

CHINESE ZEN MASTERS

Lecture 3: The 7th & 8th Generation Chan Masters

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The topic of lecture two was on the great master Sixth Patriarch Huineng, who stood at the watershed in Chan (Chinese Zen) history. He was instrumental in the integration of Chan as an Indian import into Chinese culture, and began to define the unique and original style of teaching Buddhism that characterizes Chan.

In this lecture we will introduce, among the seventh and eighth generation Dharma descendents of Huineng, several of the most important masters and see how they carried on the development of Chinese Zen.

Seventh Generation Masters

1. Master Yongjia: One-Night Enlightenment (665 – 713) 永嘉「一宿覺」

Master Yongjia Xuanjue left home as a youth and studied the Buddhist scriptures thoroughly. He also mastered the Tiantai school of Buddhism, which is known for its complete analysis and integration of the Buddhist canon, particularly in developing a systematic theory of meditation. However, it was when he studied the *Vimalakirti Sutra* that he came to true awakening on his own. Later on he met one of Sixth Patriarch Huineng's disciples, and upon the disciple's urging, Yongjia went to visit the Great Master Huineng.

When he arrived, Yongjia struck his staff on the ground and circled the Sixth Patriarch three times, then stood there upright (without bowing).

The Sixth Patriarch Huineng said, "A monk should possess the three thousand noble bearings and the eighty thousand fine demeanors. Venerable! Where are you from, and why such arrogance?"

Yongjia replied, "Birth-and-death is an urgent matter. Impermanence strikes swiftly (meaning that there is no time for such formalities)!"

Patriarch Huineng said, "Why don't you grasp the essence of the Unborn and realize that which is timeless?"

Master Yongjia said, "The essence is the Unborn, a realization is timeless."

The Sixth Patriarch said, "Just so! Just so!"

Upon hearing these exchanges, the congregation was astounded.

Now Yongjia formally paid his respects in prostration to the Sixth Patriarch. A short while later he announced his departure, whereupon the Sixth Patriarch said, "Leaving so quickly?"

Master Yongjia said, “Fundamentally there is no movement, what can be too quick?”

The Patriarch said, “Who knows that there is no movement?”

Yongjia said, “Such discrimination is entirely your venerable’s own making.”

The Patriarch praised, “You have the right idea of the Unborn!”

Yongjia said, “Can the Unborn be known by ideas?”

The Patriarch said, “Without ideas, who can make discriminations?”

Yongjia said, “(True) discrimination is not an idea.”

The Patriarch exclaimed, “Well said! Do stay one night!”

Henceforth Master Yongjia had the distinction of “One-Night Enlightenment.” Later on he wrote the “Song of Enlightenment,” a widely known masterpiece in the “sudden enlightenment” Zen literature, beloved for its poetic beauty and profound insight,

玄覺參訪六祖，遠師三匝，振錫而立。祖曰：「夫沙門者，具三千威儀，八萬細行；大德自何方來，生大我慢？」師曰：「生死事大，無常迅速。」祖曰：「何不體取無生，了無速乎？」師曰：「體即無生，了本無速。」祖曰：「如是，如是！」師方具威儀禮拜。須臾告辭，祖曰：「返太速乎？」師曰：「本自非動，豈有速耶？」祖曰：「誰知非動？」師曰：「仁者自生分別。」祖曰：「汝甚得無生之意。」師曰：「無生豈有意耶？」祖曰：「無意誰當分別？」師曰：「分別亦非意。」祖曰：「善哉！少留一宿。」時謂一宿覺，後著證道歌，盛行于世

2. Master Huizhong: The Emperor’s Teacher (675? – 775) 慧忠國師

Master HuiZhong was an eminent disciple of the Sixth Patriarch. After receiving the seal of enlightenment, he stayed in Nanyang for 40 years without leaving the Baiye mountain, and had up to a thousand disciples. Later he became the Dharma master of three Tang emperors, and therefore was widely known as the “National Teacher.” He was also one of the very few who taught primarily in northern China; most of the Sixth Patriarch’s direct descendents remained in the south.

Mind Reader

A famous Indian monk named “Big Ear Tripitaka Master” came to stay in the capital city (ChangAn) He claimed to have telepathic powers. The emperor Su Zong called on the National Teacher to test this monk.

The National Teacher Huizhong said to the Tripitaka Master, “I hear that you have mind-reading power.”

Big Ear Tripitaka replied, “I don’t presume to say so.”

Master Huizhong said, “Where is my mind right now?”

Tripitaka said, “The Master is a teacher of the whole nation, so why have you gone to the West River to see a boat race?”

After a while, Master Huizhong asked again, “Now where am I?”

Tripitaka said, “The Master is a teacher of the whole nation, so why have you gone to the Tianjin Bridge to see a monkey show?”

After a while, Master Huizhong asked again, “Where am I right now?”

This time Tripitaka had no idea.

Master Huizhong reprimanded him, “You wild fox demon! Where is your mind-reading ability?”

Tripitaka could not answer.

有西天大耳三藏到京，云得他心通。肅宗命國師試驗。三藏纔見師便禮拜，立于右邊。師問曰：「汝得他心通那？」對曰：「不敢！」師曰：「汝道老僧即今在甚麼處？」曰：「和尚是一國之師，何得卻去西川看競渡？」良久，再問：「汝道老僧即今在甚麼處？」曰：「和尚是一國之師，何得卻在天津橋上看弄糊猴？」師良久，復問：「汝道老僧只今在甚麼處？」藏罔測，師叱曰：「這野狐精，他心通在甚麼處！」藏無對。

National Teacher’s Three Calls

One day the Master called his attendant. The attendant answered. The Master called a second time, and a third time; each time the attendant answered. The Master said, “Don’t say that I let you down, it is you who let me down.”

(Later on Master Wumen commented on this koan, “The National Teacher is old and ever so kind, pushing the ox’s head low to chew the grass, but the attendant wouldn’t take it upon himself. It is like offering a delicious meal to one who is full.)

一日喚侍者，者應諾。如是三召三應。師曰：「將謂吾孤負汝，卻是汝孤負吾？」（無門曰：國師年老心孤，按牛頭喫草；侍者未肯承當，美食不中飽人餐。）

Thus Have I Heard

A monk came to visit Master Huizhong. The Master asked, “What is it that you do?”

The monk replied, “I lecture on the *Diamond Sutra*.”

The Master asked, “What is the beginning of the *Diamond Sutra*?”

“Thus have I heard.”

The Master asked, “What is ‘thus’?”

The monk had no answer.

有僧到參禮，師問：「蘊何事業？」曰：「講金剛經。」師曰：「最初兩字是甚麼？」曰：「如是。」師曰：「是甚麼？」僧無對。

All Things Are in Harmony

The National Teacher said, “The green vines climb well, reaching the top of the winter pine; the white clouds are carefree, appearing in and out of the great void. All things are in harmony; it is the people who cause commotions.”

「青蘿夤緣，直上寒松之頂；白雲淡泊，出沒太虛之中。萬法本閑而人自鬧。」

3. Master Huairang: The Unspeakable (677-744) 南嶽懷讓—什麼物？

Master Huairang was a senior disciple of the Sixth Patriarch. Two of the five houses of Chinese Zen trace their origin to the Sixth Patriarch through Master Huairang and his famous disciple, Master Mazu. Little in writing exists of Master Huairang’s teaching, but the following has become an important *koan* in the Chinese Zen lore.

The Unspeakable

The monk Huairang went to visit the great Sixth Patriarch Huineng.

Master Huineng saw him coming and asked, “What is it that has thus come forth?”

Huairang could give no answer. After eight years of contemplating this question, he suddenly had a profound insight. He then told the master, “I understand now.”

“What is *it* (that has thus come forth)?”

“To say *it* is anything is to miss the mark.”

Master Huineng asked, “Does *it* require cultivation?”

Huairang said, “Cultivation is not unnecessary. But neither can *it* be defiled.”

The Patriarch said, “Just this that is undefiled is what is mindfully guarded by all Buddhas. You are *thus*, I also am *thus*.”

The Patriarch also said, “Prajnatara (The 27th Patriarch of India) has foretold that under your feet will come a horse that tramples to death everyone in the world. Bear this in mind but there is no need to speak of it anytime soon.” Huairang attended by the Sixth Patriarch’s side for fifteen years before he left to transmit the Dharma.

祖問：「甚麼處來？」曰：「嵩山來。」祖曰：「甚麼物怎麼來？」師無語。遂經八載，忽然有省。乃白祖曰：「某甲有個會處。」祖曰：「作麼生？」師曰：「說似一物即不中。」祖曰：「還假修證否？」師曰：「修證則不無，污染即不得。」祖曰：「祇此不污染，諸佛之所護念。汝既如是，吾亦如是。西天般若多羅識汝足下一馬駒，踏殺天下人。應在汝心，不須速說。」師執侍左右一十五年。

Eighth Generation Masters

1. Master Shitou: Slippery Rock (700-790) 石頭路滑

Of the next, eighth generation masters, only two are well known: Master ShiTou (ShiTou means “rock”) and Master Mazu (“Patriarch Ma”). They are two key figures in the development of Chinese Zen. All the five houses of Zen trace their origins to these two masters; the CaoDong (j. Soto), YunMen, and FaYan schools are descendents of Master Shitou, whereas the LinJi (j. Rinzai) and GuiYang schools trace back to Master Mazu.

Master Shitou was from Duanzhou (west of Canton). When Shitou’s mother became pregnant she avoided eating meat. At that time the villagers of Duanzhou feared demons and performed sacrifices of oxen and wine. As a teenager, the young Shitou would destroy their altars and free the oxen. He became a novice monk and a disciple of the Sixth Patriarch. When the Sixth Patriarch passed away, he practiced under the Patriarch’s disciple, Master QingYuan. He became the only known disciple of Master Qingyuan to receive the Dharma transmission. He taught in the Hunan Province (literally, south of the lake), and his contemporary, Master Mazu, taught in the Jiangxi Province (literally, west of the river). The two masters became so famous among the Zen aspirants that it was said that a disciple didn’t know Zen if he hadn’t been to either of these masters.

Master Shitou (“the Rock”) got his title because he built a hut and practiced Zen meditation

on top of a rock platform nearby the monastery. His style of teaching is sparse, direct, and uncompromising. Master Mazu said of him, “The Rock is slippery.”

Nothing Gained from River Cao

Master Qingyuan asked the disciple Shitou, “Where have you come from?”

Shitou said, “Cao Xi (River Cao).”

Qingyuan asked, “What did you get from Cao Xi?”

“Nothing that I didn’t have before going to Cao Xi.”

Qingyuan said, “Then why bother going to Cao Xi?”

Shitou said, “If I hadn’t been to CaoXi, how would I know this?”

And Shitou asked, “Did the Great Master of Cao Xi (i.e. Sixth Patriarch Huineng) know you?”

Qingyuan said, “Do you know me now?”

Shitou said, “How can anyone really know?”

Whereupon master Qingyuan praised him, “There are many horned animals, but one unicorn is enough!”

Shitou joined Qingyuan’s assembly, and in due course, received the Dharma transmission from him.

祖（青原行思）曰：「子何方來？」師曰：「曹谿。」祖曰：「將得甚麼來？」曰：「未到曹谿亦不失。」祖曰：「若恁麼，用去曹谿作甚麼？」曰：「若不到曹谿，爭知不失？」師又曰：「曹谿大師還識和尚否？」祖曰：「汝今識吾否？」曰：「識又爭能識得？」祖曰：「眾角雖多，一麟足矣。」

Slippery Rock

Mazu’s disciple Deng asked for a leave from Mazu.

Mazu said, “Where are you going?”

Deng said, “To see the Rock. (Shitou).”

Mazu said, “Beware, the Rock is slippery.”

Deng said, “I’ll take my staff and play as it goes!” And so he left. As soon as Deng arrived at Shitou’s, he circled around the master’s seat, struck his staff on the ground and challenged, “What is this principle?”

Shitou said, “Oh, heavens! Heavens!”

Deng had no reply, so he returned and told Mazu of this encounter.

Mazu said, “Go ask again. When he replies, just hiss at him a couple of times.”

Deng went to Shitou again, and raised his question as before.

Shitou hissed at him a couple of times.

Again Deng had no reply, and returned to Mazu.

Mazu said, “I told you ‘the Rock is slippery!’”

鄧隱峰辭馬祖，馬祖曰：「甚麼處去？」曰：「石頭去。」馬祖曰：「石頭路滑。」曰：「竿木隨身，逢場作戲。」便去。纔到石頭，即繞禪床一匝，振錫一聲。問：「是何宗旨？」師曰：「蒼天，蒼天！」峰無語，卻回舉似馬祖。馬祖曰：「汝更去問，待他有答，汝便噓兩聲。」峰又去，依前問。師乃噓兩聲。峰又無語，回舉似馬祖。馬祖曰：「向汝道『石頭路滑。』」

Pure Land

A monk asked, “What is liberation?”

Master Shitou said, “Who has bound you?”

“What is the Pure Land?”

Master Shitou said, “Who has defiled you?”

“What is nirvana?”

Master Shitou said, “Who has given you birth and death?”

僧問：「如何是解脫？」師曰：「誰縛汝？」問：「如何是淨土？」師曰：「誰垢汝？」問：「如何是涅槃？」師曰：「誰將生死與汝？」

Fundamental Duty 學人本分事

The Zen disciple ShiLi asked, “What is a disciple’s fundamental duty?”

The Master said, “Why do you seek from me?”

“If I don’t seek from the master, how can I find it?”

“Have you ever lost it?”

Shili came to an awakening.

京兆府尸利禪師，問師：「如何是學人本分事？」師曰：「汝何從吾覓？」曰：「不從師覓，如何即得？」師曰：「汝還曾失麼？」兆乃契會厥旨。

No Buddha Nature

The Zen monk HuiLang asked, “What is Buddha?”

Master Shitou said, “You have no Buddha nature.”

HuiLang said, “But what about all the sentient beings?”

Shitou said, “Sentient beings have Buddha nature.”

“Then how come Huilang doesn’t?”

The Master said, “Because you wouldn’t acknowledge it.” With these words Huilang attained entrance into the faith. Later, whenever a disciple came to seek the Dharma teaching from Huilang, he always said, “Go! Go! You have no Buddha nature!”

慧朗禪師問：「如何是佛？」師曰：「汝無佛性。」朗曰：「蠢動含靈，又作麼生？」師曰：「蠢動含靈，卻有佛性。」曰：「慧朗為甚麼卻無？」師曰：「為汝不肯承當。」朗於言下信入。住後，凡學者至，皆曰：「去！去！汝無佛性。」

2. Master Mazu: The Horse that Tramples the World (709-788) 馬祖道一——馬駒踏殺天下人

Master MaZu DaoYi was the only one of the six disciples of Master Huairang to receive the Dharma transmission. The Sixth Patriarch had told Master Huairang, that he would have under him “a horse that would trample the world.” DaoYi, whose family name was Ma (horse), came to be called Patriarch Ma. This is an indication of the scope and importance of this great master’s

influence in Chinese Zen history.

Master Mazu was a great teacher. He conveyed an awesome sense of presence, having the “stride of a bull and gaze of a tiger.” His teaching had an air of immediacy to the truth. He developed a wide variety of teaching devices that came to shape the unique “Zen” character of teaching. These included using his staff to jolt the disciple (into awakening), shouting, debasing, beating, even nose-twisting, and offering contradictory teachings (to keep the disciples from clinging to the concepts too literally), etc. His saying “this mind is the Buddha” and “the ordinary mind is the Way” have become staples in Zen teaching. He is said to have from 80 to 139 enlightened disciples, who spread all over China to initiate a golden age of Zen.

Brick Mirror 磨磚成鏡

At Mt. Nanyue, under Master Huairang, the disciple Mazu constantly practiced sitting meditation. Master Huairang knew that he was a vessel for the Dharma, so he asked him, “Venerable, what are you trying to achieve with sitting meditation?” to which Mazu replied, “To become a Buddha.”

Master Huairang took a brick and started to grind it in front of Mazu’s cabin.

Mazu asked, “Why are you grinding the brick?”

The Master said, “To polish it into a mirror.”

“How can a brick be polished into a mirror?”

The Master said, “If a brick cannot be polished into a mirror, how can sitting meditation turn you into a Buddha?”

Mazu asked, “Then what should one do?”

The Master said, “It is like an ox pulling the cart, if the cart is not moving, do you whip the cart, or the ox?”

Mazu had no reply.

Master Huairang continued, “Are you sitting to practice Zen, or sitting to become a Buddha? If you sit to practice Zen, Zen is not about sitting or lying down. If you sit to become a Buddha, the Buddha has no fixed form. In the non-abiding Dharma, one should neither grasp nor abhor anything. If you are sitting to imitate the Buddha, that is to kill the Buddha. Clinging to the sitting form is to diverge from the principle.” Mazu felt that he had drunk the ambrosia of enlightenment when he heard this ... Eventually he was awakened, and attended by Master Huairang’s side for ten years, his mind rose beyond and reached ever more profound depths.

師在衡嶽山常習坐禪。祖知是法器，往問曰：「大德坐禪圖甚麼？」一曰：「圖作佛。」祖乃取一磚，於彼庵前石上磨。師曰：「磨作甚麼？」祖曰：「磨作鏡。」師曰：「磨磚豈得成鏡邪？」祖曰：「磨磚既不成鏡，坐禪豈得作佛？」師曰：「如何即是？」祖曰：「如牛駕車。車若不行，打車即是，打牛即是？」師無對。祖又曰：「汝學坐禪，為學坐佛？若學坐禪，禪非坐臥。若學坐佛，佛非定相。於無住法，不應取捨。汝若坐佛，即是殺佛。若執坐相，非達其理。」師聞示誨，如飲醍醐...師蒙開悟，心意超然。侍奉十秋，日益玄奧。

Gateless Gate 無門為法門

One day Mazu addressed the congregation, saying, “All of you here! You should believe that

your own mind is Buddha. This very mind is the Buddha mind. When Bodhidharma came from south India to China he transmitted the supreme vehicle teaching of One Mind, allowing people like you to attain awakening ... in the *Lankavatara Sutra* we know from Buddha's words that mind is the essence, and that no gate is the Dharma gate. You who seek the Dharma should seek nothing. Apart from mind there is no other Buddha. Apart from Buddha there is no other mind. Do not grasp what is good nor reject what is bad. Don't lean toward purity or defilement ... What is born of the mind is called form; knowing the emptiness of form, then birth is non-birth. If you understand this, then to dress and to eat is to cultivate the Buddha nature. Live in harmony according to circumstances, what more is there to do? You should follow my teaching. Listen to this verse:

*The mind-ground is always speaking,
Bodhi is only inner peace.
Phenomena and principles are in harmony
And birth is non-birth.*

一日謂眾曰：「汝等諸人，各信自心是佛，此心即是佛心。達磨大師從南天竺國來至中華，傳上乘一心之法，令汝等開悟；又引楞伽經文以印眾生心地，恐汝顛倒，不自信此一心之法，各各有之；故《楞伽經》以佛語心為宗，無門為法門。夫求法者，應無所求，心外無別佛，佛外無別心。不取善，不捨惡，淨穢兩邊，俱不依怙。...凡所見色，皆是見心；心不自心，因色故有。汝但隨時言說，即事即理，都無所礙；菩提道果，亦復如是。於心所生，即名為色；知色空故，生即不生。若了此意，乃可隨時著衣喫飯，長養聖胎，任運過時，更有何事？汝受吾教，聽吾偈曰：心地隨時說，菩提亦只寧，事理俱無礙，當生即不生。」

Mind is the Buddha (Great Plum Part 1) 即心即佛

On Ven. FaChang's initial visit, he asked Master Mazu, "What is Buddha?"

The Master said, "This mind is the Buddha."

Ven. Fachang immediately attained great awakening. He then retreated to Plum Mountain for many years to perfect his practice and was hence known as Master Damei (Great Plum) Fachang.

法常初參馬祖，問：「如何是佛？」祖曰：「即心是佛。」師即大悟。

No mind, no Buddha 非心非佛

A monk asked, "What is Buddha?" Master Mazu said, "No mind, no Buddha."

僧問：「如何是佛？」師曰：「非心非佛。」

The Plum Is Ripe (Great Plum Part 2) 梅子熟也

Master Mazu heard that Damei was residing in a mountain¹, so he sent a monk to check on Damei. The monk went and asked Damei, "Venerable abbot! What did you realize when you visited Master Mazu, so that now you reside in this mountain?"

¹ "To reside in a mountain" can mean: (a) After awakening, doing solitary retreat in a mountain to perfect one's practice and understanding. (b) To be an abbot in a monastery, taking on disciples and transmitting the Dharma. (Most Zen monasteries in China are in the mountains.)

Ven. Damei replied, “The Great Master told me, this mind is the Buddha. Since then I’ve been residing *here*.”

The monk said, “The Master’s Buddha Dharma is different these days.”

Damei asked, “How so?”

The monk said, “He now says, ‘no mind, no Buddha.’”

Damei said, “This old fella never stops trying to mislead people! He can have his ‘no mind, no Buddha,’ I’ll stick to ‘this mind is the Buddha.’”

The monk returned to Mazu with Damei’s words, whereupon the Master said, “The plum is ripe!”

大寂聞師住山，乃令僧問：「和尚見馬大師得個甚麼，便住此山？」師曰：「大師向我道：即心是佛。我便向這裡住。」僧曰：「大師近日佛法又別。」師曰：「作麼生？」曰：「又道：非心非佛。」師曰：「這老漢惑亂人，未有了日。任他非心非佛，我祇管即心即佛。」其僧回舉似馬祖，祖曰：「梅子熟也！」

Eating Meat 喫酒肉

Magistrate Lian of Hongzhou province asked, “Should I drink wine and eat meat or not?”

Master Mazu said, “To consume wine and meat is your privilege. To not consume them is your merit.”

洪州廉使問曰：「喫酒肉即是，不喫即是？」師曰：「若喫是中丞祿，不喫是中丞福。」

Your Own Pearl

Zen Master HuiHai came to learn from Master Mazu. The Master asked, “Where are you from?”

Ven. Huihai replied, “From the Great Cloud Monastery of Yuezhou.”

The Master asked, “What do you need from this place?”

“To seek the Buddha Dharma.”

The Master said, “I have not a single thing here. Why seek the Dharma? Why do you ignore your own treasure at home and run around outside!”

“But what is Huihai’s own treasure?”

The Master said, “That which is asking this question is your own treasure—perfectly complete, lacking nothing, you can use it anyway you want to. Why are you seeking outside?”

Upon hearing this, Ven. Huihai realized the original mind. He attended the Master for six years. Later he returned to Yuezhou to attend to his ordaining master, who was getting old. There he composed a treatise entitled “Essentials of Entering the Way Through Sudden Enlightenment.” When Master Mazu saw the text he praised, “Yuezhou has a great pearl, its perfect brilliance shines freely without obstruction.” Hence Huihai became known as Master Dazhu (Great Pearl).

馬祖問：「從何處來？」曰：「越州大雲寺來。」祖曰：「來此擬須何事？」曰：「來求佛法。」祖曰：「我這裡一物也無，求甚麼佛法？自家寶藏不顧，拋家散走作麼！」曰：「阿那個是慧海寶藏？」祖曰：「即今問我者，是汝寶藏。一切具足，更無欠少，使用自在，何假外求？」師於言下，自識本心。事祖六載，因受業師年老，即歸奉養。自撰《頓悟入道要門論》一卷，以闡發南宗禪之頓悟要旨。法姪玄晏私下呈馬祖。祖閱訖，讚曰：「越州有大珠，圓明光透自在，無遮障處也。」

Cultivate the Way

Master Mazu said, “The Way cannot be cultivated. If it can be cultivated, once complete it will rot away. But if you do not cultivate, then you are just a mortal.”

道不屬修。若言修得，修成還壞，即同聲聞。若言不修，即同凡夫。

Ordinary Mind

The Way needs no cultivation. Just do not defile it. What is defilement? When having a mind of birth and death one acts in a contrived way, then everything is defilement. If one wants to know the Way directly, understand this: *ordinary mind is the Way*. What is ‘ordinary mind’? No effort, no right or wrong, no grasping or rejecting, no extinction or permanence, nothing is mundane or holy. The sutra says, “Neither the practice of the ordinary people, nor the practice of saints, that is the bodhisattva’s practice.” Just like now, whether walking, standing, sitting, or reclining, responding to situations and dealing with people as they come: everything is the Way.

道不用脩，但莫汙染。何為汙染？但有生死心，造作趨向，皆是汙染。若欲直會其道，平常心是道。何謂平常心？無造作、無是非、無取捨、無斷常、無凡無聖。經云：非凡夫行、非聖賢行，是菩薩行。只如今行住坐臥、應機接物，盡是道。

Sun-Faced Buddha

In the first month of the year 788, Master Mazu climbed Stone Gate Mountain and saw a cave with flat ground. He said to his attendant, “This ruined old body of mine will return to this ground next month.” He subsequently became ill. The temple director asked, “How is the Venerable Master’s condition lately?” The Master replied, “Sun-faced Buddha, Moon-faced Buddha.”

On the first day of the second lunar month of year 788, the Master bathed, sat in the lotus position, and passed away.

馬大師不安，院主問：「和尚近日尊候如何？」師曰：「日面佛，月面佛。」

Further Readings

- (1) Original Chinese Sources: 景德傳燈錄，五燈會元，六祖壇經，指月錄
- (2) “Zen’s Chinese Heritage: The Masters and Their Teachings” by Andy Ferguson, 2000, Wisdom Publications. (*A good reference book of translated Chinese Zen records.*)
- (3) “Sun-Face Buddha: The Teachings of Ma-Tsu and the Hung-Chou School of Ch’an” by Cheng Chien Bhiksu, 2001, Jain Publishing Company. (*Translation of Mazu (Ma-Tsu)’s Records of Teaching and valuable information on this important master.*)
- (4) “The Zen Teachings of Instantaneous Awakening” by Dazhu Huihai (Great Pearl), translated by John Blofeld, 1987, Associated Publishers Group. (*The only known English translation of this important Chinese Zen classic from Master Great Pearl. It seems to be out of print in the U.S.*)