

# *Pictorial Biography of Venerable Master Hsu yun*

*Composed by Venerable Master Hua*

Lung Ch'ang (Glorious Flourishing) Monastery on Pao Hua  
(Precious Flower) Mountain. #94

After bowing at Chiu Hua mountain, the Master crossed the river to Lung Ch'ang monastery on Pao Hua mountain. This Bodhimanda is known for its strict maintenance of the moral precepts and so people call it the "old Vinaya hall." Pao Hua mountain is a most honorable place to receive the complete precepts of a Bhikshu. Therefore many of the new preceptees in the nation assembled there each time the precepts were to be transmitted. The Master bowed to the Abbot, the Venerable Master Sheng Hsing (Sagely Nature) who invited him to spend New Years there.

The Gatha says:

*The other name of Pao Hua temple, is the Old Vinaya Hall.  
In sila and pure practices, it is far and away the leader.  
A powerful vajra brightness emanates from within;  
It's wonderfully adorned with endless layers of banners and jeweled netting.*

## *The Essentials of Investigating Ch'an*

*-selected from the writings of Ming Dynasty Great  
Master Han Shan (" Silly Mountain" )*

*translated by Bhikshuni Heng Tao  
edited by Bhikshuni Heng Ch'ih*

The Buddhas and Patriarchs all told you to investigate within yourself, not to seek from the vain verbalizations of others. Of those who investigate Ch'an in this age, everyone says that they watch the *hua t'ou* (meditation topic) and bring forth a feeling of doubt, but they don't know to drill to the very roots, so they get caught in pursuing the meditation topic. Back and forth they seek, and then, should a minor state appear, they claim that they have become enlightened. Instantaneously they utter verses and proffer their odes, considering these to be rare commodities, thinking they have some real attainment. Devoid of proper knowledge, they fall into the net of false thinking and of deviant knowledge and views. Aren't those who investigate Ch'an like this just blinding the eyes of all those who will come in the future?

There are youths of today who haven't even managed to sit still on the Ch'an mat, and yet who claim they have become enlightened to the Way. Blabbering nonsense, they toy with their ghostly intelligence, taking that as Ch'an banter. And when inane gibberish pops up in their

minds, they think they are composing odes which rival the ancients'. Those things are products of their false thinking. They have never even dreamed of the ancients! If enlightenment were as easy as people nowadays take it to be, then what of the ancients with their uncompromising discipline? Master Chang Ch'ing wore out seven Ch'an mats, and Master Chao Chou concentrated his mind, allowing for no distractions for upwards of thirty years. Wouldn't those Masters seem to be endowed with extremely dull and obtuse natures? It would seem they are not even up to carrying the straw sandals of these modern day people. Ah, those who suffer from overweening pride, claiming they have attained what they haven't attained, are people to be very wary of.