

# Significance of the Fulfillment of Shakyamuni Buddha's Vow as the Foundation of the Soteriology of the *Lotus Sutra*\*

Shin'ichi Tsuda

It is an oddity that the part of the *Lotus Sutra* mentioning the fulfillment of Shakyamuni Buddha's vow, which is of decisive significance for the soteriology of the *Lotus Sutra*, has been given so little attention throughout the history of *Lotus Sutra* studies. The significant portion consists of verses 54 to 62 of chapter two. Verses 60 and 61 provide the main point: that the meaning of the One Vehicle is not that all people can attain Buddhahood, as is commonly understood, but rather that all people are already buddhas; in other words, complete salvation is realized for all of us since Shakyamuni Buddha's vow to make all people become buddha was fulfilled with his attainment of the highest enlightenment under the Bodhi-tree at Gaya. Verse 62 further defines the One Vehicle as a complete system of the *Dialectik* of our religious existences, and gives us a "dialectical imperative"—the necessity of further practice by practitioners even though our enlightenment has already been realized through the Buddha's fulfillment of his vow. This request has been actualized, for example, by the present Nichiren sect, the Japanese sect that pays homage to the *Lotus Sutra*, in its practice of reciting the title of the Sutra continuously.

## I. Introductory Remarks: A Fancy of the Geist of the *Lotus Sutra* as a *topos* in the Study of the Sutra.

For some thirty years I have held the fancy that my understanding of a text is not attained through my own intellect, but is gifted to me from a *Geist* through the course of necessity. I have become conscious of this fancy anew as I have come to be interested in the *Lotus Sutra* for the last several years.

In my first readings of the text, the notion of *ganjōju* (願成就: fulfillment of a vow; more exactly, the fact that the vow Shakyamuni Buddha made in the remote past has been fulfilled ever since he attained his highest enlightenment), which is located in a half-concealed manner (*oute legei oute kryptei*) in verse 61 of the Skillful Means chapter of the sutra, caught my attention. I sensed that it is working as the fundamental *Position* of the entire theoretical system of the sutra because the paragraph containing this verse

61 (I call it the *ganjōju* paragraph) constitutes a unity with the preceding paragraph that is “proclaiming the One Vehicle,” and, with this unity, shows itself as being the reason why the One Vehicle—the fundamental position of the sutra—is possible. In other words, it is defining the meaning of the One Vehicle. Here is the translation I gave to verses 60 and 61 at that time:

*evaṃ ca cintemy ahu Śāriputra*  
*kathaṃ nu evaṃ bhavi sarvasattvāḥ |*  
*dvātriṃśatīlakṣaṇarūpadhāriṇaḥ*  
*svayaṃprabhā lokavidū svayaṃbhūḥ ||60||*  
*yathā ca paśyāmi yathā ca cintaye*  
*yathā ca saṅkalpa mam’ āsi pūrvam |*  
*paripūrṇam etat praṇidhānu mahyaṃ*  
*buddhā ca bodhiṃ \*ca prakāśayāmi ||61||*  
*\*ca, WT, tib. na [KN.47, 9-12]*

“At that time, O Śāriputra, I wondered how I could make all people be as perfect buddhas—having bodies equipped with the thirty-two characteristic marks, being themselves resplendent, being knowers of the world, being born of themselves [60].

As I had seen, as I had thought, and as I had vowed at the time, so is my vow now fulfilled [therefore all of them are actually perfect buddhas as I am now]. However, I had never spoken [to people until now] of their being buddhas or of [their attainment of the highest] enlightenment [61].”

At that time I took it as a revelation given to me—a mere beginner in the study of the sutra—directly from the *Geist* of the sutra. I have come to be convinced of it as I learned, to my astonishment, that the decisive importance of the notion of *ganjōju* has not been noticed at all, and, consequently, the first and foremost question for the study of the sutra—“What is the One Vehicle?”—has not been answered correctly throughout the history of our study of the sutra. I really fancied that the *Geist* of the sutra had revealed his or her secret to me, for the first time in history, over the heads of tens of thousands of very learned scholars who devoted themselves to the study of the sutra.

## II. An Example of how the Significance of the Notion of *Ganjōju* and the Meaning of the One Vehicle are Recognized in Buddhist Studies in Japan Today.

So as to prove that these words of mine are not too much exaggerated, I would like to present here an example of the understanding reached by the late Dr. Akira Hirakawa, the most learned and authoritative scholar of Buddhist studies in Japan.

Dr. Hirakawa's studies of the *Lotus Sutra* are collected in the latter half of Volume VI of his voluminous *Collected Works* (in 17 volumes). We find his references to the words *gan* (願) or *seigan* (誓願) in five places within a total of 200 pages of six articles presented there [CW. VI, p. 347; p. 403; p. 447; p. 460; and p. 473]. The reference that will be examined is that from p. 403, wherein Dr. Hirakawa summarizes a long passage from the Skillful Means chapter that corresponds with our paragraphs of "*ganjōju*" and "proclaiming the One Vehicle" as follows:

"So as to proclaim this *hō-jishō-in* (法自性印, *dharmasvabhāvamudrā*), [the compiler of this passage] shows first the vow of *Śākya-bodhisattva*; the vow is said [by the compiler] to be 'making all living beings enter into the same enlightenment as his own.' However, those people, lacking in wisdom, were confused and didn't accept the teaching; they came to transmigrate in the six transmigratory ways, and many kinds of misleading thoughts occurred in the world. Therefore, [*Śākyamuni Buddha*] came to preach the teaching of skillful means (*hōben*, 方便) first. However, '*dharmas* are, from the first and always, of tranquil features in themselves (諸法從本來 常自寂滅相).' Even if many misleading thoughts are prevalent in the world and the three vehicles are flourishing in Buddhism, the truth is never influenced by such positions; the truth is '*dharmas* are, from the first, of tranquil features (諸法從本來寂滅相).'"

The context of the passage by Dr. Hirakawa shown here is in a way different from that of the original Sanskrit text because the summary was done from Kumārajīva's (鳩摩羅什) translation into Chinese of the *Myō-hō-rengē-kyō* [妙法蓮華經, Taishō. Vol. 9, No. 262]. As far as the context of the original Sanskrit text goes, *jissō-in* (實相印) is itself a mere empty concept, of no positive connotations, that is working merely as an epithet of the sutra, as is said in the text as follows: "I am [as a real buddha who is] actually preaching this [*Lotus Sutra*, which is the] 'seal of the reality of all the *dharmas*' in the presence of [you] hundreds of people revering me [v. 59 cd]." The phrase "諸法從本來 常自寂滅相" is not the "truth" of this passage, and it is not the "truth" of the One

Vehicle either; it is the thesis of the *pratyekabuddha-yāna* (*engaku-jō*, 縁覺乘 or *dokkaku-jō*, 獨覺乘) of the three vehicles, which are skillful means (方便).

However, what is most problematic here is that Dr. Hirakawa, referring only to the vow, doesn't pay any attention to the fact that the vow has been "fulfilled"—which is of decisive significance in defining the meaning of the One Vehicle.

How, then, does Dr. Hirakawa himself define the One Vehicle? He says:

"The One Vehicle is the teaching which teaches that 'all the people can attain Buddhahood.'" [HIRAKAWA 1983, *CW*. VI. p. 317; emphasis by Tsuda]

or;

"The One Vehicle is 'the recognition that all the living beings can become buddhas.'" [*ibid.*, p. 331]

If so, why is the One Vehicle possible? He says that it is because of the Buddha-nature (*busshō*, 仏性). He says:

"We can think that the ground which makes the teaching of the *Lotus Sutra* possible is the idea of the 'immanence of the Buddha-nature in every living being (*shitsuu-busshō*, 悉有仏性).'" [HIRAKAWA 1970, *CW*. VI, p. 398; emphasis by Tsuda]

or;

"The One Vehicle as the principle (理)' is to be said as 'the Buddha-nature.' Though the term '*busshō* (仏性)' hadn't been invented at the stage of the *Lotus Sutra*, we can understand that the sutra expressed the idea [of the Buddha-nature] with the term 'the One Vehicle (*ichi-jō*, 一乘).'" [*ibid.*]

What is the Buddha-nature then? Dr. Hirakawa says:

"The Buddha-nature is 'the character of becoming a buddha.'" [*ibid.* p. 397]

"The Buddha-nature is 'the possibility of becoming a buddha.'" [*op. cit.*]

This reasoning by Dr. Hirakawa reminds me of a fallacy: By drinking a sleeping drug we become sleepy, because the nature of making us sleepy is immanent in the sleeping drug.

The One Vehicle is not the position that asserts that we can become buddhas; it is, rather, the position that asserts that we are already buddhas because the vow of *Sākya-*

*bodhisattva* to make us buddhas has been fulfilled. In some places of his works (see p. 324, p. 411 of *CW. VI*), Dr. Hirakawa argues the fact that the people of the *Lotus Sutra* cult were persecuted because they asserted that “all the people can become buddhas.” However, we suppose, they were persecuted because they asserted that, “we already are buddhas.”

### III. The Key Phrase: “Be rejoiced at the Enlightenment (Realized to you) (*bodhāya janetha chandam*).”

By the way, I have recently come to be aware of a new factor with regard to this “*gangōju* paragraph;” it is the fact that the phrase *bodhāya janetha chandam*, which is found in the second line of verse 62 and which is necessarily connected with the above-mentioned verse 61, is first to be grasped as “be rejoiced at the enlightenment, already realized to you because my vow was fulfilled” before its usual comprehension as “you should gather your desire for enlightenment.” At this new understanding I felt that the meaning of the paragraph had become another step clearer; I fancied as if it were given to me by the *Geist* of the sutra as her or his second revelation.

I would like to present a few examples of translations by authoritative scholars of verses 61 and 62:

*yathā ca paśyāmi yathā ca cintaye*  
*yathā ca saṅkalpa mam’ āsi pūrvam |*  
*paripūrṇam etat praṇidhānu mahyaṃ*  
*buddhā ca bodhiṃ \*ca prakāśayāmi ||61||*  
*\*ca, WT, tib. na*  
*saced ahaṃ Śārisutā vadeyaṃ*  
*sattvāna bodhāya janetha chandam |*  
*ajānakāḥ \*sarva bhrameyur atra*  
*na jātu grhṇīyu subhāṣitaṃ me ||62||*  
*\*sarva, tib. sattva [KN.47, 11-14]*

The translation to be shown first is, of course, the translation by H. Kern, which goes as follows:

“60. And while I am thinking and pondering, when my wish has been fulfilled and my vow accomplished, I no more reveal Buddha-knowledge.

61. If, O son of Sāri, I spoke to the creatures, ‘Vivify in your minds the wish for enlightenment,’ they would in their ignorance all go astray and never catch the meaning of my good words.” [*The Sacred Books of the East*, Oxford, 1909, p. 74; emphasis by Tsuda]

The translation by Dr. Seiren Matsunami, which seems to me the most reliable, is as follows:

“The vow of mine was fulfilled as I saw, as I considered and as I contemplated deeply. However, I haven’t talked [about it] after I attained enlightenment [61].

Even if, O Śāriputra, I tell to the people that “you should gather your desire to enlightenment [of the Great-Vehicle], all of them, who are ignorant, will be perplexed and never understand what I rightly preach. [62]” [*The Hokkekyō*, I, “*Daijō-buten*” 4, The Chūō-kōron Publishing Company, 1975, p. 61; emphasis by Tsuda]

A conspicuous example is the translation by Dr. Yutaka Iwamoto, included in the Iwanami Bunko, Japan’s most popular and authoritative library. It is as follows:

“As I saw, as I considered and as I determined, so was my vow completely fulfilled. I will, as the Buddha, proclaim ‘enlightenment’ over the world [61].

If I order the people to gather the desire for enlightenment, all the ignorant people will be perplexed and will never understand my excellent words [62].” [*The Iwanami Library edition*, I, p. 109; emphasis by Tsuda]

Each of these translations shows its own frustrating ambiguities; these frustrations can only be dissolved when we take the meaning of the phrase *bodhāya janetha chandam* to be “be rejoiced at the enlightenment [which is already realized to you because my vow was completely realized]”

This above-mentioned recently attained understanding clarifies the context of the passage for me as follows:

In the drama of the *Lotus Sutra*, an unheard-of thing has happened some forty years ago, or the astonishing meaning of this happening was grasped by the

preacher of the sutra, the Buddha Śākyamuni: that the vow to make all people buddhas was fulfilled at the moment he achieved his enlightenment forty years or so in the past, and that the people in his presence were buddhas since then. However, he hadn't told them of this marvelous fact until "now," the time in which the sutra was going to be preached, because they, being ignorant, would not have understood this fact. Even if he had informed them of this same fact with the words "be rejoiced at the enlightenment [which is actually realized to you]," they, being perplexed, would never have understood his appropriately spoken words at that time. "However," he says, "the time has ripened and the moment has come; I will speak to you of the One Vehicle for the first time since I achieved enlightenment forty years ago."

The One Vehicle is the position that proclaims the astonishing truth: "All people are actually buddhas because the vow was fulfilled."

#### IV. The One Vehicle as a "Dialectic of Eschatological Existence."

Here, a question occurs to me: Why, then, had I been able to rely peacefully on "you should gather your desire for enlightenment," i.e., the usual understanding of the sentence, for these several years?

I answer to myself: It was because I had been understanding the meaning of the passage in light of what is spoken of in Christianity as "the dialectic of the eschatological existences of Christians," which I previously encountered in *Bultmann*, a book written by Dr. Yoshinobu Kumazawa, a bright young Christian scholar. In the book he introduces the idea that had been advocated by Rudolf Bultmann as a way of understanding the *New Testament*, as follows:

"In the case of Paul, and in the case of John, too, the life of a believer is not a 'static state' but a 'dynamic action' to be indicated as the dialectical unity of the indicative and the imperative; he should become what he is now, and, he has already been one what he should be in future." [p. 187]

I accepted the character of the One Vehicle in the paragraph in a manner exactly identical to the concept introduced by Dr. Kumazawa here. Although people are really

ignorant, and have taken no actions by themselves toward their enlightenment throughout their past, they are actually buddhas (*buddhā*, nominative plural, [61d]), or they have attained enlightenment (*bodhiṃ*, accusative singular, [61d]) because the necessary practices for their own enlightenment were performed by Śākyamuni Buddha in their stead in keeping with the vow made when he was *Śākya-bodhisattva* in the remote past. And yet they are ordered ‘dialectically’ to gather their desire to attain the same enlightenment in their future. However, this high-level logic of a “dialectic of eschatological existence” would never have been understood by the immature ignorant people in Śākyamuni Buddha’s presence at that time. Thus, he didn’t tell them to “gather the desire for your enlightenment [which is already realized].”

In reality, the usual understanding of the sentence “you should gather the desire for enlightenment” was correct from the first. I was well to understand it the way it had been understood by preceding scholars such as Kern, Matsunami, and Iwamoto.

What, then, was the meaning of my newly attained understanding of the dialectical double meaning of the sentence *bodhāya jenentha chandam*? It was that I grasped that the One Vehicle—which I had understood as being similar in character to “the dialectics of eschatological existence”—was a “dialectic of eschatological existence” itself.

#### V. The Transitional Character of the Formula of the One Vehicle as a Formula of “Dialectics.”

Another question occurs here: Why did I feel comfortable when the idea of the One Vehicle was assured to be correct because I knew it to be concurrent with the Christian idea of “the dialectics of eschatological existence”?

My justification was that I had been intuiting the matter of the One Vehicle as dialectical before I superimposed the newly learned Christian idea of “the dialectics of eschatological existence” upon it, because I had myself previously prepared a final perfect formula of that kind of dialectic, i.e., “the propositions of the open system,” which goes as follows:

- A. “You are in yourself (*svayam*) your own Father.”  
and yet  
B. You should by yourself (*svayam*) become your own Father.



The reason why the indicative proposition A is shown in quotation marks is that it constitutes the last *pāda* of the last verse of the *Hevajra Tantra* [HV], which, in my construct of the progression of Indian Buddhist thinking, I define as “the peak of Tantric Buddhism,” or “the final evolution into *Samvara* tantrism, which is the fulfillment of Tantric Buddhism and culmination of the progression of Buddhism in India.” The last verse of the *Hevajra Tantra* is as follows:

*idaṃ jñānaṃ mahāsūkṣmaṃ vajramaṇḍaṃ nabhopamam |*  
*\*virajaskaṃ mokṣadaṃ śāntaṃ “pitā te tvam asi svayam” || [HV. II. xii. 4]*  
*\*virajaskaṃ, Snellgrove, virajaṃ*

“This wisdom is very subtle; it is the cream of the adamant and is like the empty sky. It is free from the dust [of passion], brings about liberation, and is tranquil. ‘You are in yourself your own Father.’”

Why are these propositions called those of “the open system?” It is because the principles in my own comprehensive, positivistic construct of the progression of Indian Buddhist thinking, completed in 1985, evolved, in 1990, into a new principle that I call “the principle of the open system.” This principle expresses that same construct as the process through which—borrowing a fragmental sentence from E. Husserl [*Husserliana VI*, S. 386]—“the teleological reason (*eine teleologische Vernunft*) that is existent throughout the entire process of progression manifests himself.” Actually, the “teleological reason” (whom, in my terminology, I call the “*Geist* of the evolution of Buddhist thought”) showed me “the propositions of the open system,” which reveal to us the ultimate secret of his existence—the existence of “the Father” who is in dialectical correspondence with human beings, with each of us, in a manner formulaically expressed from the human perspective.

However, while I considered the formula of “the open system” to be perfect and final, at the same time I had to be aware of the fact that the dialectic of the One Vehicle was not formally perfect and final but is still transitional. This transitional character of the One Vehicle can be discovered in the Introductory chapter in a paragraph that re-expresses the definition of the One Vehicle that is presented repeatedly in the Skillful Means chapter, i.e., that “the One Vehicle—the Buddha Vehicle—is the standpoint that aims at the attainment of omniscience [*yad idaṃ buddhayānaṃ sarvajñatā-paryavasānam*: KN.41, 1.5, 1.15; KN.42, 1.6, 1.16].” The paragraph in the Introductory chapter re-expressing that definition of the One Vehicle is:

...candrasūryapradīpo nāma tathāgato 'rhan samyaksaṃbuddho loka  
 udapādi...| sa dharmam deśayati sma...| yaduta śrāvakāṇām  
 caturāryasatyasaṃprayuktam pratītyasamtpādapravṛttam dharmam deśayati  
 sma...nirvānaparyavasānam | bodhisattvānām ca mahāsattvānām ca  
ṣaṭpāramitāpratisamyuktam anuttarām samyaksaṃbodhim ārabhya sarvajña-  
jñāna-paryavasānam dharmam deśayati sma || [KN.17, 9-18.1]

This typically enigmatic paragraph is to be translated as follows:

“[In the remote past,] a buddha named Candrasūryapradīpa appeared in the world. He preached teachings. For *śrāvakas* (聲聞) [he preached the teaching] relating to the four noble truths (四諦, *shitai*); [for *pratyekabuddhas*, 緣覺, *enagku*] the teaching led from [the truth of the twelve-linked] relative occurrences (十二因緣, *jūni-innen*); [these two are teachings] aiming at the final goal of *nirvāṇa* (涅槃, *nehan*).

For *bodhisattvas* (菩薩, *bosatsu*), [he preached the teaching aiming at the highest perfect enlightenment (無上正等覺, *mujō-shōtōgaku*)] through the practice of six perfect deeds (六波羅蜜, *ropparamitsu*), and for *mahāsattvas* (摩訶薩, the great people of the One Vehicle or the Buddha-vehicle), he preached the teaching [advocating the practice which] starts with the highest perfect enlightenment and aims to attain the final end of omniscience (*sarvajña-jñāna*, 一切智智).”

Here, the One Vehicle, or the Buddha-vehicle, is formally defined as the standpoint that starts with the highest perfect enlightenment—the final end of the *bodhisattva-yāna* of the three vehicles—and ends with the attainment of omniscience (*sarvajñajñāna*). There is, however, an issue with the concept of *sarvajñatā* (一切智性) in the definition appearing in the Skillful Means chapter. The word *sarvajñatā* literally means “the state of being an omniscient,” i.e., a *buddha*. But in the preceding *Aṣṭasāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā* (the *Hassenju-hannya-kyō*, 八千頌般若經), the word meant “the celestial world of *nirvāṇa* itself.” In my schema of the two-worlds theory of the Buddhist view of the world, the celestial world of *nirvāṇa*, the world **A**, transcendently corresponds with this terrestrial world of living beings, the world **B**. This fact is very possibly suggested, I presume, with the synonym *sarvajñajñāna*, which is found—pretending an indifferent manner—in the above quoted paragraph from the Introductory chapter. *Sarvajñajñāna* is

nothing other than the key term of the *Vairocanābhisaṃbodhi* (大日經, *Dainichi-kyō*, the principal text of “genuine” esoteric Buddhism and a text successive to the *Lotus Sutra*), and is indicating the Dharma-body or the reality of the cosmos-huge Vairocana Tathāgata (*Dainichi-nyorai*, 大日如来), or the *maṇḍala* of the text (*Tai-hi-taizōshō-mandala*, 大悲胎藏生曼荼羅, of *Taizō-kai-mandala*, 胎藏界曼荼羅), the world **A** itself.

In short, the One Vehicle is the standpoint that says “we are, from the first, human-size buddhas similar to the Buddha Śākyamuni who attained his enlightenment at Gayā (*gaya-konjō*, 伽耶近成) some forty years before preaching the *Lotus Sutra*; and yet, we should become the cosmos-huge Buddha who shows himself in chapter 16 (*Nyorai-juryō-hon*, 如来寿量品, Duration of the Life of the Tathāgata). I regard this formula not as “perfect and final,” but as transitional, formally comparing with that of “the propositions of the open system” which say that “we are in ourselves our own ‘Father,’ the cosmos-huge Buddha who is actually present to each of us respectively; and yet, we should become the same ‘Father’ who is still existing transcendentally in—or as—the world **A**.”

As is well known, this concept of the cosmos-huge Buddha is referred to, in chapter 16, as “the Father of the world [*lokapitā*, XVI, v.21a, KN. 320.7],” the one “who is actually present in this *Sahā*-world, and, at the same time, present to each and every person in the same manner respectively [*tatrāpi cātnānam adhiṣṭhahāmi sarvāṃś ca sattvāna tathaiva cāham*, XVI, v. 4ab, KN. 323.13].” However, there it is not yet said that the people are in themselves their Father.

## VI. A Difficulty [Not] of my Notion of *Ganjōju* and its Turn [Wende]

My new awareness of this transitional character of the dialectic of the One Vehicle of the *Lotus Sutra* led me to wonder if the notion of *ganjōju*—which I had been treasuring as the revelation of the fundamental position of the entire theoretical system of the sutra that was given to me directly by the *Geist* of the sutra—really was merely a disposable piece of a single-use apparatus used to present the idea of the One Vehicle, which is itself a transitional step in the overall progression of Buddhist thinking to be taken to its teleological end. I considered this doubt to be a *Not* (difficulty), and it caused a feeling of uneasiness in me. However, the same German word *Not* turned my uneasiness toward hope, because the word *Not* constitutes, together with another word, *Wende* (turn), the word *Notwendigkeit* (necessity; destiny; but literally “the turn of the difficulty”), a key

concept for me which has been motivating my life and my scholarship these thirty years. With this hope, I searched for the place (*topos*) where the significance of the notion of *ganjōju* could be recovered again and ultimately secured. I found it at the necessary place—where an “existential interpretation” is applied to imagery depicting human existence at the culmination of the progression of Indian Buddhist thinking as the structure of the life of a Saṃvara tantrist.

At the fourth consecration, the consecration with words (*vācā*, 第四灌頂, *dai-yon-kanjō*), the Saṃvara tantrist is given to acknowledge “*pitā te tvam asi svayam*” (“you are in yourself your own Father,” the first of the dialectical propositions of the open system). He then begins a life of constant pilgrimages to the *pīthas* (“the seats,” pilgrimage locations of Saṃvara Tantrism), which is the process of “becoming his own Father,” as indicated by the second proposition of the open system. He continues this life of pilgrimage until his own death. Now come questions and answers that lead us to the final scenes of human existence.

We must first ask ourselves: Was the practitioner able to “become his own Father” by the end of his life-long course of pilgrimage? To this question, the answer is, “no.” What is the reason for the inability to do so? It is because he, being a tantrist, was not a *brahmacārin* (*bongyō-sha*, 梵行者) who maintains chastity throughout his entire life. For this reasoning, supplemental questions and answers are needed.

Question: Was there anyone who actually became his own Father?

Answer: There was at least one such person, Gautama Buddha himself. In his experience of enlightenment he reached and attained sameness with the world **A**; transcending our world, i.e., the world **B**, of common people (*bonbu*) transmigrating through the six states of existence (*roku-shu*, 六趣). In the *Lotus Sutra* it is the world **A**, the world of *nirvāṇa* (*nehan-gai*, 涅槃界), that is indicated as the final aim of the One Vehicle with the words *sarvajñatā* (一切智性), in the Skillful Means chapter, and *sarvajñajñāna* (一切智智), in the Introductory chapter.

Here comes the last question: Did the Saṃvara tantrist, not being able to become his own Father, come to his death in despair?

We can answer this question thusly: He died not having become his own Father, but not in despair; He had to have died peacefully with a comprehension that he was saved. In other words, he was not able to realize his own emancipation (*gedatsu*, 解脱) through his own exertion (*jiriki*, 自力), but he knew he was saved (*kyūsai*, 救済).

That he was saved is believable, but only through the surmise that the cosmos-huge Buddha, who is his own Father, had revealed himself in the remote space beyond the

ocean of transmigration that, not being *brahmacārin*, he was unable to cross. Seeing his own Father “face-to-face” [I Cor., 13.12], it can be imagined that he closed his eyes thus relieved.

The premise arrived at for the last scene in the flow of Indian Buddhist thinking can be attested by looking at Pure-land Buddhism in Japan (*jōdokyō*, 浄土教). The vow of Dharmākara Bodhisattva (*Hōzō-bosatsu*, 法蔵菩薩) has been fulfilled and the Pure-land (*Gokuraku-sekai*, 極樂世界) is thereby present in the world of defilement (*edo*, 穢土), the world **B**. Those who exist in the world **B** can be in the Pure-land (the world **A**) or can themselves become the Dharma-body (*hosshin*, 法身) of Amitābha on the occasion of their first recitation of the name of Amitābha Tathāgata (*Amida-nyorai*, 阿弥陀如来). And yet, they must continue reciting Amitābha’s name—hoping to see, face-to-face, in their last moments of consciousness, the one who comes from the remote Pure-land to accept reciters of Amitābha Buddha’s name who are dying (*rinjū-no-shōnen*, 臨終の正念).

I apply my “existential interpretation” to this soteriological structure of human existence shown in the last scene in the flow of Indian Buddhist thinking; and through this “interpretation” I can hope that the significance of the notion of *ganjōju* (願成就) will be recovered and ultimately secured.

## VII. In Conclusion: “Destiny and Freedom” or “the Philosophy of Gravitation”—The Philosophical Possibilities of the *Lotus Sutra*’s Concept Re-established on the Basis of the Notion of *Ganjōju*.

- The *Lotus Sutra* is a text that advocates the presence (*adhiṣṭhāna*, 加持) of the God Śākyamuni Tathāgata over the world (the world **B**).
- The notion *ganjōju* (願成就) is an expression of the reality of the presence of the God Śākyamuni.
- One’s current existence on the earth is that of the latest course of a seamless succession of links of transmigration.
- The entire process of the transmigratory succession of a person is completely filled (*adhiṣṭhita*) with the deeds of the God Śākyamuni, done according to his own vow.
- The lives of each of us now existing on the earth are completely destined as the latest course determined from the outset according to the teleology of the God Śākyamuni.

- The One Vehicle orders all of us to acknowledge our present state of life, even if it is actually the most miserable and completely hopeless: “Awaken to the actual state of your life, because you are enlightened.”
- This demand for complete acknowledgement puts us in the heaviest gravitation.
- The dialectic of the One Vehicle orders us to take the next step, and to continue progressing all of our lives to see the God who exists in the transcendental height of the world **A**.
- However, how is it possible for us to take the step that stems the gravitation, or how is it possible for us to be free within a complete destination originally set through the teleology of a God?
- What is the teleology of the God Śākyamuni who orders us to take the step of freedom?

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