Immeasurable Devices: Their Treatment in the *Damoduoluo chanjing* and Further Distillation in Japanese Zen

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Abstract

This article discusses the "four immeasurable minds" from a range of perspectives beginning with their standard description in an early fifth-century meditation treatise called the *Dámóduōluó Chánjīng* 達摩多羅禪經. After mentioning the only comprehensive commentary on the *Chanjing* by the Japanese Rinzai teacher Tōrei Enji 東嶺圓慈 (1721–92), it argues that one of Tōrei's major insights into the significance of the immeasurables is their role as devices pushing the mind to overcome its discursive limitations. Eventually, this piece moves beyond Tōrei's interpretation to engage in a broader conversation about the implications of the four immeasurables for us here and now. It suggests that the *Chanjing* sheds light onto early practices at the juncture between Indian and Chinese Buddhism, and could lead to reexamine the links between traditional sources and contemporary meditation practices. The immeasurables could even serve as a focal point for bracketing sectarian or national differences between Buddhist traditions. Furthermore, the various levels at which these devices are understood and translated into action provide tools for engaging communities beyond scholarly circles because of their crucial ethical implications.

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Keywords

Four Immeasurable Minds; Apramāṇa-citta; Dámóduōluó Chánjīng; Chanjing; Tōrei Enji; meditation; Buddhabhadra; Dharmatrāta

1. Introduction

The four immeasurables—also known as the "four immeasurable minds" (*apramāṇa-citta*, or *sì wúliàngxīn* 四無量心)—indicate four mental dispositions focused on the wellbeing of others.[1] Although the way they are envisioned during practice differs depending on each tradition, these four dispositions can be cultivated and expanded *ad infinitum* across time and space, hence their immeasurable character. What matters is that in Buddhism and other meditation techniques originating from India this practice encapsulates some of the core concerns related to altruistic thoughts and ethical behavior.

1.1 Scope of this Article

This article examines the *Dámóduōluó Chánjīng* 達摩多羅禪經 (T 15 no. 618, abbreviated hereafter as *Chanjing*), a meditation treatise composed in the early fifth century (I avoid the term "translation" because it is questionable). As its title suggests, this "sutra" is attributed to a teacher called Dharmatrāta, whose profile remains nebulous and whose name may even have resulted from a confusion.[2] The present article focuses in particular on its fourteenth section, which provides a precise description of the four immeasurables and of

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[1] A possible rendition of the four immeasurables is: 1. Immeasurable mind of loving-kindness (*maitrī*, *cí wúliàngxīn* 慈無量心), bestowing of joy or happiness; 2. Immeasurable mind of compassion (*karuṇā*, *bēi wúliàngxīn* 悲無量心), empathy and desire to remove misfortune from others; 3. Immeasurable mind of sympathetic joy (*muditā*, *xǐ wúliàngxīn* 喜無量心), rejoicing in others' happiness; 4. Immeasurable mind of equanimity (*upekṣa*, *shě wúliàngxīn* 捨無量心), where all distinctions between friends and foes disappear.

[2] Morrison provides one of the best recent treatments of this text (translated as *Meditation Sūtra*) by discussing its importance among other such scriptures for the construction and legitimization of lineages in China. Morrison 2010, 24–27, and numerous other mentions.

the samādhi targeted by this type of cultivation.[3] I further discuss the only comprehensive commentary on the *Chanjing* by the Japanese Rinzai teacher Tōrei Enji 東嶺圓慈 (1721–92). His commentary in six volumes titled *Darumatara zenkyō settsū kōsho* 達磨多羅禪經説通考疏 was first published in 1784 and remains available only in two woodblock editions (abbreviated hereafter DZSK).[4] His commentary contributes to highlight the role of the immeasurables as devices conducive to the extinction of the discursive mind.

Another distinctive feature of this commentary is its combination of the perspectives on the immeasurables provided by scholastic Buddhism and by the Chán traditions. Tōrei distinguishes between these two approaches while ultimately highlighting their nonduality, and also denounces the relative neglect of the immeasurables by Chán teachers. This will lead us to address the relevance of this practice for our postmodern world.[5]

What remains beyond the reach of this article is the investigation of the much discussed possible authorship of the *Chanjing*, which has remained elusive for many decades and mostly adds a touch of mystery to this otherwise seemingly conservative piece of Chinese Buddhist literature.[6] Although several other Chinese Buddhist traditions, Tiāntái in particular,[7] also paid considerable attention to the

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3 An English translation of this section has been produced for the 2014 IABS Conference but it is too large to be included in this article.

4 A scanned version of this text is now available on eVols, the open-access digital institutional repository for the University of Hawai‘i hosting Tōrei’s works. See http://evols.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/handle/10524/47071 (accessed November 12, 2014).

5 It is important to bear in mind that the immeasurables constitute a fourfold set of practices, not a list of doctrinal items.

6 One already old approach about the authorship problem has been to consider that this text “contains the teachings of Buddhasena, not Dharmatrāta.” Greene 2012, 49.

7 It is interesting to see in the *Móhē zhǐguān* 摩訶止觀 a passage distinguishing between the practice of goodness (*xíngshàn* 行善), categorized as belonging to the insight aspect (*guānxiàng* 觀相, *vipaśyanā*), versus the four immeasurables and the four *dhyānas*, categorized as belonging to the stillness aspect (*zhǐxiàng* 止相, *śamatha*). T 46: 23c21–22.

four immeasurables, this article focuses on their treatment in the Chán and Zen lineages claiming a special connection between their putative founder Bodhidharma and the *Chanjing*.

1.2 Objectives

Thus, this article's objective is not to engage in speculation about the origins of the *Chanjing*, a source whose authorship is shrouded in uncertainty given its confusing attribution to Bodhidharma by a range of religious authorities including Tōrei. It rather attempts to scrutinize this text as any other ancient sutra with its quaint charm and limitations, while keeping in mind the question of why it once drew so much attention. Namely, what was projected onto this text may be more important than what it actually says.

Conversely, because the focus is on the section describing the immeasurables (the theme of our panel at the 2014 IAHR Conference), we need to ask whether this particular source adds anything to our knowledge of how this practice was approached. Yet we may be drawn to admit that nothing extraordinary is revealed by the *Chanjing*, which mostly describes a set of Abhidharmic prescriptions, and that what triggers our interest is more how a representative of the Japanese Zen tradition read this source and saw it as having the potential for some kind of revival of his own lineage. Finally, I suggest moving beyond Tōrei's sectarian agendas, in an attempt to pave the way for a broader conversation about some of the implications of the four immeasurables for us here and now.

1.3 Available Research

Since I already wrote a chapter dealing with the general features of the *Chanjing*, I will abstain from replicating the same information in this

article.[8] Suffice it to say here that the pioneering work done by Paul Demiéville (1894–1979) remains to a large extent valid and that recent contributions to this topic are mostly related to Central Asia[9] and to later developments, in particular during the Sòng dynasty (960–1279), when the various Chán lineages were receiving an increasing amount of support from the state.

The case of Fórì Qìsōng 佛日契嵩 (1007–1072) is especially relevant for our understanding because of his *Chuánfǎ zhèngzōng lùn* 傳法正宗論 (Treatise on the True Lineage of the Dharma Transmission, T 51 no. 2080) and his claims about Bodhidharma's authorship of the *Chanjing*. Elizabeth Morrison's published dissertation contributes to dispel a few myths about this important Chán teacher and shows that he never intended to deceive the public.[10] We will briefly return to this figure in the section about the Sòng dynasty.

1.4 Considerations Guiding this Article

Let me formulate some generic considerations about the immeasurables before returning to the specific case of their iteration in the *Chanjing*. My approach has been guided by the perspective that the immeasurables could be envisioned as devices precluding discursive limitations and sectarian divides. Although this does not constitute a demonstrated fact, this perspective provides an incentive to broaden the philosophical implications of this fourfold practice. Let us see how this can be envisioned.

On one hand, an excessive focus on the immeasurables may lead to overemphasize their importance and to forget that this fourfold

8 See Mohr 2006. Unfortunately, it contains a significant number of typos.

9 Regarding Khotanese Buddhism, see for instance the discussion of parallels between the *Book of Zambasta* and the *Dámóduōluó chánjīng* in Martini 2011.

10 Morrison 2010. Previously, the only work about Qìsōng available in English was Huang 1986.

practice serves as a meditational device aiming at facilitating the realization of nonduality, in particular between oneself and others. Conversely, it is difficult to deny that this particular way of putting teachings into practice pervades almost all Buddhist traditions, from Theravāda to Tibetan Tantric Buddhism. It even goes beyond the boundaries of Buddhism, since there is a strict parallel in the *Yoga Sūtras* attributed to Patañjali. As we will see in the section discussing historical layers, however, although the language is identical, the Yogic interpretation of the four immeasurables may differ from the Buddhist one, especially regarding the way the fourth immeasurable is understood.

In this regard, especially since we live in a time when previous assumptions about the supposed homogeneity of the Buddhist teachings are being questioned, identifying at least one item shared by most traditions may sound refreshing. Yet some exceptions may exist, and the various Chán and Zen traditions are among the prime suspects for ignoring the practice focusing on the immeasurables. We will see how Tōrei astutely addresses this issue.

From a purely philosophical perspective, it is difficult to avoid pointing out that if, indeed, the four immeasurables constitute devices allowing to a certain extent to bracket sectarian divisions and distinctions between the various vehicles (pre-Mahāyāna or Theravāda, Mahāyāna, and Vajrayāna), then we must be dealing with something really crucial. One may even venture to claim that this commonality indicates how ethical concerns tend to take precedence over doctrinal subtleties. For instance, when facing someone in need or wounded, empathy (*karuṇā*) should trigger action without the need for the intervention of any intellectual process. This is where the ethical dimension can be understood as precluding cognitive constructs. Ethics and their translation into concrete action also suggests an area suitable for exploring universals predating the inception of religious and sectarian boundaries, although their culturally-determined

dimension also warrants caution.[11]

Thus, when examining the various ways in which the four immeasurables were taught, understood, and practiced, we need to take into account each particular instance in its own sociohistorical context. The next section provides a few elements of information about the circumstances in which the *Chanjing* emerged, was composed or translated, and then rediscovered in China and in Japan.

2. Peeling off Some of the Chanjing's Historical Layers

2.1 Indian Buddhist Literature and the Yoga Sūtras

Little is known about the context in which the Indian text corresponding to the *Chanjing* emerged, if there ever was a Sanskrit original.[12] Yet, when considering the vast array of Indian Buddhist commentarial literature (Abhidharma) translated into Chinese, this piece belongs to a genre of meditation manuals that became popular since the early phase of the transmission of Buddhist scriptures to China. One way to characterize this new genre would be to speak of recycled Abhidharmic materials with various degrees of Mahāyānic spin.

As pointed out in my earlier discussion of this topic, this genre goes back to the second century of the Common Era, marked by Ān Shìgāo 安世高 and his translation team's arrival in Luòyáng in 148 CE,

[11] For a discussion of possible avenues to reexamine the question of universality in the postmodern age, see chapter 10 in Mohr 2014.

[12] For a different interpretation, see the dissertation including a translation by Chan 2013. This work deserves to be praised but, unfortunately, its hesitant English syntax makes it hard to read, while many passages in the translation are debatable. The author's stated purpose is to establish the "unshakable claim that the sūtra is a Sarvāstivāda text" composed by "Sarvāstivāda Dārṣṭāntika masters."

which corresponds to the beginning of regular translation activities.[13] Among numerous works, Ān Shìgāo is credited for a partial translation of one of the *Yogācārabhūmi* texts that later evolved into our *Chanjing*, the *Dàodìjīng* 道地經 (Sutra on the Stages on the Way, T 15 no. 607). The original *Yogācārabhūmi* treatise is attributed to Saṃgharakṣa, a teacher from Kashmir credited for having taught emperor Kaniṣka. Eventually, a complete translation was produced by Dharmarakṣa (Zhú Fǎhù 竺法護) in 284 CE, under the title *Xiūxíng dàodì jīng* 修行道地經 (T 15 no. 606).

In any case, what is relevant for our understanding is that these texts display a combination of Mahāyāna and pre-Mahāyāna elements,[14] and that their exposition of Buddhist doctrines and practices exhibits an archaic flavor that does not evoke Chán at all. It is true that one possible sectarian linkage would be to the Dārṣṭāntika (Pìyù bù 譬喻部) school and, in his 1954 article, Demiéville already asserted that "[Saṃgharakṣa's] *Yogācārabhūmi* was quoted by Dharmatrāta, the great master of the Dārṣṭāntika school at the time of the *Mahāvibhāṣā*."[15]

Although this does not go beyond the realm of speculation, the fact that Saṃgharakṣa came from Kashmir seems to suggest one of the geographic areas where the Buddhist community was the most engaged with non-Buddhist practitioners, especially those identifying themselves with the Yoga tradition. Some type of early interaction is further demonstrated by the inclusion of a precise passage describing

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[13] Yamabe 2000.

[14] For instance, Demiéville considers the last three chapters of the *Xiūxíng dàodì jīng* as the text's "Mahāyānist appendix."

[15] English translation mine. From Demiéville, Paul. 1954. "La Yogācārabhūmi de Saṅgharakṣa," 339, footnote 2. Later, on page 406, Demiéville admits that this is based on the plausible account by Lin 1949, 330. Lin Li-kouang has produced one of the most detailed discussions of Dharmatrāta, in Appendix 9 of his work, 314–351. His conclusion that the "three Dharmatrātas" earlier identified by La Vallée-Poussin actually indicate the same person appears on page 335. Yet this provisional conclusion is later revised and Lin also ends up identifying three different individuals, on page 351.

the four immeasurables in the *Yoga Sūtras* ascribed to Patañjali. Here is Edwin Bryant's translation of this section (1.33):

> By cultivating an attitude of friendship toward those who are happy, compassion toward those in distress, joy toward those who are virtuous, and equanimity toward those who are nonvirtuous, lucidity arises in the mind.[16]

This is not entirely surprising, since the Pāli canon also includes narratives about disciples of the historical Buddha having various encounters with "wanderers of other sects." In one instance, in a park in the town of Haliddavasana, the Buddha's disciples are depicted as being puzzled by the fact that practitioners of other traditions claim to be using exactly the same meditation technique they had been taught as the *brahma-vihāras* (another name for the immeasurables).[17] They then report this incident to the Buddha, who supposedly clarifies the differences by asserting that his version leads to "a superior liberation" because each of the four components of this meditation targets one of the highest spheres of samādhi. The Buddha is then depicted as enjoining his disciples to examine the results obtained by these practices and to identify differences with their non-Buddhist equivalents, asking in particular: "What does it have as its destination, its culmination, its fruit, its final goal?"[18]

As far as the version mentioned in the *Yoga Sūtras* goes, it seems beyond doubt that it refers to practices aimed at cleansing the mind of its impurities[19] including inherent proclivities such as likes and dislikes (reinforced by the *saṃskāras*). This would be conducive to

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16 Bryant 2009, 128. It corresponds to the following passage in Sanskrit: 1.33 *maitrī-karuṇā-muditopekṣāṇāṁ sukha-duḥkha-puṇyāpuṇya-viṣayāṇām bhāvanātaś citta-prasādanam*.

17 Bodhi 2000. "*Bojjhaṅgasaṃyutta Sutta*: Connected Discourses on the Factors of Enlightenment," 1567–1626. See in particular pages 1607–1611.

18 Ibid., 1609–1610.

19 These impurities or defilements (*kleśa*) include inherited proclivities such as likes and dislikes (reinforced by the *saṃskāras*).

developing the pure "*sāttvic* mind" indicated by the word "lucidity" (*prasādanam*) in this passage.[20] Apart from the subtle differences in the results obtained by those cultivating the Buddhist and non-Buddhist version of these practices, there is one instance where their potential impact on ethical decisions seems radically different.

The fourth immeasurable, *upekṣā*[21] (equanimity), is described in the *Yoga Sūtras* as a response to "those who are nonvirtuous" (*apuṇya*). This implies a nonspecified standard for recognizing what constitutes nonvirtuous action, also suggesting that "switching off" from such negative interactions may constitute the preferred course of action. Although the second part of the implication is debatable and has indeed been debated within the Yoga tradition itself, the potential for misinterpreting this as mere "indifference" can hardly be denied.

In the Tibetan Tantric tradition we find the opposite side of the spectrum regarding the Buddhist interpretations of the fourth immeasurable. Teachings attributed to Patrul Rimpoche (1808–1887) include a detailed exposition of the immeasurables, where *upekṣā* occupies a prominent place as the starting point of the four. The English rendition of his work uses the word "impartiality" as an equivalent for *upekṣā*, explaining the corresponding Tibetan term *tang nyom* as, "giving up (*tang*) our hatred for enemies and infatuation with friends, [...] having an even-minded (*nyom*) attitude toward all

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20 This is also backed up by the main commentaries on the *Yoga Sūtras* by Vācaspati Miśra, Hariharānanda, Vijñanabhikṣu, Śaṅkara, and Bhoja Rāja, discussed by Bryant. The idea that the four immeasurables stem from Kapila, the mythical founder of the Sāṃkhya school sounds enticing but, so far, no evidence allows to back up this claim. About Kapila, see Larson 1979, 139, where he asserts, "there is no doubt that he is a mythical figure." The existence of the town of Kapilavastu—often mentioned in Buddhist sources and whose foundation is attributed to Kapila's students—nevertheless remains intriguing.

21 The etymology of *upekṣā* (Pāli *upekkhā*) deriving from the root "*īkṣ*" is discussed to a certain extent in chapter 9 of Nagao 1991, 91. Yet, after all his detailed contextualization of this term, the choice of the English translation "indifference" is puzzling.

beings."[22] Patrul's manual further emphasizes the necessity to "begin with the meditation on impartiality" to prevent the other three from being one-sided.[23]

The above seems to suggest that, although a version of the immeasurables was used in the early Buddhist community, its meaning was *interpreted* in a way significantly different from its non-Buddhist version. Although stressing the differences may have been a rhetorical device to assert Buddhism's originality, this reflects the orthodox Buddhist tradition articulated in the Nikāyas. In any case, let us skip the discussion about which version of the immeasurables came first, since identical words did not necessarily refer to the same content. It would nevertheless be logical if early Buddhists gave a different spin to an existing concept. Hopefully, further research will shed new light on this chronology.

2.2 Scholastic Buddhism in the Fifth Century and Huiyuan's Preface

Although in the above-mentioned identification of Dharmatrāta as a "master of the Dārṣṭāntika school" Demiéville may have been carried away by his enthusiasm, a few elements about this sutra can be established with a reasonable degree of certainty. One of them is the identity of the individual having spearheaded the composition/translation of this piece into Chinese: Buddhabhadra (359–429, usually transcribed Fótuóbátuóluó 佛陀跋陀羅 in Chinese but Tōrei mostly uses Fótuóbátuóluó 佛陀跋馱羅).[24] This information seems reliable

[22] Patrul 1998, 196. A fascinating parallel to this Tibetan understanding of the concept of impartiality is the transsectarian movement of the same name that developed in nineteenth-century Khams, identified as *phyogs ris su med pa*. See the unpublished paper by Deroche 2014.

[23] Ibid., 195.

[24] Of course, we know that the translators were not working alone and often rather led a translation team. Tōrei's commentary is more specific about this and quotes the passage of the *Bǎolínchuán* 寶林傳 saying that Buddhabhadra was invited to come to Lúshān to translate this sutra, with "more than forty individuals including Huìyán

because of the sutra's preface by Lúshān Huìyuǎn 廬山慧遠 (334–416), about whom significant research has been conducted.[25]

Having heard that Buddhabhadra fell out of favor with the authorities—because he had condemned his former colleague Kumārajīva's disregard for the Buddhist precepts—in 410 Huìyuǎn invited Buddhabhadra to his monastery on Mount Lu to translate several texts. This resulted in the completion of the *Chanjing*'s composition/translation in 413, five years after another similar text was produced by Kumārajīva's team, the *Zuòchán sānmèi fǎmén jīng* 坐禪三昧法門經 (Sutra on the Approach to Samādhi [through] Seated Meditation, T 15 no. 614) completed in 407.[26] Both texts complement each other and, in the introduction to his Commentary, Tōrei recalls how consulting both sources helped him overcome his initial perplexity. Having first read the *Chanjing* in 1762, he admitted, "I couldn't understand its meaning," and added, "when I eventually procured the *Zuòchán sānmèi [fǎmén] jīng*, the significance [of the *Chanjing*] became increasingly clear."[27]

Regarding the context in which the *Chanjing* emerged and was propagated, we should keep in mind that, if the 413 CE date for its composition/translation is accurate, it predates the major transformation brought by the Tiāntái school through its new taxonomies of the Buddhist teachings (*pànjiào* 判教). It also took place more than a century before the possible arrival of the semi-legendary figure called Bodhidharma (Pútídámó 菩提達磨).

慧嚴 and Huìguān 慧觀," S1K0P16b (page number referring to the woodblock edition). The dates for Buddhabhadra's birth and death rely on Demiéville, Durt, and Seidel, eds 1978, 238.

[25] See in particular Kimura 1960 and 1962.

[26] See the English translation by Yamabe and Sueki 2009. In their introduction, they suggest that it was a compilation of various sources translated into Chinese rather than a single Indian text translated as a whole. If the *Chánjīng* was also the translation of such a compilation, it may partly explain its rather awkward character.

[27] In particular the *Chán mìyàofǎ jīng* 禪祕要法經 (T 15 no. 613), a translation that might have been wrongly attributed to Kumārajīva, and the *Chánfǎ yàojiě* 禪法要解 (T 15 no. 616).

Another element that we should take into account is that during the Eastern Jìn dynasty (317–420) the capital was located in Jiànkāng 建康 (present Nánjīng) and that the Buddhist clergy was far from presenting a united front across the fragile mosaic of feudal domains identified as "China." This period of time also coincides with the expedition of Fǎxiǎn 法顯 (337–422), who traveled to India and other Western regions between 399 and 412. His return with a trove of scriptures[28] roughly coincides with the completion of our sutra's translation, showing that Chinese Buddhism was still in the midst of a formative process.

Political instability peaked with the reign of Emperor Jìn Ān 晉安 (reign 382–419), who was seriously disabled, resulting in constant rebellions by warlords threatening the dynasty, while a myriad of various ethnic groups vied for supremacy. This is why the fourth and early fifth centuries coincide with the period of the so-called Sixteen Kingdoms (*Shíliù Guó* 十六國 304–420). Much remains to be studied about how each Buddhist temple was able to survive and find appropriate sources of patronage among such chaos and plethora of factions.

2.3 Chan in the Song Dynasty and Fori Qisong's Take

It may be fair to say that the *Chanjing* fell into oblivion for several centuries as newer and more fashionable versions of the Buddhist teachings gained popularity. Thus, we need to fast-forward to the eleventh century, during which Fórì Qìsōng 佛日契嵩 wrote his *Chuánfǎ zhèngzōng lùn* 傳法正宗論 (*Treatise on the True Lineage of the Dharma Transmission*). As Elizabeth Morrison argues, Fórì Qìsōng has too often been treated as a scapegoat for all the historical inaccuracies replicated in the Chán tradition. Although he may

[28] Eighth year of the Yìxī 義熙 era (412).

deserve more credit for his "historical sophistication,"[29] his interpretation deserves to be questioned.

Fórì considered the *Chanjing* as the central piece of evidence demonstrating the uninterrupted lineage of transmission that linked the historical Buddha to his own teachers. Being able to show this mattered in the context of constant disputes with the rival Tiāntái school, which challenged the authenticity of Chán and claimed that its lineage had been broken. In any case, Fórì sought to put those polemics to rest through an argument partially relying on the authority of the masters having written the prefaces for the two versions of the *Chanjing* (Huìyuǎn and Huìguān). After having asserted, "[t]he *Meditation Sūtra* comes from Bodhidharma but was translated by Buddhabhadra,"[30] Fórì demonstrates some philological sophistication by admitting, "[i]n investigating the date of Buddhabhadra's translation of the sūtra, I find that it occurred between the seventh and eighth year of the Yixi period of [Emperor] An of the Jin [411–12]. Yet Bodhidharma came to the Liang at the beginning of the Putong [520–526]. These events are separated by almost one hundred years."[31]

The justification he provides is rather convoluted, however: "This is probably because of Bodhidharma's unusual longevity. […] [Emperor] Wu of the Liang composed an epitaph for Bodhidharma in which he says, 'His age was one hundred fifty years.' When [Bodhidharma] died and was buried, he rose again, took one shoe, and returned westward. How can [one] calculate his longevity with years? I infer from the year Buddhabhadra translated the scripture that Bodhidharma was then only twenty-seven roughly. His preaching of the *Meditation*

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[29] Morrison 2010, 170. She translates this title as *Critical Essay on the True Lineage of the Transmission of the Dharma* and provides an annotated translation of pages 773c–783c in the Taishō edition (T 51 no. 2080). Morrison 2010, 229–284.

[30] Morrison 2010, 242. Corresponds to 夫禪經者蓋出於菩提達磨 T 51: 776a10.

[31] Ibid., 248.

Sūtra was surely before that."[32]

Such a peculiar rhetoric also highlights the fact that Fórì Qìsōng was the product of his time, during which Chán was vying for state-sponsorship and lost much of its independence as a result. It would be an oversimplification to say that what Chán gained in power was often lost in terms of freedom of thought and expression, but the particular context of the Sòng Dynasty demanded compromises affecting each cleric's worldviews. Simultaneously, it also coincided with a major reorganization of the teachings into large traditional schools, with the effects of boosting a competitive spirit that contributed to the flourishing of Zen monasteries. The downside of this success was an increasing tendency toward sectarianism,[33] which was only reinforced with the introduction of separate transmissions to Japan.

2.4 Japanese Adaptations in the Eighteenth Century

The complexity of the developments affecting Japanese Zen circles during the six hundred years since their emergence precludes even a rudimentary depiction of its history but in the eighteenth century—during Tōrei Enji's lifetime—most Buddhist schools were thriving. The influx of Chinese immigrants and monks who landed in Japan after the 1644 fall of the Ming dynasty also contributed to a renewal of Zen, with the introduction of a new blend of Chán that eventually led to the emergence of the Ōbaku school. While carefully navigating between the two sources of political power—the Imperial Court and the Military Government (Bakufu)—most Zen monasteries prospered thanks to the stable patronage they received from the rising merchants' class. This was the case of the monastery founded by

[32] Ibid., 248.

[33] See, for instance, the rivalry between the Linji and Caodong lineages depicted in chapter 6 of Schlütter 2008.

Hakuin and Tōrei, the Ryūtakuji 龍澤寺, which additionally gained official recognition when in 1768 it became the repository for the funerary tablets of emperor Reigen 靈元 (1654–1732, reign 1663–87), a mark of deep trust from the imperial family.[34]

For our purpose, the only point that needs to be made regarding the place of Tōrei in Japan during the Tokugawa period (1600–1867) is that his life coincided with a shift in the way practice was conceived and implemented in his Rinzai school. Hitherto, so-called monasteries were often centers for literati and for cultural pursuits that were only remotely connected to the Buddhist teachings. Aware of the institutional sclerosis in the former capitals (Kyoto and Kamakura), Hakuin and his followers mostly kept their distance from the central Buddhist institutions and spent their lives in the countryside. Yet, eventually, this type of grass-root movement succeeded in overtaking the main lineages and became, in turn, caught in games of power. It is in this context that we should understand Tōrei's work, at a time when new monasteries such as Ryūtakuji were beginning to emerge and everything still seemed possible. This also coincided with efforts to reach out to the laypeople providing support, a factor that may have contributed to creating new narratives about the origins of the Zen tradition in order to boost its prestige.

3. Toward the Rediscovery of the Chanjing beyond Dharmatrāta

The above showed how the "re-discoverers" of the *Chanjing*, Fórì and Tōrei in particular, shared some similar characteristics. It suggested that the time and energy they devoted to this text largely resulted from their fascination for Bodhidharma but also from the possible benefits of this authorship for their own sectarian revivals. In the case of Tōrei this is demonstrated by a series of paintings he drew for his lay followers, depicting Bodhidharma and suggesting various links with

[34] Biography of Tōrei, age 48. Nishimura 1982, 209.

Yogācāra, breathing techniques, the circulation of Qì 氣, and even representing the Daoist concept of cinnabar field (*dāntián* 丹田).[35]

Since both Zen teachers were also seasoned scholars of Buddhism, they should be given the benefit of the doubt regarding what could appear at first sight as naive infatuation for legendary accounts. They might as well have chosen to highlight the connection with the exotic figure of Bodhidharma as a skillful means to enhance the public's interest. This is why, after having mulled over this issue for a while, I am inclined to believe that speculations about the semi-legendary Dharmatrāta—who may have been utilized as a decoy for Bodhidharma—serve as distractions and prevent us from examining what this text is all about. Let us, therefore, return to examining the section of the *Chanjing* on the immeasurables and see how Tōrei constructs his analysis of the issues at stake.

3.1 Tōrei's Central Argument

In the latter part of his commentary Tōrei expands his discussion in three phases, explaining as follows how he will "prove his argument" (證論):

> First, I will cite the original texts [containing] what the Buddha taught to the Bodhisattvas.[36] Second, I will explain how certain patriarchs who did not practice the four immeasurables were lacking meritorious karma (欠福德業). Finally, I will argue that the four immeasurables possess extraordinary efficacy (格外之妙) by themselves.[37]

One of the distinctive features of Tōrei's writings is their emphasis on the absence of distinction between the sutras' teachings and Chán literature. He often encourages Zen practitioners to read the sutras in

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[35] My first published article was focused on this topic: Mōru 1987.

[36] This suggests that Tōrei believed the Mahāyāna sutras to reflect the Buddha's actual words.

[37] S5K14P14b.

order to deepen their realization. Here is a passage highlighting this point in Tōrei's lifework, *On the Inexhaustible Lamp of the Primary Approach* (*Shūmon mujintōron* 宗門無盡燈論):

> To test the Dharma approaches that you have realized, regularly take the Buddhist sutras and commentaries. Read them carefully, paying attention to details. Ask yourself whether or not what you have realized and what the sutras and commentaries say coincide. If it contradicts the [teachings found in the] sutras and commentaries, then it is your understanding that is biased and withered, superficial and simplistic.[38]

In any case, in his commentary on the section dealing with the immeasurables Tōrei mentions the examples of several teachers. He begins with Yǒngjiā Xuánjué 永嘉玄覺 (665–713), a Tiāntái expert depicted as having turned to Chán after gaining an insight upon reading the *Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa-sūtra*. The reason why Tōrei dedicates a significant amount of space to quoting Yǒngjiā is that the tenth section of the work bearing his name (*Yǒngjiājí* 永嘉集) includes an elaborate list of vows (*Fāyuànwén Dìshí* 發願文第十).[39] These vows are deeply linked to the four immeasurables and Tōrei praises this text, emphasizing that, "it indicates a crucial path for practicing the samādhi of the four immeasurables" (*kore sunawachi shimuryō sanmai o shugyō suru no yōro nari* 是卽修行四無量三昧之要路也).[40]

After Yǒngjiā, Tōrei examines three cases of Chán teachers who had to endure special hardships because they supposedly failed to practice the four immeasurables in their past lives (宿世) and thus, initially, in their current life (此生) had to endure misfortune and a lack of favorable karmic affinities (無福欠緣). Yet his mention of these examples does not serve to blame them, because they were ultimately able to overcome these obstacles and to become "three great

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[38] T 81: 590a12–a15.

[39] T 48: 394c16–395c02.

[40] S5K14P18b.

Bodhisattvas" through tremendous efforts and dedication. Tōrei's purpose in mentioning these examples is rather to emphasize how the four immeasurables play an important role in the completion of the Buddhist path, and to encourage practitioners to incorporate these practices to make their lives easier. The three individuals mentioned in this passage are:

•Dàsuí Zhēn héshang 大隋真和尚 = Dàsuí Fǎzhēn 大隋法真 (834–919)[41]

•Fúzhōu Dàzhāngshān Qìrú ānzhǔ 福州大章山契如庵主 (n.d.)[42]

•Qīngsù shìzhě 清素侍者 (n.d.)[43]

Tōrei then proceeds with an integral citation of the *Homage to Guanyin* (*Lǐ Guānyīn wén* 禮觀音文)[44] by Dàhuì Zōnggǎo 大慧宗杲 (1089–1163). Dàhuì's formal vows impressed Xūtáng Zhìyú 虛堂智愚 (1185–1269) to such an extent that he supposedly exclaimed, "Before [him], no Śākyamuni, behind [him], no Maitreya!" (前無釋迦, 後無彌勒矣).[45]

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41 Chiefly known as the central figure in case 29 of the *Emerald Cliff Record* (*Bìyánlù* 碧巖錄) about the great fire marking the end of a kalpa (*jiéhuǒ* 劫火). See Iriya et al. 1992–1996. *Hekiganroku*. Vol. 1, 358–364. Tōrei quotes T 48: 169a22–a29. Unsatisfactory translations include: Yuanwu, Cleary, Thomas F. & Cleary, J. C. 1977. *The Blue Cliff Record*, vol. 1, 187–190, and Yuanwu, Xuedou & Cleary, Thomas F. 1998. *Blue Cliff Record. Berkeley*, CA: Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 159–162.

42 He was a successor of Xuánshā Shībèi 玄沙師備 (835–908). A detailed entry about him is included in *Bǔxù gāosēng chuán* 補續高僧傳 (Additional Materials to the Sequel to Biographies of Eminent Monks). Tōrei quotes a passage roughly equivalent to X 77: 408a08–a12.

43 One of the ancient sources discussing this figure is the *Luóhúyělù* 羅湖野録, X 83: 392c05–393a09. Tōrei may also have relied on the work by his teacher Hakuin, who devotes some space to discussing Qīngsù in his *Sokkōroku kaien fusetsu* 息耕録開筵普説, in *Hakuin oshō zenshū* vol. 2, 437–438 (Gotō, ed. 1934–1935). See the translation of this passage in Waddell 1994, 95–97.

44 From *Zīmén jǐngxùn* 緇門警訓, T 48: 1081b08–c01.

45 Here, it seems that Tōrei may have confused two similar expressions. In *Xūtáng Héshang yǔlù* 虛堂和尚語錄 (The Recorded Sayings of Xutang), Xūtáng begins his praise of Dàhuì by writing, "Before [him], no Śākyamuni, behind [him], no [Bodhi]dharma!" (前無釋迦, 後無達磨), T 47: 1032a26. The words used by Tōrei

Tōrei then cites one last example of two Chán teachers, from case 41 of the *Emerald Cliff Record* (*Bìyánlù* 碧巖錄). It features the following dialogue between Zhàozhōu Cóngshěn 趙州從諗 (778–897) and Tóuzǐ Dàtóng 投子大同 (819–914):

> Zhàozhōu: What about a thoroughly dead person returning to life?
>
> Tóuzǐ : Even though circulating at night is not allowed, he must arrive before dawn.[46]

This allows Tōrei to mention Hakuin's commendation of these exceptional patriarchs, since they formulated great vows and devoted their lives to helping others in unconventional ways. Tōrei wraps up this section by adding:

> Although the ancients equally possessed the wish [to deliver all beings] (古人一等雖有願心), those among them who profoundly investigated the four immeasurable minds (就中深究四無量心) were able to turn the wheel of mastery, and they represent the Chán teachers who are the most difficult to find (轉自在輪底之宗師最難得耳).[47]

Returning to the sutra literature, Tōrei concludes by quoting a long section of the *Dà fāngbiàn fó bào'ēn jīng* 大方便佛報恩經 (Sutra of the Great Skillful Means of the Buddha to Reciprocate [His Parents'] Kindness), one of his favorite pieces promoting the idea that sentient beings and Buddhas also directly interact by being born as each other's children, thus providing a rationale for a higher form of filial piety.[48]

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refer to the famous verses in case 37 of the *Gateless Barrier*s (*Wúménguān* 無門關), T 48: 297c08. These verses have taken a life of their own in the *Zenrin kushū* 禪林句集, see their translation as "In front, no Śākyamuni; behind, no Maitreya," in Hori 2003, 356.

[46] My translation of 大死底人却活時如何？投子云:不許夜行，投明須到。T 48: 178c16–c18. Here, Zhàozhōu pretends to be a thieve ready to attack a vulnerable traveler.

[47] S5K14P20b.

[48] T 3: 127c08–128a18. Regarding quotes from this sutra and its usage in another of Tōrei's works, see Mohr 2013.

Overall, in this piece Tōrei proceeds to systematically demonstrate both continuity and discontinuity, first by showing how the sutras and Chán records reflect a deep concern for the type of altruism embedded in the four immeasurable minds. Conversely, he is careful not to oversimplify and points out that, even within the Chán tradition, teachers did not necessarily pay the same amount of attention to this type of practice. Paramount to Tōrei's emphasis on the four immeasurables, however, seems to be the understanding that these are not only theoretical niceties in the Buddhist doctrine. They must be implemented and, ultimately, what matters is their result. Results, in this context, are considered to be measurable in three ways: 1. the effect of the immeasurables on providing happiness and relieving pain or dis-ease from others[49]; 2. their effect on making the life of the practitioner easier (through positive actions that produce merit); 3. their effect on triggering entrance into deep samādhi. This third aspect deserves to be briefly discussed in the following section, since the portion of Tōrei's text that we examined didn't provide a detailed explanation of this dimension.

3.2 The Link to Meditation

As seen above, the Pāli Canon already provided a depiction of the four immeasurables emphasizing their "final goal." This goal is defined as

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[49] This is illustrated by a passage of the *Dàzhì dù lùn* 大智度論 quoted by Tōrei at the beginning of this section, in DZSK, S5K14P1a–P1b, which revolves around the question, "what is lesser loving-kindness and lesser compassion?" (何等是小慈小悲), T 25: 256b21. The reply stresses the importance of "efficacy" as one of the main criteria: "Furthermore, lesser loving-kindness gives happiness to beings only in theory (但心念); actually, it has no happy effect (實無樂事). Lesser compassion considers the various physical and mental sufferings of beings and has pity on them (憐愍), but is incapable of freeing them from suffering (不能令脫). On the other hand, the great loving-kindness not [256c] only wishes that beings find happiness, but also assures them of happy things (大慈者念令眾生得樂亦與樂事); and great compassion not only has pity for the suffering of beings but also frees them from sufferings (大悲憐愍眾生苦亦能令脫苦)." Translation by Gelongma Migme Chodron of Gampo Abbey, from Lamotte's French rendition, *The Treatise on the Great Virtue of Wisdom of Nāgārjuna* (*Mahāprajñāpāramitaśastra*), 1398–1399.

entering formless states of absorption, technically known as the four *samāpattis* or "attainments." Some of the traditional descriptions of these attainments place above them the ninth stage of cessation of perception and feeling (P. *saññāvedayitanirodha*), the ultimate absorption also known as the attainment of cessation (Skt. *nirodha-samāpatti*).

Even though it would seem easier not to venture into the technicalities of these eightfold or ninefold descriptions, they constitute an unavoidable counterpart of the four immeasurables. The different stages of absorption include the four *dhyānas* associated with the world of form, followed by the four *samāpattis* associated with the world of non-form, sometimes capped by the ninth cessation. It is important to mention them, insofar as one of the main objectives of the immeasurables is to facilitate entrance into such subtle meditative states. At least one modern-day Vipassanā teacher has chosen to simplify this by speaking of eight *jhānas*, including four material *jhānas*, followed by four immaterial *jhānas*.[50] In the correspondence he establishes with the four immeasurables, the first three immeasurables concur to produce the third *jhāna*, whereas equanimity is said to produce the fourth *jhāna*.[51]

In a similar vein, Tibetan practices involving visualization often conclude by dissolving the meditation deity into the heart center, thus merging it into the practitioner's true nature and producing an undifferentiated state of deep absorption. This is particularly interesting to us in the case of the Bodhisattva Tārā (Duōluó Púsà 多羅菩薩), whose twenty-one different emanations represent embodiments of loving kindness and compassion. A traditional manual describing the various practices focused on Tārā recommends to "meditate with courage and commitment on the four immeasurables, or four boundless ones."[52] What further captures our attention is that,

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[50] Snyder & Rasmussen 2009.

[51] Ibid., 116–117.

[52] Palden et al. 2007, 45.

eventually, the visualized image is dissolved and, "[w]e meditate in this state of natural awareness for as long as we are able."[53] What is called here "natural awareness" refers to *rigpa*, which the Tibetan Dzogchen tradition understands as nonconceptual wisdom. This is not something to be acquired, since, "[f]rom beginningless time until now, *rigpa* has never been obscured—it is innately shining and radiant."[54]

Although most Chán and Zen teachers are reluctant to discuss such details dealing with the psychology of meditation, Tōrei touches upon the various immaterial attainments. In an earlier section of his commentary on the *Chanjing,* he mentions that mind-consciousness becomes extinct (心識滅盡) when penetrating the Dharma nature (入法性).[55]

I believe that this idea of the discursive mind becoming extinct constitutes the core of the teachings revolving around the four immeasurables, not only as dispositions of mind to be cultivated but as the natural manifestation of a precognitive total openness precluding the distinction between oneself and another. As long as this practice is conceived as a tool to encourage positive behavior, it still remains confined to the realm of expedient means fostering good intentions. If we are interested in exploring some of the immeasurables' deeper implications, then the examination of its nondiscursive dimension may prove fruitful, although we should also pay attention to how this is envisioned in various traditions whose teachings are based on different models and mappings of consciousness.

For instance, the understanding of cessation (*nirodha*) in the Pāli tradition as the culmination of a series of increasingly deeper absorptions is conceived and formulated differently from the way Tibetan Tantric teachers saw this as a return to the inherently luminous nonconceptual wisdom (*rigpa*). It nevertheless seems

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53 Ibid., 61.

54 Ibid., 69.

55 See DZSK, S1K0P37b-P38a.

possible to assume that these various models share the same practical purpose of suppressing distinctions between oneself and others by overcoming discursive limitations. After all, this practice focused on the "immeasurables" appears to have been conceived as an antidote to what is "measurable" (*pramāṇa, fēnliàng* 分量).[56]

This may tempt us to formulate the *gong'an*-like question, "how does one measure the immeasurables?" Apart from the amusing aspect of this question, I think that we need to broaden this investigation to encompass not only the tools of modern scientific and medical research but also those of traditional Chinese medicine. For instance, it would be worthwhile to examine how absorption into the immeasurables could affect the circulation of vital energy or bioplasm (*prāṇa* or *qì* 氣), as hinted in Tōrei's painting.[57]

4. Conclusions

Obviously, this goes far beyond the scope of the present article, and we should now proceed to reviewing what has been discussed so far and attempt to determine how it may lead to further discoveries. We examined a vast range of phenomena related to the immeasurables, extending from their description in the *Chanjing* to their reemphasis in eighteenth-century Japanese Zen, with occasional excursions into other approaches related to this fourfold practice, including ancient Yoga, the Pāli Canon, and Tibetan Tantric interpretations.

From my ongoing reading of Tōrei's huge commentary and the initial steps taken toward producing a scholarly edition of this text, one of his major insights into the significance of the immeasurables is that

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[56] This question is also linked to the fascinating attempts to "measure" the results of the practice on the immeasurables described in Venerable Huimin's contribution to this journal issue.

[57] Tōrei's painting titled "Zenkyō Daruma no Sonzō 禪經達磨の尊像" is kept at the Kyōto Mingeikan 京都民芸館. It displays channels representing the circulation of vital energy, as well as the different levels of consciousness as understood in Yogācāra. A black and white reproduction is included in Mōru 1987.

they can serve as devices pushing the mind to overcome its discursive limitations. His abovementioned statement about the rarity of teachers "who investigated the four immeasurable minds" and thus "were able to turn the wheel of mastery" indicates the importance he gave to this practice. This goes together with his huge emphasis on the vows to liberate others in another of his works, where he compared them to a "favorable breeze propelling a sailboat."[58] According to him, such motivation is so crucial for setting in motion the vessel of wisdom in which the practitioner rides that, "without the cognitive breeze of the great vows, eventually it would not move."[59] In other words, without altruistic motivation, there is no way a practitioner can progress toward realization.

We have seen some of the tensions between continuity and discontinuity, because Tōrei is not the only Japanese Zen teacher to have utilized the legacy of Chán luminaries active in the Sòng dynasty. These tensions lied at the core of the Rinzai revival that took place in Japan since the seventeenth century. Yet, aside from following and replicating some of the teachings of his Chinese predecessor Fórì Qìsōng—in particular Fórì's uncritical assessment of the *Chanjing*'s authorship—, Tōrei also innovated in several respects. First, he attempted to transcend the dichotomy between scholastic Buddhism as expressed in the sutras and his own Rinzai orthodoxy. Second, he saw this text of supposedly Indian origins as a source at the confluence between a wide range of personal interests, which he shared in part with his teacher Hakuin. They included but were not limited to the physiology of meditation and Yogācāra.

Although all the different avenues suggested by Tōrei's commentary and the *Chanjing* are far from having been exhausted, I would like to make an appeal to all parties interested in collaborating toward the edition and publication of this work by Tōrei. This may serve as an incentive to encourage the scholarly community to reexamine this

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58 T 81: 584c29.

59 T 81: 584c29–585a01.

neglected source and to move beyond unproductive discussions about who the enigmatic Dharmatrāta may have been. Whoever produced the *Chanjing,* it has the potential to shed light onto early practices at the juncture between Indian and Chinese Buddhism, and may provide leads to reexamine the links between traditional sources and contemporary meditation practices. Furthermore, it has the potential to serve as a focal point where sectarian or national differences between Buddhist traditions could be bracketed while examining some of the modern implications of these ancient resources. As far as the four immeasurables are concerned, the various levels at which they can be understood and translated into action provide unique tools for engaging communities far beyond scholarly circles because of their crucial ethical implications.

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無量心法門：《達摩多羅禪經》的論述及其在日本佛教的發展

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摘要：

本文從多個視點討論四無量心，首先從五世紀初的禪修典籍《達摩多羅禪經》的標準描述談起。文章論及《禪經》唯一的注釋書——日本臨濟宗禪師東嶺圓慈（1721–92）的著作，主張東嶺對四無量之意義有一個重要洞見：它們扮演著某種法門能夠讓心克服論理的局限。最後，本文跨出東嶺的詮釋，進入更廣闊的對話，涉及四無量對此時此地的我們的意涵。本文認為《禪經》讓我們了解印度佛教與中國佛教交流時的早期實踐，也讓我們重新檢示傳統典籍與當代禪修實踐的聯結。四無量可以作為一個焦點，用來釐清佛教傳統間派系或國家性的差異。再者，由於這些法門具有重要的倫理意涵，對四無量不同程度的理解與付諸實踐，可以協助我們讓學界以外的社群產生興趣。

關鍵詞：

四無量心、無量心、達摩多羅禪經、禪經、東嶺圓慈、禪修、佛陀跋陀羅、達摩多羅