

Harmony of Difference and Equality
(*Sandōkai* 参同契)

The mind of the great sage of India
is intimately transmitted from west to east.

While human faculties are sharp or dull,
the way has no northern or southern ancestors.

The spiritual source shines clear in the light;
the branching streams flow on in the dark.

Grasping at things is surely delusion;
according with sameness is still not enlightenment.

◎ All the objects of the senses
transpose and do not transpose.

Transposing, they are linked together;
not transposing, each keeps its place.

Sights vary in quality and form;
sounds differ as pleasing or harsh.

Darkness merges refined and common words;
brightness distinguishes clear and murky phrases.

The four elements return to their natures,
just as a child turns to its mother.

Fire heats, wind moves,
water wets, earth is solid.

Eye and sights, ear and sounds,
nose and smells, tongue and tastes ;

thus for each and every thing,
according to the roots, the leaves spread forth.

Trunk and branches share the essence ;
revered and common, each has its speech.

In the light there is darkness,
but don't take it as darkness.

In the dark there is light,
but don't see it as light.

Light and dark oppose one another
like the front and back foot in walking.

◎ Each of the myriad things has its merit,
expressed according to function and place.

Existing phenomenally like box and cover joining ;
according with principle like arrow points meeting.

◎ Hearing the words, understand the meaning ;
don't establish standards of your own.

Not understanding the way before your eyes,
how do you know the path you walk?

Walking forward is not a matter of far or near,
but if you are confused, mountains and rivers block
your way.

- I respectfully urge you who study the mystery,
- don't pass your days and nights in vain.