

[Short Summary]

The Interpretation on Honpusho(本不生)described by Rev. Jogon Atsuo FUJITANI

Rev.Jogon(浄厳 : 1639~1702) was a monk of Shingon sect in Edo period. In 1690 he authored “Shingon-shugyo-taiyosho” (『真言修行大要鈔』) as a summary of the Training in Shingon esoteric Buddhism for his disciples. In this description he emphasized that Ajikan Yoga (阿字觀), which was a meditation by contemplating A character in our mind, was the most important practice in Shingon Training. In particular, he pointed out that ‘Originally all phenomena have never occurred’ (一切諸法本不生) in the true meaning of A character. And he stated that Honpusho (本不生) was a significant idea that meant the metaphysical existence without beginning or end. In short it is very important that he defined it as the meaning of Eternal Existence(本有) in that description. Furthermore he argued that the content of enlightenment in Shingon esoteric Buddhism was better than that of Zen Buddhism which was thriving in Japan at the time. He insisted that Shingon sect had advantages over other Mahayana Buddhist sects by clarifying the superiority of realizing Honpusho.

His new and unique interpretation of Honpusho revealed that the experiential acquisition of Honpusho was essential for the attainment of Buddhahood in this existence(即身成仏) [in myself], and indicated the meditation practice of the Shingon sect was most effective among the practices of other sects in the Buddhist world at that time. It is also important that the spread and reconstruction of the Shingon sect by him was greatly promoted mainly in the Kanto region. However, at the same time, a great controversy arose over the interpretation of this Honpusho, and therefore the Shingon Esoteric Buddhism, which had not developed much since Kukai(空海), became very popular and spread.

[References]

- * Atsuo Fujitani “*Shingon-shugyo-taiyosho*” (*The Description on the summary of Shingon*) ,
[Shitennoji University Bulletin Vol.64, PP1-16, 2017]
- * Atsuo Fujitani “*Shingonritsuben*” (*The Description on the Precepts of Singon Sect*) stated by
Precept-Master,Rev.Jogon [Shitennoji University Bulletin Vol.61, PP17-34, 2016]