

## *The Fa Yen Sect (Hogen Zen)*

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### ***Master Wen I of Ch'ing Liang Monastery in Sheng Chou District*<sup>1</sup>**

(From The Transmission of the Lamp - Ch'uan Teng Lu)

(The Sect is called Fa Yen after the master's posthumous title)

THE master was a native of Yu Hang district.<sup>2</sup> His lay surname was Lu. At the tender age of seven, he followed Ch'an Master Ch'uan Wei of Chih T'ung monastery at Hsin Ting. When he came of age, he shaved his head and received his full ordination at K'ai Yuan monastery in Yueh Chou district. It happened that the eminent vinaya Master Hsi Chueh was receiving and converting people at Yu Wang monastery<sup>3</sup> on Mou Shan mountain in Ming Chou district. The master went there to attend the meeting and listen to his profound teaching. At the same time, he took the opportunity to call on Confucian scholars to learn the Confucian classics. For this reason Hsi Chueh called him 'the man of letters' in his community. But as soon as his latent potentiality was aroused, the master gave up all his other pursuits and took his staff to go to the south. When he arrived at the Ch'ang Ch'ing Dharma meeting in Fu Chou (Foochow) district, the assembly held him in high esteem in spite of the fact that he was still not completely successful in controlling his mind. (Later) with a few companions<sup>4</sup> he made his journey to other places. After setting out, they were caught in (heavy) rain which suddenly swelled the streams (and rivers). They made a temporary halt at Ti Ts'ang monastery where they called on the abbot Kuei Ch'en.<sup>5</sup> The latter asked the master: 'Where are you going?' The master replied: 'I am just wandering.' Kuei Ch'en

1. Now Nanking city.

2. Now Hangchow, in Chekiang province.

3. The Asoka monastery at Ningpo, Chekiang, in which there is a sarira-stupa said to have been made by King Asoka for the preservation of a relic (sarira) of Sakyamuni Buddha.

4. His three companions were: Shao Hsiu, Hung Chin and Fa.

5. Fa Yen was Dharma successor of Kuei Ch'en.

asked: 'What is the purpose of your wandering?' The master replied: 'I do not know.' Kuei Ch'en said: '(That which) does not know is the most intimate.' Thereupon, the master was instantly awakened. The four visitors then submitted themselves (to Kuei Ch'en) from whom they received further instruction. All of them were thus awakened and received the (usual) prophecy<sup>1</sup> from the abbot, who sent them to (four different) places to spread the Dharma. The master went to Kan Che Chou (Sugar Cane Island) where he built a thatched hut as his abode. As Hung Chin and the others wished to visit all the monasteries south of the Yangtze river, they urged the master to accompany them.

When the master arrived at Lin Ch'uan, the chief magistrate invited him to stay at Ch'ung Shou monastery. On the first day, before the master left his dinner table, the four vargas<sup>2</sup> had already gathered (in the hall) and were circumambulating his Dharma seat. A monk came to report this to him, saying: 'The four vargas are circumambulating your Dhanna seat.' The master said: 'The assembly should call on their learned friend.'<sup>3</sup> A short while later, the master (came in and) ascended to his seat. After the assembly had paid reverence to him, he said: 'This mountain monk should speak a few words to you.' Then he quoted an ancient saying,

urged his listeners to take good care of themselves and descended from his seat. A monk came forward and prostrated himself before the master who said: 'What a good question.'<sup>4</sup> As the monk was about to ask a question, the master said: 'As the abbot does not call a meeting, no questions will be answered.'

When Tsu Fang, the leader of the Ch'ang Ch'ing assembly, came, the master quoted the words of the late master Hui Leng of Ch'ang Ch'ing monastery and asked him: 'What is the solitary body exposing itself in the midst of a myriad appearances?' As Tsu Fang raised his dust-whisk, the master said: 'How can you interpret in this manner?' Tsu Fang asked: 'How does the Venerable Sir interpret?' The master asked back: 'What is it that you called a myriad appearances?' Tsu Fang replied:

1. Prophecy of a Bodhisattva's future Buddhahood or of his future Bodhisattva work at a certain place.
2. Monks, nuns, male and female devotees.
3. Besides its literal meaning, this sentence has a deeper one which is: The assembly should look into the enlightened one inherent in every man.
4. The best question is a speechless one, for no words can express the absolute which is speechless. The monk's prostration is the performance of its function and reveals its presence.
5. As the monk was stirring his mind in search of a question, the master urged him to recognize only that which spoke these words.

'The ancients did not eliminate appearances.'<sup>1</sup> The master asked: '(It is said that) a solitary body is exposed in the midst of a myriad appearances; why do you speak of elimination and non-elimination?'<sup>2</sup> Thereupon, Tsu Fang was instantly awakened, chanted his gatha and submitted himself to the master.

Since then, those elsewhere who still treasured their knowledge and interpretation, came in great numbers to the monastery. At first they were presumptuous but the master quietly and minutely stimulated them to advance until all of them submitted themselves to his eminence. For this reason, his following was never below the number of one thousand persons.

In the hall, after the master had ascended his seat and the assembly had stood for a long while,<sup>3</sup> he said: 'If this meeting is now dismissed, is there still (any) Buddha Dharma?'<sup>4</sup> Try to say something for me to see. If there is not, why have you come here? If there is, it exists also in the crowded market place, and there is no need for you to come here. All of you have read books like *The Meditation of the Return to the Source*,<sup>5</sup> *The Meaningful Ocean of the Door to the Knowledge of Universal Phenomena*,<sup>6</sup> *The Commentary on the Avatamsaka Sutra* and the *Mahaparinirvana Sutra*. In which book is there (the same) opportunity? as afforded (by our Sect)? If you find something like it show it to me. If you say that it is found in a certain sutra, has it in fact any relevance? For this reason, (it is said:) 'All abstruse words will obstruct the mind and are always the cause of anxieties.' Reality is before us but is (wrongly)

1. To eliminate appearances is to annihilate them in contrast with the Buddha's teaching which 'does not advocate the annihilation of things'. (See "The Diamond Cutter of Doubts", Series One, Part IIL)

2. Tsu Fang grasped the 'guest' and the master taught him to release his hold in order to realize the 'host'.

3. Usually, an enlightened master kept his disciples standing for a long while so that they could put a stop to their thoughts and quiet their minds.

4. The Dharma is everywhere whether there is meeting or not and whether there is speech or not, for it is inherent in every man and cannot be taught. It can only be recognized and intuitively united with oneself.

5. Abandonment of illusion and return to enlightenment, a commentary on the six methods of meditation of the Avatamsaka Sect.

6. One of the first stages of Bodhisattva progress. 'Meaning-ocean' or ocean of meaning is a Buddhist term which signifies 'meaning as profound and extensive as an ocean'.

7. Opportunity, or timeliness; shih chieh in Chinese; it is a Buddhist term which means the favourable time and occasion leading to one's instantaneous enlightenment.

The following two lines of Hui Neng's gatha give a clear meaning of this idiom:

*'The mind-ground holds the flower seeds  
Which sprout when falls the all-pervading rain:'*

substituted by (the objective) name and appearance.<sup>1</sup> (Now) how to return the object (to its primal condition) and how to do so correctly? Do you understand me? What is the use of reading books in a (wrong) manner?"

A monk asked the master: 'How to expose (the Self) in order to unite with the Tao?' The master asked back: 'When did you expose it without uniting with the Tao?'<sup>2</sup> The monk asked: 'What is it when the six sense-organs are unresponsive?' The master replied: 'A group of children of your own family.' He added: 'How are you going to understand this? You should know that your question will not lead to anything. When you say that the six sense-organs are unresponsive, do you mean the eyes or the ears are unresponsive? If fundamentally there is existence, how can you interpret the non-existent?'<sup>3</sup> (This is what) an ancient called "grasping" sound and form by straying away from sound and form and grasping name and term by straying from name and term.' For the same reason, the devas of the thoughtless heaven still backslid in one day after their long practice for eighty thousand mahakalpas.<sup>4</sup> This was bound to happen because they did not know the fundamental true reality. Gradual practice for three rebirths and sixty kalpas,<sup>5</sup> for four rebirths and a hundred kalpas,<sup>6</sup> and for three asankhyeyas to attain the full fruit (of enlightenment)<sup>7</sup> still cannot, according to the ancients,<sup>8</sup> compare with a causal thought leading to the realization of birthlessness which leaps over and beyond the aim of the expedient teaching of the Three Vehicles. They also said that the eighty thousand doors (to enlightenment) could be completely attained in a finger-snap<sup>9</sup> and that the three asankhyeyas could be wiped out in the shortest moment of time (a ksana).<sup>10</sup> (However), you

1. Everything has a name, sound, or appearance, the visible; both are unreal and give rise to delusion.

2. The Self being identical with the Tao, the question was nonsensical, for it splits the undivided whole into Self and Tao, or subject and object.

3. If you grasp the six sense-organs which you hold as existing, how can you realize their non-existence, i.e. unreality?

4. Mahakalpa: the great kalpa, or aeon, from the beginning of a universe till it is destroyed and another begins in its place. The digit 8 in 80,000 symbolizes the eighth consciousness, or alaya-vijnana, the cause of ignorance and suffering.

5. An arhat's method of obtaining release, by intensive effort, at the shortest in three rebirths, at the longest in sixty kalpas,

6. A Pratyeka Buddha's method of obtaining release, by intensive effort, at the shortest in four rebirths, at the longest in a hundred kalpas.

7. A Bodhisattva's method of attaining Buddhahood, by intensive effort, in three asankhyeyas or innumerable aeons, to achieve the six perfections (paramita) and in a hundred kalpas to acquire the thirty-two characteristic marks of a Buddha.

8. According to enlightened masters of the Ch'an Sect in ancient times.

9. Elimination of space.

10. Elimination of time.

should see clearly and examine into all this, although some little effort is required.'

A monk asked the master: 'I do not ask you anything about pointing; what is the moon?' The master asked back: 'Who is not asking about pointing?'<sup>1</sup> Another monk asked: 'I do not ask you about the moon; what is pointing?' The master replied: '(The) moon.'<sup>2</sup> The monk continued: 'I asked about pointing; why did you speak of the moon?' The master replied: 'Because you asked about pointing.'<sup>3</sup>

The prince of Chiang Nan state who held the master in great reverence, invited him to stay at Pao En monastery as acting abbot (to take the place) of ch'an Master Chin Hui. In the hall, the master said to the assembly: 'An ancient said: "I am standing on the ground to wait for you to perceive me."<sup>4</sup> This mountain monk is now sitting on the ground here and is waiting for you to perceive him. Is there no reason for saying so? Try to

distinguish between that which is intimate and that which is distant.<sup>5</sup>

A monk said to the master: 'The bell has been tolled and the assembly has gathered and (reverently) invites the master to be thus.'<sup>6</sup> The master said: 'How can the assembly's understanding compare with your own?'<sup>7</sup> The monk asked: 'What was the ancient Buddhas' tradition?' The master asked back: 'Where do you notice (its) incompleteness?'<sup>8</sup> The monk asked: 'How should one conduct oneself in order to unite with the Tao?' The master replied: 'A grasping and rejecting mind produces ingenious falsehood.'<sup>9</sup> The monk asked: 'Who was foretold (of his enlightenment)

1. A direct pointing at the mind which actually asked the question.
2. The moon symbolizes the mind which actually does the pointing.
3. Another direct pointing at the mind, or the Self which actually asks about itself performing the act of 'pointing'.
4. Here again, 'I' and 'you', or my 'Self' and your 'Self', beside which there is only illusion. Another pointing at the mind.
5. Both sayings directly pointed at the mind which is the most intimate, i.e. the Self, the only difference being that the ancient was standing while the master was sitting.
6. Thus: evam in Sanskrit, a Ch'an term which means: thus, so; so it is; such it is; i.e. we invite the master to teach us from his state of thusness, or absolute condition, so that we also can attain it.
7. This answer is full of meaning and directly points at the self of the speaking monk who is the 'host' and is, therefore, more intimate than the assembly which is only the 'guest' in relation to him.
8. The monk asked about the conduct of ancient Buddhas so that we could learn from it and also attain enlightenment. This question was wrong in that it split the questioner's undivided whole into subject, himself, and object, i.e. the tradition. The master's reply meant that the monk's Self was fundamentally complete ill itself and did not lack anything. Why ask about the 'guest' and neglect the 'host'?
9. Falsehood that obstructs union with the Tao.

when an ancient transmitted his robe?'<sup>1</sup> The master asked back: 'Where have you seen an ancient transmitting his robe?'<sup>2</sup> The monk asked: '(It is said that) all the saints and the sages in the ten directions of space enter into this Sect; what is this Sect?'<sup>3</sup> The master replied: '(That into which) all the saints and the sages in the ten directions of space (must) enter.' The monk asked: 'Who is the man who looks up towards the Buddha?' The master replied: 'Buddha is an expedient name.' The monk asked: 'Who can pass through sound and form?' (Instead of answering the question) the master asked the assembly: 'Venerable Friends, do you think this monk has passed through sound and form? If you can see where this question arises,<sup>4</sup> it will not be difficult to pass through sound and form.' The monk asked: 'What is the shortest way to Buddha wisdom?' The master replied: 'There is no way shorter than this question.'<sup>5</sup> The monk asked: 'What is it when the auspicious straw does not wither?'<sup>6</sup> The master replied: 'Deceptive words.'<sup>7</sup> The monk asked: 'All the assembly is present; will the Venerable Master cut instantaneously the net of their doubts?' The master replied: 'Discussion is held in the huts and deliberation in the tea room.'<sup>8</sup> The monk asked: 'What is it when clouds disperse to allow the sun to be seen?' The master replied: 'Really deceptive words.'<sup>9</sup> The monk asked: 'What should a monk esteem?' The master replied: 'If there is a little bit of esteem, he cannot be called a monk.'<sup>10</sup>

1. The monk asked about the inheritor of the robe, whose enlightenment was predicted at the time of transmission, i.e. about the Self of the heir to the Dharma.
2. The literal meaning of this sentence reveals nothing, but its 'living meaning' points directly at 'you', or the monk's Self which was asked when it saw the transmission of the robe.
3. 'Sect' is a Ch'an idiom which means the mind with which all the saints and the sages attain enlightenment.
4. The question arises from the mind, and if the mind is realized, it will not be difficult to perceive the real through the illusory sound and form.
5. That which questions, i.e. the mind is the shortest way to Buddha wisdom.

6. The straw symbolizes the mind and reveals its existence.
7. If the mind does not wither, i.e. if it does not disappear, how can wisdom manifest itself and the self-nature appear?
8. The master meant that the cutting of doubts consisted in recognizing the mind which spoke in the huts and tea room.
9. Because of the splitting of the undivided whole into subject which sees and object, the sun seen.
10. According to the Ch'an Sect, one can only be called a monk if one realizes the self-mind and attains the fundamental. If a man holds a little bit of esteem for something, he still discriminates and fails to realize his universal mind. How can such a man be called a monk?

The monk asked: 'What is the pure and clean Dharmakaya in the midst of the myriad (forms of) Nirmanakaya?' The master replied: 'All is.'<sup>1</sup>  
 The monk asked: 'What will you do when all (things) suddenly appear?'<sup>2</sup>  
 The master replied: 'It is the eye and not the eye.'<sup>3</sup> The monk asked: 'Will the Venerable Master enlighten us (on the sentence:) "The whole body is truth"?' The master replied: 'Your truth will break up of itself.'<sup>4</sup>  
 The monk asked: 'What is the ancient Buddha's mind?' The master replied: 'That from which flow kindness, pity, joy and indifference.'<sup>5</sup>  
 The monk asked: 'What is the One Lamp that can destroy darkness which has lasted a hundred years in a room?' The master replied: 'Why do you speak of a hundred years?'<sup>6</sup> The monk asked: 'What is the true and right Tao?' The master replied: '(My) one vow is to teach you how to perform it; (my) two vows are also to teach you how to perform it.'<sup>7</sup>  
 The monk asked: 'What is the stage of One Reality?' The master replied: 'Stage has no One Reality.' The monk asked: 'How to set it up?' The master replied: '(Your question is) irrelevant.'<sup>9</sup> The monk asked: 'What is the ancient Buddha?' The master replied: 'He is not objected to even now.'<sup>10</sup> The monk asked: 'What should one do during the twelve hours of the day and night?' The master replied: 'Each step should tread on this question.'<sup>11</sup> The monk asked: 'Before the ancient mirror is opened, how does it shine to reveal itself?'<sup>12</sup>  
 The master replied: 'Why are you (so) reiterative?'<sup>13</sup> The monk asked: 'What is the profound aim of all Buddhas?' The master replied: 'You

1. All Nirmanakayas, or transformation bodies are essentially the Dharmakaya from which they arise.
2. Literally, crop forth.
3. They are in the realm of the eye because they are seen as appearing but are not really in the realm of the eye, for both things and eye are unreal and do not exist.
4. When you realize the spiritual body, your so-called truth will vanish, for the absolute is neither truth nor untruth.
5. If the same four immeasurables emanate from your mind, it will not differ from that of the ancient Buddha.
6. To wipe out the time element.
7. The true and right Tao is the Dharma which is neither one nor two, i.e. is beyond all dualisms.
8. The One Reality is beyond a stage, beyond location and direction.
9. Your question is irrelevant for the inconceivable One Reality cannot be established.
10. The eternal Buddha is neither ancient nor modern. This is to wipe out the time element.
11. No steps should stray from this question which is your Self's function. Hui Neng said: 'Do not stray from the fundamental thought (of Self).'
12. Where is the self-nature when it is held in bondage by feelings and passions?
13. The more you speak of it, the more you will stray from it.

also have it.'<sup>1</sup> The monk asked: 'The teaching says: "All things are set up on basic impermanence"; what is basic impermanence?' The master replied: 'All appearances lack in essence and all names arise from that which is nowhere.'<sup>3</sup> The monk asked: 'The community auctions the robes of a deceased monk but who auctions the robe of the Patriarch?'<sup>4</sup>  
 The master asked back: 'Which deceased monk's robe can you auction?'<sup>5</sup>  
 The monk asked: 'How is it when the wandering son returns to his

village?<sup>6</sup> The master asked back: 'What will you offer him?' The monk replied: 'Not a thing.'? The master asked: 'What about his daily needs?'<sup>8</sup>

Later, the master moved to Ch'ing Liang monastery where (one day) in the hall, he said to the assembly: 'Leavers of home, you will succeed if you adapt yourselves to the propitious time and occasion (no matter) whether it is cold or hot.'<sup>9</sup> If you want to know the truth of the Buddha nature, you should look for the (favourable) time and (concurrent) circumstance. Since olden times till now, there have been many expediences (in use). Have you not seen that, after reading (a passage in) the Shao Lun<sup>10</sup> saying: "Only a saint can integrate a myriad things into his Self", Shih T'ou declared: "A saint has no Self but there is not a thing which is not his Self."<sup>11</sup> These are words (good) for discussion among followers of our Sect.' The master further said: 'The mind of the Great Immortal in India<sup>12</sup> did not go beyond these words, in spite of what he said from

1. The profound aim of all Buddhas is to enlighten deluded beings. As there is also a self-natured Buddha immanent in you, you also possess his profound aim which will reveal itself when you are enlightened.

2. A quotation from the Vimalakirti Nirdeśa Sūtra.

3. Illusory appearances have no independent nature of their own and all names are given to the non-existent.

4. When a monk dies, his money automatically becomes the property of the monastery. His robes and other possessions are sold by the monks and the proceeds are divided equally among them.

5. This question warns the monk not to grasp the illusion of birth and death.

6. A quotation from the Lotus Sūtra; the wandering son symbolizes a deluded man who strays from his village, or self-nature.

7. The monk did not understand the master's question and answered at random by quoting the last line of Hui Neng's gatha, written on the wall of the monastery of the Fifth Patriarch.

8. The wandering son returning to his village' is, according to the Lotus Sūtra, a deluded man having at last a chance of knowing that the self-nature is inherent in him. He does not know as yet the method of practice to realize it. Therefore, his daily needs consist in the daily practice of the Ch'an training.

9. In spite of changing circumstances.

10. A treatise written by Seng Shao, a famous monk in the fourth century.

11. This is the perfect integration of the real and the seeming into an undivided whole, called Host in Host.

12. Sakyamuni Buddha.

time to time, each (discourse being) appropriate for the occasion. Venerable Friends, you should now return all things to your Self because there is not a thing that can be perceived (as real).' The master added: 'Do not pass your time aimlessly. As I have just told you, you will attain your goals if you avail yourselves of the propitious time and opportunity. If you do not adapt yourselves to them, you will trifle away your time and mistake the formless for form.'<sup>1</sup> Venerable Friends, if the formless is mistaken for form, this is a misuse of both time and opportunity. Now is it proper to say that form should be regarded as formless?<sup>2</sup> This (way of interpreting) is irrelevant and is just like the case of an insane man aimlessly running in both directions. Can this be of any use? Venerable Friends, you have only to keep on your own (self) and pass your time according to the prevailing circumstances. Take good care of yourselves.'

A monk asked the master: 'What is the Ch'ing Liang (monastery's) tradition?'<sup>3</sup> The master replied: 'If you go to other places, just mention that you have come to Ch'ing Liang.'<sup>4</sup> The monk asked: 'How to attain a state in which there is no matchable thing (dharma)?' The master said: 'What thing (dharma) can match the Venerable Friend?'<sup>5</sup> The monk asked: 'What can be done about (all that appears) day and night?'<sup>6</sup> The master replied: 'Idle words.' The monk asked: 'What is it when the body is perceived as an illusion and when the internal is also so perceived?' The master asked back: 'Have you succeeded in so perceiving?'<sup>7</sup> The monk asked: '(It is said:) "He who is anxious immediately to unite (with the truth) speaks only non-dual words"; what are non-dual words?'

The master asked back: 'Can you add a little bit to it?'<sup>8</sup> The monk asked: 'What is the Dharmakaya?' The master replied: 'This is Nirmanakaya.'<sup>9</sup>

1. Mistake of the real for the seeming.
2. This is a useless discussion for the illusion of the formless will add another bond to the binding illusion of form, both being a dualism hindering the realization of the absolute.
3. What technique do you teach in the Ch'ing Liang monastery?
4. 'You have come' is to reveal your 'Self' which actually arrived at the Ch'ing Liang monastery. In other words, the Ch'ing Liang monastery's tradition is to point directly at the mind which performs the act of coming there.
5. The monk asked about the dharma, or guest, and the master spoke of the Venerable Friend, or his host. Readers will see the difference between the monk's question and the master's answer.
6. What can be done about the changing which never comes to an end?
7. He who succeeds in so perceiving will not ask such a silly question.
8. If you can add a little bit to it, it will be dual and will not be the absolute.
9. The Dharmakaya is inconceivable and inexpressible. That which can be asked is the Nirmanakaya, or transformation body which emanates from the Dharmakaya.

The monk asked: 'What is the first rate meaning (i.e. the Truth)?' The master replied: 'If I speak of it, it will be the second rate.'<sup>1</sup>

The master asked Shao Hsiu:<sup>2</sup> 'How do you interpret (the saying:)'  
"A slight differentiation causes a separation as between heaven and earth"?'  
Shao Hsiu replied: 'A slight differentiation causes a separation as between heaven and earth.' The master asked: 'How can your interpretation hold good?' Shao Hsiu asked: 'What is yours?' The master replied: 'A slight differentiation causes a separation between heaven and earth.' Thereupon, Shao Hsiu paid his reverence to the master.<sup>3</sup>

As the master and Wu K'ung<sup>4</sup> were warming themselves at a fire, the former raised an incense spoon and asked the latter: 'Without being permitted to call this a spoon,<sup>5</sup> what will the Venerable Brother call it?' Wu K'ung replied: 'An incense spoon', but the master did not approve of his answer. Only after twenty days had elapsed did Wu K'ung understand what the master meant.<sup>6</sup>

As the monks came for instruction before the meal-time, the master pointed his finger at the (bamboo) blind. Thereupon, two monks went simultaneously to roll it up. The master said: 'One is awakened and one is not.'<sup>7</sup>

(One day) Yun Men asked a monk: 'Where do you come from?'  
The monk replied: 'Chiang Hsi.' Yun Men asked: 'Has not the gang of old masters in Chiang Hsi stopped talking in their sleep?' The monk

1. The first rate meaning, or Truth, is inexpressible. If I express it in words, the first rate will be the second rate meaning.
2. Shao Hsiu was one of the master's travelling companions
3. This sentence means: 'If you give rise to the least discrimination, you will stray from the absolute, and the distance will be as great as that between heaven and earth. The master probed the competence of his former travelling companion and asked him about the saying. Shao Hsiu was correct when he answered by merely repeating it to reveal that which did the talking. The master continued his probe by saying that Shao Hsiu's interpretation was not perfect. The latter who began to be not quite sure of his own understanding, asked the master about his correct interpretation. The master merely repeated the saying to confirm that that which did the talking was the one who was free from all differentiation. Shao Hsiu thanked the master for his confirmation; he had no more doubt about his Self.
4. Wu K'ung was also a Ch'an master.
5. Within the absolute reality there is not a thing as small as a speck of dust. To call a spoon a spoon is to admit its existence in the clean and pure reality. How can one reveal the absolute when one is to call a spoon by an appropriate name which should accord with it?
6. For the explanation, see 'The Kuei Yang Sect'. page 59, footnotes 1, 2 and 3.
7. The monk who succeeded in perceiving that which pointed its finger at the blind was awakened to the host, whereas the monk who grasped the illusion of the bamboo blind, or the guest, was deluded.

could not answer, and (later when he arrived at the monastery, he related the dialogue and) asked the master: 'What was Yun Men's idea?' The

master said: 'Yun Men was completely exposed by this monk.'<sup>1</sup>

The master asked a monk: 'Where do you come from?' The monk replied: 'From a holy site.'<sup>2</sup> The master asked: 'Would you call it light or dark?'<sup>3</sup> The monk could not answer.

(One day), the master ordered a monk to fetch some earth to add to a lotus flower-pot. When the monk returned with the earth, the master asked him: 'Did you fetch it from east or west of the bridge?' The monk replied: 'From the east.' The master asked: 'Is it true or false?'<sup>4</sup>

The master asked a monk: 'Where do you come from?' The monk replied: 'Pao En monastery.' The master asked: 'Were the monks there in good health?' The monk replied: 'They were.' The master said: 'Go and have some tea.'<sup>5</sup>

The master asked a monk: 'Where do you come from?' The monk replied: 'From Szu Chou where I paid reverence to the Great Saint.' The master asked: 'Has he come out of the stupa this year?' The monk replied: 'Yes.' The master then asked another monk who was standing beside him: 'Do you think this monk has (actually) arrived at Szu Chou or not?'<sup>6</sup>

The master asked the elder monk Pao Tzu: 'An ancient said:

1. The absolute reality is inconceivable and inexpressible and the more a master speaks of it, the more he will stray away from it. For this reason, Yun Men said that the old masters in the Kiangsi province were talking nonsense and asked the monk if they had stopped 'talking in their sleep'. The fact of criticizing the old monks was also nonsensical, for it was irrelevant to the revelation of the truth, hence the master's remark.

2. Bodhimandala in Sanskrit; a place of worship or of enlightenment; a monastery where an enlightened master stayed.

3. 'Light' should be the emblem of a Bodhimandala, or place of enlightenment. The master asked the question to see if the monk still grasped the illusion of light which implied its opposite 'darkness', both being a dualism. The monk did not understand and so did not answer.

4. The master asked the question to see if the monk still grasped the illusion of location and direction. His last question meant; 'Is it true that there is direction in the absolute which is all-embracing?'

5. The master did not miss a chance to teach the visiting monk. His second question was asked to probe the monk's ability to understand the self-nature of the monks at Pao En, which self-nature should always be in perfect condition. He told the monk to go to the tea-room and take tea to reveal the Self which would perform the act of going and of drinking.

6. 'To arrive at Szu Chou' is to understand the Dharma taught at Szu Chou. When an enlightened master dies, his body is usually placed in a stupa which, however, cannot hold his Dharmakaya in bondage. If the first monk did not grasp the place called Szu Chou and the stupa, i.e. the 'guest', he would realize the 'host'.

"Mountains and rivers do not obstruct the light which is all-pervading"; what is the light which pervades everywhere?' Pao Tzu replied: 'The sound of a gong (beaten) on the eastern bank.'<sup>1</sup>

The master pointed at a bamboo and asked a monk: 'Do you see it?' The monk replied: 'I see it.' The master asked: 'Does the bamboo come into your eyes or do your eyes go to it?' The monk replied: 'It is wholly not so.'<sup>2</sup>

A layman artist gave a painted screen to the master who, after examining it, asked: 'Is your hand or your mind skilful?' The layman replied: 'My mind.' The master asked: 'What is your mind?' The layman could not answer.

A monk asked the master: 'What is the second moon?'<sup>3</sup> The master replied: 'Appearances in their myriads.' The monk asked: 'What is the first moon?'<sup>4</sup> The master replied: '(That from which arises) myriad appearances.'<sup>5</sup>

The master's causal affinity was at Chin Ling<sup>6</sup> where he thrice sat at the great Bodhimandala and where day and night he expounded the Dharma (of the Transmission). Monks from other monasteries in the

country came to follow him. Others in foreign lands who held his Dharma in reverence, made long journeys to come to his monastery. Thus through him, the Hsuan Sha Sect<sup>7</sup> prospered in the region south of the Yangtze river. He was skilful in taming his followers and in adjusting their potentialities, thus removing all their obstructions and wiping out their delusion. Countless were those who came after having received the teaching in other places, presented their interpretations and implored his instruction. They were given the right medicine appropriate to their individual cases and were awakened according to their capabilities.

1. The 'light' here symbolizes the self-mind which is as extensive as space, as Huang Po put it. This self-mind actually hears the sound of a gong beaten on the eastern bank of the river; it is, therefore, all-pervading and mountains, rivers and distance cannot obstruct it, or the light mentioned in the master's question.

2. As the master was speaking of the guest which is entirely different from the absolute host, the monk proved by this answer merely to be learned.

3. The seeming.

4. The real.

5. The first answer means: 'The second moon is the symbol of illusory appearances which are innumerable.' And the second answer means: 'The first moon symbolizes the real from which myriad appearances arise.'

6. Chin Ling was also called Sheng Chou; now called Nanking. ..

7. See Genealogical Chart of the Ch'an Sects of China. The Seventh Generation after the Sixth Patriarch.

On the seventh day of the seventh lunar month of the year Wu Wu in the fifth year of the Hsien Teh reign of the Chou dynasty (958), the master felt unwell and the prince of the state came personally to the monastery to inquire after him. On the fifth day of the extra seventh lunar month of the same year (22 August), he had his head shaved, took a bath, bade farewell to the community, sat cross-legged and passed away. After his death his face was exactly the same colour as when he was living.

The master passed away in his seventy-fourth year at the Dharma age of fifty-four. Monks in the neighbouring regions came in full ceremony and from Duke Li Chien Hsun downward, people wore mourning to receive his body at Tang Yang in Chiang Ning district, where his stupa was erected. The emperor conferred upon him the posthumous title of 'Ch'an Master Ta Fa Yen' (Great Dharma Eye) and upon the stupa the epigraph 'Wu Hsiang' (The Formless).

Among his successors were Master Teh Shao of T'ien T'ai mountain, the state master of the Wu Yueh kingdom, Master Wen Sui, the state master of the Chiang Nan kingdom, Master Hui Chu, the state master of Korea, and others numbering fourteen enlightened disciples who, immediately after his death, 'appeared in the world' and were held in great reverence by the princes and counts in the country. His other successors numbered forty-nine, including Lung Kuang and T'ai Ch'in, who later spread the Dharma, each in a different place.

(The following is found in the 'Five Lamps Meeting at the Source'  
- Wu Teng Hui Yuan.)

The master composed the following gatha:

*The three worlds are one mind (for) all  
Things come from consciousness.  
(With) mind and consciousness (the cause)  
See sound with eye, with ear hear form.<sup>1</sup>  
If form reaches not the ear*

1. The first two lines are the basis of the Fa Yen doctrine and the two following lines are its teaching, according to which a student should realize the self-mind to see

sound with his eyes and hear form with his ears, and thus resume the mind's normal function.

*How can sound penetrate the eye?  
When form's confined to eye and sound  
To ear, all things appear in full.<sup>1</sup>  
Since all things are not the cause  
How can one see them as illusion?<sup>2</sup>  
Of mountains, rivers and the great earth,  
Which endures and which is changing?<sup>3</sup>*

1. If the student discriminates and discerns, he will upset the normal function of the mind and will see form with his eyes and hear sound with his ears, thus splitting his undivided whole into subject and object. Thus the phenomenal will appear in full, from which it will be very difficult for him to be disentangled, hence his delusion.

2. Since illusory appearances are not the cause of his delusion, how can a student get rid of them by trying to see them as illusions?

3. Our delusion is caused by our wandering mind which grasps at all that we see around us, including the great earth, mountains and rivers, but they are all non-existent; where are changing and unchanging things in the immutable mind? This is also direct pointing at the mind which should be reduced to impotence before our self-nature can resume its normal function and realize the absolute.