

.....

(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 vower should imagine Maitreya and Kṣitigarbha who came out from the seed character Maim̐ and Thlim̐ 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 (Māmakī, 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 Māmakī, the following:

atha sā sarvatathāgatacittadayitā māmakī bhagavantam sarva-

tathāgatādhipatiṃ mahāvajradharam ebhir vajradharakāmarati-  
 pūjāgrākṣarapadaīḥ prītyā samstūyāmāsa /  
 tvaṃ vajracitta\* bhuvaneśvara sattvadhāto /  
 trāyāhi mām ratimanojña mahārthakāmaiḥ /  
 kāmāhi mām janaka sattvamahāgrabandho /  
 yadicchase jīvitum 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 *Piṇḍīkrama-sādhana*. His quotation corresponding to this verse goes as follows:

maṇḍalaṣṭhāś caturdevyo na paśyantaṃ tataḥ patim /  
 gāthācatuṣṭayenetthaṃ bodhayanti mahāsukham // 205 //  
 tvaṃ vajrasattva bhuvaneśvara sattvadhāto /  
 trāyāhi mām ratimanojña mahārthakāmaiḥ /



kāmāhi mām 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 *Piṇḍīkrama-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 (\*Māmakī, 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 (\*Māmakī, etc.), in total nine women, are

“adamantine ladies” (*vajrayoṣid*) 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-kāyavākcittavajrādhipati”, 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” (*vajrayoṣids*), and secondly, between the five *tathāgatas* (\*Akṣobhya etc.) and the five *mahāmudrā*-girls (\*Rūpavajrā, etc.), and between the “visiting leader” and the four wives (\*Māmakī, 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 \*Akṣobhya, the donor. This *abhiṣeka* which makes \*Akṣobhya 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 *Sarvvara* 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 *mahāmurā* \**Sparsāvajrā* who was offered to him by the donor \*Akṣobhya, 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 \*Akṣobhya himself.

The efficacy of this “secret-*abhiṣeka*” granted to \*Akṣobhya 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 adamant 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* (*bodhicittaś*, m. sg.) and the *ācārya* (阿闍梨 *ajari* = \*Akṣobhya) 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 (*puṇya - 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 - cittam*, 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 \*Akṣobhya 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 \*Akṣobhya 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 *Vairocanābhisaṃbodhi-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:

ataḥ prabhavati sarvabodhisattvaaryāmaṇḍalam (*Suzuki*. p. 496)

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

or

yenānuttarāyāṃ samyak sambodhau cittam utpāditam so  
'pramāṇaguṇasamudito bhavati sarvajñatācittādhyāśayasusaṃgrhit-  
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 *prajñājñāna-abhiṣeka* (般若智灌頂 *hannya - chi - kanjō*) of the *Hevajra-tantra* (HV).

\*Akṣobhya 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.*, \* Sparśavajrā ; 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 sarvatathāgatāḥ sarvatathāgatakāyavākচিত্ত-  
vajrayoṣidbhageṣu 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 (\*Māmakī etc.) who are deprived of their original consorts (\*Vairocana, etc.) ask the “visiting leader ” who is now withdrawn from the *yoga* with \*Sparśavajrā, to perform sexual union with themselves. The “visiting leader ” of course accepts the solicitation of \*Māmakī etc. and unites himself with whom.

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 \*Māmakī 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*, *samyaksaṃbuddhas* 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.’

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.