

# *The Bodhi Seal of the Patriarchs*



*THE 37th GENERATION PATRIARCH CH'AN*

*MASTER HUANG P'I HSI YUN*

The Master was from Fu Chou. He called upon Dhyana Master Pai Chang and asked him the famous question, "How does one achieve competence in everyday cultivation?"

Pai Chang brought up a former incident. "The Elder Master, the Great Patriarch Ma once shouted at you, and didn't your ears become deaf for three days?" When the Master heard this type of prompting, he stuck out his tongue. Then Pai Chang further asked him, "Don't you plan to become the heir of Patriarch Ma?"

The Master answered, "No. Today, upon being upbraided by the Venerable One, I have suddenly realized the functioning of Patriarch Ma's extensive scope, which shows that formerly I didn't recognize the Patriarch Ma. If I were to become his heir, I would certainly fail all my sons and grandsons of the Dharma transmission."

Master Pai Chang responded, "So it is, so it is. If your views were parallel to that of your teacher's, you would only be reckoned as having half his virtue. Only when your insights transcend those of your teacher, could you be worthy of his transmission. It seems that you now have insights that could transcend your teacher's."

Later, the Prime Minister Pei Hsiu established a huge Ch'an Institute and requested the Master to expound the Dharma. In the third year of the Pai Chung reign of the Emperor Hsuan Chung, the Master entered the stillness. His posthumous title was Ch'an Master Severing the Boundaries. His stupa was called Vast Deeds. A verse in his praise says,

Slicing through his fellow-cultivator's shinbone,  
He spilled the secrets from Patriarch Ma's tongue.  
How majestic and awesome!  
He was known clear to the northern ranges.  
From the end of the stick came the "Proper Eye."  
He is like a rock fired to imposing brightness.  
Beneath his feet will come disciples and grand disciples,  
The pure and select from among renegades.