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The Huayan Understanding of One-mind and Buddhist Practice on the Basis of the Awakening of Faith

Abstract

The Huayan school of Chinese Buddhism inherited the legacy of the early transmission of Yogācāra teachings through the Dilun and Shelun schools, signifying a scholarly endeavour to synthesise the Yogācāra and Tathāgatagarbha teachings. In contrast to the Indian Yogācāra tradition, which was subsequently introduced to China by the renowned monk and traveller Xuanzang 玄奘 (602–664), these early schools emphasised a kind of actual or pure reality behind the phenomenal world and was not satisfied with the worldview that the world can be traced back to a tainted entity, the *ālayavijñāna*, the source of all phenomena. This distinctive Chinese viewpoint finds explicit expression in the apocryphal Chinese text the *Awakening of Faith Mahāyāna* (*Dasheng Qixin lun* 大乘起信論), which has become one of the most important philosophical treatises in the history of Chinese Buddhism. This text proposes the concept of one-mind, which has the *tathatā* aspect (*zhenru men* 真如門) and the *samsāra* aspect (*shengmie men* 生滅門). Huayan exegetes, who authored commentaries on the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*, the scripture that they regarded as the most perfect teaching of the Buddha, were influenced by the *Awakening of Faith* and the early Chinese Yogācāra schools in their understanding of this scripture. In this article, we are going to introduce the teachings of *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra* that were interpreted as not only the appearance of Yogācāra thought but also as an unequivocal articulation of the concept of one-mind as it was put forward in the *Awakening of Faith* by Huayan scholars. We will show how this concept was further elaborated in Huayan philosophy and practice.

Keywords: *Awakening of Faith Mahāyāna*, one-mind, Huayan, Zhiyan, Fazang, Chengguan.

The Huayan 華嚴 school of Chinese Buddhism inherited the early Chinese understanding of Yogācāra teachings reflected by the works of the Dilun 地論 and Shelun 攝論宗 schools.¹ These works influenced the way that the Huayan masters shaped their own distinct tenets, which are, as they claim, the perfect teaching.² The second patriarch of the school, Zhiyan 智儼 (602–668), who actually proposed several of the innovative teachings of the Huayan school, laying the ground for further elaborations of the following generations, started to write his main Huayan works as a response to the challenge of the new transmission of Yogācāra teachings by the traveller-monk Xuanzang 玄奘 (602–664), who was acknowledged as a great authority of Buddhist knowledge by the imperial court.³ Consequently, Zhiyan and the subsequent Huayan masters had to take great effort both intellectually and by finding powerful supporters in the court in order to protect the central concepts of the early transmission of Yogācāra, such as the universality of Buddhahood, or *tathatā*, as the final reality.

Indisputably, the *Awakening of Faith in Mahāyāna* (*Dasheng Qixin lun* 大乘起信論, hereafter: *Awakening of Faith*), a short but very influential treatise not only in Huayan Buddhism but also in the East Asian Buddhist tradition, was at the core of the tradition that the Huayan masters attempted to uphold and served as a foundation upon which they built their own legacy.⁴ It is one of the Buddhist works to which they refer most often in their commentaries on the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*, the scripture that the Huayan masters regarded as Buddha's most perfect teaching. The third patriarch, Fazang 法藏 (643–712), wrote a very substantial commentary on the *Awakening of Faith* that became one of the most authoritative commentaries on the treatise in the Buddhist tradition.⁵ Chengguan 澄觀 (738–839), the fourth patriarch, who composed the most voluminous commentaries (i.e., a Buddhist encyclopaedia that includes references

¹ For the early transmission of Yogācāra teachings in China through the Dilun and the Shelun schools, see Paul 1984, Keng 2009.

² The Huayan school regarded the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* as the Perfect Teaching, which was preached by Buddha directly after his enlightenment under the bodhi tree and is called the distinct teaching of the one vehicle. For the study of the content of the Perfect Teaching and its distinct character, see Gregory 1991: 154–172.

³ For the study of Zhiyan's life, works, his doctrinal innovations, and especially his reaction toward Xuanzang's teaching, the best treatment has been Gimello's unpublished doctoral dissertation. See Gimello 1976.

⁴ For a translation of this important treatise, see Hakeda 1967. For a translation with references to Chinese and Korean commentaries, see Girard 2004, Jorgensen 2019.

⁵ For a very comprehensive biography of Fazang emphasising his role as a religious leader who maintained close a relationship with the court, see Chen 2007. Fazang wrote two commentaries on the *Awakening of Faith*: 1. *Dasheng qixin lun yi ji* 大乘起信論義記, T 1846 and 2. *Dasheng qixin lun yi ji bieji* 大乘起信論義記別記, T 1847. For an English translation of the *Dasheng qixin lun yi ji*, see Vorenkamp 2004.

to more than 300 Buddhist works) on the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*, did not write his own commentary on the *Awakening of Faith*, but while explaining the text of the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*, he often refers to the *Awakening of Faith* and provides his own understanding of this treatise.⁶ His disciple, Zongmi 宗密 (780–841), who favoured the *Scripture of Perfect Enlightenment* (*Da fangguang Yuanjue xiuduoluo liaoyi jing* 大方廣圓覺修多羅了義經, T 842),⁷ did not write a commentary on the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*; however, he further elaborated Fazang's commentary on the *Awakening of Faith*, and his doing so also played an important role in his understanding of the *Scripture of Perfect Enlightenment*.⁸

Given that the patriarchs of Huayan Buddhism lived in different political and religious environments, the agendas of their religious and social activities, and consequently their philosophical persuasions, differed. As we have seen, the challenge faced by the new Yogācāra school was formidable in Zhiyan's and Fazang's times, and this challenge prompted the two scholar-monks to prove, by all means, the priority of the old Yogācāra school, including the *Tathāgata-garbha* teachings over Xuanzang's school, which Fazang derogatively named the 'Faxiang' 法相 (i.e., 'the characteristics of the dharma') school. To show the superiority of the old school, in his system of five teachings, Fazang denoted the Faxiang school as the beginning of the Mahāyāna teachings and *Tathāgata-garbha* as the final level.⁹

By the time of Chengguan, the threat of the takeover of the Indian Yogācāra must have diminished; however, the Chan school gained wide currency in society and the Buddhist world. The Chan iconoclasm and its serious attack on traditional Buddhist doctrine and practice presented new challenges to scholar-monks such as Chengguan, who, although on the level of perfect teaching were able to acknowledge the perfect interfusion of all practices, firmly believed in the conventional Buddhist path to enlightenment and the necessity of Buddhist practice.¹⁰ To cope with the rise of the new school, Chengguan was no longer malignant toward the Faxiang school, even if it remained inferior in the five teachings. However, he often cited the seminal work of the Faxiang school, the *Demonstration of Consciousness Only* (*Cheng weishi lun* 成唯識論, T 1585) and Kuiji's 窺基 (632–682) commentary on it, the *Cheng weishi lun shuji* 成唯

⁶ For Chengguan's biography, see Hamar 2002. For a translation of Chengguan's introduction to his commentary on the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra* with his subcommentary, see Guo 2014.

⁷ The *Scripture of Perfect Enlightenment* is a Chinese apocryphal text probably written in the 8th century by one or more individuals associated with Chan and Huayan Buddhism. See Muller 1999: 3.

⁸ See Zhang 2017: 217–226.

⁹ For a thorough treatment of the Huayan system of the classification of teachings, see Liu 1981, Gregory 1991: 115–135.

¹⁰ See Hamar 2016.

識論述記 (T. 1830).¹¹ Chengguan's scholastic mind, to a certain extent, seems to have been charmed by the very sophisticated elaboration of mental activity and religious practice by the *Cheng weishi lun*, which excellently supplements the rather terse and profound statement of the *Awakening of Faith*. To balance the previous, biased views on the new school, Chengguan created two new categories for classifying teachings: the Dharma-characteristics principle (*faxiang zong* 法相宗) and the Dharma-nature principle (*faxing zong* 法性宗), the latter of which includes Madhyamaka teachings, not only *Tathāgatagarbha* teachings. Chengguan attempts to show two different kinds of philosophical views that are finally transcended by the perfect teaching, the Huayan doctrine.¹²

Next, I show, due to limited space, through two examples how the Huayan masters were influenced by the *Awakening of Faith* in their understanding and interpretation of the most perfect scripture of the Huayan school, the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*, and how the *Awakening of Faith* influenced their views on Buddhist practice. One of the most famous teachings of the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra* is that 'the three realms are mind only.' This occurs in the following passage of the 60-fascicle version of the sūtra:

三界虛妄但是心作；十二緣分是皆依心。¹³

The three realms are illusion, created only by mind; the twelve chains of dependent arising rely on mind.

The same passage in the 80-fascicle version:

三界所有，唯是一心。如來於此分別演說，十二有支皆依一心，如是而立。¹⁴

All existent things in the three realms are only one-mind. Thus the *Tathāgata* explained that the twelve branches of existence are established relying on one-mind.

The Sanskrit and Tibetan versions of this passage are very close to the Chinese renditions.¹⁵ This passage might shed some light on the process of *samsāra*, which functions without personal agent, and in a broader context, it might clarify that this process actually is an illusory result produced by our minds.¹⁶

¹¹ For the most recent translation of this seminal work, see Cook 1999.

¹² See Hamar 2007.

¹³ *Da fanguang fo huayan jing* 大方廣佛華嚴經, T 09.0278: 558c10–11.

¹⁴ *Da fanguang fo huayan jing* 大方廣佛華嚴經, T 10.0279: 194a14–15.

¹⁵ For a comparative study of the various versions of this passage, see Tamaki 1960.

¹⁶ See Schmithausen 2009: 142–143.

It is tempting to interpret this text as evidence for the presence of Yogācāra, or even the Absolute mind in the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*; however, it is quite clear from the context that here the mind is deluded due to ignorance about the Absolute truth, and this ignorance leads to existence, death, and suffering, which are described by the 12 chains of dependent arising. As existence comes into being due to the craving mind, we can be certain that the one-mind mentioned in this passage is not the Absolute one-mind advocated by the famous Chinese apocryphal scripture, *The Awakening of Faith*.

The Dilun master Huiyuan 慧遠 (523–592) attributed a tainted quality to the mind, which gives rise to all objects in the phenomenal (*shixiang* 事相) world. This understanding is very close to the original meaning of the *sūtra*. However, when discussing dependent arising, he emphasises that the process involves actual and false aspects that depend on each other, and that it is exactly the coexistence of these two ways that makes the evolution of the process possible. Even if both actual and false aspects play a role in the process of the origination of the phenomenal world, based on how deep one penetrates the mind, one can find different levels of causes and conditions that set the process of origination in motion.

On the first level, the six kinds of consciousness are the causes and conditions for the phenomenal world to arise, which creates all karmic sufferings of *samsāra*. On the next level, if one investigates the principle (*li* 理) of this phenomenal world, which must mean the realisation of emptiness of all phenomena, one finds that only false conceptualisation (*wangxiang* 妄想) is behind the fabrication of the phenomenal world as cause and condition. In fact, all phenomena are just like dreams, as there are no phenomena outside the mind. On the third level, one is able to penetrate into the essence (*ti* 體) of the false conceptualisation, reaching its original nature (*benxing* 本性). It turns out that eventually all phenomena are originated by the actual consciousness (*zhenshi* 真識), which is called the actual (*zhenshi* 真實) cause and condition. Huiyuan argues that the one-mind, as defined by the *Daśabhūmika-sūtra*, is none other than the same actual mind (*zhenxin* 真心), the only existent entity. This actual mind is defined as the non-empty aspect of suchness and characterised by eternal, unchanging, pure dharmas by the *Awakening of Faith*.¹⁷

Zhiyan explains this passage in the context of the seminal Huayan doctrine the *dharma-dhātu* dependent arising (*fajie yuanqi* 法界緣起), which he says has many ways but in short can be divided into the following: defiled dependent arising from the perspective of ordinary beings and the pure dependent arising from the perspective of the enlightenment.¹⁸ In other words, the former explains

¹⁷ *Dasheng qixin lun* 大乘起信論, T 32.1666: 576b5–7.

¹⁸ T 35.1732: 62c25–63c3. Gimello 1976: 435–439.

how suffering evolves out of ignorance, while the latter shows how to reverse the process of the appearance of suffering by religious cultivation. On the one hand, this scheme preserves the meaning of the original teaching of *pratītya-samutpāda* formulated by Buddha and the passage of the *sūtra* concerned here. On the other hand, as we will see, it incorporates the teachings of Yogācāra and *Tathāgatagarbha*.

The defiled dependent arising is divided into two aspects: the dependent arising one-mind (*luanqi yixin* 緣起一心) and the supporting one-mind (*yichi yixin* 依持一心). The dependent arising one-mind is described from three perspectives. First, Zhiyan emphasises that the root consciousness (*benshi* 本識), out of which the 12 links of dependent arising evolve, does not have the distinction of actuality and falsity. This root consciousness, named one-mind by the *Awakening of Faith*, comprises them as potentials before being activated; this consciousness that merges actuality and falsity is called *ālaya*, which enables the appearance of mutually dependent actuality and falsity (*zhenwang yuanqi* 真妄緣集). Having underlined the general statement about the integration of actuality and falsity, Zhiyan then introduces the process of dependent arising from two directions.

The second perspective is to follow that which is evolved while entailing the origin (*sheben congmo* 攝本從末), a process that creates the deluded mind. This direction is further defined as seed consciousness (*sarvabījakavijñāna*; *zhongzi shi* 種子識) and retributive consciousness (*vipāka-vijñāna*; *guobao shi* 果報識), and in turn is to be eliminated through corrective practices (*pratipakṣa-mārga*; *dui zhidao* 對治道). Furthermore, this is revealed by the circulation of the *dharma-kāya* in five destinies, called living beings, resulting in various forms of suffering.

The third perspective is to follow the origin while entailing that which is evolved (*shemo congben* 攝末從本). In contrast with the previous perspective, this involves the creation of 12 links by the actual mind (*zhenxin* 真心), just like how waves are created in water. To speak more broadly, five *skandhas*, 12 links of dependent arising, and ignorance are nothing but Buddha-nature, and this is the meaning of the sentence: ‘The three realms are illusion, created only by mind’.

The other aspect, the supporting one-mind, is the *ālaya* on which the first six and seventh consciousnesses rely in their formation, being the general cause (*tongyin* 通因). In comparison with the first aspect, which emphasises that during the dependent arising of one-mind, defilement and purity essentially cannot be differentiated. Rather, as we have seen, depending on the direction of our observing the process of coming into existence, we can make statements

in terms of falsity or actuality. Here, the support and that which is supported (*nengsuo* 能所) are clearly differentiated; their identity cannot be established.

The pure dependent arising, the Buddhist solution for eliminating suffering and realising enlightenment, is discussed from the perspective of whether it is originally possessed (*ben you* 本有) by the practitioner (as it is advocated by the *Tathāgatagarbha* or Buddha-nature doctrine) or reached by cultivation (*xiusheng* 修生), which should be the original Buddhist way (as it had been prescribed by the Buddha). In order to shed light on the mutual dependence and inseparability of these two aspects, Zhiyan adds two other aspects of enlightenment: ‘originally possessed and (due to that) reached by cultivation (*ben you xiusheng* 本有修生)’, and ‘reached by cultivation and (due to that) originally possessed (*xiusheng ben you* 修生本有)’.

First, given that the reality of dependent arising (*yuanqi benshi* 緣起本實) essentially cannot be described and that the *dharma-dhātu* appears as such without the movement of the three times (past, present, future), all living beings originally possess the great tree of awakening, and therefore they all realise enlightenment sooner or later.

Second, originally possessed and (due to that) reached by cultivation means that even if pure qualities originally do not have different natures, based on various conditions new good dharmas can be produced. True knowledge can be realised on the level of false dharmas, and that is the field of Samantabhadra’s religious practice. The essence of the innate nature is not differentiated, just like wisdom attained through cultivation. That is the reason that wisdom is in accordance with principle (*shunli* 順理) and not with conditions out of which it was generated. In conclusion, that which is reached by cultivation is identical to that which is originally possessed.

Third, reached by cultivation means that faith and other good roots previously do not appear, but after encountering the pure teachings, dependent on conditions, these good qualities are newly born.

Fourth, reached by cultivation and (due to that) originally possessed means that ordinary beings are deluded; therefore, the nature of *Tathāgatagarbha* is concealed in the defilements. As long as they are deluded, we cannot say that they are endowed with the nature of *Tathāgatagarbha*. Attaining the non-discriminating wisdom, the *dharma-kāya* appears in the defilements, showing its purity. Given that previously the *Tathāgatagarbha* was not efficient (*wu you li* 無有力), this dharma did not exist (*wufa* 無法), but after attaining wisdom, it revealed its function (*chengyong* 成用). As it did not originally exist, we cannot say that it was originally possessed. Rather, it was reached by cultivation and purification (*xiujing* 修淨).

Fazang, defining the meaning of dependent arising in his commentary on this passage, preserved the pure and defiled ways, but he added a third way that treats the previous two together (*ranjing heshuo* 染淨合說).¹⁹ Each of these three ways is divided into four aspects. Fazang considerably reorganised the scheme of defiled dependent arising that Zhiyan put forth by including into his four aspects the original two: the dependent arising one-mind (*yuanqi yixin* 緣起一心) and the supporting one-mind (*yichi yixin* 依持一心). However, the supporting one-mind was renamed as 'the support of the origin and that which is evolved' (*benmo yichi* 本末依持). In addition, he included following that which is evolved while entailing the origin (*sheben congmo* 攝本從末) and following the origin while entailing that which is evolved (*shemo congben* 攝末從本), which originally were the second and third aspects of the dependent arising mind, respectively. Fazang dropped the first aspect of the dependent arising mind, mutually dependent actuality and falsity (*zhenwang yuanqi* 真妄緣集), probably because he instead proposed the joint discussion of defilement and purity as a third way of dependent arising.

Fazang completely adopted the four aspects of pure dependent arising from Zhiyan: originally possessed (*ben you* 本有), originally possessed and (due to that) reached by cultivation (*ben you xiusheng* 本有修生), reached by cultivation (*xiusheng* 修生), and reached by cultivation and (due to that) originally possessed (*xiusheng ben you* 修生本有).

The four aspects of the joint discussion of defilement and purity are: revealing purity by turning over defilement (*fanran xianjing* 翻染現淨), responding to defilement by purity (*yijing yingran* 以淨應染), the coalescence of defilement by identifying with purity (*huiran jijing* 會染即淨), and the elimination of the defilement and annihilation of purity (*ranjin jingmin* 染盡淨泯). Here, I propose that we find a Sinitic or Huayan application of the Madhyamaka, *catuṣkoṭi*, or tetralemma, with the first representing purity, the second defilement, the third both purity and defilement, and the fourth neither purity nor defilement.

Fazang, who comments on both the original text of the sūtra and Vasubandhu's commentary, in turn divides his explanation of the passage into two parts. The sentence 'the three realms are illusion, created only by mind' clarifies the collective arising (*yuanqi* 集起) of all phenomena, while the sentence 'the twelve chains of dependent arising rely on mind' points out the support (*yichi* 依持) of this process. It is interesting to note that in explaining the collective arising, Fazang introduces a new scheme for Yogācāra teachings, the 10 levels of consciousness-only, which are discussed elsewhere.²⁰

¹⁹ *Huayan jing tanxuan ji* 華嚴經探玄記, T 35.1733: 344a29–b8.

²⁰ See Hamar 2012a.

Chengguan treats the Buddhist causal theory in a broader context compared to how Confucianist and Daoist teachings treat the creation of the outer world. He recapitulates Fazang's scheme of three aspects of dependent arising almost word by word.²¹ Moreover, he adopts the scheme of 10 levels of consciousness-only but makes considerable changes due to his own ambitions.

Zhiyan:

<i>dharmadhātu</i> dependent arising (<i>fajie yuanqi</i> 法界緣起)	
defiled dependent arising	pure dependent arising
1. the dependent arising one-mind (<i>yuanqi yixin</i> 緣起一心)	1. originally possessed (<i>ben you</i> 本有)
a. root consciousness (<i>benshi</i> 本識)	2. originally possessed and (due to that) reached by cultivation (<i>ben you xiusheng</i> 本有修生),
b. following that which is evolved while entailing the origin (<i>sheben congmo</i> 攝本從末)	3. reached by cultivation (<i>xiusheng</i> 修生)
c. following the origin while entailing that which is evolved (<i>shemo congben</i> 攝末從本)	4. reached by cultivation and (due to that) originally possessed (<i>xiusheng ben you</i> 修生本有)
2. supporting one-mind (<i>yichi yixin</i> 依持一心)	

²¹ T 36.1736: 513c15–25. The only difference is that in elaborating the pure dependent arising in the third and fourth permutations, Chengguan inserts the word 'identical' (*ji* 即): originally possessed is identical with that which is reached by cultivation (*ben you ji xiusheng* 本有即修生), and that which is reached by cultivation is identical with the originally possessed (*xiusheng ben you* 修生即本有).

Fazang:

<i>dharmā-dhātu</i> dependent arising (<i>fajie yuanqi</i> 法界緣起)		
defiled dependent arising	pure dependent arising	Defiled and pure jointly discussed (<i>ranjing heshuo</i> 染淨合說)
1. the dependent arising one-mind (<i>yuanqi yixin</i> 緣起一心)	1. originally possessed (<i>ben you</i> 本有)	1. revealing purity by turning over defilement (<i>fanran xianjing</i> 翻染現淨)
2. the support of the origin and that which is evolved (<i>benmo yichi</i> 本末依持)	2. originally possessed and (due to that) reached by cultivation (<i>ben you xiusheng</i> 本有修生)	2. responding to defilement by purity (<i>yijing yingran</i> 以淨應染)
3. following that which is evolved while entailing the origin (<i>sheben congmo</i> 攝本從末)	3. reached by cultivation (<i>xiusheng</i> 修生)	3. coalescence of defilement by identifying with purity (<i>huiran jijing</i> 會染即淨)
4. following the origin while entailing that which is evolved (<i>shemo congben</i> 攝末從本)	4. reached by cultivation and (due to that) originally possessed (<i>xiusheng ben you</i> 修生本有)	4. elimination of defilement and annihilation of purity (<i>ranjin jingmin</i> 染盡淨泯)

As we have seen above, the Huayan masters in their interpretation of ‘three realms are mind-only’ were willing to neglect the original context of this passage of the sūtra, which clearly describes the mind as a source of illusions, and as such eventually is the main reason for living beings to be born in *samsāra*. This in turn leads to all kinds of suffering. The Huayan masters preferred to understand one-mind (*yixin* 一心) as the one-mind described by the *Awakening of Faith*, which described one-mind as having the *tathatā* aspect (*zhenru men* 真如門) and the *samsāra* aspect (*shengmie men* 生滅門).

Another famous part of the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra* that is often traditionally believed by East Asian scholar monks and modern Japanese scholars, whose understanding heavily relies on the traditional exegetical works, to be influ-

enced by Yogācāra philosophy is the so-called *Mind-only Poem* (*Weixin jie* 唯心偈) that appears in the chapter titled ‘Hymns recited in the palace of Yama’.²² By this poem, the bodhisattva called Forest of Awakening, like other bodhisattvas in this chapter, praises Buddha’s merits and capacities, and originally intends to emphasise Buddha’s unique and magnificent ability to resume various forms in the world suitable to the needs and capacities of living beings.²³ The bodhisattva claims that the mind creating the external world is just like a painter who applies various colours to make a picture on a canvas.

1.
譬如工畫師 分布諸彩色
虛妄取異相 大種無差別

Like when a painter
is spreading the paint:
the different forms are apprehended in a wrong way;
[in fact] the components are not distinct.

2.
大種中無色 色中無大種
亦不離大種 而有色可得

In the composing elements, there is no form.
In the form, there is no composing elements.
Outside the composing element
form cannot be apprehended.

3.
心中無彩畫 彩畫中無心
然不離於心 有彩畫可得

In the mind, there is no colourful painting.
In the colourful painting, there is no mind.
Outside the mind, therefore,
the colourful picture cannot be apprehended.

²² For Japanese commentaries on this poem, see Kamata 1989.

²³ For thorough studies of the possible original meaning of this poem and its interpretation in Huayan Buddhism, see Schmithausen 2009 and Hamar 2012b.

4.

彼心恒不住 無量難思議
示現一切色 各各不相知

Mind does not abide forever,
numberless and incomprehensible.
It manifests all forms
that do not know each other.

5.

譬如工畫師 不能知自心
而由心故畫 諸法性如是

Just as in the case of the painter
who does not know his own mind,
but the painting comes from his mind
– the nature of all dharmas is like this.

6.

心如工畫師 能畫諸世間
五蘊悉從生 無法而不造

Mind, just like the painter,
can paint the different worlds.
The five skandha are born from it;
there is nothing it does not create.

7.

如心佛亦爾 如佛眾生然
應知佛與心 體性皆無盡

The Buddha is also like mind,
and living beings are like the Buddha.
It must be known that the Buddha and mind
are, in their essential nature, inexhaustible.

8.

若人知心行 普造諸世間
是人則見佛 了佛真實性

If one understands that the activity of mind
creates the worlds everywhere,
he will see the Buddha,
and understand the real nature of the Buddha.

9.

心不住於身 身亦不住心
而能作佛事 自在未曾有

The mind does not dwell in the body,
and the body does not dwell in the mind.
However, it can still perform Buddha's deeds
freely and in an unequalled way.

10.

若人欲了知 三世一切佛
應觀法界性 一切唯心造

If somebody wants to know
all the buddhas of the three worlds,
he has to discern the nature of dharma-dhātu:
everything is created by the mind.

Fazang and Chengguan explain the meaning of the *Mind-only poem* in terms of the doctrines of the *Awakening of Faith*, which overshadows the original intention of the sūtra by interpreting mind as one-mind, the creator of the phenomenal world. Fazang structures the text saying that ‘the first six stanzas tell us how mind creates the world of phenomena (*zuofan* 作凡); the next four stanzas explain how mind brings about the enlightenment (*qisheng* 起聖)’.²⁴ In other words, the first part reveals the defiled dependent arising discussed above, which is none other than the origination of phenomenal world from one-mind as described in the *Awakening of Faith*, while the last four stanzas show how Buddhist practice can lead to the realisation of the actual aspect of mind. On the other hand, in this poem Chengguan underlines the unity of actuality and falsity (*zhenwang hecheng* 真妄合成), which is called the ‘complete consciousness-only’ (*jufen weishi* 具分唯識), because this poem reveals both the origination of defiled phenomenal world and the realisation of Buddha-mind.²⁵

Various colourful forms appear on the canvas, but in fact they consist of the same four elements (Earth, Water, Fire, Wind) and only due to illusion are perceived as different, just like, as Fazang argues, all the objects, eventually, are none other than the actual mind.²⁶ On the one hand, phenomena are different from actual mind, given that they are empty, while actual mind is real; on the other hand, phenomena and actual mind cannot be separated, as actuality can

²⁴ See *Huayan jing tanxuan ji* 華嚴經探玄記, T 35.1733: 215b5–6.

²⁵ See *Da fangguang fo huayan jing shu* 大方廣佛華嚴經疏, T35, no. 1735, p. 658, a8; *Da fangguang fo huayan jing suishu yanyi chao* 大方廣佛華嚴經隨疏演義鈔, T 36.1736: 321c9–10.

²⁶ See *Huayan jing tanxuan ji* 華嚴經探玄記, T 33.1733: 215b22–23.

appear only if the real nature of phenomena (i.e., their emptiness) is perceived. The phenomena, as Chengguan underlines, do not possess a distinct essence (*wu bieti* 無別體); therefore, applying the classical Huayan expression, nature and phenomena mutually pervade (*xingxiang jiaoche* 性相交徹).

後偈上半明真妄不即。上句明能造非所造喻。攝妄之真不即妄，以性真故。下句明所造非能造喻。依真之妄不即真，以性虛故。下半明妄不離真。謂以虛徹真，虛盡真現故，云不離。是故不離、不異、不即。思之！²⁷

The first half of the [second] stanza clarifies that the actual and false are not identical. The first sentence shows that in the metaphor the creator is not that which is created. The actual that includes the false is not identical with the false, because its nature is real. The next sentence illustrates that the created is not the creator. The false that relies on the real is not identical with the actual, because its nature is empty. The second half elucidates that the false is not apart from the actual. It means that emptiness penetrates the actual, because the actual is manifested if emptiness is eliminated. Thus, we say they are not separated. They are neither separated, nor different, nor identical. Think about it!

The non-constant mind (*xin bu heng zhu* 心恒不住), mentioned in the fourth stanza, is interpreted by Chinese exegetes as the *ālayavijñāna* of the *Awakening of Faith*, which is described as ‘the non-born and non-ceasing is connected to the born and the ceasing (*bu sheng bu mie yu shengmie hehe* 不生不滅與生滅和合)’.²⁸

The seventh stanza undoubtedly raises new questions by introducing the concept of Buddha, which, as the Chinese scholars interpret, involves soteriological issues into the discussion of the nature and origin of phenomena. The stanza seems to suggest the identity of Buddha, mind, and living beings, underlying the inexhaustible nature of Buddha and mind. Fazang, retaining the context of the *Awakening of Faith*, regards the root and branches as the principle of actuality—which is represented by the Buddha endowed with pure nature and enlightenment, the goal of Buddhist practice—and living beings evolved from mind, respectively. Mind includes both root and branches, as on the one hand it relies on actuality; on the other hand, it is able to evolve to bring about phenomena. Consequently, mind, Buddha, and living beings are integrated and unobstructed parts of the process of dependent arising (*yuanqi rongtong wuai* 緣起融通無礙).²⁹

²⁷ *Huayan jing tanxuan ji* 華嚴經探玄記, T 33.1733: 3215b23–28.

²⁸ T 32.1666: 576b8–9.

²⁹ *Huayan jing tanxuan ji* 華嚴經探玄記, T 35.1733: 215c18–23.

In terms of Buddhist practice, as Chengguan states, a practitioner should understand that mind is the source of all phenomena to proceed in the line of pure dependent arising (*jing yuanqi* 淨緣起), which eventually leads to enlightenment. Conversely, ignorance about this truth causes rebirth in one of the realms of living beings, which is defined as defiled dependent arising (*ran yuanqi* 染緣起). In order to prove the identity of mind, Buddha, and living beings, Chengguan shows that each of them has tainted and pure aspects.

上三各有二義。總心二義者：一染、二淨。佛二義者：一應機隨染、二平等違染。眾生二者：一隨流背佛、二機熟感佛。各以初義，成順流無差；各以後義，為反流無差；則無差之言，含盡無盡。³⁰

The three above each have two aspects. These are two aspects of the comprehensive mind: first, being tainted and, second, being pure. These are the two aspects of a Buddha: first, in response to the faculty [of living beings] he follows the tainted, and second, in his equanimity he avoids the tainted. These are two aspects of living beings: first, they wander in *samsāra* turning away from Buddha, and second, the faculties of living beings ripen and generate belief in Buddha. In accordance with their first aspect, they do not differ in that they wander in the *samsāra*. In accordance with the second aspect, they do not differ in that they return from *samsāra*. Thus, if we say that they are not different, it includes both their limit and limitlessness.

The last stanza is explained as guidance for religious practice to realise Buddhahood, which enables the practitioner to see all the Buddhas of the three worlds. The only efficient method to reach this goal is to discern the real nature of the *dharmadhātu*, all phenomena, and to understand that everything originates from mind. One must, as Fazang admonishes, rely on principle in his discernment of all phenomena (*yi li guan* 依理觀), and can realize actuality or tathatā by coalescence with the mind (*hui xin ru shi* 會心入實).

Applying the paradigm of *Awakening of Faith*, Chengguan claims that the discernment of *dharmadhātu* is the actual aspect, while the realisation that everything is created by mind is the *samsāra* aspect. In addition, he formulates two Mahāyāna practices of discernment: discernment regarding the truth of actuality (*zhenru shi guan* 真如實觀) and discernment regarding the truth of mind-only (*weixin shi guan* 唯心實觀). One-mind not only includes all dharmas, as the *Awakening of Faith* says, but also these two kinds of discernment, or meditation practices, and these two discernment are interpenetrated, unobstructed, and one flavoured, which is the final Huayan vision of reality leading to the most marvellous (*miaoji* 妙極) insight realised by Buddha under the bodhi tree.

³⁰ *Da fangguang fo huyan jing shu* 大方廣佛華嚴經疏, T 35.1735: 658c14–19.

As we have seen above, the two famous citations of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* that are traditionally, and sometimes even by modern scholars, related to the Yogācāra philosophy, in fact originally were not embedded in the context of the consciousness-only philosophy. However, Huayan exegetes undoubtedly believed that they express the same idea, namely the one-mind as tathatā found in the *Awakening of Faith*. However, they interpreted one-mind in the framework of the most important Huayan concept, the *dharma-dhātu* dependent arising (*fajie yuanqi* 法界緣起), revealing that these two aspects eventually form one final reality, and that they are an integrated, unseparated part of it. The Huayan term ‘the defiled dependent arising’, which shows the origination of the phenomenal world, is in accord with the *Awakening of Faith* saying that on the basis of *tathāgatagarbha* (*rulai zang* 如來藏) ‘the non-born and non-ceasing is connected to the born and the ceasing (*bu sheng bu mie yu shengmie hehe* 不生不滅與生滅和合)’, and this process is designated as the *ālayavijñāna* (*aliyeshi* 阿梨耶識) by the *Awakening of Faith*.³¹

Immediately after introducing the two aspects of the one mind, the *Awakening of Faith* defines original enlightenment (*benjue* 本覺; the natural state of mind without disturbance caused by thinking that in turn can be traced back to ignorance) and the acquired enlightenment (*shijue* 始覺; which is identical to original enlightenment, given that the four characteristics [*si xiang* 四相] of the mind, that is origin, abiding, change, and decay [*sheng zhu yi mie* 生住異滅], are simultaneous). In contrast, the pure dependent arising of the Huayan calls original enlightenment and acquired enlightenment originally possessed and reached by cultivation, respectively. To show the identity of these two kinds of enlightenment, Huayan exegetes introduced the categories ‘originally possessed and (due to that) reached by cultivation’ and ‘reached by cultivation and (due to that) originally possessed’, which shed light on the fact that no matter which kind of enlightenment is the starting point, it will eventually lead to the other one. In other words, the identity of the initial enlightenment and the acquired enlightenment is revealed through the Huayan understanding of the dependent arising, which includes mind, Buddha, and living beings integratively and unobstructedly. This can lead to the correct discernment of the *dharma-dhātu*.

³¹ See CBETA T32, no. 1666, p. 576b8–9.

References

Abbreviation

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