

# Harmony of Difference and Equality, by Shitou Xiqian (Sekitō Kisen)

Cantongqi (Sandōkai) translated by Sōtō Zen Text Project and San Francisco Zen Center

## 參同契

竺土大仙心 The mind of the great sage of India  
東西密相付 is intimately transmitted from west to east.  
人根有利鈍 While human faculties are sharp or dull,  
道無南北祖 the Way has no northern or southern ancestors.  
靈源明皎潔 The spiritual source shines clear in the light;  
枝派暗流注 the branching streams flow on in the dark.  
執事元是迷 Grasping at things is surely delusion;  
契理亦非悟 according with sameness is still not enlightenment.  
門門一切境 All the objects of the senses  
迴互不迴互 interact and yet do not.  
迴而更相涉 Interacting brings involvement.  
不爾依位住 Otherwise, each keeps its place.  
色本殊質像 Sights vary in quality and form,  
聲元異樂苦 sounds differ as pleasing or harsh.  
暗合上中言 Refined and common speech come together in the dark,  
明明清濁句 clear and murky phrases are distinguished in the light.  
四大性自復 The four elements return to their natures  
如子得其母 just as a child turns to its mother;  
火熱風動搖 Fire heats, wind moves,  
水濕地堅固 water wets, earth is solid.  
眼色耳音聲 Eye and sights, ear and sounds,  
鼻香舌鹹醋 nose and smells, tongue and tastes;  
然依一一法 Thus with each and every thing,  
依根葉分布 depending on these roots, the leaves spread forth.  
本未須歸宗 Trunk and branches share the essence;  
尊卑用其語 revered and common, each has its speech.  
當明中有暗 In the light there is darkness,  
勿以暗相遇 but don't take it as darkness;  
當暗中有明 In the dark there is light,  
勿以明相覩 but don't see it as light.  
明暗各相對 Light and dark oppose one another  
比如前後步 like the front and back foot in walking.  
萬物自有功 Each of the myriad things has its merit,  
當言用及處 expressed according to function and place.  
事存函蓋合 Phenomena exist; box and lid fit;  
理應箭鋒拄 principle responds; arrow points meet.  
承言須會宗 Hearing the words, understand the meaning;  
勿自立規矩 don't set up standards of your own.  
觸目不會道 If you don't understand the Way right before you,  
運足焉知路 how will you know the path as you walk?  
進步非近遠 Progress is not a matter of far or near,  
迷隔山河固 but if you are confused, mountains and rivers block your way.  
謹白參玄人 I respectfully urge you who study the mystery,  
光陰莫虛度 do not pass your days and nights in vain.