

The Bodhi seal of the Patriarchs



***THIRTY-SIXTH GENERATION DHYANA MASTER
PU YUAN (UNIVERSAL VOWS) OF NAN QUAN
(SOUTHERN SPRINGS REGION)***

The Master's surname was Wang. He was a native of Hsin Cheng. He received the bequest from Dhyana Master Ta Wei (Great Wisdom), and went to the Lofty Peak to receive the precepts and practice the different sections of the Vinaya. Later he bowed to the Patriarch Ma Tzu. Instantaneously he let loose his grip on things and attained the Playful Roaming Samadhi. One day as they were passing gruel in the dining hall, Ma Tzu asked, "What is inside this bucket?"

The Master replied, "What is the old guy rambling about?" Whereupon the Patriarch ceased talking.

During the Cheng Yuan reign period (785-805 A.D.) of the T'ang Dynasty, the Master rested at Ch'ih Chou and did not go down to the Southern Springs region for well over thirty years. One day, the leader of the assembly asked him, "In a hundred year's time, where will the Venerable Master go?"

The Master replied, "I'm going to be a water buffalo at the foot of the hill."

The other monk further asked him, "May I follow along with you?"

The Master said, "If you want to come along, in your mouth you'll have to carry a stalk of grass." Then the Master manifested signs of illness and told the Assembly, "All appears like a haze around the stars and like illusory images in the lamplight. With regard to me, you should not say there is coming or going." Upon saying these words, he departed.

A verse in praise says:

Transcending all of creation
 he playfully skipped around.
He never wandered down to Southern Springs,
 yet there was ample water and grass.
On the day he came down from the mountain,
 the great earth itself trembled.
Pointing at flowers, rambling on with dream-talk,
 slay the cat so it becomes a calf!