

In the Illumination hexagram, apparent and real interact. Stacked together they become three; the permutations make five, like the taste of the five flavored herb, like the five-pronged vajra. Wondrously embraced within the real, drumming and singing begin together.

Penetrate the source and travel the pathways; embrace the territory and treasure the roads. You will do well to respect this; do not neglect it.

Natural and wondrous, it is not a matter of delusion or enlightenment. Within causes and conditions, time and season, it is serene and illuminating. So minute it enters where there is no gap; so vast it transcends all dimension. Just a hairsbreadth's deviation, and you are out of tune.

Now there are sudden and gradual, so teachings and approaches arise. With these matters distinguished, each has its standard, mastered or not, reality constantly flows.

Outside still and inside trembling, like tethered colts or cowering rats: the ancient sages grieved for them and offered them the Dharma. Led by their inverted views, they take black for white. When inverted thinking stops, the affirming mind naturally accords.

If you want to follow in the ancient tracks, please observe the sages of the past. One on the verge of realizing the Buddha Way contemplated a tree for ten long kalpas, like a battle-scarred tiger, like a horse with shanks gone gray.

Because some are vulgar, jeweled tables and ornate robes; because some are wide eyed, cats and white oxen.

With a great archer's skill, one can hit the mark at a hundred yards, but arrows meeting head on: how could it be a matter of skill?

Wooden man starts to sing; stone woman gets up dancing. It is not reached by feelings or consciousness; how could it involve deliberation?

Ministers serve their lords; children obey their parents. Not obeying is not filial; failure to serve is no help.

With practice hidden, function secretly, like a fool, like an idiot. Just to do this continuously is called the host within the host.

Tōzan Ryōkai (807-869)

Harmony of Difference and Sameness (*Sandōkai*)

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 true 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 interact and yet do not. Interacting brings involvement. Otherwise, each keeps its place. Sights vary in quality and form; sounds differ as pleasing or harsh. Refined and common speech come together in the dark; clear and murky phrases are distinguished in the light. 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 sight, ear and sound; nose and smell, tongue and taste: thus with each and everything, depending on these 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. Phenomena exist, box and lid fit; principle responds, arrow points meet. Hearing the words, understand the meaning; don't set up standards of your own. If you don't understand the Way right before you, how will you know the path as you walk? Progress 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, do not pass your days and nights in vain. *Sekitō Kisen (700-790)*

The Precious Mirror Samadhi (*Hōkyō zanmai*)

The dharma of thusness is intimately transmitted by buddhas and ancestors; now you have it, preserve it well.

A silver bowl filled with snow; a heron hidden in the moon. Taken as similar, they are not the same; not distinguished, their places are known. The meaning does not reside in the words, but a pivotal moment brings it forth.

Move and you are trapped; miss and you fall into doubt and vacillation. Turning away and touching are both wrong, for it is like massive fire. Just to portray it in literary form is to stain it with defilement. In darkest night it is perfectly clear; in the light of dawn it is hidden.

It is a standard for all things; its use removes all suffering. Though it is not constructed, it is not beyond words. Facing a precious mirror, form and reflection behold each other. You are not it, but in truth it is you.

Like a newborn child, it is fully endowed with five aspects: no going, no coming, no arising, no abiding. A baby babbles: is anything said or not? In the end it says nothing, for the words are not yet right.