

Creating Huayan Lineage: Miraculous Stories About the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*¹

Imre Hamar (Budapest)

Introduction

Chinese people have been fascinated by supernatural, strange and unusual happenings since ancient times, and a great many records of rare celestial appearances, spirits and other phenomena were recorded. From the Han dynasty (206 BC – 220 AD) onwards, dynastic histories included a chapter on such events.² The appearance of strange phenomena was linked to human behaviour: one of the oldest Chinese books, the “Book of Documents”, relates how the emperor’s behaviour influences Nature.

Gravity: seasonable rain responds to it. Orderliness: seasonable sunshine responds to it. Wisdom: seasonable heat responds to it. Deliberation: seasonable cold responds to it. Sageliness: seasonable wind responds to it.

Wildness: constant rain responds to it. Presumption: constant sunshine responds to it. Laxity: constant heat responds to it. Rashness: constant cold responds to it. Stupidity: constant wind responds to it.³

In the history of ancient Chinese philosophy Zou Yan 鄒衍 (305–240 BC), is credited with founding the school of Five Elements (*wuxing* 五行), which claims that the human and cosmic worlds influence one another. This philosophical concept is labelled “correlative cosmology”.⁴ It was adopted by the famous Confucian philosopher of the Han dynasty, Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒 (179–104 BC), who emphasized the mutual influence of the heavenly and human realms (*tianren xianggan* 天人相感).⁵

With the collapse of the Han Empire Confucian ideology lost much of its authority, leaving space for other intellectual initiatives. Frustrated with the current political and social situation, the scholarly elite indulged in metaphysical speculations of the philosophical school called Dark Learning (*xuanxue* 玄學). In their literary genre, Pure Conversation (*qingtan* 清談), we find mystical discussions of the Buddhist *prajñā* and the Taoist *tao*.⁶ Given the growing interest in the discussion of transcendental topics, it is hardly surprising

1 I worked on this article in the summer of 2010 when I had the honour to be the Numata Professor at Hamburg University. I was reading these miraculous stories with the students, who gave me great inspiration that I am very grateful for. I especially thank Prof. Michael Friedrich and Prof. Kai Vogelsang for their encouragement and important remarks on my article.

2 See Sharf 2002, 97.

3 See Nylan 1992, 20.

4 See Schwartz 1985, 350–382.

5 See Sharf 2002, 88.

6 See Zürcher 1959, 93–95.

that a whole series of works were written on strange phenomena. These works are referred to as “records of strange phenomena” (*zhiguai* 志怪).⁷

It was during the 3rd–4th centuries that the newly introduced religion of Buddhism started to attract many followers, and even the scholarly elite became interested in *prajñā* philosophy, which resembled the indigenous Taoist teachings. The Chinese scholars discovered not only the mystical aspects of Buddhism, but also its magical side. In the biography of Buddha we find several miraculous episodes, the best-known of which is his victory over rival religious teachers in Śrāvastī by means of a magical performance involving the multiplication of his body.⁸

Several monks from India or Central Asia became famous for their ability to work miracles. They were able to foretell important political events, or make rain in times of drought. Not surprisingly, the emperors greatly appreciated these monks, and sometimes appointed them as their advisors.⁹ At the same time, this imperial approval facilitated the spread of Buddhism in China. The first miraculous stories were probably written about these masters and their extraordinary talents, and were later incorporated into the official accounts of these monks’ lives in the collections of Buddhist biographies. The miraculous stories undoubtedly served a didactic purpose: ordinary people were unable to understand the abstruse philosophical tenets of Buddhism, so these stories about masters and their amazing achievements were an ideal way to inspire them to religious development.

The early miraculous stories in Buddhism

In addition, the Mahāyāna scriptures were also suitable sources for the composition of miraculous stories, since they depict celestial bodhisattvas who, according to their bodhisattva vow, must work for the benefit of all living beings, and help them to leave the world of suffering, the *saṃsāra*. The twenty-fifth chapter of the Lotus sūtra in Kumārajīva’s translation states that Avalokiteśvara can save anybody at the mere invocation of his name; he is especially effective in cases of fire, storm, illness, demons, fetters, brigands and the sword. If a woman wishes to bear a child, she must pray to him. Such was the popularity of this chapter that it was circulated alone under the title *Avalokiteśvara-sūtra*, and the first collection of miraculous stories, “Records of Miracles Concerning Avalokiteśvara” (*Guangshiyin yingyan ji* 光世音應驗記), written by Xie Fu 謝敷 around 399, describes seven cases of bodhisattva saving someone. Later on, several continuations of this work were authored. One of them, “The Additional Records of Miracles Concerning Avalokiteśvara” (*Xi Guangshiyin yingyan ji* 繫光世音應驗記), arranges the tales according to the kinds of trouble from which the bodhisattva rescued people.¹⁰

The didactic purpose is very obvious in the tales which describe cases of karmic retribution. The aim of the collection, “Records of Miraculous Retribution” (*Mingbao ji* 冥報記),

7 See Gjertson 1989, 3.

8 See Ōtake 2007, 89.

9 A famous example is Fo Tudeng. See Wright 1948.

10 See Gjertson 1989, 28.

written by the government official and pious Buddhist practitioner Tang Lin 唐臨 (601–660) in the mid seventh century, was to persuade non-believers of the reality of karmic retribution.¹¹ These stories show that the virtuous will enjoy a better rebirth, while those who commit evil deeds will be reborn into a vicious world. Many of the stories include accounts of the nether world and its bureaucracy.

The other type of collection of miraculous stories is associated exclusively with one of the Mahāyāna sūtras. The early Indian followers of Mahāyāna Buddhism greatly respected the Mahāyāna sūtras, as they represent the wisdom of the Buddha: in the absence of Buddha's relics the sūtras can be venerated.¹² The sūtras also encouraged believers to recite, copy and explain the texts, as innumerable good karmas can be accumulated by means of these pious activities. The importance of sūtra copying in China is well attested by the collection in the Dunhuang cave library, where hundreds or thousands of copies of votive sūtras have survived.¹³ The first of these works is the “Miraculous Stories about the Diamond Sūtra” (*Jin'gang bore jing lingyan ji* 金剛般若經靈驗記), written by Xiao Yu 蕭瑀 (575–648) at the end of 6th century. We find other collections about the “Lotus Sūtra” and the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*.

Miraculous stories about the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*

Several collections of miraculous stories about the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* were written. The earliest extant collection is the “Account of Stimuli and Responses Related to *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*” (*Dafanguang fo huayan ganying zhuan* 大方廣佛華嚴經感應傳, hereafter *Ganying zhuan*), compiled shortly after 783 by Hu Youzhen 胡幽貞 (?–783). This collection must have been based on “The Collection of Avatamsaka-related Numinous Tales” (*Huayan zuanling ji* 華嚴纂靈記), which has been lost since the 14th century, though citations by Chengguan 澄觀 (738–839), Purui 普瑞 (1254–1329), Zongmi 宗密 (780–841), Yongming Yanshou 永明延壽 (904–975) and Tan'ei 湛叡 (1271–1346) have survived.¹⁴ Chengguan states that this work was authored by Fazang 法藏 (643–712) and was later “polished”;¹⁵ however, he does not provide the names of the editors. Choe Jiweon in Fazang's biography seems to corroborate this statement, but adds that this work is also called “The Record of the Transmission of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*” (*Huayan jing zhuanji* 華嚴經傳記) in five fascicles, and that Fazang was prevented from finishing this work by his death, and his disciples Huiying 惠英 (?–712), Huiyuan 慧苑 (673–743) and others added comments (*lun* 論) and eulogies (*zan* 贊), but did not change much.¹⁶ Purui 普瑞, who lived under the Yuan dynasty, in his commentary on Chengguan's introduction to his commentary on the

11 See Gjertson 1989, 118.

12 See Schopen 1975.

13 See Van Schaik and Galambos 2012.

14 See Sakamoto Yukio 1956, 30–45; Chen 2007, 22–24.

15 *Da fanguang fo huayanjing suishu yanyi chao* 大方廣佛華嚴經隨疏演義鈔 (T36, no. 1736), 110a14: 纂靈記說：然此記本是藏和尚製，後經修飾。

16 *Tang Tae Ch'ōnboksa kosaju pōn'gyōng taedōk Pōppang hwasang chōn* 唐大薦福寺故寺主翻經大德法藏和尚傳 (T50, no. 2054), 283a7–8: 緝華嚴傳五卷，或名纂靈記（此記未畢而逝。門人慧苑慧英等續之，別加論贊。文極省約，所益無幾）。

Avatamsaka-sūtra, says that originally the *Zuanlingji* was Fazang's *Huayanjing zhuan ji*, and by the time of Chengguan, Huiyuan wrote a work entitled *Zuanlingji* in five fascicles, Huiying authored the *Huayan ganying zhuan* in two fascicles, and the layman Hui Youzhen edited it in one fascicle.¹⁷ This seems to be substantiated by a Korean catalogue which lists *Huayanjing zhuan ji* and *Zuanlingji* side by side, the former being attributed to Fazang and the latter to Huiyuan. The catalogue also lists Hui Youzhen's work, but does not mention Huiying.¹⁸

The concept of stimulus and response (*ganying* 感應) is rooted in the ancient Chinese belief in correlative cosmology. The practitioner of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* creates a stimulus by his/her efforts, and the Buddha, bodhisattvas or other celestial beings respond with a miracle. Miraculous responses of this kind have been recorded recently: stories have spread about miraculous cures experienced after worshipping a bodhisattva or reciting a *sūtra*.¹⁹ Similar phenomena are described in Taoism, when a taoist god makes miraculous responses (*lingying* 靈應) after being invoked by an adept.²⁰

Although Huayan Buddhism declined after the Tang dynasty three further collections are extant: the first is the "Short Record of Account of Stimuli and Responses Related to *Avatamsaka*" (*Huayanjing ganying lueji* 華嚴經感應略記) by Zhuhong 祿宏 (1535–1615),²¹ the second is Hongbi's 弘璧 (1598–1669) "Causes of Stimuli and Responses Related to the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*" (*Huayanjing ganying yuangi zhuan* 華嚴經感應緣起傳),²² and the third is the "Chronological Account of the Efficacies of *Huayanjing*" (*Lichao huayan chiyuan ji* 歷朝華嚴持驗記) written by Zhou Kefu 周可復 under the Qing dynasty.²³

As we saw above, the *Ganying zhuan* must have been based on the "Record of the Transmission of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*" (*Huayan jing zhuanji* 華嚴經傳記),²⁴ which is a conscious attempt to create a separate Huayan tradition by giving a detailed account of the texts and masters related to the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*. The work is divided into ten chapters. The first chapter, Versions (*bulei* 部類), relates that originally there were three versions of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*, of which the shortest, consisting of a hundred thousand ślokas²⁵ and forty-eight chapters, was transmitted into the human world.²⁶ The second chapter, Hidden

17 *Huayan xuantan huixuan ji* 華嚴懸談會玄記 (Xu Zangjing 續藏經, hereafter XZJ, vol. 8, no. 236), 379b15–21: 纂靈記, 說者以華嚴傳記五卷, 本賢首集, 文有十章: 一部類, 二隱顯, 三傳譯, 四支流, 五論釋, 六講解, 七〔言*奉〕誦, 八轉讀, 九書寫, 十雜述。此賢首初集, 後經修飾。至清涼時, 有二家, 並賢首弟子。一靜法寺慧苑法師修五卷, 名纂靈記。二經行寺慧英法師修兩卷, 名華嚴感應傳。又近四明居士胡幽貞纂成一卷。

18 *Simp'yŏn chejong kyojang ch'ongnok* 新編諸宗教藏總錄 (T55, no. 2184), 1167c12–14: 傳記五卷, 已上, 法藏述。纂靈記五卷, 慧苑述。感應傳一卷, 胡幽貞刊纂。

19 See Yü 2007, 1243–1245.

20 See Chau 2006, 2–3.

21 XZJ, vol. 77, no. 1532.

22 XZJ, vol. 77, no. 1533.

23 XZJ, vol. 77, no. 1534.

24 T 2073.

25 Śloka is a distich of Sanskrit verse consisting of two sixteen-syllable lines.

26 For a detailed explanation of the three versions, see Hamar 2007a, 139–140.

and Manifested (*yinxian* 隱顯), says that in the land of Zhejupan 遮拘槃²⁷ king Liye 歷葉 greatly respected this sūtra, and Zhi Faling 支法領 was able to receive thirty-six thousands ślokas. The third chapter, Transmission of Translations (*zhuan yi* 傳譯), includes short biographies of three translators, Buddhahadra (359/360–429), Divākara (613–688) and Śikṣānanda (652–710). The fourth chapter, Partial Translations (*zhiliu* 支流), lists scriptures which were translated either before or after the translation of the complete *Avatamsaka-sūtra*, and can be regarded as separate translations of single chapters, or are related to the whole corpus of *Avatamsaka*-literature.²⁸ The fifth chapter, Commentaries (*lunshi* 論釋), while listing some Indian and Chinese commentaries on the sūtra, includes the story that when Vasubandhu wrote his commentary on the *Daśabhūmika-sūtra*, the sūtra emitted light and the mountain and the ground trembled, which everybody took as an auspicious sign.²⁹ The sixth chapter, Interpreters (*jiangjie* 講解), records the biographies of seventeen masters and the names of another twenty-four masters who explained the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*. Here we find the biography of Fazang's master, Zhiyan 智儼 (602–668). The seventh chapter, Reciters (*fengsong* 諷誦), includes the biographies of eleven masters who recited this scripture. Four stories can be found in "The Account of Stimuli and Responses related to the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*" (*Dafangguangfo huayan ganying zhuan* 大方廣佛華嚴經感應傳) by Hu Youzhen. The eighth chapter provides the biographies of eight monks who chanted (*zhuan du* 轉讀) the sūtra. This kind of chanting differs from the previously described reciting in that in case of chanting only the title of the sūtra and some parts of it are recited.³⁰ The ninth chapter, Copying (*shuxie* 書寫), contains six biographies, one of which tells the story of a person who dies but then comes back to life and speaks of his experience in the nether world of the merit of copying the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*. The last chapter, Miscellaneous Records (*zashu* 雜述), lists some works related to the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* composed by Chinese authors.

Miraculous stories in Huayan exegetical works

However, collections of miraculous stories are not the only sources for legends associated with the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*. These legends are recorded in the great exegetical works of the Huayan school, Fazang's commentary on the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*, (*Huayanjing Tanxuanji* 華嚴經探玄記) and Chengguan's 澄觀 (738–839) commentary (*Da fangguangfo huayanjing shu* 大方廣佛華嚴經疏) and subcommentary (*Da fangguangfo huayanjing suishu yanyi chao* 大方廣佛華嚴經隨疏演義鈔) on the same scripture. Fazang divides his introduction (*xuantan* 玄談) to the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* into ten sections.³¹ The eighth section, Versions and

27 Zhejupan can be identified as Karghalik, the present-day Yecheng 葉城 in Xinjiang. See Chen 2007, 107, n60.

28 For a list of these works and their relation to the complete translation, see Hamar 2007a.

29 T51, no. 2073, 156b27–c1.

30 Kamata 1981, 268.

31 For a comparative table of the divisions of the introduction by Zhiyan, Fazang, Huiyuan and Chengguan, see Hamar 1998, 349.

Transmission of Translations (*bulei chuanyi* 部類傳譯), introduces the various versions of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*, the commentaries on this scripture, its Chinese translation, the independently circulated chapters, and finally the stimuli and responses.³²

Fazang includes six miraculous stories in his commentary. While giving an account of the various translations he tells the story about Buddhahadra's translation which can be found in many other sources, though his biography in the *Gaoseng zhuan* 高僧傳 does not record it.³³ The legend says that when Buddhahadra made his translation in the Xiesikong monastery 謝司空寺 of Yangzhou 揚州 there was a lotus pond before his hall, and every morning two boys dressed in green (*er qingyi tongzi* 二青衣童子) emerged from the pond, cleaned the master's room, made ink and served him. In the evening they returned to the pond. Fazang says that tradition explains (*xiangzhuan shiyun* 相傳釋云) that according to the legend the original version of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* was hidden in the Nāgās' palace, and the king of Nāgās was pleased to see the transmission of this text, and sent two nāgās to serve the master.³⁴

The legend that the original version was kept in the nāgās' palace has been well documented in the exegetical tradition of the Huayan school. The legend goes on to say that it was Nāgārjuna who took the shortest version of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* to the human world.³⁵ The other famous story about Buddhahadra is told as an example of stimulus and response. The Chinese emperor asks Buddhahadra to explain the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* to him, but the foreign master is afraid that he will be unable to express himself properly. He prays for seven days, and during the night he dreams that his Indian head has changed into a Chinese one. As we might expect, the next day he can speak Chinese perfectly. This story is also missing from Buddhahadra's official biography in the *Gaoseng zhuan*. Thus we might conclude that even if Buddhahadra is described as a wonder-worker in his biography, these two stories were probably later additions to it.³⁶

It is important to note that these miraculous stories were included in the introduction of Fazang's commentary. They are related along with the transmission of the text of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*, its commentaries and the Chinese translations, and are thus organically incorporated into the Huayan tradition. It is obvious that in Fazang's view there was no sharp division between popular religion and the Buddhism of the scholarly elite who were engaged in the exegetical discovery of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*. Fazang is usually depicted as a scholarly monk and credited with founding the Huayan school by elaborating the main tenets of the school on the basis of his predecessors' work, especially that of his master, Zhiyan, but in his new book on Fazang Chen Jinhua very clearly shows that this is an one-sided evaluation of his role in the religious-political world of the Tang period.³⁷ Fazang played an active part as a po-

32 T35, no. 1733, 122a29–123a26.

33 For his biography in the *Gaoseng zhuan*, see T50, no. 2059, 334b26–335c14.

34 T35, no. 1733, 122c14–18.

35 See Hamar 2007.

36 T35, no. 1733, 123a13–16.

37 See Chen 2007 and my review of his book in *BSOAS* 72.2 (2009), 408–410.

litical advisor, and performed rituals in order to provide rain for agriculture and to quell the Khitan rebellions. In addition, we might surmise that he was even engaged in popular Buddhist practices. Evidently there was no distinction between “popular and elite” for those who practiced Buddhism in the Tang period. Fazang expanded the scope of Huayan Buddhism beyond a mere exegetical school of one of the Buddhist scriptures by incorporating these miraculous stories which reflected certain aspects of Buddhist practice related to the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*. As we will see below, these miracles happened during the recitation, copying, or reading of this *sūtra*.

Chengguan, the fourth patriarch of the Huayan tradition, is famous for his commentary and subcommentary on the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*.³⁸ Even if he was not a disciple of Fazang, as he was born after Fazang’s death, he was his loyal follower. His main religious/philosophical intention was to create an orthodox Huayan lineage by sorting out some Huayan concepts, for example by creating a classification of teachings, ten mysteries, ten kinds of consciousness only, and so on, out of Fazang’s legacy, and rigorously adhering to them.³⁹ He severely criticised Huiyuan 慧苑 (673–743), Fazang’s disciple, for altering Fazang’s teaching, for example, by including non-Buddhist teachings in the classification of teachings.⁴⁰ Because of his criticism, Huiyuan was excluded from the Huayan lineage, even if in fact his work had quite a strong influence on Chengguan. Nonetheless, in response to the social, religious and political changes at the end of the Tang dynasty, within the framework of orthodoxy, Chengguan himself modified his predecessor’s teachings. All these changes are very clearly reflected in his magnum opus, his commentaries on the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*.

In the introduction to his commentary, Chengguan relates twenty-four miraculous stories about the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*, however, he makes these references more extensively than Fazang, and he establishes six categories of circumstances under which these miracles were experienced: 1. translation (*fanyi* 翻譯), 2. writing commentary (*zaolun* 造論), 3. copying (*shuxie* 書寫), 4. recitation (*dusong* 讀誦), 5. meditation (*guanxing* 觀行), and 6. interpretation (*jiangshuo* 講說). Comparing these with Fazang’s categories in the *Huayan zhuanji*, we can see that Chengguan lumped the two kinds of recitation, *fengsong* 諷誦 and *zhuandu* 轉讀 together under one category, *dusong* 讀誦. The other important difference is the introduction of a new category, meditation. We have to bear in mind that Chengguan studied under several Chan masters, and even if he was very wary of the radical Chan movements, Chan Buddhism did have a significant impact on his teachings.⁴¹ I would suggest that this influence is the reason why he added this new category.

In the first category, he not only repeats the stories about Buddhahadra, but also records the auspicious sign of the decency of sweet dew after Empress Wu’s 武 (r. 690–705) dream and the trembling of earth after Fazang’s preaching of the new translation of the

38 For Chengguan’s biography, see Hamar 2002.

39 I have elaborated my views on Chengguan’s position in Huayan tradition in several articles, see Hamar 2007b; Hamar 2010; Hamar 2012.

40 See Hamar 1999.

41 See Hamar 2003.

Avatamsaka-sūtra by Śikṣānanda.⁴² While Chengguan does not give accounts of any new miracles in the case of commentary-writing, in the section about copying he refers to a story which is not included in *Huayan jing zhuanji*, but is recorded in *Ganying zhuan* in the following way:

證聖年中，花陰鄧元英（有本名元爽）有一親友，忽染時患。死經七日却蘇，謂元爽曰：“見冥道宮吏將追君父，文案欲成，急修功德以禳之。”元英驚懼曰：“修何功德，而疾獲免？”彼人云：“急寫《大華嚴經》一部，若遲大期不遠。元英乃遽市買紙，向隣寺伏禪師院，請禪師與名召經生，如法護淨，一時書寫。未旬日，經已周畢，辦齋慶之。於後遂免斯厄。元英仍依母服，哀切在懷。至其冬十一月中，於母墳所舊種寒枯之莖，忽生花葉。芳〔廿/(缺-夫+玉)〕榮艷，五彩含英。斯蓋寫經之感也。洲縣以之聞奏，則天嗟異，賜立孝門，降勅旌表。

In the Zhengsheng period (695) Deng Yuanying (originally Yuanshuang) of Huayin had a close friend who suddenly was infected with a disease, and suffered from this disease. He came back to life after seven days. He told Yuan Shuang: “I saw that the official of the underworld was about to chase your father, and the order was soon to be issued. You should accumulate merit to avoid this disaster. Yuanying was frightened and asked: “What kind of merit do I need for my father to avoid this fate?” He replied: “You should hurry to copy the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*! Don’t be late, the date of your father’s death is not far!” Yuanying went to the market, and bought paper. He went to the Chan shrine of the neighbouring monastery, and asked the Chan master to introduce him to a scribe of sūtras who lived a pure life according to the Dharma, and can start to write right away. He finished the copying of the whole sūtra in less than ten days. They celebrated it with a vegetarian feast. This way he could avoid this calamity. Yuanying subsequently followed the custom of observing the mourning period for his deceased mother, which kept his sorrow keen in his heart. In that winter in the eleventh month the withered plants on his mother’s grave that had been planted a long time ago suddenly started to blossom and grow leaves. The grave became covered with fragrant and beautiful flowers. It must have been the effect of copying the sūtra. The officials of that region wrote memorials about this. Empress Wu Zetian greatly appreciated it, and presented him with a gate of filial piety with the imperial inscription.⁴³

In the fourth section Chengguan mentions five stories in connection with miraculous phenomena that had occurred during the recitation of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*. Four of these stories can be found in the *Huayanjing zhuanji*, the fifth, however, is not found in Fazang’s works, but is related in *Ganying zhuan*, where the protagonist is called Huizhao 惠招.⁴⁴ The story goes as follows:

慧祐法師，京崇福寺僧。戒行精苦，事儼和尚，專以華嚴為業。每清景良宵，焚香專誦《出現》一品。後時忽見十餘菩薩從地踊出，現金色身皆放光明，坐蓮華座。合掌敬念，聽誦此品經。經了便隱。

Master Huiyou was a monk in the Chongfu monastery in the capital. His discipline and practice were extremely rigorous. He served Monk Zhiyan as his master, and exclusively practiced Huayan. Every day from early morning to late evening he burned incense and recited the

42 See Chen 2004.

43 T51, no. 2074, 177a10–21.

44 T51, no. 2074, 177b25–c5.

chapter Manifestation [of the Tathāgata]. Once suddenly more than ten bodhisattvas appeared from the earth, their manifested golden bodies emitted light while sitting on a lotus seat. They joined their palms, and listened to the recitation of this chapter with great concentration. When the recitation was finished, they became invisible.⁴⁵

It is interesting to note that Fazang does not mention this story in his *Huayanjing zhuanji*, although Huiyou must have been his fellow-disciple, as they both studied under Zhiyan. It is possible that the story, which is repeated in later sources,⁴⁶ originally comes from the *Zuanling ji*, or from the edited version of *Zuanling ji*. However, it is also possible that this monk was too close to Fazang, so the story was created only later.

The fifth section contains stories about masters of meditation who experienced supernatural phenomena owing to their practice. Here, even if it is a new category that had not been used by Fazang, Chengguan does not tell any new stories, but simply refers to stories that were told by Fazang as cases related to the recitation and interpretation of the sūtra. The most eminent master in this category is Master Jietuo 解脫 (561–642), who lived in the Foguang monastery (*Foguangsi* 佛光寺) on Wutaishan in the seventh century. He is credited with the establishment of the Buddha-light meditation based on the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* and is said to have had a vision of Mañjuśrī bodhisattva on Wutaishan, his alleged abode.

In the sixth section, Interpreters, we find Du Shun 杜順 (557–640), later regarded as the first patriarch of Huayan masters, even if he seems to have been a master more involved in meditation than exegesis.⁴⁷ Fazang also mentions Du Shun in connection with Zhiyan, but describes him as a spiritual monk (*shenseng* 神僧). Chengguan emphasized that he practiced Huayan, and relates that he was able to cure a person who had been deaf since birth simply by talking to him. He was definitely a wonder-working monk, and thus he was venerated as a manifestation of Mañjuśrī bodhisattva. Chengguan also mentions Fazang as an interpreter of the scripture, and relates that Fazang's mother dreamed of a strange light, and then became pregnant. Here Chengguan makes a conscious effort to create a lineage for Huayan Buddhism by adding Du Shun to the lineage, which later became widely accepted.

After listing these stories in six categories, Chengguan records the story of Wang Minggan, who was saved from hell because he recited one poem from the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*. He wants to show the function of the scripture (*gongneng* 功能).⁴⁸ The Huayan monk cites this story from *Zuanling ji*. Fazang also includes it in his *Huayanjing Zhuanji*, but provides only the family name of the protagonist, saying that we do not know his personal name.⁴⁹

45 T36, no. 1736, 115a23–28.

46 *Fajie zong wuzu lueji* 法界宗五祖略記 (XZJ, vol. 77, no. 1530), 620b9–13; *Huayanjing ganying lueji* 華嚴經感應略記 (XZJ, vol. 77, no. 1532), 632c7–10; *Huayan ganying yuanqi zhuan* 華嚴感應緣起傳 (XZJ, vol. 77, no. 1533), 640b24–c3; *Huayanjing chiyuan ji* 華嚴經持驗記 (XZJ, vol. 77, no. 1534), 652b19–22.

47 On Dushun, and his connection with Zhiyan, see Gimello 1976.

48 He records the story twice in his commentary: first in his introduction of the sub-commentary T36, no. 1736, 116b18–c4, and secondly while interpreting this poem in the text T36, no. 1736, 324b5–18.

49 T51, no. 2073, 167a18–29.

纂靈記云：京兆人，姓王名明幹，本無戒行，曾不修善。因患致死，被二人引至地獄。地獄門前見一僧云，是地藏菩薩。乃教誦偈云：“若人欲了知，三世一切佛，應當如是觀，心造諸如來。”菩薩授經已。謂之曰：“誦得此偈，能排汝地獄苦。其人誦已，遂入見王。王問：“此人有何功德？”答云：“唯受持一四句偈。”具如上說，王遂放免。當誦此偈時，聲所至處，受苦之人皆得解脫。後三日方蘇，憶持此偈，向諸道俗說之。參驗偈文，方知是《華嚴經》，夜摩天宮無量菩薩雲集所說，即覺林菩薩偈也。

The *Zuanling ji* says: There was man of Jingzhao, whose family name was Wang, and his personal name was Minggan. Originally he did not follow any particular religious practice, and did not cultivate any good deeds. He died in an accident, and two men took him to hell. In front of the gate of hell, he saw a monk who said that he was Bodhisattva Kṣitigarbha. Then he taught him to recite one poem:

If somebody wants to know
all the Buddhas of the three worlds,
he has to discern like this:
mind creates all the Tathāgatas.

The Bodhisattva, having finished the lesson, said: “By reciting this one poem, you can be saved from all the suffering of hell.” That man mastered the recitation of this poem, and went to see the king [of the underworld]. The king asked: “What virtue does this man have?” He replied: “I can recite only a poem with four lines.” He recited it as he was taught, and the king excused him. When he recited this poem, wherever his voice reached, all the suffering people were set free. After three days he came back to life, and remembered this poem, and told all the monks and lay people. After investigating he discovered that this poem comes from the chapter called Countless Bodhisattvas Assemble in the Heavenly Palace of Yama of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*. This is the poem by Bodhisattva Juelin.

Conclusion

In this study we have seen how the popular traditions of miraculous stories were incorporated into the exegetical tradition of Huayan Buddhism, which seems to have been no more than a highly sophisticated scholarly orientation under the Tang Dynasty. However, Fazang wanted to show that even if translating, commenting and interpreting are the mainstream of Huayan tradition, the practice of Huayan Buddhism cannot be limited to these activities. Fazang tells us many stories of the recitation and copying of the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*, which are very effective practices as miraculous events can result from all of them. On the other hand, there is no doubt that Fazang wanted these stories to encourage Buddhist followers to recite and copy the *Avatamsaka-sūtra* just like the “Lotus-sūtra”, the “Diamond sūtra”, and so on. Thus his main purpose was not only to record these miracles, but also to spread the Huayan tradition into lower levels of society. Chengguan went on recording these stories in order to establish the lineage of Huayan Buddhism. At the same time he did not forget that Chan Buddhism was becoming ever more popular, so he showed that the practice of meditation is also a part of the Huayan tradition.

References

- Chen, Jinhua [陳錦華]. 2004. "The Location and Chief Members of Śikṣānanda's (652–710) *Avatamsaka* Translation Office: Some Remarks on a Chinese Collection of Stories and Legends Related to the *Avatamsaka Sūtra*," *Journal of Asian History* 38.2, 215–263.
- . 2007. *Philosopher, Practitioner, Politician: The Many Lives of Fazang (643–712)*. Leiden: Brill.
- Chau, Adam Yuet [周越]. 2006. *Miraculous Response: Doing Popular Religion in Contemporary China*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Gimello, Robert M. 1976. "Chih-yen (602–668) and the Foundation of Hua-yen Buddhism," Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University.
- Gjertson, Donald E. 1989. *Miraculous Retribution: A Study and Translation of Tang Lin's Ming-Pao Chi*. Berkeley Buddhist Studies Series; 8. Berkeley: University of California.
- Hamar, Imre. 1998. "The Doctrines of Perfect Teaching in Ch'eng-kuan's Introduction to his Commentary on the *Hua-yen-ching*," *Journal of The Center for Buddhist Studies* 3, 331–349.
- . 1999. "Buddhism and the Dao in Tang China: The Impact of Confucianism and Daoism on the Philosophy of Chengguan," *Acta Orientalia Hungaria* 52.3–4, 283–292.
- . 2002. *A Religious Leader in the Tang: Chengguan's Biography*. Studia Philologica Buddhica Occasional Paper Series; 12. Tokyo: International Institute for Buddhist Studies.
- . 2003. "Practice and Enlightenment in Chengguan's Philosophy," in: *Enlightenment and its Cultural Aspects in the Modern Perspective* (Seoul: Academic Institute of Songchol Son Buddhism affiliated with the White Lotus Buddhist Cultural Foundation, 277–286.
- . 2007. *Reflecting Mirrors: Perspectives on Huayan Buddhism*. Asiatische Forschungen; 151. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- . 2007a. "The History of the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*: Shorter and Larger Texts," in: Hamar 2007, 139–167.
- . 2007b. "A Huayan Paradigm for Classification of Mahāyāna Teachings: The Origin and Meaning of *Faxiangzong* and *Faxingzong*," in: Hamar 2007, 195–220.
- . 2010. "Interpretation of Yogācāra Philosophy in Huayan Buddhism," *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 37.2, 181–197.
- . 2012. "Deconstructing and Reconstructing Yogācāra: Ten Levels of Consciousness-only/One-mind in Huayan Buddhism," in Gimello, Girard and Hamar 2012, 53–71.
- Gimello, Robert, Frédéric Girard and Imre Hamar (ed.): *Avatamsaka (Huayan, Kegon, Flower Ornament) Buddhism in East Asia: Origins and Adaptation of a Visual Culture*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz,

- Kamata Shigeo 鎌田茂雄. 1981. *Chūgoku bukkyōshi jiten* 中国仏教史辞典. Tōkyō: Tōkyōdō.
- Nylan, Michael. 1992. *The Shifting Center: The original "Great Plan" and Later Readings*. Monumenta Serica Monograph Series; 24. Nettetal: Steyler.
- Ōtake, Susumu [大竹晋]. 2007. "On the Origin and Early Development of the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*," in: Hamar 2007, 87–107.
- Sakamoto Yukio 坂本幸男. 1956. *Kegon kyōgaku no kenkyū* 華嚴教学の研究. Kyōto: Heirakuji [reprint 1964].
- Schopen, Gregory. 1975. "The Phrase 'sa pṛthivīpradeśaś caityabhūto bhavet' in the *Vajracchedikā*: Notes on the Cult of the Book in Mahayana," *Indo Iranian Journal* 17, 147–181.
- Schwartz, Benjamin I. 1985. *The World of Thought in Ancient China*. Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard University.
- Sharf, Robert. 2002. *Coming to Terms with Chinese Buddhism: A Reading of the Treasure Store Treatise*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i.
- Van Schaik, Sam, and Imre Galambos. 2012. *Manuscripts and Travellers: The Sino-Tibetan Documents of a Tenth-Century Buddhist Pilgrim*. Studies in Manuscript Cultures; 2. Berlin: De Gruyter.
- Zürcher, Erik. 1959. *The Buddhist Conquest of China: The Spread and Adaptation of Buddhism in Early Medieval China*. Leiden: E. J. Brill.
- Wright, Arthur F. 1948. "Fo-t'u-teng: A Biography." *HJAS* 11.3–4, 321–371.
- Yü, Chün-fang [于君方]. 2007. "Eye on Religion: Miracles in the Chinese Buddhist Tradition," *Southern Medical Journal* 100.12, 1243–1245.