

Article

Treatise of the Golden Lion: An Exploration of the Doctrine of the Infinite Dependent Arising of Dharmadhātu

Ye Xiong

Centre of Buddhist Studies, Faculty of Arts, The University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong 999077, China; vendecun@connect.hku.hk

Abstract: Among the texts of Huayan Buddhism, the study of the *Treatise of the Golden Lion* remains at the level of literal translation. Neither the core doctrines of the *Treatise* nor the original contexts of its delivery have received much scholarly attention. This paper first contextualizes the preaching background of the *Treatise* and its relevant doctrines, and then conducts a section-by-section explanation of the *Treatise* with special consideration given to the intention of Fazang and his manner of preaching. The doctrines of the ten mysterious gates and the six characteristics, along with the manifestation of the distinctive teaching of one vehicle, constitute the key components of the preaching. They are the representation and revelation of the doctrine of the infinite dependent arising of dharmadhātu.

Keywords: golden lion; infinite dependent arising; dharmadhātu; Huayan; Fazang

1. Introduction

In the Tang dynasty (618–907), the *Jinshizi zhang* (*Treatise of the Golden Lion*, hereafter referred to as *Treatise*) 金獅子章 was introduced to Wu Zetian 武則天 (Empress Wu, 624–705) by Fazang 法藏 (643–712) when he attempted to explain the most profound teachings of the Huayan school 華嚴宗 (Flower Garland school).¹ The time when Fazang preached the *Treatise* is recorded in the *Fozu tongji* 佛祖統紀 (*Chronicle of the Buddhas and the Patriarchs*):

In the tenth month of the second year of Shengli 聖歷二年 (699), Fazang received the edict in the lecture hall of the Foshouji Si 佛授記寺. The capital city was shaken. The next day, Fazang used the metaphor of the golden lion to explain the profound teachings of the *Dafang guangfo huayanjing* 大方廣佛華嚴經 (*Avatamsaka Sūtra*, hereafter referred to as *AS*)² in Changsheng Palace 長生殿.³

The primary focus of this paper is to elicit the doctrine of the infinite⁴ dependent arising of dharmadhātu 無盡法界緣起 (hereafter referred to as DIDCD) from the *Treatise*. The DIDCD—the core teaching of the Huayan school—originates from the central thrust and doctrines of the *AS*. While the concept of the DIDCD has different emphases in many commentaries, the content is basically the same. In short, that is:

In the dharmadhātu, all things (dharmas) that arise from the combination of infinite causes and conditions are interdependent, interpenetrating, and unobstructed. Therefore, it is also called the infinite dependent arising, or the infinite dependent arising of dharmadhātu.⁵

The DIDCD, which is the unique understanding of dependent arising of Huayan school, is not only related to the understanding of dependent arising from different Buddhist schools but also embraces various forms of analysis within a compatible system through its unique classification of the five teachings. In the Huayan school, the DIDCD is primarily available in the *Fajieguanmen* 法界觀門 (*The Approach to the Visualization of the Dharma Realm* T1883(45), hereafter referred to as *FJGM*) by Dushun 杜順 (557–640) and developed in the *Huayan yicheng shixuanmen* 華嚴一乘十玄門 (*Ten Mysterious Gates of the One*



Citation: Xiong, Ye. 2024. *Treatise of the Golden Lion: An Exploration of the Doctrine of the Infinite Dependent Arising of Dharmadhātu*. *Religions* 15: 482. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel15040482>

Academic Editors: Jeffery D. Long and Reiko Ohnuma

Received: 22 February 2024

Revised: 14 March 2024

Accepted: 9 April 2024

Published: 12 April 2024



Copyright: © 2024 by the author. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

Vehicle of Huayan T1868(45), hereafter referred to as *HYSXM* by Zhiyan 智儼 (602–668). In the High Tang period (650–755), no matter the theory of the DIDCD, the five teachings, or the entire Huayan school system, had matured due to the significant contribution of Fazang, the third patriarch and systematizer of the Huayan school.

In the Huayan school, the DIDCD is available in most of the commentaries. However, they treat the teachings of Huayan from different aspects, with much repetition (Wei 2008, p. 128). Along with that, until the retranslation of the *AS*, there was no commentary that gave a concise explanation of the core teachings of the Huayan school. In the second year of Shengli 聖歷二年 (699), it was at the request of Empress Wu that Fazang interpreted these doctrines at Changsheng Palace.

The core source of this paper is the *Treatise*, however, the original text no longer exists. The editions circulating in Chinese are accessible from the *Jinshizizhang yunjianleijie* 金師子章雲間類解 (*Classical Clouds Interpretation of the Golden Lion Treatise*) T1880(45) by Jingyuan 淨源 (1011–1088), and the *Huayan jinshizizhang zhu* 華嚴經金師子章註 (*Commentary on the Golden Lion Treatise of the Avatamsaka Sūtra*) T1881(45), annotated by Chengqian 承遷.⁶ However, in addition to the original text, these sources are mixed with commentary. Thus, this paper uses the full text of the *Treatise* that is available in *Collation and Explanation of the Treatise of Huayan* 華嚴金獅子章校釋 by Fang (2012, pp. 221–400) for direct translation and/or reference.⁷

The interpretation of DIDCD in the *Treatise* has not yet attracted much attention from scholars. For instance, Fang (2012) completed a monograph that explored the thoughts of Fazang and the *Treatise*. It includes four valuable ancient commentaries on the *Treatise*. Fang preferred a compendium of the commentaries rather than an explanation of the doctrines. Chen (1996) focused on the construction and development of the DIDCD from the thoughts of Huayan masters such as Dushun, Zhiyan, and Fazang. The author provides an excellent opportunity for readers to understand the DIDCD through its historical development. However, Chen's interpretation of the DIDCD is mainly based on the *FJGM* by Dushun and the *HYSXM* by Zhiyan. Jones (2016, p. 130) explains the “infinite regress of dependent conditioning”, however, he quoted Jizang's 吉藏 (549–623) statement rather than Fazang's thought. Lin (2016) discussed how Fazang interpreted the teachings of Huayan through infinity 無盡. Lin mainly referred to the *Huayan wujiao zhang* 華嚴五教章 or 華嚴一乘教義分齊章 (*Essay on the Five Teachings of the Huayan* T1866(45) hereafter referred to as *WJZ*) and the *Huayanjing tanxuanji* 華嚴經探玄記 (*Profound Meaning of Huayan* T1733(35) hereafter referred to as *TXJ*) but did not discuss the *Treatise*. Di (2011, pp. 58–59) claimed that the golden lion metaphor was an illustration of “one is all, and all is one”, 一即一切, 一切即一 but did not further interpret the content of the *Treatise*. Moreover, Zaccchetti (2000) completed an annotated translation of the *Treatise* in an Italian publication.

Although previous studies discussed the *Treatise*, no scholar has yet provided a detailed interpretation of its contents in English, especially the DIDCD, from the perspective or intention of Fazang, nor has any author explained in detail the significance of the *Treatise* on Chinese Buddhism. These issues are the focus of this paper.

The available English translation of the *Treatise* is primarily based on the literal meaning, without any attempt at an interpretation in terms of the doctrines proclaimed in the text. For instance, Johnson (2020, pp. 120–23) included his translation in the appendix of his publication for reference only, while Chang (1971, pp. 224–30) put his translation in the section on the selected readings of Huayan. Moreover, some online resources include its translation, but it is difficult to identify their initial sources and confirm their authenticity.⁸ Thus, although such translations are accessible for reference, they make it difficult for readers to understand the doctrines from the standpoint of the Huayan school. Therefore, during the interpretation process, although this paper considers the published translations, it also attempts to retranslate most of the contents/doctrines of the *Treatise*, combined with the interpretation according to the position of Fazang when necessary.

2. Structure of the *Treatise*

There are ten chapters in the *Treatise*, which are divided into four parts for interpretation. The first part (Chapters 1–5) focuses on the metaphor of the golden lion in conjunction with the teachings of different schools to explain the fundamental concept of dependent arising, the emptiness of the matter, and the three natures. The purpose is to provide assumed knowledge to explain the DIDCD. This manner of narration by Fazang can be understood as an indirect explanation of the DIDCD. The second part (Chapter 6) focuses on the five teachings. The purpose is to discuss the differences and connections between other Buddhist schools and the Huayan school. The third part (Chapters 7 and 8) focuses on the ten mysterious gates and the six characteristics. This part constitutes the core element of the *Treatise*. The ten mysterious gates are used to explain the DIDCD in detail from ten perspectives, while the six characteristics are concisely explained. By explaining the DIDCD through the ten mysterious gates and the six characteristics after introducing the relevant knowledge as a foundation, Fazang ensured that Empress Wu was able to understand the core teachings of Huayan at that stage. The preaching of the DIDCD also reveals the distinctive teaching of one vehicle 一乘別教. The final part (Chapters 9 and 10) focuses on the interpretation of the path toward bodhi and nirvana. It also reflects the ultimate purpose of Fazang’s preaching. Table 1 presents the structure of the analysis based on the content of the *Treatise*.

Table 1. Structure of analysis.

Chapters in the <i>Treatise</i>	Sections in This Paper	Contents	Key Analysis	
N/A	Sections 1 and 2	Introduction	a. Background of preaching. b. Structure of analysis.	
Chapter 1	Section 3.1	Dependent arising and absence of own-being	a. Assumed knowledge for preaching. b. Indirect explanation of the DIDCD.	
Chapter 2	Section 3.2	The emptiness of the form		
Chapter 3	Section 3.3	Three natures		
Chapter 4	Section 3.4	No characteristics		
Chapter 5		Non-arising		
Chapter 6	Part 2	Section 4	Five teachings	Classification of five teachings.
Chapter 7	Part 3	Section 5	Ten mysterious gates	Direct preaching of the DIDCD.
Chapter 8		Section 6	Six characteristics	
N/A	Section 7	Distinctive teaching of one vehicle	Enhances understanding of the DIDCD.	
Chapter 9	Part 4	Section 8	Bodhi	Ultimate purpose of preaching.
Chapter 10			Nirvana	
N/A	Section 9	Conclusions	a. Summary of analysis. b. Importance/influence of the <i>Treatise</i> .	

Although there are ten chapters in the *Treatise*, and the preaching is of a progressive manner, the focus of the *Treatise* is the ten mysterious gates (Chapter 7) and the six characteristics (Chapter 8). These two chapters, along with the rest of the *Treatise* and even the rest of Fazang’s teachings, are the skill means used by Fazang for learners to understand the infinite meaning in the universal sea 刹海. It is also a manifestation of the DIDCD.

3. Assumed Knowledge to Understand the DIDCD (Chapters 1 to 5)

In Changsheng Palace, Fazang did not directly explain the core doctrines of the Huayan school to Empress Wu. Rather, he adopted a step-by-step approach. The first

five chapters of the *Treatise*, with no more than forty Chinese characters per chapter, lay the foundation for further exposition of the DIDCD.

3.1. Principle of Dependent Arising (Chapter 1)

Chapter 1 uses the metaphor of the gold and the lion to illustrate the doctrines of dependent arising and the absence of own-being. At first, Fazang explained the absence of own-being of the gold. He stated the following: “that is to say, the gold has no inherent nature of its own. The characteristic of the lion arises due to the condition of the skilled craft of the craftsman”.⁹ Then, he concluded that “it is called the dependent arising because of its origin”.¹⁰ The origin of the craftsman is the condition of the (crafted) lion.

By explaining the doctrines of dependent arising and the absence of own-being from the standpoint of the Huayan school, Fazang referred to the relevant principles of early Buddhism and the Mādhyamaka school in the initial phase. Fazang did not connect the dharmadhātu with dependent arising at this stage.

The concept of absence of own-being in Mahāyāna Buddhism can be traced back to Nāgārjuna, the founder of the Mādhyamaka school. Nāgārjuna elaborated on the meaning of dependent arising and the absence of own-being in several influential texts, such as the *Zhong lun* 中論 (*Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* T1564(30) hereafter referred to as *MMK*) and the *Shiermen lun* 十二門論 (*Dvādaśanikāya Śāstra* T1568(30) hereafter referred to as *DS*). Fazang made a comment regarding the *DS*, which is named *Shiermenlun zongzhiyiji* 十二門論宗致義記 (*An Account of the Significance of Dvādaśanikāya Śāstra*) T1826(42). It mainly explains his understanding of the Mādhyamaka school, especially the doctrine of dependent arising and related concepts, from the perspective of the Huayan school.

Since the *Treatise* is primarily an introduction to the Huayan doctrines, there was no need for Fazang to explain the doctrines of early Buddhism and the Mādhyamaka school in detail. The doctrines of dependent arising and the absence of own-being are introduced at the beginning of the *Treatise* because they are both fundamental to understanding the DIDCD.

3.2. Emptiness of the Form (Chapter 2)

In Chapter 2, Fazang explained the emptiness of the form through the relationship between the gold and the lion. He stated the following: “that is to say, the characteristics of the lion are unreal. Only the gold is real”.¹¹ He further claimed that “It is called the emptiness of the form because the lion does not exist, but the nature of gold is not non-existent”.¹² From the perspective of emptiness, Fazang claimed that “There is no self-nature of the emptiness, and the emptiness needs to be revealed by the matter. It is called the emptiness of the form because it does not hinder illusory existence”.¹³

Compared with the definition of emptiness in early Buddhism and the Mādhyamaka school, Fazang paid attention to the interpretation of the emptiness of the form. The existence of gold was used to illustrate the existence of the form. The intention was to show the illusory nature of the lion and the absence of self-nature of the emptiness. The Mādhyamaka school, especially the early Mādhyamaka school, breaks down the existence from all perspectives, and adopts a negative dialectic to explain the relationship between dependent arising and emptiness. The Huayan school adopts a positive approach to the interpretation of dependent arising and emptiness, and connects the interpretation of these elements to the dharmadhātu.

The particular understanding of the emptiness of the form can be identified in the *Treatise*. The relationship between the lion and the gold, along with the relationship between emptiness and form, paves the way for a further explanation of the relationship between Li 理 (noumenon) and Shi 事 (phenomena) from Chapter 7 onward. The interpretation of Li and Shi and their relationship is central to the teachings of Huayan school and, in particular, to understanding the DIDCD. Although Fazang did not identify Li and Shi in this chapter, his statement that “the nature of gold is not non-existence”¹⁴ is a statement about Shi. The gold is the noumenon of the lion, which is essentially the Shi of the Huayan school.

The first two chapters of the *Treatise* focus on the dependent arising and emptiness in the context of early Buddhism and the Mādhyamaka school. The contents of the Huayan school are not directly presented by Fazang at this stage as he had considered Empress Wu's ability to understand the teachings of Huayan. According to Yinshun (1950, p. 1), the *MMK* is the general theory of Agama. Although this statement is controversial, the definitions of dependent arising and emptiness, as well as the relationship between the two, are explained in detail in the Mādhyamaka school. For instance, the *MMK* (24.18) states that "what is dependently co-arisen, that is explained to be emptiness. That, being a dependent designation, is itself the middle way". (Garfield 1995, p. 69). The interpretation from the *MMK* regarding dependent arising and emptiness is endorsed by many Buddhist schools, including the Huayan school. In the first two chapters, Fazang's example of the relationship between the gold and the lion is also an alternative expression of this formulation. He did not explain the DIDCD directly, however, he pointed out the relationship between Li (the gold) and Shi (the lion) in the Huayan school through dependent arising and the emptiness of the form. This lays the groundwork for the subsequent explanation of the DIDCD.

3.3. Yogācāra Theory of Three Natures (Chapter 3)

The Yogācāra theory of three natures is the fundamental doctrine of the Yogācāra school. There are detailed explanations of three natures in the *Jieshenme jing* 解深密經 (*Samḍhinirmocana-Sūtra* T676(16) hereafter referred to as *SS*), the *She dacheng lun* 攝大乘論 (*Mahāyānasamgraha* T1592(31) hereafter referred to as *SDCL*), and the *Chengweishi lun* 成唯識論 (*Vijñāptimātratāsiddhi* T1585(31) hereafter referred to as *CWSL*). Although the interpretation of the three natures is not entirely consistent between Yogācāra and Huayan due to differences in emphasis, it provides the basis for Fazang's preaching.

The *SS*, which is the earliest canon in the Yogācāra school, analyzes the three natures (or three characteristic patterns). It states that all dharmas are threefold: they are "the characteristic pattern of clinging to what is entirely imagined 遍計所執, the characteristic pattern of other-dependency 依它起性, and the characteristic pattern of full perfection 圓成實性". Keenan (2000, p. 31). There is a similar expression in the *SDCL*: "there are three natures. They are the nature of interdependency, the nature of imputed (imaginary), and the truly existent nature".¹⁵

The nature of imaginary is related to concept construction. The *SS* "refers (it) to the establishing of names and symbols for all things and the distinguishing of their essences, whereby they come to be expressed in language". (Keenan 2000, p. 31). The *SDCL* defines it as the dual characteristics of subjective and objective that a dharma exhibits. The *CWSL* also indicates that there is the absence of an existential nature by its very defining characteristic. All the above texts are consistent in their expression of the nature of the imaginary. The nature of the imaginary means that sentient beings subjectively believe that these conceptualized dharmas are real, however, they have no intrinsic existence or nature.

For the nature of interdependency, the *SS* "refers (it) to the pattern whereby all things arise co-dependently: for if this exists, then that exists, and if this arises, then that arises". (Keenan 2000, p. 29). This is consistent with the teachings of early Buddhism and the Mādhyamaka school. For the nature of truly existent, the *SS* (Keenan 2000, p. 31) refers (it) to the universally equal suchness of all things. Bodhisattvas penetrate to this suchness because of their resolute zeal, intelligent focusing, and true reflection. By gradually cultivating this penetration, they reach unsurpassed true awakening and realize perfection.

In contrast to the other two natures, the nature of truly existent was proposed by the Yogācāra school, and is one of the key points that distinguishes the Yogācāra school from others.

Based on the Yogācāra interpretation of the three natures, Fazang offered a similar interpretation in Chapter 3. First, as far as the nature of imaginary is concerned, Fazang's understanding is largely consistent with the doctrine of the Yogācāra school. Fazang believed that sentient beings have a misunderstanding of the lion and mistakenly "cling to

the lion, which has no entity, as real".¹⁶ Moreover, Fazang claimed that "the lion appears to be existing; it is called (the characteristic of) dependency on others".¹⁷ The essence of "appears to be" 似有 in this context implies that there is no real lion, and the existence of the lion depends on the existence of the gold. Moreover, Fazang claimed that "the nature of gold is unchanging, (which means that the gold that makes up the golden lion is unchanging), so it is called the nature of truly existent".¹⁸

In contrast to the absence of own-being in the Mādhyamaka school, Fazang claimed that the nature of the gold is unchanging. The recognition of the unchangeable nature of the gold is his unique interpretation based on the doctrines of the Huayan school. It lays the foundation for the interpretation of the relationship between noumenon (Li) and phenomena (Shi)¹⁹ in the ten mysterious gates 十玄門 (Chapter 7).

3.4. No Characteristics and Non-Arising (Chapters 4 and 5)

In Chapter 4, Fazang claimed that "the unchangeable nature of the gold can embrace the (characteristics of the) lion entirely. Other than the unchangeable nature of the gold, the lion is designated without characteristics. So, it is called the no characteristics".²⁰ In Chapter 5, Fazang claimed that "when looking at the appearance of the lion, there are only the characteristics of the gold. There is nothing other than the gold. Although the lion may arise and perish, the nature of the gold never increases or decreases. That is why it is called non-arising".²¹ Furthermore, Fazang introduced the absence of non-being 無自性 of the gold. Compared with the doctrine of dependent arising, he highlighted the characteristics of the gold. The arising and ceasing of the golden lion are based on the characteristics of the gold. As a result, the golden lion exhibits dependent arising. However, he adopted a different style in his analysis of the characteristics of the gold, even though he claimed the non-existence and the non-arising of the lion. He made use of the relationship between the gold and the lion to explore the relationship between Li and Shi.

However, Fazang did not explain the factors that make up the noumenon of the gold further. This is inconsistent with how he interpreted the lion. When he analyzed the lion, he focused on the doctrine of dependent arising. When he analyzed the characteristics of the gold, he paid more attention to the unchangeable nature of the noumenon. He no longer discussed the gold from the perspective of dependent arising. The unchangeable nature of Li is the key feature of the Huayan school. The different interpretation of the gold and the lion reflects the unique understanding of the relationship between Li and Shi.

From Fazang's point of view, the first five chapters used doctrines from early Buddhism, Mādhyamaka, and Yogācāra to interpret the relationship between Li (the gold) and Shi (the lion) in an indirect way. The relationships between different schools under the Huayan system are discussed in Chapter 6.

4. Five Teachings (Chapter 6)

In Chapter 6, Fazang introduced the five teachings with the metaphor of the golden lion. The five teachings are explained by Fazang in his *WJZ* from ten perspectives. Based on the consideration of the occasion and the purpose of this preaching, Fazang gave a general introduction to the contents of the five teachings for Empress Wu. Although this chapter has the function of carrying on from the previous chapters, its focus is to elicit the contents of the perfect doctrine of one vehicle 一乘圓教.

Fazang had already made sufficient preparations in the first five chapters. In Chapter 6, the content of the Huayan school is expanded. This chapter not only concisely explains the content of the five teachings but also helps Empress Wu understand the unique teachings of Huayan among various Buddhist schools. Fazang briefly introduced the teaching of śrāvakas 聲聞教, the elementary teaching of Mahāyāna 大乘始教, the final teaching of Mahāyāna 大乘終教, the sudden teaching 頓教, and the complete teaching of one vehicle 一乘圓教²² in a hierarchical order.

Structurally, the order of the five teachings is essentially consistent with the order of the *Treatise*. Under the system of Huayan, the content of early Buddhism belongs to the

teaching of śrāvakas, while the contents of Mādhyamaka and Yogācāra belong to the elementary teaching of Mahāyāna. The content of the “unchangeable nature of the gold” could be attributed to the final teaching of Mahāyāna. However, this classification is not arbitrary. For example, when Fazang discussed how “the nature of gold never increases or decreases” in Chapter 5, he included elements of the teaching of śrāvakas and the elementary teaching of Mahāyāna. Therefore, this chapter is ostensibly a classification of the five teachings, but it is the classification that enables Empress Wu to appreciate the DIDCD through the relationships of the five teachings. Under the system of Huayan, the DIDCD can be understood not only through the perfect doctrine of one vehicle but also through any kind of teachings.

When deconstructing the phenomena or appearance of the lion, Fazang indicated that the gold (noumenon) appears and becomes visible as an integrated gold. It is acknowledgeable that the arising phenomena represent the true manifestations of the noumenon. Moreover, the relationship between the one and the all is also demonstrated. There are two perspectives to explain this relationship: the one could be understood as the true manifestation of the noumenon, while the all could be understood as different phenomena. As a result, the relationship between the one and the all could be understood as the relationship between the true manifestations of the noumenon and the phenomena; this is similar to the relationship between the gold and the lion. On the other hand, the relationship between the one and the all could also be interpreted under the DIDCD, wherein everything is connected with everything else. Even if it seems like there is no direct relationship between two distinctive objects (or dhammas), they are connected within the dharmadhātu. There is no exception to this doctrine. This is the second perspective required to understand the relationship between the one and the all. It is preferable to adopt this latter perspective as it is consistent with Fazang’s subsequent preaching regarding the ten mysterious gates and the six characteristics.

Fazang introduced the gold (noumenon) in Chapters 2 to 5. When considering the gold, he did not explore its characteristics further. Although he said that the gold is non-arising, he concentrated more on aspect of the dependent arising of phenomena. This could be interpreted as a transitional preaching from the relationship between noumenon and phenomena to the relationships between phenomena. For the specific content of the five teachings, Fazang’s *WJZ* provides a more detailed and comprehensive explanation. The *Treatise* only provides an introduction for Empress Wu (and other learners) that presents a basic idea of the five teachings in a summarized style.

5. Ten Mysterious Gates (Chapter 7)

5.1. An Introduction to the Ten Mysterious Gates

The chapter on the ten mysterious gates is a central part of the *Treatise*. As explained by Nakanishi (2010, p. 1280) under his understanding of the ten mysterious gates, “a feature of Huayan Buddhism is that it gives a clear explanation of the metaphysical vision in Vairocana’s intent contemplation, which is impossible to express by means of language”. Prior to analyzing its specific content, it is necessary to understand the sources of the ten mysterious gates at first. The ten mysterious gates were originally proposed by Zhiyan rather than Fazang. Zhiyan originally formalized the ten mysterious gates in the *HYSXM*. It is clear from the name of Zhiyan’s work that the ten mysterious gates are constructed under the one vehicle system of the Huayan school. Zhiyan explained the one vehicle system of the Huayan from ten perspectives. The “ten” is also frequently used in the *AS* in interpreting doctrines. For example, there are ten types of conducts, ten dedications of merit, and ten stages. Both the *AS* and the Huayan school use the “ten” to interpret the DIDCD. We can understand the “ten” as a skill means of preachment.

The content of the ten mysterious gates in Fazang’s earlier work is consistent with the ten mysterious gates proposed by Zhiyan (Han 2018, p. 69), although Fazang adjusted the order of the ten gates.²³ It should be noted that the ten mysterious gates in other works of Fazang are not exactly the same as these in the *Treatise*.

5.2. Ten Mysterious Gates in the Treatise

5.2.1. Gate of Simultaneous Completeness

Fazang explained that “the gold and the lion are established simultaneously. They are all perfect and complete”.²⁴ In this gate, Fazang focused not only on dependent arising but also on interpreting the simultaneous interaction between the gold and the lion. In Chapter 1, Fazang claimed that the lion is composed of the conditions of the gold and the skilled craft of the craftsman. However, he did not use this formula to interpret the relationship between the gold and the lion in this chapter, nor did he use the doctrines from the Mādhyamaka and the Yogācāra schools to analyze the simultaneous interaction between the gold and the lion. By focusing on the simultaneous interaction between the gold and the lion, he indicated no preference between them. Only by understanding their relationship in this way can it be called “perfect and complete”.

When considering the relationship between dharmas, sentient beings usually cling to the sequential process. However, in this gate, Fazang considered that the arising of the gold is synchronized with the arising of the lion. A further step is to show the relationship between a dharma and all other dharmas. This is the Huayan philosophy of “one is all, and all is one”. Furthermore, this gate also implies the relationships between the ten gates, meaning that the arising of the first gate is the arising of all gates. All gates and all dharmas thereby interact with one another simultaneously.

5.2.2. Gate of Pure and Mixed Repositories Containing All Virtues

Fazang explained that “if the eye (or the ear) of the lion embraces the lion in its entirety, then all are purely eye (or ear). If all other sense organs embrace the lion in its entirety simultaneously, then each organ is mixed; each organ is (also) pure. So, they are perfect repositories”.²⁵

The pure represents an individual dharma being itself, while the mixed represents a dharma as a whole that contains all other dharmas in the dharmadhātu. The relationship between pure and mixed also represents the doctrine of “one is all, and all is one” as purity is one of the manifestations of the one, while a mixture is one of the manifestations of the all. Zhiyan used another example to illustrate this relationship in his *HYSXM*. For the issue of the practice of giving, Zhiyan claimed that “it has been called the pure because all practice of the six pāramitās is the practice of giving. It has been called the mixed because of the practice of giving”.²⁶ Thus, when any one of the eyes, ears, or giving represents the dharmas in the dharmadhātu, this is a manifestation of the pure. When it is necessary to express the difference between a dharma and other dharmas in the dharmadhātu, this is a manifestation of the mixed. Therefore, any dharma can express the pure and the mixed simultaneously.

5.2.3. Gate of Mutual Inclusion and Yet Difference of the One and the Many

Fazang explained that “the gold and the lion are established with mutual inclusion. And there is no obstruction between the one and the many. The Li and the Shi are not identical. Whether it is the one, or the many, they are all in different positions”.²⁷ The gold represents the noumenon, or Li (the one), while the lion represents the phenomena, or Shi (the many). In this gate, their relationship can be considered from two perspectives: on the one hand, the one and the many are not identical. On the other hand, “the one and the many are compatible with each other”. (Hsian-du 2006, p. 134) More specifically, “(in the dharmadhātu), each phenomenon represents noumenon. The one is the many, and the many is the one” (Fang 2012, p. 113). Thus, the one and the many are mutually inclusive.

Fazang extended the relationship between the gold and the lion to the relationship between Li and Shi. The essence of this is the relationship between noumenon and phenomena in the dharmadhātu. Under the system of Huayan, we should not limit our scope to the level of the relationship between noumenon and phenomena. Based on the DIDCD, each dharma is related to other dharmas. The one is the dharma interacts with countless other dharmas (the many), and the many (other dharmas) also interacts with the origi-

nal dharma (the one). In the dharmadhātu, one dharma gives rise to all dharmas, and one dharma also contains all dharmas. This is what Fazang called “mutual inclusion and yet difference”.²⁸

5.2.4. Gate of Freedom of Mutual Identity of All Dharmas

As pointed out by Fazang, “each sense organ in the lion, such as the eye, ear, nose and hair, is capable of containing all the characteristics of the lion because they are all the gold”.²⁹ He further claimed that “each of the sense organs permeates the eye of the lion. The eye is the ear, the ear is the nose, the nose is the tongue, the tongue is the body. They all exist freely and without obstacles”.³⁰

Compared with the third gate which pays more attention to the relationship between noumenon and phenomena, this gate pays more attention to interpreting the relationship between phenomena. There are conditions and conditioned dharmas. The third gate explores the relationships between conditions and conditioned dharmas. This gate further explains the relationships between all conditioned dharmas.³¹ This is the relationship between Shi and Shi as disclosed in the Huayan school.

In the dharmadhātu, each eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, or hair represents a separate phenomenon. Learners may be able to identify the relationships between individual sense organs (phenomena) and the lion (noumenon); however, it is difficult for them to properly recognize the relationships between sense organs (phenomena). This is why Fazang explained this gate. This gate shows the relationships between phenomena in the dharmadhātu by explaining the relationships between different sense organs. As claimed by Fazang, “The eye is the ear, the ear is the nose, the nose is the tongue, the tongue is the body”.³² Since each sense organ in the lion is composed of the gold, they are inherently unhindered. Similarly, each phenomenon exists freely without obstacles in the dharmadhātu. Meanwhile, Fazang implied that each phenomenon has its own characteristics and, therefore, that phenomenon is not identical to other phenomena. For instance, the eyes and ears of the lion are in different parts of the lion and their shapes are different. Therefore, they also manifest themselves differently.

Based on this gate, we can understand the relationships between phenomena in the dharmadhātu. On the one hand, they co-exist freely without any obstacles. Each of the sense organs (phenomena) permeates the eye of the lion (noumenon). On the other hand, they manifest themselves in different manners. This means that each phenomenon still retains its unique individual characteristics. This is what Fazang called “freedom of mutual identity of all dharmas”.³³

5.2.5. Gate of Simultaneous Concealment and Revelation

“When seeing the lion, there is only the lion and no gold. The lion is revealed, and the gold is concealed”.³⁴ Conversely, “when seeing the gold, there is only the gold and no lion. The gold is revealed, and the lion is concealed”.³⁵ Furthermore, “if one looks at both of them (simultaneously), then they are both concealed and revealed (simultaneously). If they are concealed, they are secret; if they are revealed, they are visible”.³⁶ Fazang explained the relationship between all dharmas in the dharmadhātu through the relationship between concealment and revelation. The lion refers to a revealed dharma and the gold refers to a concealed dharma. In terms of dependent arising, sentient beings can recognize the relationships between the revealed dharma and other dharmas, but it is difficult for them to recognize the relationships between the concealed dharma and other dharmas. In the dharmadhātu, each dharma is related to all other dharmas, regardless of whether they are revealed or concealed. If we can only identify the connection between the revealed dharma and other dharmas, this is not the full substance of the DIDCD. In addition, as explained by Fazang, the transition between concealment and revelation between the gold and the lion is also simultaneous. If a dharma can be manifested as a revealed dharma, it can also be manifested as a concealed dharma or as a dharma that manifests simultaneously as both concealed and revealed.

5.2.6. Gate of Mutual Containment and Establishment

The focus of this gate is on interpreting the relationship between dharmas in the dharmadhātu in terms of different sizes or shapes. The particle 極微, which is the smallest thing (dharma) in Buddhism, is discussed in detail in the Abhidharma. In this gate, the particle is used to express the smallest dharma in the dharmadhātu. As claimed by Fazang, “the gold and the lion may be concealed or revealed, one or many, pure or mixed, powerful or powerless”.³⁷ These four relationships expounded by Fazang express the relationship between Li (the gold) and Shi (the lion) in the Huayan system. Chengguan 澄觀 (738–839), who was the fourth patriarch of the Huayan school, explained the Fourfold Dharmadhātu 四法界, which comprises the dharmadhātu of Shi 事法界 (the first layer), the dharmadhātu of Li 理法界 (the second layer), the dharmadhātu of non-obstruction of Li and Shi 理事無礙法界 (the third layer), and the dharmadhātu of non-obstruction of Shi and Shi 事事無礙法界 (the fourth layer).³⁸ The dharmadhātu of non-obstruction of Shi and Shi is the highest layer. However, it should be noted that from a macro perspective, we can understand the DIDCD not only from the fourth layer but from any layer. On a micro level, Fazang proved that there are no obstacles between dharmas through the mutual containment 相攝 of the gold and the lion.

As claimed by Fang (2012, p. 116), “even a pore from a Buddha contains all Buddhas, all realms, all times, and even all benefits”. It is difficult for learners to understand the relationship between the large size of dharma and the small size of dharma. Learners may think that the large size of dharma and the small size of dharma are incompatible, however, in the Huayan school, as claimed by Chen (1996, p. 76), “the large (size of dharma) arises in dependence, the small (size of dharma) also arises in dependence”. Both of them have no self-nature. Extending this relationship to the entire Dharmadhātu, there is no hindrance between all dharmas, regardless of their sizes and shapes. Thus, they are all mutually contained in the Dharmadhātu.

5.2.7. Gate of the Realm of Indra’s Net

Although this is the seventh gate, it could be considered a summary of the ten mysterious gates. Indra’s net is used to describe the relationships between all dharmas in the Dharmadhātu. As claimed by Fazang, “each of the lion’s eyes, ears, limbs, and even hair contains a golden lion”.³⁹ He further claimed that “the lions in each hair (or another sense organ) instantaneously and simultaneously enter into a single hair. In each hair, there are infinite lions. Again, each hair carries these infinite lions returns into the one hair”.⁴⁰ After using the lion as a metaphor, Fazang extended this relationship to the entire Dharmadhātu. He further claimed that “this dynamic process repeats infinitely and never ends, like the heavenly emperor’s net of pearls”.⁴¹ The net of pearls was used by Fazang to show the infinite dharmadhātu. In the dharmadhātu, all dharmas are interdependent, resembling an endless mesh. Fazang embodied the infinite characteristics in the dharmadhātu through the relationship between hair and lion. This is what “returns into” 還入 means in his analysis.

In the first six gates, Fazang interpreted the relationships between the gold and the lion from several angles. However, according to the DIDCD, the relationship between each dharma in the dharmadhātu is not only interdependent but also mutually inclusive. This interdependency means that the relationship between dharmas is not single threaded, but an interconnected relationship resembling a mesh. All the dharmas in this mesh are in a never-ending state of constant change. This is an extension of the relationship between the gold and the lion based on the DIDCD. Compared with the interpretations from other gates in terms of size, shape, and time, this gate builds on that foundation to explain the application of the DIDCD in the dharmadhātu as a whole, in particular, from the perspective of the dynamic process between all dharmas in the dharmadhātu. In this network, whether this dharma belongs to the phenomena or the noumenon, there is a constant and dynamic connection between this dharma and all other dharmas. Therefore, this dynamic relation-

ship is well established, both from a particular perspective (e.g., size, shape, or time) and from that of the dharmadhātu as a whole.

5.2.8. Gate of Illustrating the Understanding of the Dharma (Thing) through Phenomena

As claimed by Fazang, “the lion is used to express ignorance. The nature of gold is spoken to reveal the true nature (of all dharmas). The purpose of discussing Li and Shi together is to understand ālayavijñāna correctly”.⁴² Fazang tried to emphasize the relationship between Shi and Shi in this gate. Through the relationship between Shi and Shi, Fazang illustrated to Empress Wu that the DIDCD can be understood through any dharma. The Shi in this gate can be further interpreted as either a phenomenon or any of the dharmas in the dharmadhātu. Through this example, we can understand the interdependency of dharmas in the dharmadhātu, regardless of the type of the dharma.

In this gate, the focus is on explaining how the DIDCD can be understood through phenomena. The golden lion in Changsheng Palace is one example of Fazang using an ordinary thing (dharma) to explain the DIDCD. According to Fazang’s explanation, sentient beings can realize the DIDCD through any kind of dharma. From the perspective of Shi, that is, from the perspective of phenomena, we can understand the relationships between phenomena and noumenon through a phenomenon. Moreover, the relationships between phenomena can also be comprehended through a phenomenon. Extending this relationship to the dharmadhātu, sentient beings can comprehend the DIDCD from one flower or fruit mentioned in the AS.

5.2.9. Gate of Different Formation of Separated Dharmas through Ten Ages

In this gate, Fazang extended the understanding of the DIDCD from space to time. It also implies that the DIDCD includes all perspectives in the dharmadhātu and is not limited to space and time. As claimed by Fazang, “the lion is the conditioned dharma and it arises and annihilates at all times. In an instant (kṣana), it is divided into three ages, namely past, present, and future. In each age, it is further subdivided into past, present, and future”.⁴³ Fazang summarized by saying that “there are three ages in each of the three ages, for a total of nine ages”.⁴⁴ The nine connected ages are called “a section of the Dharma Door”.⁴⁵ Based on this relationship, Fazang further claimed that “although these nine ages have their own nature, they are mutually established and compatible with each other. Therefore, (only) one mind is required (to establish nine ages)”.⁴⁶ These nine ages plus one mind are what Fazang called the “ten ages” 十世.

When it comes to any age, it is related both to other ages and other dharmas in the dharmadhātu. The focus of this gate is on explaining the relationships between one age and other related ages. Under the Huayan system, all ages are interdependent with other ages. It means all ages require other ages to be established, and all ages become conditions for the establishment of other ages. Take the past as an example: On the one hand, the past has characteristics that distinguish it from the present and the future. On the other hand, the past is interconnected with the present and the future. The present and the future are conditions for the establishment of the past. In fact, there is no time limit under the Huayan system. Because each age can be subdivided infinitely, there are not only nine ages but infinite ages. Whether there are nine ages or infinite ages, all are constantly and endlessly interconnected under one mind. This dynamic process of ages is the manifestation of the DIDCD from the perspective of time.

5.2.10. Gate of Realization of Goodness Based on the Operation of the Mind

This gate follows the previous one, highlighting the function of the one mind in the dharmadhātu. As claimed by Fazang, “the gold and the lion, either concealed or revealed, one or many, have no self-nature. (All dharmas) turn from the mind, whether from the perspective of Shi (phenomena) or Li (noumenon), there is (only one mind) by which they are formed”.⁴⁷ This gate seems to be a response to the contents of the first three chapters, that is, while acknowledging the dependent arising, it highlights the understanding and

emphasis on the mind from the perspective of the Huayan school. Although the Huayan school attributes great importance to the interpretation of the dynamic changes in the relationships between dharmas in the dharmadhātu, it also emphasizes the importance of the mind. As Fazang said, “all dharmas in the three realms are created by a single mind”.⁴⁸ Fazang ultimately linked the dharmadhātu with one mind, constituting a unique ontology of the dharmadhātu.

5.3. The Influence of the Ten Mysterious Gates

This chapter is the core of the *Treatise*. Functionally, the rest of the chapters are centered around the ten mysterious gates. The influence of the *Treatise* on Chinese Buddhism is also reflected in this chapter.

In terms of content, the ten mysterious gates in the *Treatise* are different from the ten mysterious gates proposed by Zhiyan, and they are also different from the ten mysterious gates proposed by Fazang in his *TXJ* and *WJZ*. The multiple versions of the ten mysterious gates have given rise to extensive scholarly discussion in the history of Chinese Buddhism. The ten mysterious gates in the *Treatise* reflect the transition in Fazang’s understanding of the DIDCD after the retranslation of the *AS*.

The doctrine of the ten mysterious gates was first introduced by Zhiyan, who summarized the ten gates to give learners a better understanding of the *AS* and, specifically, the DIDCD. When Fazang further explored the meaning of the ten gates, he changed their order in his early writings. In the *Treatise*, Fazang did not make major alterations, although there were some minor changes. For instance, in multiple versions of the ten gates, only the *Huayanjing wenyigangmu* 花嚴經文義綱目 (*Outline of the Avatamsaka Sūtra*) T1734(35) and the *Treatise* contain “the gate of realization of goodness based on the operation of mind” 唯心回轉善成門, and only the *Treatise* positions it as the last gate. This is an indication of the importance that Fazang placed on the mind at this stage. However, this gate is replaced in the *TXJ* with the gate of “the principal and satellites completely illumined and containing all qualities” 主伴圓明具德門. As claimed by Kamata (1965, p. 553):

the disappearance of the gate of realization of goodness based on the operation of mind in the new ten gates⁴⁹ is the result of Fazang’s departure from the idea of the *Dacheng qixinlun* 大乘起信論 (*Mahāyāna śraddhotpādaśāstra*) centered on the pure heart of the Tathagata from the standpoint of Huayan.

From this change, when Fazang produced the *Treatise*, his understanding of the DIDCD changed somewhat compared to his earlier writings, but it was still in a transitional period.

In addition to the tenth gate, the second “gate of pure and mixed repositories containing all virtues” 諸藏純雜具德門 is also replaced by the “gate of mutual inclusion of the broad and the narrow without impediment” 廣狹自在無礙門 in the *TXJ*. Compared with the replacement of the tenth gate, the modification of the name of the second gate is mainly reflected in the emphasis on the relationships between phenomena. As explained by Lv (1979, p. 362), “the updated second gate brings attention to the aspect of the relationships between phenomena and removes the traces of the relationships between noumenon and phenomena”. This change is less obvious than the change in the tenth gate. It indicates that Fazang paid more attention to the interpretation of the DIDCD in terms of the relationships between phenomena.

Although there are only ten gates, the number of gates in the Huayan school is infinite. It is recognizable that the ten gates used by Fazang are ten typical and easily acceptable methods for sentient beings to notice and realize the “mysteries” of the Huayan school. If we can understand the ten gates, we will realize that there is no hindrance within the dharmadhātu and we can recognize that each dharma is connected with all other dharmas within the dharmadhātu. The explanation of the ten mysterious gates is only a skill means for Zhiyan and Fazang (and also Chengguan) to preach the DIDCD to learners based on their levels of acceptance in that specific social, political, and cultural background.

6. Six Characteristics (Chapter 8)

In this chapter, Fazang claimed that “the lion represents the characteristic of totality 總相. The difference between the five sense organs represents the characteristic of particularity 別相”.⁵⁰ He used the five sense organs to describe the characteristics of identity 同相, differentiation 異相, formation 成相, and disintegration 壞相. For instance, he claimed that “the combination of all sense organs constitutes the lion. It represents the characteristic of formation. Each sense organ abides in its own position. It represents the characteristic of disintegration”.⁵¹

The exposition of the basic principles of the six characteristics on which Fazang focused follows the explanation of the ten gates. In his account of the ten gates, Fazang presented the content of the DIDCD through ten perspectives. In comparison, Fazang is relatively specific in his account of the ten gates, while he is more concise and even had a sense of summary in his preaching of the six characteristics.⁵² This is also consistent with the occasion of Fazang’s statement. When he preached the core teachings of the Huayan school in Changsheng Palace, Fazang could not develop his understanding of the DIDCD in all aspects. After expounding the core idea of the DIDCD in ten areas, Fazang needed to provide a summary. He briefly described the Huayan system of interdependency from six perspectives: totality, particularity, identity, differentiation, formation, and disintegration. This gave Empress Wu an understanding of the DIDCD on both the micro and the macro levels. Both the ten mysterious gates and the six characteristics were Fazang’s response to Empress Wu’s request to preach the teachings of Huayan at that time. Therefore, this chapter is not only an extension of the previous chapter but also a summary of the DIDCD at the macro level. In terms of the content, whether it is the ten mysterious gates or the six characteristics, they are all Fazang’s way of proclaiming the teachings of Huayan for learners from the realm of the Buddha.

7. Manifestation of the Distinctive Teaching of One Vehicle

Fazang discussed the complete teaching of one vehicle 一乘圓教 in Chapter 6. The one vehicle in his preaching is not identical to the one vehicle of the Tian’tai school 天臺宗. Under the Huayan system, the one vehicle is subdivided into the common teaching of one vehicle 一乘同教 and the distinctive teaching of one vehicle 一乘別教. The distinctive teaching of one vehicle is the perfect doctrine of one vehicle as defined by Fazang. The common teaching of one vehicle is a reference to the one vehicle of the Tian’tai school under the unique classifications of the teachings of the Huayan school.

In the Huayan school, the distinctive teaching of one vehicle is the most advanced approach. The DIDCD, which is revealed in the *Treatise*, also belongs to the content of the distinctive teaching of one vehicle. The manner and content of Fazang’s preaching demonstrate the uniqueness of the DIDCD, which is that one can “Rufajie” 入法界 (enter the dharmadhātu)⁵³ from all dharmas. Fazang used a gradual approach in the first five chapters to open up the relationship between the Huayan school and other schools. However, his intention was not that the DIDCD can only be understood through the ten mysterious gates and the six characteristics. It is still possible to enter the dharmadhātu through any of the teachings such as the doctrine of dependent arising and the theory of three natures.

The structure of the *Treatise* not only reflects the relationship between the distinctive teaching of one vehicle and other teachings but also reflects the relationship between two types of one vehicle. On the one hand, because the first five chapters are derived from doctrines other than the distinctive teaching of one vehicle, they reflect the relationships between the distinctive teaching of one vehicle and other teachings, such as the doctrines of early Buddhism, Mādhyamaka, and Yogācāra. On the other hand, the way that Fazang preached the *Treatise* also reflected the differences and connections between the common teaching of one vehicle and the distinctive teaching of one vehicle. The progressive manner in which Fazang preached in Chapters 1–5 was intended to enable Empress Wu to understand the DIDCD through the common teaching of one vehicle. This is the process that guided Empress Wu from understanding the teachings of three vehicles to one vehicle. It

is also referred to as “to unite the three vehicles in one” 會三歸一 in the Tian'tai school. In terms of the first five chapters, Fazang adopted this approach mainly in view of the acceptability of the Huayan teachings to learners.

As far as the one vehicle is concerned, the way of comprehending the distinctive teaching of one vehicle is not identical from the common teaching of one vehicle. Those who can accept and master the distinctive teaching of one vehicle will be able to understand the DIDCD from any of the doctrines explained by Fazang. Under Huayan school, anyone can enter the dharmadhātu from any dharma. Whether it is the lion or the gold, the ten mysterious gates or the six characteristics, these are examples employed by Fazang when he preached. Those who are deeply enlightened in the distinctive teaching of one vehicle can understand the DIDCD even at the beginning of the *Treatise* without having to wait until Fazang preached on the ten mysterious gates or the six characteristics. Therefore, in understanding the DIDCD, one should not limit its scope to the doctrines disclosed in the *Treatise*. One can enter the dharmadhātu through any dharma after understanding the DIDCD. This is also the reflection of the doctrine of “one is all, and all is one”.

It should be noted that although Fazang adopted two types of one vehicle in the *Treatise*, the focus was to enable Empress Wu to comprehend the DIDCD from any dharma. Therefore, the distinctive teaching of one vehicle was the focus of Fazang's preaching.

8. Ultimate Purpose of Preaching (Chapters 9 and 10)

After explaining the ten mysterious gates and the six characteristics to Empress Wu, Fazang concluded the *Treatise* with bodhi and nirvana. These concepts are closely related to the ultimate purpose of the preaching of the Dharma by the Buddha, especially in the framework of Chinese Buddhism.

The definition of bodhi is explained as the path or enlightenment in Chapter 9.⁵⁴ More specifically, Fazang explained that “when observing the lion, we can see all the conditioned dharmas 有為法 are all originally interdependent”.⁵⁵ Therefore, we should not grasp or abandon all of them. Only in this way can we enter the path of enlightenment and attain omniscience 一切種智. Moreover, Fazang defined “nirvana as the permanent abandonment of suffering”.⁵⁶ In that event, our minds cease to fluctuate under any circumstances.

The main purpose of Fazang's preaching was to enable Empress Wu to understand the core teachings of the Huayan school in a concise and gradual way. However, this did not prevent Fazang from directly stating the ultimate purpose of the *Treatise* in this context. During the High Tang 盛唐 period (650–755), when Mahāyāna Buddhism was flourishing, the ultimate goal of both the Huayan and other schools was to enable sentient beings to attain bodhi and nirvana. Therefore, the ultimate purpose of understanding the DIDCD is also to enable sentient beings to attain bodhi and nirvana. Regardless of the manner of explanation, the ultimate purpose of Fazang's preaching of this *Treatise* is consistent with the preaching of the Dharma by the Buddha: for all sentient beings to attain the path of bodhi and abandon the suffering permanently.

9. Conclusions

The above statements are an exploration of the DIDCD based on the *Treatise*. It is crucial to recognize the intention and the corresponding background of this preaching. Compared with other commentaries by Fazang, the purpose of the *Treatise* was not for learners to comprehensively understand the DIDCD. Rather, its function is to provide a guideline for those who find it difficult to understand the general concept and framework of the DIDCD. In the Huayan system, the related doctrines from other Indian Buddhist schools are used as a skill means to illustrate that the highest teaching of Buddhism is the distinctive teaching of one vehicle. The concepts of the ten mysterious gates and the six characteristics are intended to explain the DIDCD in detailed and summarized manners, respectively. This is the key teaching of the Huayan school that Fazang disclosed to all learners, not just to Empress Wu.

The *Treatise*, as well as other texts of Huayan school, also reveals the characteristics of Chinese thought. In ancient China, the mainstream thought was affected by Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism. As summarized by Shi (2012, p. 23), the Huayan patriarchs not only reveal the secrets of religious experience from the religious sphere, but they also unveil these teachings. Fazang and other patriarchs of the Huayan school took flexible manner to deal with the thought in the AS. The expansion and development of the Huayan school during the Tang dynasty took place under such a social and cultural background. During the High Tang period, Fazang produced many influential works, interpreting the Huayan teachings from different angles. Among all of his works, only the *Treatise* was preached on request, and it was requested by a reputable Buddhist monarch (Empress Wu) in medieval China.

The *Treatise* is a well-structured, progressive, and short work by Fazang, who was the actual founder of the Huayan school. Because it is short and concise, it is perceived as less influential in the Huayan school and Chinese Buddhism than Fazang's *WJZ* and the *TXJ*. However, the influence of the *Treatise* is still worthy of attention for two reasons.

On the one hand, the ten mysterious gates in the *Treatise* performs a transitional function between the old ten gates and the new ten gates. The focus of the ten mysterious gates in the *Treatise* reflects the changing emphasis in Fazang's understanding of the one vehicle, and this is helpful for subsequent studies of the evolution of Fazang's thought. On the other hand, and more easily overlooked, the preaching of the *Treatise* promoted the dissemination of the AS. It is no coincidence that Empress Wu's summons came in the same year as the completion of the retranslation of the AS. The retranslation of the AS made Empress Wu interested in the six characteristics, the ten mysterious gates, and other Huayan doctrines, leading to Fazang's preaching of the *Treatise* at Changsheng Palace. The preaching of the *Treatise* naturally facilitated the dissemination of the AS. From 699 onward, the retranslated version of the AS became the mainstream version of the disseminated Huayan scriptures.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Institutional Review Board Statement: Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement: Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement: No new data were created or analyzed in this study. Data sharing is not applicable to this article.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

Abbreviations

AS	<i>Dafang guangfo huayanjing</i> 大方廣佛華嚴經 (<i>Avatamsaka Sūtra</i>). T278(09); T279(10); T293(10).
CWSL	<i>Chengweishi lun</i> 成唯識論 (<i>Vijñāptimātratāsiddhi</i>). T1585(31).
DIDCD	doctrine of the infinite dependent arising of dharmadhātu 無盡法界緣起.
DS	<i>Shiermen lun</i> 十二門論 (<i>Dvādaśanikāya Śāstra</i>). T1568(30).
FJGM	<i>Fajieguanmen</i> 法界觀門 (<i>The Approach to the Visualization of the Dharma Realm</i>). T1883(45).
HYSXM	<i>Huayan yicheng shixuanmen</i> 華嚴一乘十玄門 (<i>Ten Mysterious Gates of the One Vehicle of Huayan</i>). T1868(45).
MMK	<i>Zhong lun</i> 中論 (<i>Mūlamadhyamakakārikā</i>). T1564(30).
SDCL	<i>She dacheng lun</i> 攝大乘論 (<i>Mahāyānasamgraha</i>). T1593(31).
SS	<i>Jieshenme jing</i> 解深密經 (<i>Samdhinirmocana-Sūtra</i>). T676(16).
T	<i>Taishō Tripitaka</i> 大正新脩大藏經.
<i>Treatise</i>	<i>Jinshizi zhang</i> 金獅子章 (<i>Treatise of the Golden Lion</i>).
TXJ	<i>Huayanjing tanxuanji</i> 華嚴經探玄記 (<i>Profound Meaning of Huayan</i>). T1733(35).
WJZ	<i>Huayan wujiao zhang</i> 華嚴五教章 or 華嚴一乘教義分齊章 (<i>Essay on the Five Teachings of the Huayan</i>). T1866(45).
X	Manji Shinsan Dainihon Zokuzōkyō 卍新纂大日本續藏經.

Notes

- 1 The authorship of the *Treatise* was attested by Chen (2003, pp. 32–358) and Girard (2012, pp. 307–38) because the *Treatise* is recorded in the later historical and textual sources such as the *Song gaoseng zhuan* 宋高僧傳 (*Biographies of Eminent Monks of Song*) T2061(50), the *Fozu tongji* 佛祖統紀 (*Chronicle of the Buddhas and the Patriarchs*) T2035(49), and the *Fajiezong wuzu lueji* 法界宗五祖略記 (*A Brief History of the Five Patriarchs of Dharmadhātu*) X1530(77). This paper argues that the attribution of authorship of the *Treatise* to Fazang is indeed controversial. However, such disputes over the authorship of texts are common in Chinese Buddhist history. There is no way of confirming the authorship of the *Treatise* in the foreseeable future. However, this does not prevent the text from being interpreted in the light of the teachings of the Huayan sect. Therefore, in the absence of any evidence to the contrary, the names attributed to Fazang from the various historical records mentioned above will be adopted in this paper.
- 2 There are three complete Chinese versions of the *Avatamsaka Sūtra*. They are in T278(09), T279(10), and T293(10) of the Taishō Tripitaka. Unless otherwise specified, the *Avatamsaka Sūtra* in this paper refers to the 80-volume version in T279(10).
- 3 T2035(49)293a13–16, original Chinese texts: “聖歷二年十月，詔講於佛授記寺講堂，京師地皆震動。即日召對長生殿，師乃指殿，隅金師子，謂大經理深事廣，文博義幽”。 (Unless otherwise stated, all ancient Chinese texts in this paper are translated by myself.) Other sources: X1530(77) 622a1 and T2061(50)732b4. Although records are in dispute upon when he preached, the second year of Shengli 聖歷二年 (699) is largely accepted by scholars. The place where Fazang preached to Empress Wu is recognized as Changsheng Palace in Chang’an.
- 4 As for the meaning of “wujin” 無盡, there are different ways of translation. One of the most common English translations is “inexhaustible”, however, this translation is not accurate enough. At least, it does not reflect the original meaning of the Huayan doctrines. Based on the Merriam-Webster dictionary (online version, accessed in March, 2023), the “inexhaustible” means “incapable of being used up” or “incapable of being wearied or worn out”. The “infinite” means “subject to no limitation or external determination” or “extending beyond, lying beyond, or being greater than any preassigned finite value however large”, which is more in line with the Huayan philosophy of limitation, such as the infinite time and infinite space. Therefore, this paper uses the “infinite” as the official translation of “wujin” 無盡.
- 5 The interpretation of this concept is derived from Fang (2012, p. 71). During the translation process, I made minor adjustments to adapt to the context and structure of the discussion.
- 6 Chengqian 承遷, years of birth and death unknown.
- 7 Various ancient sources/commentaries on the *Treatise* have been compiled and proofread in Fang’s publication. This authoritative work has a great influence on the study of Fazang and even the Huayan school in contemporary China. Fang included the original pure text of the *Treatise* on page 408–411, which is used as the reference of the original Chinese text of the *Treatise* in this paper.
- 8 For instance, Wong (n.d.). An English Translation and Annotation of “The Flower Ornament Golden Lion Treatise”, *PhilPapers*. Available online: <https://philpapers.org/archive/WONTFO.pdf> (accessed on 5 July 2022).
- 9 Fang (2012, p. 408), original Chinese texts: “謂金無自性，隨工巧匠緣，遂有獅子相起”。 All contents of the *Treatise* are translated by myself. In contrast to other English translations, the translations in this paper tend to express the meaning based on the teachings of the AS and the Huayan School, rather than simply translating the literal meaning.
- 10 Fang (2012, p. 408), original Chinese texts: “起但是緣，故名緣起”。
- 11 Fang (2012, p. 408), original Chinese texts: “謂師子相虛，唯是真金”。
- 12 Fang (2012, p. 408), original Chinese texts: “師子不有，金體不無，故名色空”。
- 13 Fang (2012, p. 408), original Chinese texts: “空無自相，約色以明，不礙幻有，名為色空”。
- 14 Fang (2012, p. 408), original Chinese texts: “金體不無”。
- 15 T1593(31) 113b25–26, original Chinese texts: “三種自性：一依他性、二分別性、三真實性”。
- 16 Fang (2012, p. 408), original Chinese texts: “師子情有，名為遍計”。
- 17 Fang (2012, p. 408), original Chinese texts: “師子似有，名曰依他”。
- 18 Fang (2012, p. 408), original Chinese texts: “金性不變，故號圓成”。
- 19 The relationship between Li and Shi can be understood as the relationship between noumena and phenomena. In the *Treatise*, Fazang used the gold to refer to Li and the lion, together with its sense organs, to Shi. Both the sense organs and the lion express their noumenon through the gold. Therefore, the relationship between Li and Shi is more accurately expressed as the relationship between noumenon (singular) and phenomena (plural) based on the *Treatise*. Similarly, this paper tends to express the relationship between Shi and Shi as the relationships between phenomena.
- 20 Fang (2012, p. 409), original Chinese texts: “以金收師子盡，金外更無師子相可得，故名無相”。
- 21 Fang (2012, p. 409), original Chinese texts: “謂正見師子生時，但是金生，金外更無一物。師子雖有生滅，金體本無增減”。
- 22 The complete teaching of one vehicle 一乘圓教 explained by Fazang is the distinctive teaching of one vehicle 一乘別教. It is not identical to the complete teaching 圓教 of the Tian’tai school 天臺宗. The complete teaching in the Tian’tai school is referred to as the common teaching of one vehicle 一乘圓教 in the Huayan school.

- 23 The ten mysterious gates are available in various articles of Fazang. It first appears in his *WJZ*. Then, they are available in the *TXJ*. The ten gates were revised again in the *Treatise* after the completion of translation of the 80-volume version of the *AS*.
- 24 Fang (2012, p. 409), original Chinese texts: “金與師子, 同時成立, 圓滿具足”.
- 25 Fang (2012, p. 409), original Chinese texts: “若師子眼收師子盡。則一切純是眼。若耳收師子盡。則一切純是耳。諸根同時相收。悉皆具足。則一一皆雜。一一皆純。為圓滿藏”.
- 26 T1868(45)517a24–27, original Chinese texts: “此約諸度門說。何者如似就一施門說者。一切萬法皆悉名施。所以名純。而此施門即具諸度等行。故名為雜”.
- 27 Fang (2012, p. 409), original Chinese texts: “金與師子。相容成立, 一多無礙; 于中理事各各不同, 或一或多, 各住各位”.
- 28 Fang (2012, p. 410), original Chinese texts: “相容不同”.
- 29 Fang (2012, p. 410), original Chinese texts: “師子諸根一一毛頭, 皆以金收師子盡”.
- 30 Fang (2012, p. 410), original Chinese texts: “一一皆徹師子眼, 眼即耳, 耳即鼻, 鼻即舌, 舌即身。自在成立, 無障無礙”.
- 31 In fact, the DIDCD is also applied to unconditioned dharmas. Since the golden lion used by Fazang is an example of a conditioned dharma, this article uses conditioned dharmas for consistency.
- 32 Fang (2012, p. 410), original Chinese texts: “眼即耳, 耳即鼻, 鼻即舌, 舌即身”.
- 33 Fang (2012, p. 410), original Chinese texts: “諸法相即自在”.
- 34 Fang (2012, p. 410), original Chinese texts: “若看師子, 唯師子無金。即師子顯, 金隱”.
- 35 Fang (2012, p. 410), original Chinese texts: “若看金, 唯金無師子。即金顯, 師子隱”.
- 36 Fang (2012, p. 410), original Chinese texts: “若兩處看。俱隱俱顯。隱則秘密, 顯則顯著”.
- 37 Fang (2012, p. 410), original Chinese texts: “或隱或顯。或一或多。定純定雜。有力無力”.
- 38 See: T1883(45)672c12–13, original Chinese texts: “一事法界。二理法界。三理事無礙法界。四事事無礙法界”.
- 39 Fang (2012, p. 410), original Chinese texts: “獅子眼耳支節, 一一毛處, 各有金師子”.
- 40 Fang (2012, p. 410), original Chinese texts: “一一毛處獅子, 同時頓入一毛中。一一毛中, 皆有無邊師子。又復, 一一毛, 帶此無邊師子, 還入一毛中”.
- 41 Fang (2012, p. 410), original Chinese texts: “如是重重無盡, 猶天帝網珠”.
- 42 Fang (2012, p. 410), original Chinese texts: “說此師子, 以表無明。語其金體, 具彰真性。理事合論, 沉阿賴識, 令生正解”.
- 43 Fang (2012, p. 410), original Chinese texts: “師子是有為之法, 念念生滅。剎那之間, 分為三際, 謂過去現在未來。此三際各有過現未來”.
- 44 Fang (2012, p. 410), original Chinese texts: “總有三三之位, 以立九世”.
- 45 Fang (2012, p. 410), original Chinese texts: “一段法門”.
- 46 Fang (2012, p. 410), original Chinese texts: “雖隔九世, 各各有隔, 相由成立, 融通無礙, 同為一念”.
- 47 Fang (2012, p. 410), original Chinese texts: “金與師子。或隱或顯。或一或多。各無自性。由心迴轉。說事說理。有成有立”.
- 48 T1876(45)640a9–10, original Chinese texts: “三界所有法, 唯是一心造”.
- 49 Scholars usually think of the ten mysterious gates created by Zhiyan as the old ten gates 古十玄. The ten mysterious gates of Fazang in his *WJZ* are similar to Zhiyan’s ten gates, which also belong to the old ten gates. The ten mysterious gates in the *TXJ* also quoted and interpreted by Chengguan, and this is also the most recognized version. Therefore, the ten mysterious gates in the *Treatise* is classified as the new ten gates 新十玄.
- 50 Fang (2012, p. 410), original Chinese texts: “師子是總相, 五根差別是別相”.
- 51 Fang (2012, p. 410), original Chinese texts: “諸根合會, 有師子是成相。諸根各住自位, 是壞相”.
- 52 A more comprehensive meaning of the six characteristics is explained in Fazang’s *WJZ*.
- 53 The final chapter of the *AS* is the *Rufajie pin* 入法界品 (*Chapter of Entering the Dharmadhātu*). In the Huayan school, the meaning of “Rufajie” 入法界 (entering the dharmadhātu) is to explore the ultimate reality of life in the universe and to attain enlightenment.
- 54 Fang (2012, p. 410), original Chinese texts: “菩提者, 此雲道也、覺也”.
- 55 Fang (2012, p. 411), original Chinese texts: “謂見師子之時, 即見一切有為之法”.
- 56 Fang (2012, p. 411), original Chinese texts: “永捨苦源。名入涅槃”.

References

Primary Sources

- Asanga. *She dacheng lun* 攝大乘論 (*Mahāyānasamgraha*). Chinese translation attributed by Paramārtha. T1593(31).
- Āśvaghōṣa. *Dacheng qixinlun* 大乘起信論 (*Mahāyāna śraddhotpādaśāstra*). Chinese translation attributed by Paramārtha. T1666(32).
- Chengguan 澄觀. *Huayan fajie xuanjing* 華嚴法界玄鏡 (*Mysterious Mirror of the Huayan Dharma Realm*). T1883(45).
- Chengqian 承遷. *Huayan jinshizhang zhu* 華嚴經金師子章註 (*Commentary on the Golden Lion Treatise of the Avatamsaka Sūtra*). T1881(45).
- Ciyun 慈雲. *Fajiezong wuzu lueji* 法界宗五祖略記 (*A Brief History of the Five Patriarchs of Dharmadhātu*). X1530(77).

- Dafang guangfo huayanjing* 大方廣佛華嚴經 (*Avatamsaka Sūtra*). T278(09), 60-volume version Chinese translation attributed by Buddhahadra; T279(10), 80-volume version Chinese translation attributed by Śīksānanda; T293(10), 40-volume version Chinese translation attributed by Prajñā.
- Dushun 杜順. *Fajieguanmen* 法界觀門 (*The Approach to the Visualization of the Dharma Realm*). T1883(45).
- Fazang 法藏. *Huayan wujiao zhang* 華嚴五教章 or 華嚴一乘教義分齊章 (*Essay on the Five Teachings of the Huayan*). T1866(45).
- Fazang 法藏. *Huayanjing tanxuanji* 華嚴經探玄記 (*Profound Meaning of Huayan*). T1733(35).
- Fazang 法藏. *Huayanjing wenyigangmu* 花嚴經文義綱目 (*Outline of the Avatamsaka Sūtra*). T1734(35).
- Fazang 法藏. *Jinshizi zhang* 金獅子章 (*Treatise of the Golden Lion*). Original text accessed from: Fang, Litian 方立天. 2012. *Fazang and the Treatise of the Golden Lion* 法藏與金獅子章. Beijing: Renming University Press, 408–411.
- Fazang 法藏. *Shiermenlun zongzhiyiji* 十二門論宗致義記 (*An Account of the Significance of Dvādaśanikāya Śāstra*). T1826(42).
- Fazang 法藏. *Xiu huayanaozhi wangjin huanyuanguan* 修華嚴奧旨妄盡還源觀 (*Practice the Concept of Returning to the Origin of Huayan*). T1876(45).
- Jieshenme jing* 解深密經 (*Samdhinirmocana-Sūtra*). Chinese translation attributed by Xuanzang. Taishō Tripitaka, T676(16).
- Jingyuan 淨源. *Jinshizhang yunjianleijie* 金師子章雲間類解 (*Classical Clouds Interpretation of the Golden Lion Treatise*). T1880(45).
- Nāgārjuna. *Shiermen lun* 十二門論 (*Dvādaśanikāya Śāstra*). Chinese translation attributed by Kumārajīva. T1568(30).
- Nāgārjuna. *Zhong lun* 中論 (*Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*). Chinese translation attributed by Kumārajīva. T1564(30).
- Xuangzang 玄奘. *Chengweishi lun* 成唯識論 (*Vijñāptimātratāsiddhi*). T1585(31).
- Zanning 贊寧. *Song gaoseng zhuan* 宋高僧傳 (*Biographies of Eminent Monks of Song*). T2061(50).
- Zhipan 志磐. *Fozu tongji* 佛祖統紀 (*Chronicle of the Buddhas and the Patriarchs*). T2035(49).
- Zhiyan 智儼. *Huayan yicheng shixuanmen* 華嚴一乘十玄門 (*Ten Mysterious Gates of the One Vehicle of Huayan*). T1868(45).

Secondary Sources

- Chang, Garma Chen-Chi. 1971. *The Buddhist Teaching of Totality: The Philosophy of Hua Yen Buddhism*. Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Chen, Jinhua. 2003. More than a Philosopher: Fazang (643–712) As a Politician and Miracle Worker. *History of Religions* 42: 320–58. [CrossRef]
- Chen, Yingshan 陳英善. 1996. *The Theory of Infinite Dependent Arising of Dharmadhātu in Huayan* 華嚴無盡法界緣起論. Taipei: Huayen Lotus Association.
- Di, Lang 糧荻. 2011. *Endless and Harmonious Phenomenon—Research into the Thought of Dependent Origination in the Hua-yen School* 無盡的現象圓融—華嚴宗緣起思想研究. Ph.D. thesis, Jilin University, Changchun, China.
- Fang, Litian 方立天. 2012. *Fazang and the Treatise of the Golden Lion* 法藏與金獅子章. Beijing: Renming University Press.
- Garfield, Jay L. 1995. *The Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way: Nagarjuna's Mulamadhyamakakarika*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Girard, Frédéric. 2012. The Treatise of the Golden Lion Attributed to Fazang in China and Japan. In *Avatamsaka Buddhism in East Asia: Huayan, Kegon, Flower Ornament Buddhism: Origins and Adaptation of a Visual Culture* *Huayan, Kegon, Flower Ornament Buddhism*. Edited by Robert Gimello, Frédéric Girard and Imre Hamar. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag.
- Han, Huanzhong 韓煥忠. 2018. Xianshou Fazang and the Sinicization of Buddhism 賢首法藏與佛教的中國化. *Journal of Baoji University of Arts and Sciences (Social Sciences)* 寶雞文理學院學報(社會科學版) 38: 69–71.
- Hsian-du 賢度. 2006. *Development of the Hua-Yen School During Tang Dynasty*. Taipei: Huayen Lotus Association. Dharma Drum Institute of Liberal Arts. Available online: <https://lic.dila.edu.tw/>>Digital Archives Project>The Complete Works of Master Hsian-du: <http://dev.dila.edu.tw/hsiendu/interface.php?book=10> (accessed on 28 August 2022).
- Johnson, Peter Lunde. 2020. *Delivering the Heart of Transcendental Discernment: An Explanation of the Heart Sutra*. An Lac Publications. Traverse City: Independently Published.
- Jones, Nicholaos. 2016. Fazang: Hermeneutics, Causation, and Mereology 法藏:闡釋、因果和分體關係. *The World Religious Cultures* 世界宗教文化 2: 122–32.
- Kamata, Shigeo. 1965. *A history of Chinese Huayan thought* 中國華嚴思想史の研究. Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press.
- Keenan, John. 2000. *The Scripture on the Explication of Underlying Meaning* 解深密經. Berkeley: Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research.
- Lin, Jianxun 林建勳. 2016. The theory of infinite by Fazang in the Preachment of Huayan 法藏大師無盡說表述對華嚴教法的意義. In *Conference Paper in Huayan International Conference 2016*. Taipei: Huayen Lotus Association, pp. 239–54.
- Lv, Cheng 呂澂. 1979. *A Brief Introduction to the Sources of Chinese Buddhism* 中國佛學源流略講. Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company.
- Nakanishi, Toshihide. 2010. The Background of Huiyuan's Philosophy: His Twofold Interpretation of the 'Ten Mysterious Gates'. *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies* 58: 1279–83. [CrossRef]
- Shi, Baoguo 施保國. 2012. Comments of Daoism's influence for Chinese Buddhism from Fang Dongmei 方東美論道家對中國佛教的影響. *Academic Exchange* 學術交流 220: 19–23.
- Wei, Daoru 魏道儒. 2008. *A General History of the Huayan Sect in China* 中國華嚴宗通史. Nanjing: Phoenix Publishing House.
- Wong, Tai Wing 黃大榮. n.d. An English Translation and Annotation of "The Flower Ornament Golden Lion Treatise". PhilPapers. Available online: <https://philpapers.org/archive/WONTFO.pdf> (accessed on 5 July 2022).

Yinshun 印順. 1950. *The Contemporary View of Madhyamakā* 中觀今論. Beijing: China Publishing House, Republished in 2010.
Zacchetti, Stefano. 2000. *Fazang—Il Trattato del leone d'oro*. Padova: Esedra Editrice.

Disclaimer/Publisher's Note: The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of MDPI and/or the editor(s). MDPI and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.