

What is Our Shared Sensory World?: Ming Dynasty Debates on Yogācāra versus Huayan Doctrines

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Abstract

This paper examines how two Ming Dynasty philosophers, steeped in the Yogācāra and Huayan 華嚴 Buddhist traditions, engaged with the question of how the world is commonly shared. It describes the debates held in the sacred Wutai Mountains between a Yogācāra scholar, Zhengui 真貴, and a Huayan-inclined scholar, Zhencheng 鎮澄, on the topic of what constitutes the shared “world of sensory experience” (Sanskrit: *bhājanaloka*; Tibetan: *snod kyi 'jig rten*; Chinese: *qi shijian* 器世間). This paper provides detailed analyses of the theoretical positions of the two experts who vigorously disputed the question of how, given the Yogācāra premise of individual and multiple consciousness, sentient beings share common experiences of the world. The Wutai debates illustrate how and why the question of what constitutes our shared world mattered to Buddhist scholars in the politically fractured and intellectually fractious years of the latter Ming Dynasty. Zhencheng and Zhengui’s paradigmatic analyses paint a picture of a community of scholars grappling with textual and conceptual lacunae in the touchstone doctrine by drawing not only from Yogācāra, but from other systems of Buddhist thought, in this instance, the Huayan tradition.

Keywords:

Yogācāra, Consciousness-only, *Cheng weishi lun*, Ming dynasty, *Bhājanaloka*

何謂「器世間」？ ——明末唯識與華嚴學家之爭論

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摘要

本文考察兩位沉浸在唯識宗和華嚴宗教義的明朝佛學家，就「有情生存世界如何為人所共享」這一問題所展開的辯論。五台山上，唯識學家真貴（1558-?）與華嚴宗傾向的鎮澄（1547-1617），二人爭論構成共同的「器世間」（梵語：*bhājanaloka*；藏語：*snod kyi 'jig rten*）的原素。本文對兩位專家的立場和論證進行了詳細的剖析，他們二人以個體和多重意識的唯識教義為前提，激烈地爭論有關「眾生如何共享世界的共同經驗」的問題。在晚明政治斷裂和學術紛爭的背景下，五台辯論彰顯何以「構成器世間的原素」的問題對佛教學者關係重大。鎮澄和真貴的分析模式，繪製了一幅晚明學術群體的畫面，他們試圖不只從唯識思想，也從其它佛學系統，也就是華嚴學中，找出詮釋宇宙論的端倪。

關鍵詞：

瑜伽行派、唯識宗、《成唯識論》、明朝、器世間

Introduction

How do we know that what we see is the same as what others see? To what degree is what we see similar to what others see? To what degree is what we see different from what others see? What accounts for the difference between the two?

Fundamental questions about how the world is seen and shared, encompassed within the overarching Buddhist doctrine of the “one and the same world” (Chinese, hereafter Chi.: *tongyi* 同一), were vigorously debated by two prelates, Yu’an Zhengui 玉菴真貴 (1558–date of death unknown) and Kongyin Zhencheng 空印鎮澄 (1547–1617), during the Ming dynasty. Both men were recognized across the North China plain as leading scholars of Buddhism and received patronage for their monasteries from the Empress Dowager Wanli.¹ Zhengui and Zhencheng were recognized as leaders of the Chinese lineage of the Huayan school of East Asian Buddhism for their longstanding contributions to this religious and philosophical tradition.²

The disputes on the doctrinally significant yet thorny topic of the “same world” (Chi.: *tongchu* 同處) took place during the spring of 1581. During this time, Zhencheng and Zhengui were residing on Mount Wutai 五臺山, a sacred Buddhist site located in modern-day Shanxi Province 山西.³ At this sacred mountain perch, Zhencheng and Zhengui engaged in debates on the topic of the Yogācāra doctrine of the same world. The question on the table was whether the conception of the same world, as articulated in the Yogācāra

¹ For Zhengui’s biography see Huang, “Ming-Qing Seng Zhengui yu Huayan xue”; and Jian, “Bei wangque de chuantong,” 237–41. For Zhencheng’s biographical details see Jian, “Wan Ming Wutai shan Kongyin Zhencheng ji qi sixiang yanjiu” and “Kongyin zhencheng dui xiangzong xueshuo zhi shangque.”

² For a groundbreaking study of Zhengui’s place in the Huayan lineage see Huang, “Ming-Qing Seng Zhengui yu Huayan xue.” Zhang has reconstructed this lineage based upon her recovery of the codex unicus of the *Lineage and Vehicle of the Honorable Masters* (*Xianzhou zongsheng* 賢首宗乘) housed within the Shanghai Library, Rare Books Collection. See Zhang, “*Xianshou zongsheng* de zuozhe ji qi xueshu jiazhi.”

³ According to Zhencheng’s preface to Zhengui’s *Collected Explanations on the Gateway to Logic* (*Nyāyapraveśa śāstra*) 因明入正理論集解, during this period of time Zhengui took up residence at the Three Pagodas Monastery 三塔寺 on Mount Wutai. See Zhengui’s *Collected Explanations*, housed within the National Library in Beijing 北京國家圖書館, 1[verso]–2[recto]. For discussion of this text see Jian, “Kongyin zhencheng dui xiangzong xueshuo zhi shangque.”

Buddhist texts, could be reconciled with the position held by Huayan Buddhism, the standing philosophical tradition of the time. At the time, the resurgent study of Yogācāra Buddhism formed the vanguard of Buddhist scholarship.⁴ However, the exegetical application of Yogācāra doctrines and terminology to Huayan Buddhism was a matter of dispute. Essentially, the Yogācāra definition of the same world, as comprised of multiple and discrete sensory worlds, was at odds with the Huayan definition of the same world as one, and only one, all-encompassing world. The Huayan expert, Zhencheng, challenged the sterling reputation of the Yogācāra doctrine by insisting that the Yogācāra explanation of the same world squared with the established Huayan methodology. Zhengui, a Yogācāra expert, took Zhencheng to task by rigorously defending the analytical distinctions between the Yogācāra and Huayan doctrines. The disputes between Zhencheng and Zhengui remain significant because they address prominent and vexing methodological issues within and between two important traditions in Chinese philosophy and religion, Yogācāra and Huayan Buddhism.

There are two surviving accounts of the Mount Wutai disputes. A verbatim description of the debate, with a commentary on the key doctrinal points, is located in the *codex unicus* of the *Polished Exegesis on the Compendium of the Mahāyāna* 攝大乘論修釋 written by Zhencheng in 1602.⁵

This voluminous document, composed of eight fascicles in eight volumes, is housed in the Xiyuan Temple 西園寺 in Suzhou 蘇州. The second account of the debate is found in the twenty volume, ten fascicle document, *Direct Exegesis on the CWSL* 成唯識論直指, completed by Zhengui on the Lunar

4 For the resurgence of Yogācāra in late Ming Buddhism, see Jennifer Eichman, “Humanizing the Study of Late Ming Buddhism,” 169–172; William Chu, “The Timing of Yogācāra Resurgence in the Ming Dynasty,” 5–25.

5 Zhencheng selects Xuanzang’s translation of Asvabhāva’s (Chi.: Wuxing 無性; Tib.: Ngo po med pa) as the root text for his *Polished Commentary on the Compendium of the Mahāyāna*. Xuanzang’s translation of this text, no longer extant in Sanskrit, presents the root text of Asaṅga with by a line-by-line commentary by Asvabhāva. In addition to Xuanzang’s Chinese translation (*Tashō*, hereafter T, 1598, 31), Asvabhāva’s commentary is extant within the Tibetan *Derge Tangyur Canon* (hereafter D)—see **Mahāyānasamgrahopanibandhana // Theg pa chen po bsdu pa'i bshad sbyar* (D 4051, 134). Zhencheng’s *Polished Commentary* on Asvabhāva’s text was commissioned by Eunuch Cao Feng 太監曹奉. The book was printed during Wanli reign year 13 (1601–2). Zhencheng resided at the Cause of Compassion Monastery (Ci’en si 慈因寺) in Beijing during the year it took to complete this work.

New Year's Eve of 1628.⁶ Zhengui's account includes historic details about the meeting between the two men on Mount Wutai, a citation of Zhencheng's critique of the Yogācāra doctrine of "same world," and an incisive and at points scathing rebuttal to Zhencheng's critique on this topic. This document is preserved in the Shanghai Library.

This paper is comprised of two sections. The first section locates the definition of the same world within the Yogācāra and Huayan traditions of Mahāyāna Buddhism. The second section presents Zhencheng's provocative critique of the Yogācāra doctrine of the same world and Zhengui's pointed rejoinder.

Section One: Yogācāra and Huayan doctrines of the same world

The Mahāyāna Buddhist ideal of the altruistic bodhisattva is predicated upon the existence of the same world or *tongchu* 同處. Without a vast and varied multitude of sentient beings living in the same world there would be no one to receive the message of the Buddha. The sacrifices of the bodhisattva—the undertakings of successive reincarnations in a mortal body and the postponement of the ultimate bliss of nirvāṇa in the service of transmitting the message of the Buddha—would be meaningless. Without a same world the work of the bodhisattva would be in vain. The doctrine of Mahāyāna Buddhism is founded on a conception of the world as inhabited by multiple and varied sentient beings; it is centered upon the idea of the world as a "one and the same world."

The Chinese word *tong* 同, which is translated as "sameness," holds more than one meaning. One definition of *tongchu* carries the idea that there is one world, and only one world, occupied by all sentient beings. The Huayan conception of same world is derived from this definition. At the same time the definition of *tongchu* includes the idea that one person's world may merely

⁶ Zhengui's preface is dated on the night of the 15th of the first lunar month of the Chongzhen Inaugural Reign year (崇禎元年正月上元日), Saturday, February 19, 1628. According to Jian's paleographical research, only three copies of this work survive (Jian, "Bei wangque de chuantong," 239). This study relies upon the edition housed in the Shanghai Library, Rare Books collection. There are two other copies of this rare work, one in the Kaifeng City Library 開封市圖書館 (10 fascicles in 11 volumes), and one in Chongqing Library 重慶圖書館 (4 volumes).

resemble, and not be entirely identical, to another person's world. The definition of *tongchu* that recognizes more than one same world is adopted by the Yogācāra scholars. The philosophical position of whether people experience the same, singular world, or similar versions of more than one world is at issue in the Ming debates.⁷

The same world according to Yogācāra tradition

Within the East Asian traditions of Yogācāra Buddhism, the Mahāyāna Buddhist concept of the same world finds its *locus classicus* in the finale of the second fascicle (Chi.: *juan* 卷) of the *Demonstration of Consciousness-Only* (Sanskrit, hereafter Skt.: **Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi-śāstra*; Chi.: *Cheng weishi lun* 成唯識論; hereafter CWSL). The CWSL, the seminal text of the East Asian Yogācāra tradition, was the subject of intense interest by Buddhist scholars during the Ming dynasty. In developing the touchstone doctrine of the same world, the CWSL builds upon the work of the great fourth century Indian Buddhist philosopher, Vasubandhu, and his original theory of “storehouse consciousness” or *ālayavijñāna* (Chi.: *alaiyeshi* 阿賴耶識). Vasubandhu posits that every sentient being possesses a “storehouse consciousness” that contains a sensory world unique to each being. What is essential to the Yogācāra definition of the same world is Vasubandhu's idea that the sensory world exists—if and only if—it is experienced by more than one mind. Because each sentient being has a unique and individual subjective experience of the world, the sensory world must be shared by more than one sentient being if it is to exist. The idea of a pluralistic world shared by more than one mind is foundational to the Yogācāra conception of the same world.

⁷ At face, the assertion of the “mutual-identity” of sensory domains seems to require a bolder set of doctrinal claims than is required to support the CWSL's postulate of “mutual similarity” or “resemblance” (*xiangsi* 相似). The mutual resemblance is a relationship that obtains at the level of the mental representations of the world as they appear in more than one mind. Hence, defenders of the resemblance theory invoke the more attenuated sense of “sameness” as a form of qualitative resemblance. They stop short of the numerical “sameness” asserted by the Huayan masters. If reasoning in accord with the law of indiscernibility of identicals, the indiscernibility of representations appearing to many sentient beings, would logically entail their numerical identity. However, the CWSL obfuscates the practical possibility that experientially indiscernible presentations of an object could occur in more than one mind.

An important passage in the second fascicle of the CWSL defines the “world” that is “shared” (Chi.: *gong shouyong* 共受用)⁸ in terms of Vasubandhu’s pluralistic view of the sensory world as existing because it is experienced by more than one mind. Here the CWSL authors invoke the metaphor of many lamps shining together to form a singular beam of light to illuminate an object. The analogy of the lamps is used to make the point that sentient beings experiencing the world together share experiences of the sensory world. In doing this they make the world real.

The passage in the CWSL reads, “although [the consciousness of] each sentient being manifests in a differentiated way,⁹ its characteristics resemble that of each other sentient being, such that there is no difference in their locus (Skt.: **sthāna*; Chi.: *chu* 處).¹⁰ We liken it to the light cast by the multitude

⁸ The Chinese rendering means, literally, “experiencing/enjoying and putting to use” 受用 together with the adverb “in common” 共. Chinese commentators sometimes treat this terminology as coordinative compound. Technically speaking, the Chinese term derives from a single verbal root in Sanskrit—*√bhuj*, meaning “to enjoy.” *Gongyong* 共用 is the modern Chinese word for “shared.”

⁹ The Chinese character *ge* 各 contains an untranslatable pun. *Ge* can be translated as either “by each” or “distinctly/differently.” There are at least two ways to understand “each pervading” (*ge pian* 各遍). One way to construe the term “each pervading” would be to indicate that “each lamplight pervades each other lamplight.” Hence all lamplights gathered together in one room form a singular beam of light. This is the basic idea behind Zhencheng’s interpretation. The other interpretation of “each pervading” means that the light cast by each lamp pervades the entire room. Hence it merely *appears* that there is only one light illuminating the entire room. If one follows this second reading, each consciousness is discrete and “differentiated from one another.” When applied to the issue of the cognition of a common object among multiple consciousnesses, each individual consciousness projects its own object (e.g., a tree) in the same locus and hence it only *appears* that there is only one consciousness that projects only one object in the same locus. This second reading is based upon the earliest commentators on the CWSL and is found in Kuiji’s *Study Notes on the CWSL* (*Cheng weishi lun shuji* 成唯識論述記, hereafter CWSL-SJ), fascicle 3 (T 1830, 43: 321c17–21). This article resorts to the translation of the phrase *ge bian* as “manifest differently,” in conformity with the second reading. This rendering is designed to capture the idea of “same locus” as the *qualitatively* similar representations of the world maintained within *numerically* different individuals.

¹⁰ This study uses Xuanzang’s rendering of “locus.” Xuanzang, the principal compiler of the CWSL, uses the character *chu* 處 when referring to the *bhājanaloka*—e.g., *Triṃśikakārika*, Verse 3c (Lévi, *Triṃśikā (La trentaine) avec le commentaire de Sthiramati*, 19). In this context, *chu* is simply the Chinese equivalent for the Sanskrit word *sthāna*, literally meaning “standing” or

of lamps which pervades each [lamp] in a different manner, yet appears as one.” 雖諸有情，所變各別，而相相似，處所無異。如眾燈明，各遍似一。¹¹

This elusive simile compares the minds of multiple sentient beings to clusters of lamps in a room. While each lamp sends out an individual ray of light, when taken together, the lamps form a singular beam of light. While each mind has its own representation of the external world, when all of the minds are taken together, they form a singular manifestation of the same world. The simile attempts to explain two things: how cognition is akin to a stream of light that illuminates the external world, and how the cognitions of the same things by different sentient beings come to “mutually resemble” (Chi.: *xiangsi* 相似) one another.

The analogy of lamps to minds invokes the venerable Yogācāra concept, first articulated in the *Demonstration of Consciousness-Only*, of “same locus, different manifestations” (Chi.: *tongchu gebian* 同處各變). The concept of same locus, different manifestations means that sentient beings living in the same world or locus can have different subjective experiences of the world, or different manifestations. In this definition, the unique subjective experience of one sentient being is compatible with the unique subjective experience of another sentient being, even if their experiences of the same thing are considerably different.

While not found in the root text of the CWSL, this four-character phrase is used as a shorthand by the Ming Yogācāra commentators to refer to the concept of “many sentient beings residing in one and the same world” (Chi.: *tong zai yi chu* 同在一處). Without the idea of same locus, different manifestations of the conception of the Buddhist world as a place of manifold diversity would be in jeopardy. The idea of same locus, different manifestations is first articulated by Kuiji 窺基 (632–682),¹² one of Xuanzang’s

“ground.” It is metonymical for the *bhājanaloka*—the world of lived experience, writ large. The character *chu* can otherwise mean *āyatana* or “home,” when taken to refer to the sense faculty.

¹¹ CWSL, fascicle two, T 1585, 31: 10c14–16. Reference has been made to the helpful editions of the CWSL: de la Vallée-Poussin (*Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi*, 430), Cook (*Three Texts*, 239), and Wei (*Cheng Weishi Lun*, 567). However, even in these cases, heavy modification has been made in the translations from the CWSL.

¹² See Kuiji’s CWSL-SJ: “The common spiritual fruit resides in one world without obstructions—this refers to the characteristics of the external sensory world.” 共果同在一處不相障礙，謂外器相。T 1830, 43: 321c15–16.

most revered disciples and the principle amanuensis in the compilation of CWSL.¹³ The doctrine of many manifestations in the same locus becomes a focal point in the series of heated disputes between Zhencheng and Zhengui on the sacred perch of Mt. Wutai.

The same world according to the Huayan tradition

The Huayan conception of the same world is different from the Yogācāra definition in one important sense. While the Yogācāra tradition defines the same world as consisting of discrete and different sensory worlds, the Huayan tradition upholds a view of the world as a singular whole containing all sentient beings. This holistic view of the world is based on the Huayan belief that the *dharmadhātu*, or the dharma realm, contains and encompasses the totality of the universe.¹⁴ This conception of the *dharmadhātu* is drawn from one of the most revered of all Mahāyāna Buddhist sūtras, the *Buddhāvataṃsaka Sūtra*, or *Flower Garland Sūtra* (Chi.: *Huayan jing* 華嚴經). The school of Huayan Buddhism derives its name from this beloved third-century sūtra. This sūtra describes the metaphor of Indra's Net wherein the sentient beings that inhabit the world hang like luminescent jewels in the net of the Hindu deity, Indra.¹⁵ Each jewel represents an individual life form that

13 The CWSL is a 7th-century translation and compilation of the Indic Yogācāra commentaries on Vasubandhu's *Thirty Stanzas*. It was compiled by the famous silk-road traveler and prolific translator Xuanzang (602–664 C.E.) and a team of amanuenses and proof-readers. According to the colophon by the literatus, Shen Xuanming, this work was undertaken between the years 645 and 649–50 C.E. Reportedly, Xuanzang began this work in his studio within the Tang Imperial Palace and completed it in the fourth reign year of Xianqing. The authenticity of Mr. Shen's colophon, and the idea that Xuanzang first started working on the CWSL soon after he returned to his native China in 645 C.E. after fifteen years of traveling abroad, are in doubt.

14 In the cosmological context, the *dharmadhātu* designates the singular dharma reflected in each and every world spread across the universe. This is only one of the various senses of the term. Gregory (*Tsung-mi*, 9) explains: "Among other things, *dhātu* can mean 'element,' 'cause,' 'essence,' and 'realm,' hence the compound *dharmadhātu* can refer to the 'dharma-element' that inheres in all beings as the 'cause' of their enlightenment as well as the 'essence of all dharmas' or the 'realm of dharma' that is realized in enlightenment." The *Dharmadhātu* is particularly associated with the last chapter of the *Huayan Sūtra*, the "Chapter on Entering the *Dharmadhātu*."

15 Fazang unravels the *Buddhāvataṃsaka Sūtra*'s "perfect teaching" by unfolding the metaphor of Indra's Net 因陀羅網. Gregory states (*Tsung-mi*, 197): "According to this metaphor, the universe is represented as a vast net extending

reflects, and is reflected by, all other life forms. Indra's Net contains all there is in the world.

Zhencheng applies the concept of the *dharmadhātu* in his attempt to reconcile the Yogācāra conception of the same world with the holistic Huayan paradigm. In his defense of the Huayan stance of a holistic "same world," Zhencheng merges the Yogācāra doctrine of plural sensory worlds with the Huayan conception of the *dharmadhātu*. He does this by subsuming the multiple and overlapping sensory worlds of Yogācāra within the all-encompassing net of the *dharmadhātu* as depicted in the Huayan tradition. In doing this he attempts to uphold the Huayan tenet of the *dharmadhātu* as containing the totality of sentient beings in the world.

Zhengui, Zhencheng's antagonist, defends the Yogācāra position that the same world can be viewed as multiple sensory worlds that overlap with one another, rather than as sensory worlds that are gathered together into one whole world. His position is consistent with the CWSL tenet that the entirety of the universe consists of separate, yet overlapping sensory worlds. Here Zhengui's definition of the sensory world, as akin to a Venn diagram, is in direct opposition to the position on numerical identity, or one world, postulated by the Huayan exegetes.

The sensory world according to the Yogācāra and Huayan traditions

The Yogācāra and Huayan traditions draw their definitions of the sensory world from the earliest teachings on the Buddhist cosmology. The *āgamas*, the records of the early discourses of the historical Buddha, describe the known universe, or *bhājanaloka* (Chi.: *qi shijian* 器世間), as comprised of the 3,000 great chiliocosms, together with their countries.¹⁶ This vast space is also

infinitely in all directions; the manifold phenomena of which it is comprised are represented as resplendent jewels suspended at each point of intersection. In this way each jewel both reflects and is reflected by every other jewel. Thus the process of mutual reflection multiplies endlessly (Chi.: *chong chong wujin* 重重無盡), just as all phenomena of the universe interrelate without obstruction."

¹⁶ According to the Buddha's discourse recorded in *Dīrghāgama* (T 1, 1: 114, b25c08), the earth and its atmosphere make up one small or "lesser world." This world extends from the earth out towards the six concentric heavens of the *kāmadhātu*. One thousand of these smaller worlds form one lesser chiliocosm 小千世界; one thousand of these lesser chiliocosms form a medium chiliocosm

referred to by the Chinese Buddhist scholars as: “this Sahā world”¹⁷ (Chi.: *Shapo shijie* 娑婆世界), the “dusty world” (Chi.: *chenshi* 塵世) of ephemeral, or “floating dust” (Chi.: *fuchen* 浮塵), and “this impure land of ours” (Chi.: *huitu* 穢土).¹⁸ The Sahā world spans from eight hot and eight cold hells below the surface of the earth to the Brahma heavens above. It contains a place for humans and non-human animals between the two. The nine continents that are habitable for ordinary humans are surrounded by four vast seas and either seven (according to Asaṅga) or eight (according to Vasubandhu) concentric rings of iron mountains.¹⁹ Vasubandhu measures the full extent of the chiliocosm to be sixteen hundred thousand leagues (Skt.: *yojanas*; Chi.: *youxun* 由旬), or roughly 200,400 miles.²⁰ This extends from the iron center of the earth to the Brahmā heavens at the outermost reach of the six celestial spheres of the *kāmadhātu*.

An exploration of the baroque detail of the inherited Abhidharma explanations on the relationship between the triple chiliocosm and the realm of sensory desire or *kāmadhātu*²¹ (Chi.: *yujie* 欲界) would take this

中千世界; a thousand of these medium chiliocosms forms one great chiliocosm 大千世界.

- 17 The word *Sahā* is derived from the Sanskrit root—*√sah*—and means, literally, “the world to be endured.” The Chinese translation is a phonetic rendering of the Sanskrit.
- 18 There is an untranslatable double-entendre on the Chinese character *hui* which can mean either “polluted” or “debauched/defiled.”
- 19 The *Treasury of Abhidharma* of Vasubandhu and the *Yogācārabhūmi* of Asaṅga are in lock step in maintaining that the *kāmadhātu* extends from the eight hot and eight cold hells below the earth to the Brahmā heavens 梵天 above the earth. The surface of the earth is said to cover Mount Sumeru and its seven surrounding territories, the eight seas, and the rings of iron mountains. The only discrepancy between the two brothers’ explanations of *kāmadhātu* is that the *Kośa* states that there exist eight rings of iron mountains, whereas the *Yogācārabhūmi* states that there exist only seven. See Kajiyama (“Buddhist Cosmology,” 193).
- 20 This standard measurement finds its *locus classicus* in Vasubandhu’s *Treasury of Metaphysics* (*Abhidharmakośa*), Chapter 3, stanza 45. For Sanskrit text see the edition of Pradhan (AK[Bh], 157). This reckoning is based on A.L. Basham’s (*Wonder That Was India*) reckoning of one *yojana* (= four *krośas*) as approximately nine miles.
- 21 Saṅghabhadra, Vasubandhu’s intellectual arch-rival and most prolific commentator, postulates that the *bhājanaloka* is “fully classified under” (Skt.: *saṃgraha*; Chi.: *she* 攝) the *kāmadhātu*. However, his commentary on AK(Bh) 3.1–3 treats *bhājanaloka* as only part of the *kāmadhātu*. Saṅghabhadra states

investigation far afield. The crucial point here is that not all Buddhist sūtras hold fast to an analytical distinction between “the world of sentient life” (Skt.: *sattvaloka*; Chi.: *youqing jie* 有情界) and the world of insensate material stuff that “contains” sentient beings.²² The *sattvaloka* describes the world that is populated with sentient beings. The *bhājanaloka* refers to the material of the physical world and excludes sentient beings. If one abides by this categorical distinction, theoretically speaking, the *bhājanaloka* can be considered as bereft of sentient life. However, the CWSL ultimately obfuscates this distinction by stating that both material things and sentient minds are “consciousness-only.”²³ The foundational Yogācāra tenet of consciousness-only asserts that the entire universe is constituted by forms of consciousness embodied in sentient beings.

The sensory world as described in the CWSL and in the *Compendium of the Māhāyāna* (Skt.: **Mahāyāna-saṃgrāha-sāstra*; Chi.: *She Dasheng lun* 攝大乘論; hereafter MsG), attributed to Asaṅga,²⁴ is comprised of individual sentient beings experiencing their own worlds. Additionally, both Yogācāra texts link the storehouse consciousness or *ālayavijñāna* of sentient beings as

that the “sensory world” or *bhājanaloka* here includes *only* that part of the six heavens of the *kāmadhātu* observable to humans on earth. See Saṃghabhadra’s Ny (T 1562, 29: 467a13–14) and his *Clarification of Abhidharma Tenets* (T 1563, 29: 833b23–4).

- 22 The Ming-period scholar Zhenjian 真鑑 explains the terminological distinction between the *bhājanaloka* and the *sattvaloka* in his *Commentary on the Correct Pulse of the Śūraṅgama Sūtra* 楞嚴經正脈疏 (postface [*ba* 跋] by the author dated to 1600). In fascicle four of this work, Zhenjian cites the *Mahāsaṃnipata-sūtra* as evidence in favor of the analytical distinction between the *bhājanaloka* and the *sattvaloka*. He writes: “This worldly realm (*lokadhātu*) is our world. Another sūtra (namely, the *Mahāsaṃnipata-sūtra*) states: there are two worlds: firstly, the worldly realm of sentient beings, which indicates sentient beings possessing bodies-with-sense-faculties (Skt.: *kayēndriya*); and secondly, the container world, which indicates the container realm devoid of sentient life.” 世界即世間。別經（即《大方等大集經》）云：世間有二：一者，眾生世間，即有情根身；二者，器世間，即無情器界。X 275, 12: 310c10–11.
- 23 As studied by Schmithausen, the CWSL regards both physical stuff and minds to be uniformly “consciousness-only.” Schmithausen (*On the Problem*, 21) summarizes: “the [CWSL] text is unambiguous in excluding matter as something really existing entirely apart from any form of mind.” Schmithausen often leaves the Sanskrit word *rūpa* untranslated in order to highlight this key term. *Rūpa* is indicated by the Chinese character meaning material thing (*se* 色).
- 24 We take Asaṅga as metonymical for the overall authorial voice of the *Yogācārabhūmi* (YoBhū) and the **Mahāyāna-saṃgrāha-sāstra* (MsG).

central to the experience of the material world. These important Yogācāra texts agree that it is the presence of *ālayavijñāna* that makes one sentient being different from another sentient being. Essentially, this means that each sentient being occupies his or her own, individual and separate world, or *bhājanaloka*.

In his exegeses of the CWSL and the *Compendium*, Xuanzang translates *bhājanaloka* as *qi shijian* (Chi.: 器世間), the “receptacle-world,”²⁵ a world filled with things that are shared or held in common. The Chinese characters for “shared” mean literally—“to be enjoyed and put to use” (Chi.: *shou yong* 受用).

The Chinese character *qi* 器 depicts sacrificial vessels that are used in ancestral rituals. *Qi* are not containers to be “filled in” with material for quotidian use.²⁶ Xuanzang’s rendering of the word *qi shijian* conveys the important idea that the sensory world is much more than a place filled with mundane utensils. In his rendition of the *bhājanaloka*, the sensory world is both sacred and profane.

To come to a more specific definition of the sensory world, the Yogācāra editors of the CWSL address the following questions: Is the sensory world shared by more than one sentient being? If the sensory world is shared, where is it shared? What is the basis of the sameness, or the common experience, of the sensory world?

25 Vasubandhu’s auto-commentary (*Bhāṣyam*) on his own *ślokas* (AK[Bh]) develops the metaphor of cooking implements for the *bhājanaloka*:

“Some (i.e., an alternative opinion) hold that matter can be likened to the receptacle, the sensory enjoyment resembles the food and drink; the agent is like the chef; consciousness stands for the eater/enjoyer (Skt.: *bhokṭṛ*). Thus the sequence of aggregates (Skt.: *skandhas*) is established according to the receptacle, etc.” 或色如器，受類飲食，想同助味，行似厨人；識喻食者，故隨器等立蘊次第。T 1558, 29: 5c10–12. A debt of gratitude is owed to the anonymous reviewer for pointing out previous errors in this author’s punctuation and translation of this difficult Chinese passage from Xuanzang’s translation of AK(Bh). Skt. based on Pradhan (AK[Bh], 25): *bhājanādyarthena vā. Bhājana-bhojana-vyañjana-karṭṛ-bhokṭṛ-bhūtā hi rūpādayaḥ skandhāḥ*. Tib. based on (D 4090, 140: 37a7): *yang na snod la sogs pa'i don gyis te, gzugs la sogs pa'i phung po ni snod dang zas dang tshod ma dang byan po dang za ba po lta bu'o*.

26 Lusthaus relates (via personal communication on December 15, 2016): “The Chinese character *qi* 器 originally depicted sacrificial vessels that were utensils to be used in ancestral rituals. So *qi* is not just a ‘receptacle,’ in the sense of a mere container of things, but something tempting, exploitable, subject to and inviting consumption, a ‘sensory sphere’ or domain of either sacred or greedy utility.”

The sensory world according the Yogācāra doctrine

The CWSL defines the sensory world, or *bhājanaloka*, as a place that must be experienced by more than one sentient being to exist. The authors of the CWSL defend the definition of a sensory world by confronting two counter-examples of sensory worlds found in Asaṅga's *Basis for Yoga Practitioners*. The first example includes a description of the world as a hellish environment (Chi.: *diyu* 地獄) occupied by one forlorn (Chi.: *gudu* 孤獨)²⁷ and unfortunate sentient being. The second example is a post-apocalyptic vision of an uninhabited and barren world that is inimical to life. While the existences of a solitary hell and an uninhabited world are generally accepted and commonly found within the Buddhist scriptures, these descriptions jeopardize one of the basic tenets of the CWSL, the principle that a world exists if and only if it is inhabited by more than one sentient being. The CWSL elaborates upon these two scenarios to bolster the tenet of the pluralistic sensory world.

The CWSL defends the sweeping claim presented in the Buddhist Mahāyāna sūtras that the sensory world is comprised of all sentient beings within the triple chiliocosm and therefore shared. The Yogācāra authors spell out two qualifications to the overarching claim that the world is shared by “all sentient beings.”²⁸ The first is that the “defiled” Sahā world is separate and

²⁷ The Tang-period scholar Lingtai 靈泰, the disciple of Zhizhou 智周 (668–723), explains that the lonely tormented hell-being (Skt.: *nāraka*; Chi.: *najialuo* 那迦羅) remains ignorant of the salvific powers of the sages. However, Lingtai points out that the lone occupant of the solitary hell does not exist in an entirely isolated state. In Lingtai's parlance, “beings above perceive worlds below” 上緣下器. Lingtai, *Jottings on Kuiji's Commentaries on CWSL (Cheng weishi lun shu chao, CWSL-SC)*, X 819, 50: 233a14. According to Lingtai's explanation, although separated from the solitary hells by a vast distance, bodhisattvas in the rarified “immaterial realms” remain aware of the physical suffering in the lowliest of the low. The bodhisattva sustains awareness of each and every sentient being across the triple chiliocosm—the entirety of the known universe—even if this form of awareness may be unilateral and not bilateral in nature. The similar explanation of the Bodhisattva's unilateral access to solitary hells is found in Ruli's 如理 *Deducing the Doctrines of CWSL-SJ (Cheng weishi lun shu yi yan 成唯識論疏義演, CWSL-YY)*, X 815, 29: 558c23.

²⁸ CWSL articulates these two qualifications in order to account for the existence of the uninhabitable worlds. The thought is that the common sensory world is a common projection of sentient beings of either of two standings: firstly, those who are currently populating that world, and secondly, those who will be reincarnated into it: “Hence, the world we presently inhabit, the maturative consciousnesses (Skt.: *vipākavijñānas*; Chi.: *yishou shi* 異熟識) that project

distinct from the “Pure Lands” (Chi.: *Jingtu* 淨土).²⁹ The second is that the definition of “all sentient beings” is not restricted to “each and every sentient being *currently* in the universe.”³⁰ This qualification accounts for the presence of bodhisattvas who elect to leave the blissful confines of the Pure Land to rescue the sentient beings who are suffering in desolate “solitary hells” or in barren wastelands that are wracked by the three types of disasters—either by wind, water, or fire.

The Yogācāra definition of a shared sensory world demands a precise explanation regarding what is meant by commonality, or shared subjective experience. In his seventh century commentary, *Study Notes on the CWSL* (*Cheng weishi lun shuji* 成唯識論述記, hereafter CWSL-SJ),³¹ Xuanzang’s prolific disciple and renowned Yogācāra expert, Kuiji, takes great pains to formulate the definitions and categories of commonality. The idea of commonality conforms to the central Yogācāra tenet that sentient beings are not alone in their general perceptions of the sensory world. The sensory world

this world, belong to those sentient beings who presently inhabit this world, or to those who will be reborn into it. The scripture states ‘all [sentient beings]’ to refer to the lesser part, because the various sentient beings with the same karma, project the world in common.” 是故現居及當生者，彼異熟識，變為此界。經依少分說一切言，諸業同者，皆共變故。T 1585, 31: 10c21–23.

- 29 The CWSL in fascicle two (T 1585, 31: 10c18–20) reads: “There is a view that holds: if it were the case that this world were projected by the consciousnesses of all sentient beings, then the Buddhas and the Bodhisattvas should actually project this polluted land. The ordinary earthlings (Skt.: *prthagjanas*; Chi.: *yisheng*), should actually project other areas (i.e., outside of the triple world-system), including the pure lands of this world-system, or of other world-systems.” 有義：若爾，諸佛菩薩應實變為此雜穢土。諸異生等，應實變為他方，此界諸淨妙土。
- 30 The CWSL in fascicle two (T 585, 31: 11a1–2) states: “Henceforth, when the world is going to be recycled, and when it has just started to re-emerge, although there are no sentient beings inhabiting it, it is yet manifestly existent. This view asserts that as for the world experienced by all sentient beings, sometimes it is experienced in a distinct way—in this way one should know that it is because what is seen differs between hungry ghost, human, and celestial being (*deva*), etc.” 故器世界將壞，初成。雖無有情，而亦現有。
- 31 Ming commentators honorifically refer to this meticulous line-by-line exegesis as the *Great Commentary* (*Da Shu* 大疏). No longer extant at the time of their writing, it appears to have been circulated through the interregnum between the fall of the Tang dynasty and the establishment of the Song dynasty. However, Kuiji’s seminal commentary was reintroduced from Japan into mainland China during the early 20th century by late-Qing period reformers. See Makeham, *Transforming Consciousness*.

that is experienced by individual sentient beings is always available to others. It is always shared. Within this concept, however, room is made for the unique perceptions or multiple perspectives of the material world that may not be identical to the subjective experiences of all sentient beings. Uncommon, or unique experiences, and common, or shared experiences, are considered to overlap within the Yogācāra tradition. Kuiji formulates the overlapping space between common and uncommon experience into four parts.³² While Kuiji's four permutations on commonality and uncommonality are regarded as original contributions to the CWSL, his iconic examples are found in the body of traditional Buddhist scriptures:

1. Commonality within commonality means that all sentient beings share unanimous subjective experiences of the material world and all the objects within it. Kuiji likens this to the “mountain without a master” in that a mountain is experienced by all sentient beings similarly and without a dominant interpretation of the sensory experience of the mountain, or “a master.” Taixu equates the sensory world with pure commonality.³³ He states that commonality within commonality is the most neutral view of the world in that it represents everyone on the earth and “nowhere and nobody” in particular.
2. Uncommonality within commonality means that all sentient beings share a majority or dominant subjective viewpoint of the material world and the objects within it, yet may have individual experiences of the sensory world. Here Kuiji enlists the metaphor of “a field that is lent to a family as part of the community fields in a village.”³⁴ While the field is

³² The cohort of Ming scholars studied here redact these examples directly from the *Records of the Source-Mirror*, fascicle forty-nine (T 48, 2016: 705a7–9). This presentation of the tetralemma is essentially the same as originally presented in Kuiji's CWSL-SJ, fascicle three (T 1830, 43: 321b7–c1). For a detailed study on Yanshou's *Records of the Source-Mirror*, see Welter, *Yongming Yanshou's Conception of Chan in the Zongjing lu*.

³³ Taixu writes: “the sensory world that constitutes part of the realm of subtle material form (*rūpadhātu*) observable by sentient beings within the *kāmadhātu* is not fully classified under the four alternatives. The above character ‘common’ is a comprehensive classification for only the insensate material [of the *bhājanaloka*].” 欲界有情望色界器世間，非四句攝，但上一共字攝，是非情之色故。Shi, “Ping Yinshun gong bu-gong yanjiu,” 113.

³⁴ The more recherche example derives from Vasubandhu's *Twenty Verses on Consciousness-only*, Stanza 3 hemistich d—see edition of Lévi (*Vimś*, 5). Here, the same river is viewed in radically different ways by different kinds of sentient beings. For example, where the human sees crystal clear drinking water,

commonly shared by the community each family has a part of the field that they farm on their own.

3. Uncommonality within uncommonality means that experiences of the material world are not unanimously shared by sentient beings and that the differences in subjective experiences outweigh their similarities. This permutation posits that individual subjective experiences between and among sentient beings are more different than similar. Kuiji employs the example the eyeball and the cortex in the visual nervous system. Zhengui follows this explanation in observing that we do not see the operative part of the visual nervous system.³⁵ For example, because we do not see the visual apparatus of another sentient being processing the experience of seeing a halogen light, this experience can be considered singular and unique.
4. Commonality within uncommonality means that while experiences of the material world are not unanimously shared by sentient beings, experiences among sentient beings are more similar than different. Kuiji notes that while humans and other sentient creatures have similar sense organs, for example, eyeballs, there is some variability in the visual perception of sentient beings. For example, humans and dogs have eyeballs in common, but when humans and dogs look at a halogen light, humans will see a continuous beam and dogs will see a flickering light. While their experiences of the halogen light are different, both the human and the dog share the experience of seeing light.

In the Wutai debates, Zhencheng and Zhengui use Kuiji's tetralemma or *catuṣkoṭi* (Chi.: *siju* 四句) as a cynosure. Zhengui cites by verbatim a version of Kuiji's *catuṣkoṭi*, edited by Yongming Yanshou 永明延壽 (904–975), the tenth century commentator on the Yogācāra and Huayan texts.³⁶ Zhencheng rejects the concept of commonality within commonality because he views this

the hungry-ghost (*preta*) sees a horrific “river of pus” (Skt.: *pūyanadī*; Chi.: *nong-he* 膿河).

³⁵ This gloss appears in Kuiji's CWSL-SJ at T 1830, 43: 321b26–7. Zhengui paraphrases: 如自浮塵根他亦受用故.

³⁶ For Zhengui's presentation of this tetralemma, see *Direct Exegesis*, 96[recto-verso]. Zhengui closely follows Yanshou's Records of the *Source-Mirror* and provides the traditional examples corresponding to each “horn” of the tetralemma. Apart from the *Records of the Source-Mirror*, Zhengui's presentation derives most of the material from Chengguan's commentary on the *Buddhāvataṃsaka Sūtra* (T 1736, 36: 615c2) and from Wang Kentang's *Verification of the CWSL Doctrine* (X 822, 50: 874a3).

permutation as inconsistent with the Huayan interpretation of sameness as presented in the CWSL. Zhengui, wedded to a strict construction of commonality within commonality, returns to the earlier and more precise version of the *catuṣkotip* presented by Kuiji in his seventh century commentary, *Direct Exegesis on the CWSL*. Here Kuiji states that pure commonality is not feasible because of the indelible influences of common and uncommon karma that render the experience of each sentient being separate and unique. Kuiji stipulates that commonality within commonality is possible in theory only. Zhengui reclaims Kuiji's original interpretation of this permutation of the sensory world and positions commonality within commonality as a theoretical construction.

The sensory world according to the Huayan teachings

In an effort to uphold the core Huayan tenet (Huayan *zong*) of the pervasive reality of the *dharmadhātu*, the Huayan scholars delve extensively into the nature of commonality within commonality as defined by the Yogācāra and Huayan sources. The cardinal Huayan tenet of the pervasive reality of the *dharmadhātu* holds that the *dharmadhātu*, the Buddhist realm of ultimate reality, encompasses all there is. By definition, the *dharmadhātu* excludes nothing and no one. It is, in this sense, according to Fazang, “all pervasive.”³⁷ The Huayan masters of the Tang dynasty, most famously Fazang, the “third patriarch” of the Huayan tradition, and his successor, “the fourth patriarch” Chengguan 澄觀 (738–839), offer a systematic approach to the exegesis on the same world that is embedded in the doctrine of the all-encompassing *dharmadhātu*.³⁸

³⁷ Fazang glosses the word “pervasive” as: “pervasive means universal and all-inclusive.” 無不普周法界名遍—see fascicle three of his *Probing the Profundities*, T 1733, 35: 146c25.

³⁸ In his longer commentary on the *Buddhāvataṃsaka*, Chengguan postulates the mutual identity of three kinds of worldly realms within the pervasive scope of the Buddha Vairocana's enlightened vision (T 1736, 36: 175a16–20). Three kinds of worlds in the context of the teaching of *Huayan jing* refer to (1) the world of sentient life (Skt.: *sattvaloka*; Chi.: *Zhongsheng shijian* 衆生世間), (2) the sensory world (Skt.: *bhājanaloka*; Chi.: *qi shijian* 器世間), the insensate container of sensate things, and (3) the enlightened world (Chi.: *zhi zhengjue shijian* 智正覺世間). In this text, Chengguan also cites the *Prajñāparāmita sūtras* which give the threefold rubric of (1) the sentient world, (2) the world constituted by five aggregates 五蘊世間, and (3) the sensory world. Chengguan goes on to identify the worldly realm (Skt.: *lokadhātu*) with the sentient world. He identifies the “countries and lands” (Chi.: *guo tu* 國土) with the

The corpuses of the Huayan patriarchs uphold this cardinal principle. Zhencheng looks to the “Worthy Elders” (Chi.: Xianshou 賢首)³⁹ of the Huayan tradition to defend the principle that all sensory worlds, without exclusion, are embraced within the *dharmadhātu*.

In his oft-cited text, *Records Probing the Profundities of the Buddhāvataṃsaka Sūtra* (Chi.: *Huayan tan xuan ji* 華嚴經探玄記), Fazang locates a cogent strategy to reconcile the Yogācāra doctrine of same world with the Huayan *dharmadhātu* teachings. In his exegesis on the CWSL discussions on the same world, Fazang reconfigures the four alternatives on commonality versus uncommonality laid out by Kuiji.⁴⁰ In his interpretation of the same world, Fazang assumes that commonality is not simply theoretical, but a real possibility. In his listing of the four alternatives, Fazang positions the *dharmadhātu* within the realm of pure commonality first and foremost. He incorporates Kuiji’s permutations on commonality and uncommonality into the Huayan system of *dharmadhātu*.

Fazang’s paradigm of the commonality and uncommonality of the sensory worlds is as follows:⁴¹

bhājanaloka. He reasons that these units of space “are all pervaded by the *dharmadhātu*.” 一切者，遍法界故。

³⁹ During the Ming dynasty, Xingzong 性宗—lit., “the tradition of dharmature”—was synonymous with Xianshou-zong 賢首宗—the tradition of worthy elders.” The latter is the title of the eighth chapter of the *Buddhāvataṃsaka sūtra*. This sobriquet was granted to Fazang by Empress Wu Zetian 武則天 (reign: 690–705).

⁴⁰ See fascicle three of Kuiji’s *Study Notes on the CWSL* (CWSL-SJ), T 1830, 43: 321b6–14.

⁴¹ Fazang states in fascicle three (T 1733, 35: 159c29–160a6) of his *Records Probing the Profundities of the Buddhāvataṃsaka Sūtra*: “Based upon the perfect teaching there are two doctrines: the first is just like the foregoing teachings stating that it [the sensory world] is the same as the multitudinously layered net of Indra belonging to the the immeasurable *dharmadhātu* in that the sensory world abides in non-impeded completeness. Both master and servant fall under this classification. The second doctrine also takes the form of a tetralemma. Firstly, either the world is common in being one and the same with the *dharmadhātu*, because they are mutually identical, or secondly, the world is not-shared because of the fact that diverging conditions arise, and because its features are not co-mingled. Thirdly, the previous two views hold, because the features are not co-mingled. Or, fourthly, the two views are both incorrect, since they exclude each other, because of the fact that the forms efface and exhaust each other.” 若依圓教有二義。一如前諸教所說，即同無盡法界帝網重重即入無礙具足，主伴即屬此攝。二以義求亦有四句：一、或唯共，

1. Pure commonality means that all sentient beings share one and the same sensory world within “one and the same dharma-realm.”
2. Pure uncommonality means that each sentient being occupies a singular and unique sensory world based on their individual karma.
3. Pure commonality and pure uncommonality means that the sensory world consists of both shared and singular subjective experience.
4. Neither pure commonality nor pure uncommonality means that the sensory world of each sentient being cannot be explained by either shared or singular experience.

In contrast to Kuiji’s Yogācāra-rooted representation of the sensory world as comprised of mutually overlapping sensory worlds, the Huayan exegetes represent the world of pure commonality, or *dharmadhātu*, as all-encompassing. They defend their position of the sensory as all there is by elaborating on the Huayan concept of *dharmadhātu*.

In the dispute Zhencheng grapples with the difficulty of reconciling the Yogācāra paradigm of multiple and overlapping sensory worlds with the Huayan worldview of a singular and indivisible universe. To reconcile the two conceptions of the sensory world Zhencheng returns to the general Buddhist teachings (Chi.: *tongjiao* 通教) on the great triple chiliocosm. He treats the thousand individual worlds of the ancient Buddhist chiliocosm as one unit that fits within the Huayan cosmology of the *dharmadhātu* (Chi.: *fajie* 法界).⁴² This perspective is derived from the Vairocana Buddha 毘盧遮那佛, the celestial Buddha resting upon a gigantic lotus-blossom who makes the claim in the Huayan sūtras⁴³ that the vast chiliocosm fits into a single grain of sand.⁴⁴

以同一法界故，相即故；二、或唯不共，以緣起各別故，相不雜故；三、或俱以上二義，不相離故，以全體相即而不壞故；四、或俱非，以二相混故，形奪盡故。

42 Zhencheng borrows this idea from the specific context of Fazang’s exegesis on the “Vairocana Buddha chapter” of the *Buddhāvataṃsaka* in his *Probing the Profundities*, fascicle three (T 1733, 35: 158a19–22).

43 This claim is initially made in fascicle three of Buddhahadra’s 佛馱跋陀羅 translation of the *Buddhāvataṃsaka sūtra*, wherein Samantarabhadra 普賢 offers a vivid description of this oceanic realm (T 278, 9: 412a16–413c16). However, later on, in the “Chapter (*Varga*) the Third on the Vairocana Buddha,” 盧舍那佛品, the further detailed description of this Lotus-Realm is delivered from the mouth of Vairocana himself.

44 Fazang’s *Records Probing the Profundities* adduce the **Mahāprajñā-pāramitōpadeśa*. This earlier text counts the great triple chiliocosm as only one constitutive unit making up a wider universe. Fazang states: “Based upon the

Zhencheng also references the metaphor of Indra’s Net to illustrate the comprehensiveness of phenomena contained within the *dharmadhātu*. Zhencheng’s reverent and evocative use of the venerable Mahāyāna sūtras allow him to make a rapprochement between the specific Yogācāra-based conception of the sensory world with the all-encompassing view upheld by the Huayan doctrine.

The trenchant analysis of the doctrine of the sensory world by the Ming scholars, Zhencheng and Zhengui, cuts through the geographical detail of chiliocosm to a direct investigation of the theoretical underpinnings of the ancient teachings of the Buddhist cosmology. The current investigation relies upon two unstudied verbatim accounts of this debate written by Zhencheng⁴⁵ and Zhengui.⁴⁶

The crux of the disputes between Zhencheng and Zhengui

The Wutai debates, as reported by Zhengui in the *Direct Exegesis on the CWSL*, open with Zhencheng and Zhengui debating the theory of same locus, different manifestations. Zhengui states:

When I saw the Dharma Master Seal-of-Emptiness (Zhencheng), at his ancient and venerable seat at Mt. Tai (*Wutai shan*), he said that he was concerned that without a foundation in scripture and logical reasoning, the theory of “same locus, different manifestations” in the *Demonstration of Consciousness-Only*, would hardly ever be believed or accepted.

final teaching, such as that of the *Mahāprajñā-pāramitōpadeśa*, we regard the great triple chiliocosm as a singular numerical unit.” 若依終教，如《智論》中，以三千大千世界為一數。(T 1733, 35: 158a17–19) Fazang takes one great chiliocosm to the quadrillioth degree to derive the measurements of the realm of Vairocana Buddha—his marvelous lotus-store world with its vast oceans spreading in four cardinal directions 蓮華藏世界。This lotus-store world is depicted in the Vairocana Chapter of the *Buddhāvataṃsaka sūtra*—see Buddhahadra’s translation at T 278, 9: 412a16–413c16.

⁴⁵ For Zhencheng’s critique as unfolded in his own work, see his *Polished Exegesis on the Compendium of the Mahāyāna*, fascicle two, 345[recto]–360 [verso]. To avoid tedious repetition, this article cites the edition provided by Jian (“Kongyin zhencheng dui xiangzong xueshuo zhi shangque”).

⁴⁶ Zhencheng’s critique is reported by Zhengui in the latter’s *Direct Exegesis on the CWSL*, vol. 2, fascicle two, 96[recto]–97[verso].

貴昔宴寂臺山，見空印澄法師云：《唯識論》「同處各變」之說，若無教理，恐難信受。⁴⁷

Zhencheng asserts his objection to the revered Yogācāra analogy equating the minds of multiple sentient beings to collections of lamps in a room. He says, “This example does not fit” 喻不齊故。⁴⁸ Zhencheng states:

The light of the lamps does not contain any obstructive stuff. The light of the each lamp can stream into and permeate another light because there is no obstructive stuff in the light. The material sensory worlds [of individual sentient beings] contain obstructive stuff. So how can you say that the obstructive stuff in the sensory world can stream through and permeate other obstructive stuff in the sensory world?⁴⁹ 燈明無質礙；燈明可涉入；器界有質礙，云何得涉入？⁵⁰

Zhencheng decisively rejects the analogy of collective lamplight illuminating a room as equivalent to the experience of the same world of sentient beings. He regards aspects of this analogy as internally incoherent.⁵¹ By dismantling

⁴⁷ *Direct Exegesis on the CWSL*, vol. 2, fascicle two, 96[recto].

⁴⁸ Zhengui, *Direct Exegesis on the CWSL*, vol. 2, fascicle two, 96[recto].

⁴⁹ Fascicle one of the CWSL cites two cases of different things “spreading throughout and penetrating each other.” Kuiji discusses how “sand receives water without increasing in volume” 沙得水而不增 (CWSL-SJ T 1830, 43: 264c17). He then discusses how “the copper vessel receives the medicinal powder without adding volume” 銅得藥而不長 (CWSL-SJ T 1830, 43: 264c17). These two examples appear in the CWSL arguments for the conclusion that cause and effect are obstructive in that they cannot occupy exactly the same space. This doctrine that two things can occupy the same space is attributed to the Brāhmanical Sāṅkhya tradition. However, the text ultimately rules out these two purported cases of assimilation of material without physical increase. The CWSL appeals to this principle again in arguments that molecular particles must have “hard edges” (Chi.: *fangfen* 方分) or boundaries, because otherwise molecules “run through” each other.

⁵⁰ *Polished Exegesis on the Compendium of the Mahāyāna*, fascicle 3, 9[recto].

⁵¹ In his *Polished Exegesis on the Compendium of the Mahāyāna*, Zhencheng further voices his doubts regarding the scriptural basis of the example of collective lamplight from the CWSL. Here, Zhencheng expresses his main objection as follows: “I worry that the property exemplified by the example is unestablished. Because of the fact that the light cast by the many lamps is not obstructed, they (i.e., the lights) can stream into and flow through one another. But it is clearly self-evident that this sensory world contains obstructive things, so how can you say that those [obstructive things] can permeate one another, just like the lamplights. Does different stuff pervade each other?” 此中法喻，

this analogy, Zhencheng threatens Zhengui's tenacious commitment to the Yogācāra doctrine of same world, different manifestations. In his response, Zhengui formulates a logical reconstruction of the CWSL doctrine of the same world as consisting of more than one overlapping world.

The three-part syllogism: Zhengui's defense of the same-world, different manifestations

Zhengui's response to Zhencheng's criticism of the lamp metaphor is found at the end of fascicle two in his *Direct Exegesis on the CWSL*. Here he presents his defense of the Yogācāra doctrine of the same world, different manifestations in the form of an inference (Skt.: *anumāna* ; Chi.: *biliang* 比量) or syllogism. Zhengui constructs the syllogism to prove that the representations of sentient beings living in the same world resemble one another.

There are three parts, or “members” (Chi.: *zhi* 支), to his proof. They are the subject-locus (Skt.: *pakṣa* ; Chi.: *zong* 宗), the reason (Skt.: *hetu* ; Chi.: *yin* 因), and the example (Skt.: *dṛṣṭānta* ; Chi.: *yu* 喻):

1. The subject-locus is: The numerous sentient beings or property-possessors (Skt.: *dharmin* ; Chi.: *you-fa*) have no difference in their locus or target property (Skt.: *sādhya* ; Chi.: *fa*).

雖諸有情（是有法），處無所異（是宗）。

The subject-locus (Chi.: *zong*) states that more than one, or multiple sentient beings, occupy the same locus or world. In this logical system the word *zong* refers to both the subject, “numerous sentient beings”, and the predicate, “living in the same world”. Zhengui uses the word *zong* for the purpose of underlining the point that the subject and the predicate, while separable for logical analysis, also belong together. In order to support this logical system, Zhengui produces the second member—the reason, or *yin* .

2. The reason is: The particular and differentiated characteristics of what is manifest to each [sentient being] mutually resemble one another.

因云：所變各別相相似故。

恐難成立。彼諸燈明無質碍故，可相涉入，此器世界確然質碍，云何入，如彼燈明，異質相徧耶？ Jian, “Kongyin zhencheng dui xiangzong xuesho zhi shangque.”

The reason states that the representations of the world shared by sentient beings are similar. Because sentient beings share similar representations of the sensory world, it can be inferred that these representations correspond to the same world. Zhengui's reason is paraphrased from the root text of the CWSL on the topic of the same world (T 1585, 31: 10c15). To support his reason, Zhengui produces the third member, the *yu*, and reprises the Yogācāra example of the lamps from the CWSL.

3. Thus, our example is: We liken it to the luminosities of a multitude of lamps, pervading each other and appearing as one.

故喻云：如眾燈明，各徧似一。⁵²

In the example Zhengui reclaims the celebrated Yogācāra analogy of lamps in the service of protecting the CWSL doctrine of the same world. In his reprisal he reconfigures the root text into a cut and dry formulation that illustrates how the idea of same world provides the best explanatory account for why sentient beings share a high degree of similarity in their subjective experiences.

Zhengui's three-membered syllogism is adapted from a commentary by his Sichuanese contemporary, Yiyu Tongrun 一雨通潤 (1565–1624).⁵³ The syllogism was later adapted into Lingyuan Dahui's 靈源大惠 (1564–1636)⁵⁴ commentary, *Investigation into the CWSL*. The differences in the three

⁵² *Direct Exegesis on the CWSL*, vol. 2, fascicle two, 96[recto].

⁵³ Zhengui cites four previous commentaries on the CWSL from the Ming dynasty. These are: Fuci Mingyu's 輔慈明昱 *Accessible Explanations on the CWSL* 俗詮 (First Printed on July 28th, 1612 萬曆王子秋七月朔旦), Shaojue Guangcheng's 紹覺廣承 (1560–1609) *Commentary on the CWSL* 成唯識論疏, a posthumous work compiled by his disciple Bianyin Daji 辯音大基 and also printed in 1612, and Tongrun's *Collected Explanations* 集解 printed in the same year, and Wang Kentang 王肯堂 (1549–1613), *Verification of the CWSL Doctrines* 成唯識論證義 (First Printed in Aug., 1613). There are a total of twelve extant Ming-period commentaries on the CWSL by eleven different authors. Two of these commentaries exist only in the form of *codex unicus* (Chi.: *guben* 孤本). Two others exist in only two copies. For an exhaustive bibliography and determination of dating, see Jian (“Bei wangque de chuantong”).

⁵⁴ See Dahui's *Investigation into the CWSL*, fascicle two, (X 823, 51: 176c13–16), published during the Inaugural Reign Year of the Chongzhen Emperor 明崇禎元年 (1628–9). There are only incidental differences with Zhengui here, and some additional *glosses*.

presentations of the inference by Zhengui, Tongrun, and Dahui⁵⁵ are negligible. All agree that it intends to prove that the target property, or the non-difference of locus, inheres in the subject, or numerous sentient beings.

Zhengui's rendering of the syllogism is successful in defending the CWSL idea that many sentient beings reside in the same world. To make his point Zhengui places two Chinese characters in parentheses in the first part of his syllogism, the property-possessor (Chi.: *youfa* 有法), or "plural sentient beings," and the property belonging to the property-possessor (Chi.: *fa* 法), or "sharing the same locus." By the *trairūpya* criteria (Chi.: *yin sanxiang* 因三相) established by the great sixth century philosopher, Dignāga,⁵⁶ Zhengui's inference is satisfactory.

Zhengui asserts that the syllogism meets each of the criteria for a valid inference. These criteria are:

- (1) The subject-locus is compatible with the reason. This means that sentient beings have similar representations of the same world.
- (2) The example given is compatible with the reason. This means that the light produced from lamps in the same room forms one beam.
- (3) There are no counter-examples. This means that, just as rays of light do not obstruct one another, the experiences of sentient beings in the same world do not obstruct one another.

Zhencheng, however, is not content with Zhengui's syllogism. He claims that the comparison of "many different lamps appearing to cast a single ray of light in one room together" to the experiences of many sentient beings occupying the same world, "does not fit."

⁵⁵ Tongrun's presentation of the core inference is exactly the same as Zhengui's—see Tongrun's *Collected Exegesis on Treatise Demonstrating Consciousness-Only* 成唯識論集解 (X 821, 50: 692c11) in fascicle two.

⁵⁶ The two foundational textbooks for *hetu-vidyā* study in Ming China were the *Gateway to Logic* (*Nyāyapraveśa* 因明入正理論), attributed to Śaṅkarasvāmin 商羯羅主, Dignāga's disciple, and the *Threshold of Logic* (*Nyāyamukha* 因明正理門論), attributed to Dignāga himself. See Tucci's studies (*Pre-Dinnāga Buddhist Texts; Nyāyamukha of Dignāga*) on Dignāga and pre-Dignāga sources on *hetu-vidyā*.

Section Two: The Wutai Debates—Zhencheng and Zhengui dispute the nature of the same world

The Wutai debates offer a vivid demonstration of how two Ming scholars contend with the doctrinal and philosophical issues embedded within the question of what comprises the same world. In his *Polished Exegesis on the Compendium of the Mahāyāna*, Zhencheng enlists a series of counter-arguments to invalidate the analogy of lamps used by Zhengui in his three-part syllogism. In his extensive rejoinder to Zhencheng, preserved in his *Direct Exegesis on the CWSL*, Zhengui defends the use of Yogācāra analogy of the lamps as a valid inference of how sentient beings experience the sensory world.

Zhencheng’s defense of the same world according to the Huayan doctrine

In the Wutai debates, Zhencheng upholds the stance that the entirety of the sensory world is subsumed within the one world *dharmadhātu* of Huayan Buddhism. He challenges the Yogācāra idea of the same world as comprised of multiple and overlapping worlds by pointing out a fundamental defect in this conceptualization of the sensory world. Zhencheng identifies the philosophical flaw within this theory as the problem of “obstruction” (Chi.: *youai* 有礙)⁵⁷ in the material and internal subjective worlds of sentient beings. Obstructions are external objects and internal factors that constrict perceptions of the real world.

Zhencheng’s complaint with the Yogācāra theory is that it fails to account for the ubiquity of obstruction in the sensory world. In developing this idea, Zhencheng considers how common karma and uncommon karma obstruct the subjective experiences of sentient beings and render them unique or uncommon. According to Zhencheng, the innumerable experiences of uncommonality can be reconciled within a construct of the same world, if and only if, the minds of sentient beings are contained within the all-encompassing net of the *dharmadhātu*.

⁵⁷ Kim (“Higashi Ajia no Kegon Sekai”) draws scholarly attention to the core notion of “non-obstruction” (Japanese: *muge*). He traces this common thread through a synoptic investigation of many Huayan thinkers throughout Chinese, Korean, and Japanese intellectual history.

Zhencheng begins his argument by debunking the example of the lamps found in the CWSL text. He follows with three examples that demonstrate the problem of obstruction in the shared world: the warring states of Qin and Chu, the pebble on the mountain, and the communal millstone. Having dispensed with the difficulty of obstruction in the Yogācāra theory, Zhencheng articulates the concept of explicit consciousness (Chi.: *xianshi* 現識), the process that allows sentient beings to take in the multitudinous features of the sensory world. Together these arguments allow Zhencheng to reconcile the unique sensory experiences of each sentient being within the holistic conception of the same world of Huayan Buddhism.

Zhencheng’s critique of the light metaphor: Lamps are not perfect emitters of light

In his critique of the CWSL discussion on the sensory world, Zhencheng homes in on a faulty component in the metaphor of the lamp used by Zhengui in his syllogism. Zhencheng states that the analogy of lamps emitting light to that of sentient beings projecting cognitions does not hold because it does not account for the fact that objects composed of solid material obstruct one another.⁵⁸ The basic idea is that while a beam of light is not subject to

⁵⁸ In fascicle three of his fastidious line-by-line *Study Notes on the CWSL* (CWSL-SJ: T 1830, 43: 322a3–6), Kuiji poses a question that touches upon part of Zhencheng’s doubts: “if that were so [i.e., if each and every presentation is distinct to a particular mind], with the common stimulation of a tree, etc., in many people, for what reason does [each stimulation] *not* mutually obstruct one another?” 若爾，多人共感木等，何故亦互相礙？ Kuiji’s response runs: “it does not obstruct the other mind, but only obstructs one’s own mind. We liken it to the hundred-thousand non-obstructions, which are the opposite of light. There have been obstructions and non-obstructions from time immemorial.” 彼不礙他心上者，但礙自者。如心上燈明，百千不礙，與「明」相違。無始於中有礙、不礙故。 (A debt of gratitude is owed to the anonymous reviewer for pointing out that the 亦 in Kuiji’s question is a negative rhetorical-adverb). In his subgloss on Kuiji’s *Study Notes on the CWSL*, Ruli 如理 (CWSL-YY: X 815, 49: 558a6–13) unpacks the main idea in Kuiji’s statement that “the hundred-thousand non-obstructive lights are impeded by ‘light’ from time immemorial.” Ruli writes that this is meant to express the idea that “the lamp, the moon, and the sun, etc., are the same kind of thing in that their light does not include mutual obstructions. We liken it to ‘many trees, rocks, etc.’ within the mind of one person which do not obstruct each other.” The implication of this view is that common world is differentiated based upon its manifestation within the mind of the individual sentient being.

obstruction by other beams of light, lamps, because they are material objects, are subject to obstruction by other lamps. He presents this difficulty in the form of a rhetorical question:

You say “the mutually-resembling characteristics manifest by each different sentient being reside in the same singular locus”—but how do they not mutually obstruct each other?

而言「所變各異，而相相似，同在一處」，不相礙耶？⁵⁹

This question is meant to point out an absurd consequence in the theory as represented in the analogy of the lamps to minds. If minds projecting cognitions into the same world are equivalent to lamps emitting light into the same world, how would minds not interfere, or obstruct each other, as lamps crowd, and obstruct each other. Zhencheng appeals to a distinction in *hetu-vidyā*, the difference between the source (Chi.: *yuyi* 喻依) of the beam of light, or the lamp, and the substance being emitted from the lamp (Chi.: *yuti* 喻體), or the beam of light.⁶⁰ While the beam of light is *not* subject to obstruction 質礙, the lamps constituting the source of the light *are* subject to obstruction and displacement by other material objects.⁶¹

The analogy of lamps emitting a singular, cohesive beam of light and sentient beings uniformly projecting cognitions of the same world is further contested by Zhencheng. He continues his argument by enumerating the real world factors, such as the specific location and the brightness of each lamp in the room, that interfere with the uniformity of the light being emitted. Citing these difficulties, Zhencheng arrives at the conclusion that the analogy of

⁵⁹ Zhengui, *Direct Exegesis on the CWSL*, Vol. 2, fascicle two, 96[recto].

⁶⁰ In order to establish that “sound is impermanent, because it’s a product,” the opponent needs a positive example apart from sound. “Pot” provides is a positive example in that “all pots are impermanent.” The basis of the example is “pot,” while the general principle of pervasion that it stands for is the substance of the example: i.e., “all pottery is impermanent.” In this case, that the substance of the example matches that of the “site” (*pakṣa*) of the inference is ensured, not because the physical nature of pottery is exactly the same as that of sound, but because the kind of impermanence that sound exhibits is the same as that of pottery.

⁶¹ Kuiji’s *CWSL-SJ*, fascicle three (T 1830, 43: 321c21–27) directly addresses the question of why mental representations of concrete things do not obstruct each other by pointing out that the appearance of a particular rock or stick in one mind does not displace a different object experienced in the same place by another mind. Sameness of locus does not entail sameness of experience.

multiple lamps emitting equal amounts and quality of light is strained, even on its own terms.

The example of the warring states of Qin and Chu

Zhencheng continues to develop his line of argument that obstructions in the sensory realm present a real world challenge to the Yogācāra conception of the same world as comprised of sentient beings inhabiting separate and overlapping sensory worlds. He uses the historical example of the kingdoms of Chu and Qin during China's Warring States Period to illustrate the Huayan holistic idea of the same world.

If it [the fruit] is experienced by/enjoyed by oneself, it is manifest to one's own consciousness; what is enjoyed in common is manifest in common by multiple people. We liken it to the mountains and rivers in the Country of Chu that are enjoyed by the people of Chu. Whatever is seized by the people of Qin is enjoyed by the people of Qin. How could it be that the manifest domain seized from another's consciousness is equivalent to the manifest domain of one's own consciousness? Whatever is manifest in common should be enjoyed in common and shouldn't be seized from another. Once another [country] has captured this domain, it is possessed by another [country] and not by this [country]—so where exactly do the mountains and rivers obtain distinct manifestations in the same locus?

若自受用者，是自識變，共受用者，是多人共變，如楚國山河，楚人受用，秦人奪之，秦人受用，豈奪彼識所變之境為我識所變之境耶？若共變者，應共受用，彼不應奪，此不應失。彼奪此已，彼有此無，安得山河各變同處？⁶²

With the example of the people of Chu and the people of Qin fighting over the same territory, Zhencheng points out a difficulty in the doctrine of common locus: different manifestations. He notes that when the people of Qin take over a portion of territory previously controlled by the Chu, the common manifestations of the mountains and rivers in the territory do not become exclusive to the people of Qin, or disappear from subjective realities of the people of Chu. In this example, even if the world is divided into separate domains, it is still experienced as one world.

⁶² Passage appears in Zhengui's reportage of Zhencheng's position in the former's *Direct Exegesis*, vol. 2, fascicle two, 98[verso].

The example of the pebble removed from the mountain

Zhencheng continues with another example of how real world obstructions introduce obstacles into the Yogācāra conception of the world as comprised of shared and overlapping sensory experiences. Here he poses the question: If the world is shared in the sense that it is available to each and every individual, then a very minor alteration in the material world should be perceived by every individual in the world. He employs the example of the pebble removed from the mountain to show that this is not the case.

One of the villagers from a nearby town goes to the top of a mountain and picks up a small pebble. He brings it home and the pebble is no longer in view. Does this mean that the mountain is experienced by the people living on the mountain as missing one pebble? Does this mean that the mountain is experienced by everyone in the village and the province as missing one pebble? Does this mean that the mountain is experienced by everyone in the world as missing one pebble?

According to Zhencheng, the scenario of removing a pebble or a small stick from a mountain presents an insuperable dilemma:

When I pick up a stick and a pebble from our mountain and enjoy it in my own home, can you now say that the mountain seen by the people is now less both one stick and one rock?

我於我山取一木石，我家受用，云何諸人所見山中俱缺一木一石耶？

Is the way and principle of consciousness-only in fact as so described? The theory [of distinct manifestations in the same locus] is largely far from clear.

唯識道理果云乎哉？大抵此說不明久矣。⁶³

With this example Zhencheng illustrates that the idea of “same locus, different manifestations” fails to account for how a small change in the sensory world is not shared by all.

The example of the millstone

Zhencheng continues to illustrate a deficiency in the Yogācāra theory of same locus, different manifestation with the example of the millstone that was shared by ten people in a village and stolen by one person. The story of the

⁶³ *Polished Exegesis on the Compendium of the Mahāyāna*, fascicle 3, 10[verso].

millstone amplifies the point that Zhencheng makes with the example of the pebble on the mountain, the idea that when something is removed from the view, it does not disappear from the sensory world.

It is granted that the common manifestation of the millstone is in the one location. However, if what is communally enjoyed is suddenly shouldered away way by one person, for his/her sole enjoyment, the other [nine households] can no longer enjoy it. The person [who shoulders it] goes away with the millstone to enjoy it by her/himself—for what reason do the rest of the nine people not get to enjoy it?

喻則且然，法恐不爾。現見一石白，十家共用，許其共變，合在一處，共受用者，忽有一人，私竊負去，彼獨受用，餘人不得，彼人應負自分石去，何故九人不得受用？⁶⁴

Zhencheng poses a rhetorical question, when an object is removed from the sensory realm of a few people, does it cease to exist for all? When the millstone used by ten households in a village is stolen, it is no longer available to them. It still exists, however, and while it is unfair to the people of the village, the millstone is enjoyed by the one person who removed it.

By pointing out this difficulty of how a larger change in the sensory world is not necessarily shared by all, Zhencheng recapitulates his main objection to the doctrine of common locus found in the *Demonstration of Consciousness-Only*:

If you say that the millstone is shared by ten people, then there are ten representations of the millstone, one in each mind. The millstone exists in one place. It cannot be divided into ten manifestations. Therefore, if someone shoulders away the millstone, for herself or himself, s/he takes away a part of the sensory experience of the millstone from the nine other people. But if this were the case, because mountains and rivers are commonly shared, it would follow, that if one person dies, another person's mountain and rivers would disappear. All of the mountains and rivers would then perish accordingly, because the common manifestations of the mountains and rivers cannot be divided into pieces.

若謂十人共變之石，體雖有十，由共變故，只在一處，不可分開，是故彼人負自分石去，餘分之石隨之而去。若爾，則共變山河，

⁶⁴ Zhencheng, *Polished Exegesis on the Compendium of the Mahāyāna* (MsG), fascicle 3, 9[verso]–10[recto].

一人既死，一人山謝，一切山河隨彼應皆滅，以是共變不可分故。
彼既如是，此何不爾？⁶⁵

Zhencheng's organizes his pointed critique of the vulnerabilities in the Yogācāra theory of same locus, different manifestations around the problem of why the appearance and disappearance of objects in the material world does not change the representations of the world held in the minds of sentient beings.

Zhencheng on the nature of explicit consciousness

Following his critique of the Yogācāra theory of same locus, different manifestations, Zhencheng offers a constructive argument for the Huayan holistic world view. His argument centers on the concept of explicit consciousness (Skt.: *khyātivijñāna*; Chi.: *xianshi* 現識). The Chinese character *xian* can be translated as “immediate” and “to appear before the eyes.” The essence of *xianshi* is that the entirety of the world appears vividly before the eyes and can be taken in at once and without distortion. The minds of sentient beings apprehend the world like mirrors that reflect the outside world perfectly and in its totality. Explicit consciousness allows sentient beings to take in the multiple alterations and diverse features of the sensory world yet experience the world as essentially the same. With this concept in place, Zhencheng fortifies his claim that the diversity of experiences of individual beings in the sensory world can be explained within the Huayan concept of a holistic same world.

Zhencheng finds scriptural support for his interpretation of explicit consciousness in the store of metaphors enshrined in the Mahāyāna scriptures. His sources include the *Laṅkāvatāra sūtra*,⁶⁶ a work traditionally associated with Yogācāra Buddhism, as well as the *Śūramgama sūtra* and the *Awakening of Faith*, works not traditionally associated with Yogācāra.⁶⁷ In developing

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Kanno and Stevenson (*Meaning of the Lotus Sūtra's Course*, 135) cite Gimello's characterization (“Zhiyan”) of this text as “a notorious hodgepodge of seemingly inchoate doctrinal motifs.” On *khyātivijñāna* in the *Laṅkāvatāra sūtra* see Zheng, “Ryōga kyō ni okeru khyātivijñāna.”

⁶⁷ See Buswell's (“Introduction,” 1–30) discussion of pseudepigrapha or “apocrypha” in Chinese Buddhism. On the problems shrouding the provenance of the *Mahāyāna Awakening of Faith* see Keng, “Yogācāra Buddhism Transmitted or Transformed?”. For discussion of provenance of the *Śūramgama*

the idea of explicit consciousness, Zhencheng draws heavily upon the idea of one mind (Chi.: *yixin* 一心), found in the *Awakening of Faith*, a catechism of the Huayan Buddhist tradition. In this scripture the one mind, or the unitary mind, is said to capture the images of all things within the world. An infamous passage in the *Awakening of Faith* reads: “With the arising of the mind the multitude of different kinds of dharmas arise; with the cessation of the mind the multitude of different kinds of dharmas come to cease.”⁶⁸

Zhencheng writes in his *Polished Exegesis*: “When one person dies, the images and reflections that are carried within that one person’s mind cease. But it is not the case that the common karma that stimulated that mind—such as the mountain or river—would also cease with it.” 一人既死，一人心中影像隨滅，非彼共業所感山河亦隨滅也。⁶⁹ He continues: “There is but one mountain and one river, one heaven and one earth, one sun and one moon. But they appear as distinct images in the mind of each and every sentient being which contains conceptual discriminations.” 一山一河、一天一地、一月一月之上，一切有情分別心中各各影現。⁷⁰

According to Zhencheng, the idea that sentient beings can apprehend the totality of the sensory world and exclude nothing is at the heart of the definition of the same world. This definition of the same world assumes that the sensory experiences of the shared world are not disrupted by minor alterations in the material world. It also assumes that the appearance or disappearance of an object from one mind does not result in the appearance or disappearance of the object in another mind. According to Zhencheng, a world which is shared in the true sense cannot be disrupted by the entrance or exit of individual minds or by minor alterations in their contents:

If you say that as entities they [i.e., manifestations to (at least two) different people] are each different but non-differentiable, it is for this reason that that they are concurrently grasped, so that when one person has died, one explicit consciousness (**khyātivijñāna*) ceases and this realm (*dhātu*) of mountains and rivers completely ceases—since it cannot be divided. We should know this by way of the example of the karmic fields, etc. The disappearance of minutiae does not palpably

sūtra, see Epstein, “*Shurangama-Sūtra* (T. 945)”;
Demiéville, *Le concile de Lhasa*, 43–52; Benn, “Another Look at the Pseudo-*Śūraṅgama sūtra*,” 57–62.

68 See the *Mahāyāna Awakening of Faith* attributed to Paramārtha: 以心生則種種法生，心滅則種種法滅. T 32, 1666: 577b22.

69 Zhencheng, *Polished Exegesis on the MsG*, fascicle 3, 10[recto].

70 Zhencheng, *Polished Exegesis on the MsG*, fascicle 3, 10[recto].

alter one's own consciousness.

若謂體雖各異而不可分，故兼取之，則一人死已，一現識滅，此界山河，應皆盡滅，不可分故。彼田業等，例此應知。⁷¹

According to Zhencheng, the singular and comprehensive status of the world fully manifest in explicit consciousness should not change with the subtraction of a single pebble from a mountain. In one particularly provocative passage, Zhencheng likens the “multitude of lamps in a room” analogy found in the CWSL to the “luminous mirror” (Chi.: *ming jing* 明鏡) elaborated in the *Laṅkāvatāra sūtra* and the *Mahāyāna Awakening of Faith*:

This is vividly manifest in this realm right before the eyes.⁷² If there is no discrimination within the mind of the sentient being, this [world] is identical to vacuous emptiness. Only when there is conscious awareness do there appear different kinds of shapes blazingly bright right in front of it.⁷³ There is only one mountain and one river that appears to the mind of each sentient being. With just one original in ten mirrors, each and every one of the mirrors contains its [i.e., the original's] reflection. What's enjoyed in common is obtained in accordance with the shared karma; what's enjoyed individually is obtained in accordance with specific karma (Chi.: *bieye* 別業).

唯一世界、一須彌盧，日月山川，現於此界。眾生心中，若不分別，即同虛空，方有覺知，即有熾然異狀在前。⁷⁴ 只一山川，眾心各現，一質十鏡，鏡鏡皆有影也。其共受用，隨共業得，各受用者，隨別業得。⁷⁵

In Zhencheng's assessment, only the Huayan view of an all-pervading, all-encompassing *dharmadhātu* can unite the different perspectives on the same world. If this were not the case, the so-called same world would remain subject to alterations in the form of subtractions or additions that would modify different perspectives on the same world. Zhencheng, doubtful about

⁷¹ Zhencheng, *Polished Exegesis on the MsG*, fascicle 3, 10[verso].

⁷² There is a clever but untranslatable pun on the two senses of the Chinese character *xian* 現: “to vividly show” and “to immediately appear.”

⁷³ This is the paraphrase of the *Śūramgama Sūtra*.

⁷⁴ Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for help repunctuating this passage of Zhencheng's commentary.

⁷⁵ Zhengui's quotation from Zhencheng in the former's *Direct Exegesis on the CWSL*, vol. 2, fascicle two, 98[verso].

the Yogācāra theory, returns to the Huayan tradition and finds that the world of sentient beings can be embraced only within the expanse of Indra's Net.

“There is naught but one worldly realm”

Zhencheng sums up his argument with the claim that there is one singular world that unites all of the perspectives held by sentient beings. He states: “There is naught but *one* worldly realm, *one* Mt. Sumeru, with the sun, the moon, the mountains, and the rivers.” 唯一世界、一須彌盧，日月山川。⁷⁶

In order to defend the bold statement that the sensory world forms a realm of “pure commonality” (Chi.: *weigong* 唯共),⁷⁷ Zhencheng returns to examples in the writings of Fazang, the *Lankavatāra sūtra*, the *Awakening of Faith*, and the *Śūraṅgama sūtra*. Fazang's example of the king and of his serfs conveys the idea that the world of common karma contains a diversity of peoples. Consistent with the concept of one world, the king cannot exercise his full range of power without the serfs in the country executing his bidding. Fazang further states that one country (Chi.: *yiguo* 一國) consists of people mired in impurity and those residing in purity.⁷⁸ Additionally, the *Awakening of Faith* teaches that the world consists of a “reality blended together with illusion”⁷⁹ (Chi.: *zhenwang hehe* 眞妄和合). This thought is expressed in the famous metaphor of the resplendent lotus blossom growing out of the polluted

⁷⁶ See Zhengui's quotation from Zhencheng in the former's *Direct Exegesis*, vol. 2, fascicle two, 98[verso].

⁷⁷ In the third fascicle of his *Records Probing the Profundities*, he writes in summary: “The initial *lemma* is taken by some [i.e., followers of the initial Māhāyana teaching] as pure commonality—that is to say, the circumstantial retribution. Although it does not depart from consciousness, the consciousness of it is distinct—the land and its phenomenal character are one.” 初或皆唯共 (emended from 亦 based upon *Sheng* 聖 edition), 謂彼依報，雖不離識，而識是別，土相是一。T 1733, 35: 159b25–26.

⁷⁸ Fascicle three of Fazang's *Probing the Profundities* contains this metaphor: “We liken it to the King and his servants who together possess the one country. Since the defiled land is manifest by way of the common karma of sentient beings, no discrimination is made.” 如王與臣，共有一國；諸雜染土，亦是有情，共業所現，故無別也。T 1733, 35: 159c2–4.

⁷⁹ Kantor discusses the Huayan doctrine of “conjunction of falseness and truth.” He writes: “The awakening which is not beyond dreaming is similar to the state in which we, yet fully aware of the illusiveness of the optical illusion we see, have not completely nullified the presence of that falseness. We are realizing that our misperceptions are part of reality and that falseness penetrates our existence.” Kantor, “Ambivalence of Illusion,” 283.

waters. Like the lotus blossoms growing in the murky swamp, the luminous mirror is by nature clear and luminous. While it resides in a state of unblemished purity, the dusty mirror perpetually shines forth to illuminate a sensory world in which “purity and impurity are comingled together inextricably.”⁸⁰ Taken together, these examples illustrate that although comprised of many various people, points of view, purity, and impurity, there is only one same world.

By looking to the commentaries of Fazang and the scriptures of Huayan Buddhism, Zhencheng harmonizes the doctrine of the mutual identity of purity and impurity in terms of the singular and universal *Tathāgatagarbha*. (Chi.: *Rulaizang* 如來藏).⁸¹ This touchstone doctrine posits a *Tathāgatagarbha*, or a Buddha-embryo, existing within each and every sentient being. Zhencheng interpolates the Huayan *Tathāgatagarbha* into the exegesis of the CWSL. In his *Polished Exegesis on the Compendium of the Mahāyāna* he asserts that “contaminated” or “defiled” *ālayavijñāna* co-exists with the “pure” *Tathāgatagarbha* storehouse.⁸² Additionally he claims that this is implied,

80 The oft-cited statement of Fazang on the purity and impurity combined in the surface of the mirror is located in fascicle four of his *Neatly-Organized Essay on the Huayan Doctrine of One Vehicle* (*Huayan yisheng jiaoyi fenqi zhang* 華嚴一乘教義分齊章), known as *Essay on Five Categories of Teachings* 五教章, for short: “We liken it (i.e., the mind) to the luminous mirror, which presents both impurity and purity, without ever sacrificing its pure, luminous quality.” 猶如明鏡，雖現染淨，而恒不失鏡之明淨。 T 1866, 45: 499b2–3. Yanshou’s *Source Mirror* cribs this passage, verbatim, at T 2016, 48: 757a23–24; so too Wang Kentang in his *Verification of the Doctrines of the CWSL* (X 822, 51: 99a16–17), one of the secondary sources heavily relied upon by both Zhencheng and Zhengui.

81 Hamar: “Nature origination is...a process of autonomic manifestation of inherently pure nature, and this spontaneous evolution does not depend upon external conditions.” Hamar adds: “Nature origination is different from the practice conditioned by external factors such as teaching, master, etc. If the conditions are not present it is impossible to carry out in practice, while the absence of conditions cannot exert any influence on nature-origination: the wisdom of *Tathāgata* remains inherent in living beings.” Hamar, “Manifestation of the Absolute,” 238.

82 The term *Tathāgatagarbha* is understood as both the “embryo” that should become a Buddha, and the “womb” where the Buddha-to-be is carried. *Tathāgata*—“thus-come-one”—is an epithet for the Buddha. In the *Śrīmālādevī sūtra* (counted by Huayan authors among the “final teachings” of the Buddha), the *Tathāgatagarbha* is taken synonymously for the incipient capacity for even ordinary, deluded sentient beings to fully embody the Buddha’s enlightenment. The Chinese translation of the term *garbha* as *cang* 藏 conveys both senses as

yet not stated overtly, in the Yogācāra text—in his words, “the Yogācāra masters left it unstated yet implicit.” 諸法相師隱而未說.⁸³ The *Tathāgatagarbha*-based approach is strongly associated with the Huayan tradition of “dharma-nature” (Chi.: *faxing zong* 法性宗).⁸⁴ It is *not* traditionally associated with the Yogācāra or “The Tradition of Dharma-characteristics” (Chi.: *faxiang zong* 法相宗). In a provocative exegetical maneuver, Zhencheng merges the *ālayavijñāna* and *Tathāgatagarbha* into the one mind described in the Huayan *Awakening of Faith*.

Zhencheng contends that all forms of humanity, regardless of their karmic or transmigratory standing, participate in the singular *dharmadhātu*. He depicts a world wherein “there is but one mountain and one river, one heaven and one earth, one sun and one moon.”⁸⁵ Each appears distinctly as a vivid image in the mind of the sentient being. In this scheme, differences in individual perspectives can be explained quite simply. According to Zhencheng, differences in the in the perception of the one world arise when the mind of the sentient being latches on to a conceptual discrimination and is not able to see the underlying unity of the sensory world. As support for this conclusion, Zhencheng cites the parable of “two countries” found in the *Śūraṅgama sūtra*.⁸⁶ Zhencheng’s reprisal of the hallowed parable of the “two

“womb” and “storehouse.” The *Laṅkāvatāra sūtra* famously identifies the *ālayavijñāna* or “storehouse” consciousness with the *Tathāgatagarbha*.

83 Zhencheng, *Polished Exegesis on the MsG*, vol. 1, fascicle one, 25[verso]: “Therefore, the *Awakening of Faith* reads: ‘the mind that arises and ceases is based in the *ālayavijñāna*. *Ālayavijñāna* refers to what arises and ceases blending together with what does not arise nor cease.’ The Yogācāra masters left this unstated yet implicit.” 故《起信論》云：「依阿賴耶識故有生滅心。所謂不生不滅與生滅和合非一非異，名為阿賴耶識。」此法相諸師隱而未說。

84 Hamar assesses the findings of Lusthaus (*Buddhist Phenomenology*, 372) and Lai (“Defeat of *Vijñaptimātratā*,” 1): “They are right in that Fazang introduced the term faxiang-zong for the Yogācāra teachings of Xuanzang (600–664).” Hamar, “Manifestation of the Absolute,” 195.

85 *Polished Exegesis on the MsG*, vol. 1, fascicle one, 11[recto].

86 Zhencheng writes in his *Polished Exegesis*: “For example, the *Śūraṅgama sūtra* says: ‘we liken it to the smaller [of the four] continents, wherein two countries rely upon each other while they (i.e., their borders) stop at each other. One country is good and one is bad. The populace of the bad country observe inauspicious omens right before their eyes which contain the message that ‘some people see two moons, the bowlike back-and-ear of the rainbow and its refraction, perverse intelligence runs rampant, etc. But the people of the good country see none of that.’” 如《楞嚴》云：「如一小洲，兩國依止，一天地

kingdoms” from the *Śūraṅgama sūtra* is meant to express the idea of “common delusion” 同分妄見. According to this parable, the people of the bad kingdom observe all sorts of ominous portents and illusions, such as the “double sun and the double moon.” In fact, the double sun and the double moon are simply distortions of the original sun and moon, caused by pollution—an atmospheric “inversion” (Chi.: *diandao* 顛倒) as it were—appearing in the sky above the bad country, wherein the people only hasten the degradation—both moral and physical—of their shared environment. The portentous appearance of the double-rainbow—composed of “rainbow” and its “secondary refraction”—within the sky over the bad country is considered to be an extremely inauspicious omen. All the while, the people of the good country observe none of these ill portents or illusions. They transparently see through the distortions of the double moon or the secondary rainbow for the reality the way it really is. Distortions of this nature can be likened to collections of dust that adhere to the mirror of the mind.⁸⁷ Although the dust obscures the image it does not blemish the purity of the holistic nature of the same world.⁸⁸

Zhencheng’s concession: This is not the Huayan view

In his closing argument Zhencheng returns to the Yogācāra conception that the same world exists in the minds of different sentient beings. He states that one might take the view that the world is an integration of a vast number of perspectives held in a vast number of minds.⁸⁹ However, Zhencheng

中，一國為惡，一國為善。惡國眾生觀見不祥，所謂或見二日，或見兩月，負耳虹霓，慧悖飛流等。善國不見。」 (Zhencheng, *Polished Exegesis on the MsG*, fascicle 3, 11[recto]) This is essentially a paraphrase of a passage of the Buddha’s speech to Ānanda found in fascicle two of the *Śūraṅgama sūtra*. T 945, 19: 113b24–28.

87 Comparisons of the Buddha’s mind to the luminous mirror are legion throughout the *Śūraṅgama sūtra*. The mirror features prominently in fascicle nine at (T 19, 945: 148, b03) in a discussion of *Tathāgatagarbha* doctrine.

88 *Śūraṅgama-sūtra*, fascicle four, T 945, 19: 119–120.

89 Zhengui, *Direct Exegesis on the CWSL*, vol. 2, fascicle two, 96[recto] contains the following query and response that cites the **Buddhāvataṃsaka-mahāvaiṣṭya-sūtra* 大方廣佛華嚴經, fifty-first fascicle, translated by Śikṣānanda (T 279, 10: 263b3–5): “Question: On what basis are the mountains, rivers, and the great earth the result of karma stimulated communally?” 問云：山河大地共業所感，亦何所據？

Reply: the scripture says: “We liken it to the great trichilocosm that encompasses the worldly-realm (*loka-dhātu*). It is not the case that it is based

emphatically states that this conception of the same world is not endorsed by the Huayan teachings.

In the denouement of his *Polished Exegesis on the Compendium of the Mahāyāna*, Zhencheng concedes that “although the mental representations of the world held by sentient beings may be similar, they are separate representations.” 雖則相似，體必有異。 He describes this concession as follows:

While the mountain appears the same place for everyone and appears similar to everyone, each person has a different representation of the mountain.

又各變之山同一處者，雖則相似，體必有異。⁹⁰

Zhencheng views the conception of the same world as comprised of the aggregation of multiple images in the minds of sentient beings as not parsimonious. However, Zhengui premises his rejoinder on the idea that the conception of the same world as comprised of the aggregation of the minds of sentient beings is valid.

The heart of Zhengui’s rejoinder to Zhencheng

In the Wutai debates, Zhengui upholds the Yogācāra idea of the same world as comprised of multiple and overlapping worlds. In the rejoinder to Zhencheng, found in his *Direct Exegesis on the CWSL*, Zhengui rehabilitates the Yogācāra analogy of the lamps by arguing that it is an appropriate metaphor for how different sentient beings experience the sensory world. He then criticizes Zhencheng’s stance—that the same world is comprised of one world—as faulty because it conflates the Yogācāra and Huayan teachings.

Zhengui’s defense of the lamp metaphor

Zhengui begins his rejoinder by pointing out where Zhencheng’s interpretations of the CWSL are strained and incoherent. He voices his complaint as follows:

on a single condition, nor that it obtains realization in a single event. It only obtains realization through innumerable conditions and innumerable events.”

答：《經》云：「譬如三千大千世界，非以一緣，非以一事而得成就，以無量緣而得成就。」

⁹⁰ Zhengui, *Direct Exegesis on the CWSL*, vol. 2, fascicle two, 96[verso].

In the initial part [of your argument] you say that “the example does not fit.” In the denouement you say, “There is only one mountain and one river that appear distinctly in many minds, like one original reflected in ten mirrors.” But is this “luminous mirror” in fact the same as the aforementioned “luminous lamp”? Of what mind are you to cite the former yet mistrust the latter?

始云「喻不齊故」，而末云「只一山川，眾心各現，如一質十鏡」，然此「鏡明」與前「燈明」，果何如哉？引此而不信彼，是何心耶？⁹¹

Here Zhengui faults Zhencheng for introducing the idea of the “perfect mirror” that is said to reflect the entirety of the material world. He contends that Zhencheng misappropriates this reference and applies it in a haphazard manner. He also states that the example of the “luminous mirror” as a metaphor for the minds of sentient beings is less plausible than the metaphor of many lamps sending forth beams of light. According to Zhengui, many lamps together would illuminate a room more effectively than a single mirror. In this section of the rejoinder, Zhengui makes the point that the original Yogācāra metaphor of the lamps is sturdier than that of Zhencheng’s one “luminous mirror” that reflects all that there is in the world. Zhengui regards the Yogācāra conception of the same world, as consisting of the mental representations of many sentient beings, to be more robust than the Huayan idea of one and only one same world.

The mountain range: Does it belong to Chu or Qin?

At this point in his rejoinder Zhengui turns to the example of the warring states of Qin and Chu. He critiques Zhencheng’s analysis of this example by stating:

You adduce the example of the mountains and rivers of Chu, and the statement that Qin annexes these mountains and forests, in rejecting the [doctrine of] common karma—but can it be the case that the people of Chu are consciousness-only and that what is seized (i.e., the territory) is not consciousness-only? If it is not consciousness-only, then Qin cannot seize it, and Chu cannot keep it.

⁹¹ Ibid., fascicle two, 94[verso].

又舉楚國山川，并彼此山林等說，排其共業，豈知楚人是唯識而奪者非唯識？若非唯識，此不能奪，彼不能守。⁹²

Here Zhengui contends that the common manifestation of the shared world does not involve a zero-sum game. The gain of one person does not automatically create a loss for another person. When the mountains formerly belonging to the Chu are annexed by the Qin they remain visible to the citizens of Chu. The Qin are “dominant” in that they impose their rule over the mountain, but the mountain is not “lost” to the people of Chu. For example, the people of Chu can see the mountain from afar and can continue to utilize the water supplied from the streams flowing down the mountain.

The pebble removed from the mountain: Does it disappear?

Zhengui then avails himself the doctrine of “dominant conditions” or *adhipati-pratyaya* (Chi.: *zengshang yuan* 增上緣) in order to solve the problem of the pebble removed from the mountain. He states:

Concerning the taking of wood or rocks from the mountain forest, either Chu or Qin is the taker or the protector—the total of all of this is singularly consciousness-only. If something departs from consciousness, it is certain that you do not conform to this [principle] and have gain and loss, each according to the karma. It is just that there is what is dominant and what is not dominant.

至于取山林之木石，或彼或此；取者，守者，總一唯識。若離識，決不如此而有得失者，各隨其業。有增上不增上耳。⁹³

Zhengui explains that the person who removes the pebble is responsible for the “dominant condition” because s/he imposes a change in the shared environment. The change caused by the removal of the pebble is miniscule, yet is registered in theory, by the remote perception of the mountain in the minds of the villagers. An infinitesimal change of this nature, however, is simply not noticed. In his rejoinder to Zhencheng’s analysis of the pebble on the mountain, Zhengui acknowledges the reality of the change induced in the shared environment by the removal of the pebble, but denies Zhencheng’s claim that the pebble literally disappears from the consciousness of the villagers.

⁹² Zhengui’s quotation of Zhencheng in the former’s *Direct Exegesis on the CWSL*, vol. 2, fascicle two, 98[verso].

⁹³ Ibid.

The example of the lumberjack

To rehabilitate the Yogācāra explanation of the same world from the withering critiques of Zhencheng, Zhengui derives the example of the lumberjack from the *Source Mirror* of Yongming Yanshou.⁹⁴ In this example, a lumberjack cuts down a tree on a piece of land that is shared by twenty villagers. By cutting down the tree, the single lumberjack imposes a change in the environment of the nineteen other villagers. While the action of the lumberjack is responsible for the “dominant condition,” or the loss of the tree, there are various factors that mediate the experience of the loss of the tree for the nineteen other villagers. Villagers who live farther away, for example, will experience the loss differently than villagers who live near the tree.

Zhengui uses this example to illustrate the idea that the imposition of a change by one person in the shared environment impacts all. In this case, the lumberjack forces the nineteen other villagers to conform to the change. The villagers who conform to the change necessarily submit to the change imposed by the lumberjack. While all twenty villagers experience the same loss of the tree, each one experiences it differently. The example of the lumberjack illustrates how the changes in the material world create separate yet interrelated experiences of the same world. This idea is consistent with the Yogācāra idea of the same world as comprised of separate, yet overlapping, experiences by many sentient beings.

Defending the disharmony between the Yogācāra and Huayan doctrines

After disabusing his opponent with examples found in the secondary literature in the CWSL, Zhengui rebukes Zhencheng by bluntly pointing out that the “lights do not go out when one closes one’s eyes.” He states that the world does not disappear when the explicit consciousness of the world ceases. Simply stated, when one person dies, the sensory worlds of the people who remain alive do not disintegrate.⁹⁵

⁹⁴ The pertinent passage treating the example of the lumberjack is found in Yanshou’s *Records of the Source-Mirror*, fascicle forty-nine, T 2016, 48: 705b29–c8.

⁹⁵ Zhencheng’s *Polished Exegesis* reads: “there are those who say: ‘Given ten people manifesting one mountain in common, if one person dies—that is, when the consciousness has already ceased, the mountain manifest to that individual should also go away, accordingly. But since the remaining nine people are still there, the image of the mountain remains. We liken it to ten lamps in one

Zhengui employs a facile example to underline this point. When a villager from North China travels to South China to conduct business for a period of time, North China does not “go away.” This example illustrates the idea that overlapping experiential worlds can be held in more than one mind. It debunks the totalistic idea of “one mind, one world.”

In his closing analysis, Zhengui rejects Zhencheng’s attempts to create a rapprochement between the Yogācāra and Huayan doctrines. Zhengui takes particular issue with Zhencheng’s eclectic use of textual sources. He regards the incorporation of these elements as akin to muddying the waters. The attempt to blend elements from non-Yogācāra sources into the exegesis on the Yogācāra doctrine of same world only confuses the underlying teaching. Zhengui insists that this vitiates Zhencheng’s overall argument and undermines his credibility as a scholar. Zhengui’s scathing rebuke is as follows:

The Thus-Come-One (Tathāgata, i.e., the Buddha) sets out teachings in accordance with the state of affairs. The doctrinal treatises (*śāstras*) are based on the teachings he made. Each of these has its main point and purport which is taken as the paradigm. But to cite the sūtras and treatises of the paradigm of nature, to rebuke the principles and paradigm of the characteristics of dharmas (i.e., Yogācāra) is like trying to throw a square peg through a circular hole.

夫如來隨機設教，諸論依教所造，各有所宗旨趣，而引性宗之經論，以駁法相之宗猷，如方木投圓竅。⁹⁶

Zhengui repeatedly points out that Zhencheng uses two pseudepigrapha, the *Śūrāṅgama Sūtra* and the *Awakening of Faith*, in his interpretation of the Huayan doctrine of the universal *Tathāgatagarbha*. In Zhengui’s opinion, Zhencheng fails to draw crucial conceptual distinctions between the doctrines and the examples. He singles out a number of examples of what he describes as “unscrupulous slippage or conceptual overflow” (Chi.: *lan shang* 濫觴),

room—the illumination pervades all over the one locus. When one lamp is extinguished, the illumination should also go out. But since the remaining nine lamps are still there, the illumination remains.” 有云：「如十人共變一山，一人既死，彼識既謝，所變自山亦隨滅去，餘九人在故，山相依然，如一室十燈，光徧一處，一燈滅時，光亦隨滅，餘九燈在故，光相宛然。」 See Zhengui’s *Direct Exegesis*, fascicle 2, 95[recto].

⁹⁶ *Direct Exegesis on the CWSL*, vol. 2, fascicle two, 98[verso].

Zhencheng's interpretation of the CWSL doctrine.⁹⁷ Zhengui takes issue with his opponent's stance that the sensory world comprises an invisible whole or totality of consciousness, as described in the *Awakening of Faith* and the *Śūramgama Sūtra*. Here he questions the idea of an all-inclusive "explicit consciousness revealing the admixture of purity and impurity," and an "innately luminous awareness engendering multifarious diversity (*yi* 異)."⁹⁸

Zhengui ultimately diagnoses Zhencheng's confusion as stemming from a misperception between the "final teaching" on the dharma-realm and the initial Mahāyāna teachings (Chi.: *chu jiao* 初教) in the Yogācāra canon.⁹⁹ Zhengui admonishes Zhencheng for conflating the Huayan and Yogācāra doctrines. While Fazang consigns the teachings on the "commingling of purity and impurity" to the category of Final Teachings of the Mahāyāna Vehicle (Chi.: *Dasheng zhong jiao* 大乘終教),¹⁰⁰ Zhencheng oversteps the bounds and applies them to the Yogācāra sources. In doing so, Zhencheng crosses the categorical boundaries established by the Huayan tradition, diverges from Yogācāra tradition, and misrepresents both doctrines.

⁹⁷ See author's preface to Zhengui's *Direct Exegesis on the CWSL*, vol. 1, fascicle one, 1[recto].

⁹⁸ Zhencheng's classical Chinese contains a double entendre on the Chinese character *yi* 異 which can mean both "difference" and "heterogeneity/variety." As reported by Zhengui, and corroborated by Zhencheng's own words, Zhencheng draws upon the *Śūramgama sūtra*'s explanation on the arising of manifold diversity: "The *Śūramgama sūtra* further states: 'Glaring differences emerge from the state of neither sameness nor difference,' etc." 《楞嚴》亦云「無同異中，熾然成異」等。Zhencheng, *Polished Exegesis on the MsG*, fascicle 3, 10[verso].

⁹⁹ In one of the prefatory sections to his *Direct Exegesis on the CWSL* titled "Citing Nature to Dispute Characteristics" 引性與相辯, Zhengui concludes: "While the aforementioned preliminary teaching is one teaching, the [teaching of] dharma-characteristics is another source. It's (i.e., the Yogācāra teachings's) doctrine has been exhaustively laid out here. I have not had opportunity to make full reference to the 'final teaching of the Mahāyāna.'" 然上引始教一教，則法相一宗，義已盡矣。後之終教，不引亦得。—See his *Direct Exegesis*, vol. 1, fascicle 1, 8[verso].

¹⁰⁰ Fazang writes in fascicle three of his *Probing the Profundities*: "the above discussions (of the Yogācāra theory of same world) conform to the spiritual fruit of the storehouse consciousness to make manifest [the world], and so forth—all of that is the preliminary teaching (i.e., preliminary teachings of the Mahāyāna Vehicle). If one takes *Tathāgatagarbha* to be manifest by way of *ālayavijñāna*, then that belongs to the final teachings" 此上若約果報賴耶識所變等，即是初教；若如來藏賴耶所現，即屬終教。T 35, 1733: 159c26–27.

Zhencheng, however, is consistent in his endorsement of the Huayan teaching of *dharmadhātu*. Zhengui does not take issue with this. Zhencheng and Zhengui are deeply steeped in Huayan scholasticism and equally wedded to the five-fold taxonomy of teachings (Chi.: *panjiao* 判教) standardized in the Huayan system.¹⁰¹ Both scholar-monks heavily employ the doxographical terminology of *xiangzong* 相宗 and *xingzong* 性宗 to describe the relationship between Yogācāra and Huayan.¹⁰² Zhengui *does* dispute the application of the ultimate Mahāyāna teachings of the *Tathāgatagarbha* tradition to the specialized Mahāyāna teachings of the Yogācāra. He states that the *xingzong*, or the “tradition based on the nature of the dharma,” and the *xiangzong*, or “the tradition based upon the characteristics of the dharma,” together supply the necessary and jointly-sufficient conditions for a comprehensive knowledge of the Mahāyāna teaching.¹⁰³ However, to Zhengui, the two separate doctrines cannot run along parallel tracks like two wheels of a cart. Rather, he cautions against making a false equivalence between the two bodies of teachings. Zhencheng states: “I have examined [the

¹⁰¹ As Hamar has studied, Fazang struggled with the question of how to classify Yogācāra vis-à-vis Huayan doctrines. Hamar writes: “Fazang (643–712) inherited from his master, Zhiyan 智儼 (602–668 C.E.), not only the *panjiao* of five teachings but also his detestation toward the new Yogācāra school. It is reflected in the name he gave to this school, *Faxiang zong*, which implies that it treats only the characteristics of the dharmas. He argues that the essence of the elementary teaching lies in the concept of *ālayavijñāna* that is the ultimate source of all kinds of existence and contains all the karmic seeds. He criticizes this school for regarding *ālaya* apart from the *Tathāgatagarbha*.” Hamar, “Interpretation of Yogācāra Philosophy,” 183.

¹⁰² *Xiangzong* 相宗—“the tradition of dharma-characteristics”—is generally taken to refer to the *Yogācāra-vijñānavāda* tradition descending from the scholarly lineage of the Tang dynasty scholar-monk Xuanzang (ca. 602–664). Chu notes: “*Xiangzong* was a rather pejorative descriptive term for the Yogācāra system coined by its rival traditions. Since the Yogācāra school was perceived by people like Fazang of the Huayan tradition as merely delving into the feature/phenomenal aspect of reality rather than penetrating into the deeper substrative level, they labeled it a ‘*Faxiang zong*, or a Dharma-feature/ Dharma-phenomena School’ in contrast with the ‘*Faxing zong*, or a Dharma-nature School.’” Chu, “Timing of the Yogācāra Resurgence,” 18–19.

¹⁰³ See *Polished Exegesis on the Compendium of the Mahāyāna*, vol. 1, fascicle one, 2[recto], where Zhencheng writes: “if you fail to study the tradition of characteristics, then you confuse the properties of conceptual distinctions without any clarity, but if you fail to study the tradition of nature, then even if you strike the target of the core principle, stagnation will follow.” 不學相宗則差別之德混淆不明，不學性宗則一貫之理觸途成滯。

works of] those scholars who adhere to the same track in their writings [on the CWSL], but I have determined that the two (i.e., Huayan and Yogācāra) are not the same path (Chi.: *lujing* 路徑).”¹⁰⁴ While acknowledging Zhencheng’s disclaimer, Zhengui is far less sanguine about reconciling the Yogācāra and Huayan conceptions of the same world.¹⁰⁵

While Zhencheng finds support for his interpretation of same world within the Huayan tradition, his application of *Tathāgatagarbha* theory to the interpretation of Yogācāra is a risky exegetical move with which Zhengui takes issue. Ultimately Zhengui rejects the *Tathāgatagarbha*-infused interpretations involving both the “innately luminous mirror” and the lamplight of the shared sensory world because they represent a conciliatory stance rooted in a misconstruction of the Huayan and Yogācāra doctrines of same world.

Conclusion: On the (in)compatibility of the Yogācāra and Huayan view of the same world

While the Yogācāra and Huayan sources agree that the sensory world is a projection of the mind, the Yogācāra sources state that the world is pluralistic in that it is experienced by more than one individual. When the Ming scholars

¹⁰⁴ Zhengui elaborates in the author’s preface to his *Direct Exegesis* (fascicle 1, volume 1, 1[recto]): “the cultivation and realization of the teaching gates of Nature and Characteristics each have their particular path of training and objectives, but those [details] are pared away. So as to hew as closely as possible to the cause, the spiritual fruit, the cultivation, and the realization, no confusion or spillage can be permitted at all, down to the most minute detail.” 性、相脩證法門，各有路徑趣入，而削之，庶乎因果脩證，無容纖毫混濫。

¹⁰⁵ Zhengui’s reserved stance regarding the Yogācāra-Tathāgatagarbha consilience stands in contrast to the more well-known Four Eminent Monks studied by Chu (“Syncretism Reconsidered”; “Timing of the Yogācāra Resurgence”). This quadrumvirate of famous scholar-monks includes Hanshan Deqing 憨山德清 (1546–1623), Dagan Zhenke 達觀真可 (1543–1603), Yunqi Zhuhong 雲棲祿宏 (1535–1615), and Ouyi Zhixu 藕益智旭 (1599–1655). Chu’s study concludes: “Most of the Eminent Monks’ Yogācāra interpretative frame rested so much on the cardinal themes of the *Awakening of the Faith* (with some of them expressly acknowledging to have done so), that one could not help but to come to the impression that the Yogācāra tradition in the late Ming was only studied to be rendered compliant to the ‘school of Dharma-nature’ (another common name for the Chinese *Tathāgatagarbha* tradition).” Chu, “Timing of the Yogācāra Resurgence,” 19.

attempted to explain and harmonize the different accounts of the same world found in the Buddhist sources, questions emerged: Where exactly do the sensory domains of multiple individuals overlap? If there is a totally objective world, from what storehouse-consciousness of sentient beings is this world being projected?

Zhengui avails himself of the theories of the *Tathāgatagarbha* and *dharmadhātu* to develop the idea of an all-encompassing universe that excludes nothing and no one. However, according to the CWSL, the stipulation of such a totally objective world would violate the very idea of consciousness-only. Indeed, the CWSL explicitly disavows the idea of a singular, totalistic world contained by one consciousness alone.¹⁰⁶ The text poses a pointed objection to this monistic view: “If there were but one consciousness containing self and other, who would preach to whom?” If there were but one consciousness, this would elide the distinctions between master and disciple, servant and lord, deluded and enlightened, etc.¹⁰⁷ A monistic interpretation would violate the purpose of preaching the dharma of the Buddha to all sentient beings. In remaining sensitive to this qualification, Zhengui eschews the notion of overt mutual identity between worlds. He draws the line at total similarity among the different worlds of sentient beings. Unmitigated similarity is not possible because what is projected by an individual’s consciousness is influenced by the store-house consciousness of each sentient being.

The idea of multiple, overlapping sensory worlds defended in the CWSL was deeply attractive to the Ming intellectuals, as evidenced by their voluminous, and unmined, body of commentarial literature. The question that captured the imaginations of the Ming scholars endures. How can we account for the subjective experiences of sentient beings living in the diverse matrices

¹⁰⁶ Werner writes in his review of Hamar, *Reflecting Mirrors*: “Western studies have not reached a consensus about the nature of the Huayan teaching: is it ‘holistic’ or ‘totalistic’? Was it ‘apophatic and kataphatic’ (whatever that may mean)? Did it provide ‘ontological basis and philosophical rationale’ for Chan (Ch’an, Zen) practice? How far did it reflect ‘sinification’ of its Indian roots?” Werner, “Book Review: *Reflecting Mirrors*,” 540.

¹⁰⁷ Wei remarks on some “obvious shortcomings” of the Huayan doctrine: “The overemphasis on harmony and accordance among things completely eliminates the contradiction and contrast among them. The overemphasis on identity thoroughly eradicates the distinction among things. The theoretical shortcomings often bring about malpractice. Guiding by perfect interfusion, practitioners will be eager for instant success and quick profits and regardless of the concrete situation.” Wei, “Fundamental Feature,” 194.

of our communities?¹⁰⁸ An examination of the Ming commentarial material on the same world is a matter for future research. Researchers might begin with the exegesis on the CWSL doctrine of *bhājanaloka*, including the corpus of the famous literatus and ardent Ming dynasty loyalist, Qian Qianyi 錢謙益 (1582–1664).¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁸ Eichman (“Humanizing the Study,” 171): “The differences between ninth-century Yogācāra study, sixteenth-century Yogācāra study, and contemporary understandings would make for a great research project.” Eichman (172) adds: “With the exception of work by the monk Taixu (1889–1947), twentieth-century Yogācāra scholars and monks have all but ignored late Ming Yogācāra exegesis.”

¹⁰⁹ Qian Qianyi, like Zhencheng and Wang Kentang, heavily draws from the *Śūramgama-sūtra* to explicate the nature of the sensory world. Qian Qianyi points to the statement by the Buddha, found in this sūtra, in defense of the doctrine of “three realms that consist in mind-only.” Qian explains the Buddha’s statement that “the dust of the worldly realm (*lokadhātu*) depends upon the mind in coming to form as an entity” (世界微塵，因心成體) to refer to both retribution for acts performed during this life (Chi.: *zhengbao* 正報) and retribution for acts performed during prior lifetimes (Chi.: *yibao* 依報)—see his voluminous commentary on the *Śūramgama sūtra* (X 287, 13: 548b22–23). Qian’s explanation diverges from that of Fazang, who is clear that the *dharmadhātu* extending in ten directions refers to circumstantial retribution—that is, the circumstances that one is born into in terms of the geographical location and the nature of the terrain. This form of karma is analytically distinct from the present retribution affecting the body and mind, because the former refers to the karma accumulated over previous lifetimes. Fazang makes this qualification clear in his formulation of the tetralemma meant to exhaust all possible relationships between the “commonality” and “uncommonality” of sensory worlds—see fascicle three of his *Probing the Profundities* cited above (note #41).

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