THE BIRTH OF A NEW RELIGION: MAITREYA GREAT TAO

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AGENDA

- **Background:** Yiguandao in China and Taiwan
- **Tian Dao:** Precursor to The Great Way
- **Wang Haode and the Great Way of Former Heaven**
- **Current Status as an Independent Group**
- **Arguments**
A WORD ON THE TITLE...

- **Great way of Maitreya = Maitreya Great Tao = 彌勒大道**
- **Tao = Dao = 道**
Wang Yuanshan

Wang Yuanshan

2009

Major New Source on Maitreya Great Tao
YIGUANDAO IN CHINA: RECENT LEADERS
LU ZHONGYI, ZHANG TIANRAN & SUN SUZHEN

17th Patriarch from 1905-1924
Joint 18th Patriarchs from 1930-1947/1995
THE ANTI-HETERODOX GROUPS AND SECRET SOCIETIES CAMPAIGN, 1953

HTTP://GANSU.GSCN.COM.CN/SYSTEM/2016/12/06/011553360.SHTML
BACKGROUND: YIGUANDAO IN TAIWAN

2005 CENSUS FIGURES:
• YIGUANDAO: 3.5% of the total population, 850,000 people
• MAITREYA GREAT TAO: 1.1% 250,000 BELIEVERS

TIAN DAO: PRECURSER TO MAITREYA GREAT TAO
THE YIGUANDAO DAOTONG 道統:
PERIODIZATION

Green Yang Period 青陽期

Red Yang Period 紅陽期

White Yang Period 白陽期
Huang Dehui 黃德輝 founds the Way of Former Heaven (Xiantian Dao) 先天道

Yao Hetian 姚鶴天 founds Yiguandao

Wang Jueyi 王覺一 founds the Hall of Eastern Thunder 東震堂

1886 Maitreya incarnates as 16th patriarch Liu Qingxu 劉清虛, who formally changes group's name to Yiguandao

1930 18th joint patriarchs Zhang Tianran 張天然 and Sun Suzhen 隼素貞 assume tianming 天命
KEY POINTS IN THE DAOTONG (2)

1941 Tian Dao 天道 is used for the first time, after instructions received in a fuji missive from the supreme deity, LaoMu 老母 (皇母訓子十戒)

1947 Zhang dies, Yiguandao split into two groups

1954 Sun Su 贞隼素贞 arrives in Taiwan

1975 Sun dies

1986 Yiguandao General Association 一貫道總會 formed

1986 Wang Haode forms the Tianen Maitreya Buddha Hall 天恩彌勒佛院
WANG HAO DE 王好德 AND XIAN TIAN 大道先天大道
(The Great Way of Former Heaven)

“FIRST GENERATION” TRANSMITTER 第一代傳人
WANG HAODE AND THE GREAT WAY OF FORMER HEAVEN: EVENTS

- Born 1927, Shandong
- To Taiwan 1947
- Converted to Yiguandao 1948
- 1955 appointed as personal assistant to Sun Suzhen
- 1975 death of Sun Suzhen
- 1975 establishes 天恩米勒佛院 in Hsinchu, Central Taiwan
- 1982-5 set up 慈光講堂 throughout Taiwan
- 1987 Registers 財團法人天恩彌勒佛院 as legal entity
- 1999 dies in Northern Thailand
PAN-YIGUANDAO: DERIVATION AND CONNECTIONS

- Liuist Faction 師兄派
- Sunist Faction師母派
- Yiguandao Stream 一貫道主流
- Yiguandao Gen Assembly
- Pan-Yiguandao Groups 范 一貫道
- 12 Branches
- Xiantian Dadao 先天大道
- Maitreay Great Tao 彌勒大道
- 中華生教 Sacred Teachings of China
- 道 of the Children
MAITREYA GREAT TAO: CURRENT STATUS AS AN INDEPENDENT GROUP

Inverted 母 (mother), symbol of the Ancient Mother 老母
THE CURRENT LEADERSHIP: WANG CIGUANG 汪慈光 & YAN MIAORU 顏妙如 (NOT PICTURED)

“SECOND GENERATION” TRANSMITTER 第二代傳人
SOME LEADERSHIP FACTORS

Intimate Care-giving

Strategic Relations

Vision
LEADERSHIP FACTORS: INTIMATE CARE-GIVING

(1) Caregiving is a natural expected part of life…. (2) Caregiving is a culturally prescribed obligation…..

STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIP BUILDING: TWO MASTER PRACTITIONERS

Wang Haode

Wang Ciguang
LEADERSHIP FACTORS: STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIPS

- Relations between temples and major lineages are negotiated between leaders (qianren 前人)
- These negotiations exist in a separate realm from the day to day worship and community activities
- The ability to manage a complex network of lineages and influential temples is key to fund-raising, distribution of new ideas, and leadership training.
LEADERSHIP VISION: ELEMENTS

- MONUMENTAL BUILDINGS (awe)
- REFOCUS ON MAITREYA WORSHIP (REBRANDING)
- REFINING DOCTRINE (REORIENTING)
- EXTRAVAGANZAS (ENTERTAINING)
- ADDRESSING CONTEMPORARY CONCERNS (RELEVANCE)
VISION: MONUMENTAL BUILDINGS
TIANEN MAITREYA BUDDHA CENTER
EMEI, TAIWAN
VISION: MAITREYA WORSHIP
THE IMPORTANCE OF MAITREYA IN SECTARIAN CHINESE RELIGIONS

In the scripture texts themselves his role is predominantly otherworldly; he comes to rescue the lost from the profane world by reminding them of their sacred roots and showing them the way home to the Eternal Mother....

Daniel L. Overmyer, in Messenger, Savior, and Revolutionary: Maitreya in Chinese Popular Religious Literature of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, 1988
THE GREAT MAITREYA FIGURE AT EMEI
72 METERS

Built 2002-2011
VISION: EXTRAVAGANZAS
VISION: ADDRESSING CONTEMPORARY CONCERNS

Nature Park

2014年熱愛大自然年會 2014 Annual Love Nature Assembly
International Nature Loving Federation
ARGUMENT SUMMARY

Maitreya Great Tao developed from the greater Yiguandao tradition due to:

- Ostracism (social pressure of exclusion)
- Strategic positioning (care-giving and opportunism)
- Relationship building (politicking and fund-raising)
- Vision (creativity, re-imagining, rebranding, reorienting)
THANK YOU!

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