

# Chikotsu Daie's View on the "Inherent Existence" (*honnu*):

An Analysis of Its Relationship with the *Sangen menju*

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## 1. Introduction

Chikotsu Daie 癡兀大慧 (1229–1312, hereafter Daie) belonged to the Shōichiha 聖一派 school of the Rinzaï Zen tradition during late Kamakura period. He was an eminent disciple of Enni 円爾 (1202–1280) who founded Tōfukuji 東福寺 temple, and served as the ninth patriarch for that temple.

According to his biographies such as the *Buttsū zenji gyōjō* 仏通禪師行状, Daie was also famous for his attainment of "esoteric knowledge" (*mitsugaku* 密学), which signified not only knowledge of Tendai but also of Shingon Esoteric Buddhism.<sup>1)</sup> In fact, collections of Daie's secret teachings of Esoteric doctrine and rituals are inherited in Hōshōin 寶生院 sub-temple of Shinpukuji 真福寺 temple; their titles are the *Kanjō hikuketsu* 灌頂秘口決 (*Secret Oral Teachings of Abhiṣeka*; hereafter *Hikuketsu*), *Sanbōin kanjō shaku* 三宝院灌頂釈 (*Interpretations of Abhiṣeka of Sanbōin Lineage*), and *Tōji injin tō kuketsu* 東寺印信等口決 (*Oral Teachings of Esoteric Certifications of Tōji Temple*; hereafter *Tōji kuketsu*).

In this paper, I will examine these texts, and attempt to answer following questions: What was Daie's knowledge of Esoteric Buddhism, especially Shingon? What historical significance did it have? Specifically, I will focus on Daie's view on the doctrinal idea "inherent existence" (*honnu* 本有) revealed in the *Tōji kuketsu* and *Hikuketsu*, and discuss its significance.

As Sueki Fumihiko 末本文美士 and Katō Michiko 加藤みち子 have explained, Daie's view on the inherent existence mainly consists of the binary concepts, "inherent existence of the gate of non-enlightenment" (*mukakumon honnu* 無覚門本有) and "inherent existence of the gate of enlightenment" (*ukakumon honnu* 有覚門本有).<sup>2)</sup> In addition, as I have point-

ed out, the *Sangen menju* 纂元面授 (hereafter, *Menju*), an anonymous but influential scripture in the medieval Shingon tradition, also employs similar manner and concepts in order to explain what the inherent existence is.<sup>3)</sup> Such ideological correspondence between Daie and the *Menju* will be investigated in this paper.

Why do Daie's texts and the *Menju* employ similar discourses on the notion of inherent existence? Of course, we are able to make a few assumptions. First, it is highly possible that the ideas in the *Menju* are based on Daie's teachings. Both texts have a strong relationship with Sanbōin lineage of Daigoji temple (*daigoji sanbōinryū* 醍醐寺三宝院流), an influential lineage of dharma-transmission in the Shingon tradition. In order to demonstrate this hypothesis, I will first investigate Daie's view in the *Tōji kuketsu* and *Hikuketsu*, and second consider similar ideas in the *Menju*.

## 2. Daie's View on the "Inherent Existence"

According to its postscript, the *Tōji kuketsu* is a record of Daie's secret teachings orally transmitted to his disciples in 1296.<sup>4)</sup> The *Hikuketsu* is similarly regarded as a record of Daie's secret teachings revealed at his deathbed in 1312.<sup>5)</sup> As for the background information, it is also noteworthy that another title of the *Hikuketsu* is the *Sanbōin kanjō hikuketsu* 三宝院灌頂秘口決 (*Secret Oral Teachings of Abhiṣeka of Sanbōin Lineage*).<sup>6)</sup>

The format of both the *Tōji kuketsu* and *Hikuketsu* respectively consist of thirty and sixty-seven questions and answers on wide variety of topics ranging from *abhiṣeka* ritual to Buddha bodies. Daie might prefer a kind of catechism for transmitting his teaching to disciples. The terms "inherent existence," "inherent existence of the gate of non-enlightenment," and "inherent existence of the gate of enlightenment" appear in more than half of these questions and answers. Needless to say, Daie pays great attention to them in the above two texts. Their actual meanings are described clearly in the third and fourth questions and answers in the *Tōji kuketsu*.

In the third question and answer, the inherent existence is paraphrased into the "undeluded" (*himei* 非迷) or "unenlightened" (*hikaku* 非覺) "principal dharma" (*honpō* 本法), or the "principal dharma as the foundation of attaining enlightenment" (*shōdō genshō no honpō* 証道元初本法).<sup>7)</sup> According to the fourth question and answer, if investigating this idea of inherent existence in more detail, we are subsequently able to find binary concepts within it; the inherent existence of the gate of enlightenment signifies that "the nature of enlight-

enment exists even within our deluded mind," and the inherent existence of the gate of non-enlightenment signifies that "both the mind and body of every sentient being are the body of the awakened Buddha."<sup>8)</sup>

Similar descriptions are found in the sixth, seventh, eighth, and forty-second question and answer in the *Hikuketsu*. Therein, the inherent existence of the gate of enlightenment is used for guiding "those who correctly seek the dharma within them," while the inherent existence of the gate of non-enlightenment is prescribed for "those who incorrectly seek the dharma outside them."<sup>9)</sup>

In both the *Tōji kuketsu* and *Hikuketsu*, the inherent existence of the gate of non-enlightenment also signifies that the "process of human conception from sexual intercourse to impregnation" (*rinne jushō no shogo* 輪廻受生初後) is the "process of Mahāvairocana Buddha's attainment of Buddhist path" (*hōbutsu jōdō no shijū* 法仏成道始終).<sup>10)</sup> Based on statements such as this, it is further connected with Esoteric Buddhist embryological discourse and the threefold procedure of conferring the secret mudras and mantras of Mahāvairocana, which were mainly developed in Sanbōin lineage of Daigoji temple. Similar descriptions are found in the *Menju*.

According to the fourth, twelfth, and thirteenth question and answer in the *Tōji kuketsu*, the inherent existence of the gate of non-enlightenment is expounded only in Zen and Esoteric Buddhist traditions, while the inherent existence of the gate of enlightenment is shared by both Exoteric and Esoteric Buddhism.<sup>11)</sup> Sueki regards such inherent existence of the gate of enlightenment and inherent existence of the gate of non-enlightenment respectively as the position of "initial enlightenment" (*shikaku* 始覺) and that of "original enlightenment" (*hongaku* 本覺).<sup>12)</sup>

### 3. The "Inherent Existence" in the *Menju*

With respect to the historical background of the *Menju*, the postscript explains that it is a collection of the essential meanings of Shingon doctrine and practices ceaselessly transmitted by the powerful members of Sanbōin lineage of Daigoji temple from the end of Heian to early Kamakura periods, specifically from Shōkaku 勝覚 (1057–1129) to Seigen 成賢 (1162–1231), who is claimed to be the author.<sup>13)</sup> However, research on the *Menju* suggests that this is likely not true. Itō Satoshi 伊藤聡 notes that it is highly possible that the *Menju* was written sometime after 1318, not by Seigen but by an anonymous monk who was a

member of Sanbōin lineage or one of its branch lineages.<sup>14)</sup>

Like the *Tōji kuketsu* or *Hikuketsu*, the *Menju* consists of twenty-nine questions and answers on various doctrinal and practical topics relating to Shingon Buddhism. The inherent existence and binary concepts are referred to in thirteen of twenty-nine questions and answers. Needless to say, it is one of the central subjects in the *Menju*, and, in thirteen questions and answers, we find descriptions that largely correspond to those in Daie's text.

As for the basic meaning of the inherent existence of the gate of non-enlightenment, in the third question and answer, it is described as the "dharma-body of bodies and minds which inherently has no hidden or open aspects."<sup>15)</sup> On the other hand, in the ninth question and answer, the inherent existence of the gate of enlightenment is said to be the stage in which the enlightenment is surrounded by the delusion and do not emerge.<sup>16)</sup> In the third, there are also references to those who correctly seek the dharma within them and those who incorrectly seek the dharma outside them.<sup>17)</sup>

With regard to the inherent existence of the gate of non-enlightenment, in the fourth question and answer, the *Menju* explains that it signifies that the "process of human conception from sexual intercourse to impregnation" is the "process of the Mahāvairocana Buddha's attainment of Buddhist path."<sup>18)</sup> Of course, the *Menju* further refers to the Esoteric Buddhist embryology and threefold procedure of conferring the secret mudras and mantras.

For several reasons, it is highly possible that above descriptions concerning the inherent existence are based on Daie's view mainly in the *Hikuketsu*. The *Menju* was written at least six years after the death of Daie, and, in the *Hikuketsu*, we are able to find clear correspondence to twenty-nine questions and answers in the *Menju*.

#### i. *Menju*

問。為心外求法者示無覺本有故云輪廻受生初後法仏成道始終也。其輪廻受生者。定依父母男女交通。若爾者和合則為善本哉。又為惡本否。答。依無覺本有者則非善本。更非惡本。<sup>19)</sup>

#### ii. *Hikuketsu*

問。為外求法者。示無覺本有故。云輪廻受生初後法仏成道始終也<sup>20)</sup>云。其輪廻受生者。定依父母男女交通和合。若爾者。交通和合則為善本耶。更為惡本耶。如何。答。若依無覺本有者。則非善本。更非惡本也。<sup>20)</sup>

These descriptions are quoted from the fourth question and answer in the *Menju* and the

seventh in the *Hikuketsu*. They are virtually the same except for a few slight differences in the underlined characters and phrases. The other twenty-eight questions and answers in the *Menju* similarly agree with any questions and answers in the *Hikuketsu*.<sup>21)</sup>

#### 4. Conclusion

As I discussed above, it is highly probable that the author of the *Menju* largely drew upon Daie's view on the concept of inherent existence, especially as recorded in the *Hikuketsu*. In other words, Daie's knowledge of Esoteric Buddhism was significantly valuable and indispensable source for the author of the *Menju*. In addition, it is also assumed that the monk of Shōichiha school acquired strong connections not only with Tendai but also with Shingon Esoteric Buddhist tradition, especially Sanbōin lineage of Daigoji temple. Based on these results, I hope to further advance the study of Daie and his work on Esoteric Buddhism, and further nuance our understanding of the relationship between Zen and Esoteric Buddhism in early medieval Japan.

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#### Notes

1) Chūseizenseki sōkan henshū iinkai 中世禪籍叢刊編集委員会, ed. *Chūseizenseki sōkan dai yonkan* 中世禪籍叢刊第四卷 *Shōichiha* 聖一派 (Kyoto: Rinsen shoten, 2016; hereafter, *Shōichiha*), 575a.

2) Sueki 2016, 615–618; Katō 2017.

3) Kameyama 2016, 645–647.

4) *Shōichiha*, 512b; Kameyama 2016, 641–643.

5) Kikuchi 2016, 650.

6) Kikuchi 2016, 649.

7) *Shōichiha*, 490a.

8) *Shōichiha*, 491a–b.

9) *Shōichiha*, 523a–b.

10) *Shōichiha*, 493a–b and 524a–b.

11) *Shōichiha*, 491a–492b and 501b–502a.

12) Sueki 2016, 616.

13) Zoku shingonshū zensho kankōkai 続真言宗全書刊行会, ed. *Zoku shingonshū zensho* 続真言宗全書 (Kōyachō, Wakayama: Zoku shingonshū zensho kankōkai, 1985; hereafter, *ZSZ*), 23: 3a and 18a.

14) Itō 1997, 219–221.

15) *ZSZ*, 23: 5a–b.

16) *ZSZ*, 23: 9b.

17) *ZSZ*, 23: 5a–b.

18) *ZSZ*, 23: 5b–6a.

19) *ZSZ*, 23: 5b–6a.

20) *Shōichiha*, 524a–b.

21) With respect to the correspondence between the *Menju* and *Hikuketsu*, see also Ogawa 2014.

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