

Is There Religious Fundamentalism in Chinese Culture?

The Case of the I-Kuan Tao in Taiwan

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When Western power came to the East, the gate of our country was bombed open by foreign countries' weapons. Chinese holy teachings couldn't meet the new challenges. As Chinese failed in the challenges, they felt inferior and gave up the holy teachings. Peace did not come and the situation worsened. People felt themselves unworthy and were compelled to fix their own problems using impractical Western means. People only superficially learned things from foreigners. People lamented the demise of the good times of old. We then experienced an unprecedented change. Western powers overturned everything in China. Chinese felt anxious about these challenges. Officials were incapable of dealing with these problems and only awaited their doom. During these very bad moments, heaven was willing to deliver a new destiny to this world. The I-Kuan Tao [一貫道 "Way of Penetrating Unity"] was born. The birth of this new phrase shows that holy teachings always innovate following history. The mission now has been transmitted to commoners, rather than teachers or emperors. The upper positions owning the power now can't solve the problem of social disorder. In urgency, now only the very unprecedented saint cooperates with the commoners who do not have political power, and with those virtuous people who may possibly stop a dangerous future...Those who take the right steps may get more help and can spread out the holy teachings. Once heaven endorses you, you can accomplish. If heaven discards you, you will lose. Now only those nonofficial profound people can be relied upon. The radical historical change will be followed by saints who know heaven's will. The saints will enhance the holy teachings and broaden their influences to the whole country. The world then will recover from danger and chaos. (Lee & Lin 1992: 3-4, quoting a pamphlet of the I-Kuan Tao)

1. Introduction

Since the 1980s, after retreating from the public sphere for a long time, religions have begun to reemerge in the global arena. International political conflicts and the religious ferments of revitalization are intertwining. The 911 attack drew the world's attention to religious issues as never before. The word "fundamentalism" has become especially hot. It is believed that fundamentalists' tenacious use of antimodern and violent means has brought the world to great disaster.

Fundamentalism can be referred to as a specific kind of religious and political orientation. Marty and Appleby (1991:ix) describe a variety of "family resemblance" of religious fundamentalism that appears in widely divergent cultures. This similarity includes, in particular, a reliance on religion as a source for identity; boundary setting that determines who belongs and who does not; dramatic eschatology; and the dramatization and mythologization of enemies (Marty & Appleby 1991:819-821)

The modern fundamentalist position developed for the first time in the United States in the late nineteenth century as a reaction to liberal Protestantism. A "Bible Conference" in 1895 issued a statement of belief affirming what were later called the five points of fundamentalism: the literal inerrancy of the Bible, the divinity of Jesus Christ, the virgin birth, a substitutionary theory of the atonement, and the physical resurrection and bodily return of Christ (Marsden 2006:117).

"Fundamentalism" soon became a general term that can be applied to the similar attitude and orientation in all religions. The word covers religious phenomena that are much broader and not only happening in the United States. In their Fundamentalism Project, Marty and Appleby (1991) explore the phenomenon of religious fundamentalism from North America to Iran and even to Confucian East Asia.

If fundamentalism were only a religious ideology, it would be of little concern to anyone outside the particular religious tradition to which it belonged. What forces the attention of all of us on it is its desire to reshape the world at large, and that often leads to violence (Bruce 2000:8).

Geographically, fundamentalist influences are indeed represented almost everywhere on the inhabited globe. There is Islamic fundamentalism in North Africa, the Middle East, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Central Asian countries and fundamentalist conflict between Hinduism, Islam, and Sikhism in India. Also South America has seen the rise of large

Protestant evangelical fundamentalist movements on traditionally Roman Catholic soil. In the United States, fundamentalist parties, linking with conservatives, have formed movements like the Moral Majority and the Christian Coalition. Today their influence is felt most at the local level, in anti-abortion, anti-pornography, pro-censorship, and pro-family activities.

Marty and Appleby concluded their project on global fundamentalism by explaining it as a reaction to modernity. Fundamentalists “no longer perceive themselves as reeling under the corrosive effects of secular life: on the contrary, they perceive themselves as fighting back, and doing so rather successfully” (Marty & Appleby 1991:ix). In short, intertwining with the complex of international political conflict and racial confrontation, in the name of counteracting the influence of modernity, a group of people may be interested in the renewed use of religious symbols, in order to attain specific political purposes. Then, in the name of traditional religions, this group of people could possibly break into the public areas.

This new cultural and political response, even though it appropriates major symbols from established religions, still its prevalence should be understood as a late modern or postmodern phenomenon (Hinnells 1995: 178).

Fundamentalism could appear in any religious tradition. However, if one can return to the core of a specific religion, usually we assume that there does exist a coherent, readily identifiable canon, or at least a single God within this religious tradition. It can be seen obviously in Qur’anic Islam, biblical Christianity, and Judaism, where there are standard texts and the belief in a single God. Fundamentalism may be harder to find in other religious traditions, such as Buddhism and Hinduism. Nevertheless, in the modern world arena, both Buddhist and Hindu fundamentalists appear, in terms of an aggressive and intolerant religious exclusivists.

For Buddhism, indeed a person who would strictly interpret traditional Buddhist texts such as the Tripitaka would not find any excuse to resort to violence. Buddha preached compassion and wisdom in every sutra, and so when the sutra are interpreted strictly they should lead one to follow the nonviolent noble eight-fold path. However, aggressive forms of Buddhism exist, many where, such as in Sri Lanka (Bartholomeusz & de Silva 1998) and Bhutan, so-called Buddhist fundamentalism has imposed and

prescribed strict adherence to the set of Buddhist dogmas and beliefs among the Buddhist populations. As an aggressive conservative movement, it excludes and expels those who do not share its conservative faith or dogmas. For example, as a Sri Lanka historian, K.M. de Silva (1986:31), emphasizes:

In the Sinhala language, the words for nation, race and people are practically synonymous, and a multiethnic or multicommunal nation or state is incomprehensible to the popular mind. The emphasis on Sri Lanka as the land of the Sinhala Buddhists carried an emotional popular appeal, compared with which the concept of a multiethnic polity was a meaningless abstraction.

With regard to Hinduism, a nineteenth-century reformist movement called the Arya Samai (Society of Aryans) sought to cleanse modern Hindu thought and practice of unnecessary clutter that had contaminated the tradition over the centuries. The society condemned not only Muslims and Christians but members of various Hindu denominations as well. Another fundamentalist-style force in recent times has been the political faction called Bharatiya Janata. In 1992 the party supported agitation by the militant Vishva Hindu Parishad (Universal Hindu Assembly) to destroy a sixteenth-century mosque in Ayodhya. They wanted to replace the mosque with a temple to Rama and to rededicate the site as Rama's birthplace, the area having been desecrated centuries before by Muslims. Also, the VHP throws its considerable weight behind political candidates who promise to do whatever is necessary to keep power in the hands of Hindus (Renard 2002:266).

Now, compare those fundamentalist ferments with religious revitalization of Chinese tradition. In the modern world arena, does any Chinese fundamentalism or fundamentalist-like group appear?

Indeed, after 1911's republican revolution in Mainland China, the Qing empire collapsed, and soon many Confucian movements rose up. The purpose of these movements was to establish Confucianism as the state religion and to restore the traditional Chinese moral standards among citizens. However, due to the lack of religious leadership, weak organizations, and too much conflict among intellectuals' visions of

restoring a traditional thought as a religion, all these movements failed (Qiu 邱 2001:57). Besides, these top-down movements were only promoted by a few intellectuals and did not have any solid social base.

Moving to modern-day East Asia, in Marty and Appleby's reports on global fundamentalism Tu Wei-ming (1991) addresses the Confucian arena in the section entitled "Confucian Revival in Industrial East Asia." Through the case of East Asian governments' boosting Confucianism after the 1980s, Tu wanted to know whether this promotion may be related to the recent economic prosperity of East Asia. Tu (1991:746) starts his project by arguing that:

the Confucian revival thus raises issues familiar to scholars of fundamentalism, even as its motivation, justification, and interpretation suggest that its overall spiritual orientation is significantly different from that in Christianity, Islam, or Buddhism. Furthermore, East Asian Confucian revivals in the twentieth century are frequently led by sophisticated intellectuals and are often supported by the central government. While these revivals may on the surface have little to do with mass movements, secret societies, and subversive organizations, they signify a general psychocultural pattern in East Asia in its response to the impact of the West.

However, according to Tu, the overall picture of whether Confucianism has revivals in industrial East Asia, by and large, is not very clear, at least, it is hard to say that industrial booming in East Asia is benefited from Confucian ethics.

Nevertheless, Tu does argue that the core values in East Asia are still Confucian in nature (1991:773). He adds:

the designation of East Asia as "Confucian" in the ethico-religious sense is comparable in validity to employing "Christian," "Islamic," "Hindu," and "Buddhist" in identifying regions such as Europe, the Middle East, India, or Southeast Asia. Notwithstanding the crudeness and inadequacy of such denotations, they give us a sense of the life-orientation, which can be otherwise easily relegated to the background as a residual category (Tu 1993:218).

Thus even though Confucianism may differ from those institutional kinds of established religions, yet it is an important value system comparable to world religions, and after it absorbs the modern spirit and adapts to the current world arena, there could come a new era of Confucian revivals (Tu 2001:81-87) °

For Tu, the future of Confucianism is not inside China; rather, the future of Confucianism depends on how people in Western capitalism resolve their cultural deadlock. To this extent, a multicultural reflection is necessary, and a Confucian revival is both functionally necessary and historically inevitable. This Confucian revival, in Tu's thinking, of course will be led by intellectuals (Tu 1996:436-438).

2. Grassroots Fundamentalism

If we perceive fundamentalists are those who are interested in appropriating and renewing the use of traditional cultural symbols in order to react to modernity, we may find that in any territories or racial groups, if their histories long have been associated with a specific religious tradition, once they experience a certain kind of economic difficulty or cultural frustration following modernity, the fundamentalist kind of cultural responses will be inevitable.

Even though India has a very diffused¹ form of traditional religion, it may have difficulties finding a coherent base for fundamentalist response. Yet under certain historical circumstances, since the chance arose, an inclination toward Hindu fundamentalism has been elicited. Observing contemporary Hindu fundamentalist movements, Talbot (1991) concludes that they are due to the fact that the majority of Hindus regard the state as endlessly favoring the minorities' interests at the expense of their own, whereas the minorities see the state as failing to afford them protection. Therefore the political alienation of the Hindu majority has caused Hindus to respond by supporting militant Hindu organizations. In this case, we can see that even without a coherent organizational form and text, as the material and mental needs arise religions can be politicized into, for example, a Hindu fundamentalism to serve a specific collective function.

¹ Diffused religion is conceived of as a religion having its theology, cults, and personnel so intimately diffused into one or more secular social institutions that they become a part of the concept, rituals, and

In parallel to traditional Hinduism, the faith of the majority in traditional China has neither a fixed organizational form nor a commonly accepted coherent text. The core of the mainstream religions in traditional China is less readily observable than the institutional kind of religion. In terms of “diffused religion,” Yang (1961:294) explains that Chinese mainstream religions are in a pervasive and diffused form. With regard to content, Mou (牟 1995:82) has labeled this diffused kind of Chinese mainstream religion as the “traditional Chinese patriarchal religion”(Ting 2004:65-66).

Indeed, in traditional China, Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism all are just threads of one coherent, mainstream, and diffused kind of “traditional Chinese patriarchal religion.” Yet, officially, the imperial order is still formally maintained by Confucianism, mainly through Confucian mechanisms in the education and examination systems, the rites of heaven worship, and most important, the Confucian ethical codes of *san-gang-wu-chang* (三綱五常, “the three cardinal guides and the five constant virtues”).

Looking at this historical and cultural background, once the majority of Chinese feel the need to renew their cultural tradition, in order to protect their own collective interests and to heal their ethnic alienation, what should they do? How do the majority of Chinese protect their interests and keep hold of their cultural identity? What kinds of cultural symbols could be appropriated and manipulated for specific social and political purposes?

In the previous section we saw Tu’s argument that due to capitalist civilization’s cultural deadlock the restoring of Confucianism is either functionally necessary or historically inevitable. However, this kind of revitalization of Confucianism, colored by a highbrow intellectual expectation, without paying too much attention to the mass-based, grassroots, local Confucian effervescences, sounds inadequate.

In this paper, I will turn the focus to the mass level. If fundamentalism is a kind of popular cultural response to modernity, and if certain historical conditions are sufficient to elicit mass-based grassroots fundamentalism, then maybe this general category of fundamentalism really can be applied to China’s religious tradition. However, we also expect that, due to China’s special social and cultural configuration, the ambiguous feeling of Confucianism toward spiritual practices, and the complicated relationship

structure of the latter, thus having no significant independent existence (see Yang 1961:294-295)

among different cultural agents within the field of cultural hegemony in China, fundamentalism in China may have its own special forms. It is worthwhile for us to examine and reflect on these issues a further.

Here, I choose the case of the I-Kuan Tao (see Seiwert 2003:427), currently the largest sectarian group in Taiwan (an updated yet underestimated official figure shows that in 1995, the I-Kuan Tao in Taiwan had approximately 942,000 members; see *Statistical Abstract of the Interior of the Republic of China 1996*:117), to explore these issues. We can label the I-Kuan Tao as cultural fundamentalism in the modern world arena, in which local people use the fundamentalist package as the solution for each individual's life problems and as a strategy to construct the collective's renewed identity. Through a study on the development of a popular sectarian group, the I-Kuan Tao in Taiwan, we may shed light on what the cultural trajectory of fundamentalism actually looks like within a locality embedded with Chinese culture.

3. A Brief History of the I-Kuan Tao and One of Its Divisions, Fa-Yi -Chong-De

The development of the I-Kuan Tao in Taiwan is complicated and multifarious. Different divisions operate separately. This separation is partially due to its previous long-term illegal status, during which each division operated skillfully in its own local domain to escape from governmental intervention. Another reason for the disunity is that after the modern founder Zhang Tian Ran's early death in 1947 (at age 58) the whole group split up. Now in Taiwan more than 30 divisions exist separately without any strong base for further unification.

However, all divisions have similar texts, doctrines, rituals, and etiquette's. This is because the I-Kuan Tao's eighteenth patriarch Zhang Tian Ran provided coherent guidelines for doctrines, daily ritual practices, and organizational management. After his death, all divisions followed these principles. These guidelines can be found in Zhang's books *Temporary Tao Etiquette* and *Questions and Answers on the I-Kuan Tao*, which offer a coherent doctrine and simplified manuals for ritual practices, and these standardized guidelines played a crucial role in the I-Kuan Tao's later rapid growth.

To join the I-Kuan Tao, one must pass through a special initiation ritual. Jordon and

Overmyer (1986) have already documented this in detail. As the organization's boundary is exclusive, one can participate in a division's activities only once she or he has already initiated into the group.

No division is willing to tolerate a follower joining two or more divisions at the same time. For this reason, I temporarily have no choice but to conduct my intensively participatory observation on only one division. In the current study, my direct data was collected from a division called Fa-Yi-Chong-De (發一崇德, "Promote Oneness and Exalt Virtues"), a division descended from another main division, Fa-Yi. However, my discussion will be supplemented by the information and publications obtained from other divisions.

Inheriting doctrines and practices from Chinese sectarian movements since the Ming dynasty (A.D. 1368-1644), the recent creation of the I-Kuan Tao can be traced to its fifteenth patriarch, Wang Jue Yi (王覺一; 1821-1886). However, its rapid development was generated by Eighteenth Patriarch Zhang Tian Ran (張天然; 1889-1947).

The Fa-Yi division originated from the Tong Xing (同興) Temple in Tianjin (天津), China. In 1948, the leader of Tong Xing Temple, Grand Senior Elder (*Lao Qian Ren* 老前人, "emeritus division head") Han Yu Lin (韓雨霖; 1901-1995) led several senior elders (*qian ren* 前人, "division heads") to Taiwan to propagate the I-Kuan Tao. Currently, there are 11 divisions that derived from the Fa-Yi group. Among them, the Fa-Yi-Chong-De, in which I participate, is the division with the most widespread growth in the Fa-Yi.

The Fa-Yi-Chong-De is led by Chen Hong Zhen (陳鴻珍; b. 1923). She arrived in Taiwan from Tianjian in 1946. She established Chong-Xiu (崇修) Temple in the tow of Douliu (斗六) as the headquarters of the Fa-Yi-Chong-De. In 1970, Chen Hong Zhen began to propagate the I-Kuan Tao to college students, especially those emigrating from rural areas to attend college in urbans area. Focusing on how to spread religious faith through college students' daily activities and interpersonal network, Chen Hong Zhen generated a new form of missionary practice, the "vegetarian assembly" (*huo shi tuan* 伙食團). It is usually set in the form of people sharing apartment rent and cooking vegetarian food by rotation, thus a small community of vegetarians can be a ground base

for spreading the I-Kuan Tao to college students. In this way, the Fa-Yi-Chong-De has become the one subdivision that has attracted more young intellectuals than any other I-Kuan Tao division..

Since 1976, the Fa-Yi-Chong-De has spread to overseas, and it now have branches across five continents.

In Communist China, the I-Kuan Tao has never received legalized status. In Taiwan, the I-Kuan Tao was not legalized until 1987. Both in 1953 and 1963, the KMT (Kuomintang, “Nationalist Party”) government initiated a major campaign to ban the I-Kuan Tao’s spread. However, a legal ban can prohibit the I-Kuan Tao’s public activities yet it cannot prevent the existence and gradual spread of the organization. In 1987, martial law was lifted. Several months before the lifting, the I-Kuan Tao got governmental recognition as legally registered religion. The reason behind this is that in facing a legitimacy crisis, the KMT desperately needed the I-Kuan Tao’s help to mobilize and solicit votes.

Even with the constant confrontation between the I-Kuan Tao and the central government, the I-Kuan Tao always claims its superceding legitimacy in embodying the real mandate of heaven.² The I-Kuan Tao holds the perspective that history has already passed through the eras of the Green Sun and the Red Sun and is now in the era of the White Sun. The cosmology and salvational scheme in the I-Kuan Tao follows the idea of “the Three Eschatological Periods,” which presumes the Third Eschatological Period is the coming of the White Sun’s era. This era is not only the last chance for salvation but also the most graceful one.

In this last salvation, the Eternal Primordial Mother (Wu sheng lao mu 無生老母) has already opened the door for universal salvation. Ji-Gong (濟公, a historical legendary figure or deity in Chinese folklore) at this time comes down from heaven to do the job of “collecting all the souls who are getting lost” (*shou yuan* 收圓). That is, now all sentinel

² In Chinese tradition, since the Zhou dynasty, the “mandate of heaven” has meant that the ruler received his mandate directly from heaven, whereby his rule was legitimized and at the same time made subject to certain limitations. It was the task of the ruler to recognize the signs of heavenly wrath and heavenly approval and act accordingly (Fischer-Schreiber 1996: 184-185). Later this concept was extended to refer not only to change of dynasties, but also to become a benchmark for current events. Therefore, anything that happens in history can be judged from the criterion of “mandate of heaven,” that is, whether the action is legitimately endorsed by heaven or not.

beings can go back to paradise. Ji-Gong in this life has reincarnated as the eighteenth patriarch of the I-Kuan Tao. Even though the Eighteenth Patriarch Zhang Tian Ran passed away in 1947, it is believed that the mandate of heaven, or the Tao Lineage, now is transmitted to the human realm. The leaders of each division in the I-Kuan Tao, called senior elders, theoretically all are entrusted with this mandate of heaven.

Today, we can see that despite the development of high technology, disasters all over the world, according to the I-Kuan Tao, certainly show the sign of doomsday approaching. Therefore, everybody should be in a hurry to link to the mandate of heaven to get the last chance of being saved.

With regard to the I-Kuan Tao's attitude toward traditional texts, on the very surface, it may look contradictory. On the one hand, most of the in-group activities in the I-Kuan Tao are about reading and learning the Chinese classical scriptures. On the other hand, the organization always emphasizes that we should not stick too much to the literal meanings of texts. Besides, the I-Kuan Tao sometimes alters the words in the Classics, and it even often generates new scriptures. More about this issue later.

As we mentioned above, to be a follower of the I-Kuan Tao, one needs to pass through a secret initiation ritual (see Jordan and Overmyer 1986:222-236), that is, a process of gaining "the Three Treasures" (*San Bao* 三寶). The Three Treasures include the Holy Gate, Holy Mantra, and Holy Sign (Lin 2003: 8-33).

The Holy Gate means that during the initiation ceremony the so-called enlightening master or initiator (*dian chung shi* 點傳師) points out a place between a follower's two eyes that may lead the follower to a bright, enlightening path. This path is the narrow gate leading one back to heaven, enabling one to transcend the cycles of birth and death.

The Holy Mantra has five words, which are believed to have the utmost value and mystery in leading one to heaven. It is a powerful bond between one's inner true self and the heavenly world (Lin 2003:19). The first three words of the mantra represent the three represents the three different levels of the cosmic order, and the last two signify the Maitreya Buddha, who is believed to be the Savior in the Third Eschatological Period.

The Holy Sign, or Holy Covenant, is a special hand gesture, which symbolically represents humans' unification with the whole universe. It also signifies a holy promise to God (Lin 2003:27).

The I-Kuan Tao postulates that we need to cultivate ourselves in two manners, through internal merits (*neigong* 内功) and through external merits (*waigong* 外功). Whereas internal merits require cultivating one's internal virtue, external merits require one to engage in doing goods for other people or society in general.

Institutionally, there are two tracks of hierarchy within the I-Kuan Tao. One is by the division of labor based upon missionary activities, from low to high: common followers, lecturer, hall chairman, initiator (or enlightening master), senior elder and so forth. The other track is by the level of training one has received, depending on what training courses one has accomplished. Each course lasts for one year, and from beginner to advanced level they are: class for being a new person (*xinmin* 新民), class for achieving perfection (*zhishan* class 至善), class for nourishing virtues (*peide* class 培德), class for practicing virtues (*xingde* class 行德), class for worshipping virtues (*chongde* class 崇德), and class for becoming a lecturer. These courses across different levels cover basically three kinds of materials: the classical scriptures, procedures for ritual practices, and wisdom and philosophy for everyday life.

Since the very beginning, the religious teachings of the I-Kuan Tao have effectively stimulated its followers to be enthusiastically involved in missionary activities. The campaign is based upon the following interrelated statements: (1) the third and also the last eschatological period is coming, and if one wants to be saved, it is the last yet also the most graceful chance; (2) therefore, it is necessary to let everyone understand that this historical urgency is coming, thus there may be more people to be saved; and (3) most importantly then, since everyone can and should take the responsibility of a missionary job, each follower becomes an indispensable member of the missionary network. This of course, may enhance a follower's willingness to learn more about the religious teachings and then also may enhance his or her self-expectation and self-pride.

In short, the I-Kuan Tao is a religious group with a highly participatory character. Although not every follower in the I-Kuan Tao shares the eagerness of a missionary, once a follower is involved in this democratic missionary network, he or she may easily develop a strong sense of participation as well as an unequivocal sense of religious identity.

4. Cultural Fundamentalism in the I-Kuan Tao

4.1. *The Scriptures Appropriated and Studied in the Fa-Yi -Chong-De Division*

As the group that claims to be exclusively connected to the Tao Lineage, the I-Kuan Tao has extreme respect for Chinese classical scriptures. It established hierarchical levels of studies on the classical scriptures and generated various programs, even competitions, to promote the learning and recitation of scriptures. It takes the literal meanings of classical scriptures seriously, for they are the guidelines for self-cultivation, personal interaction, political management, and so forth. In this sense, the I-Kuan Tao does take a stance very close to fundamentalism, which presumes an eternal truth behind the specific scriptures and wants to engage in reintegrating current social and political situations by these perennial philosophies and moral precepts.

However, at the same time, we see that the I-Kuan Tao continually generates new scriptures and even sometime alters the sequences and words of classical scriptures. How do we perceive this discrepancy in the I-Kuan Tao's attitude toward classical scriptures? And to what extent can we still say that the I-Kuan Tao belongs to one member of the fundamentalist family of the modern world?

Before a further analysis, we should have a primary review on the scriptures of the I-Kuan Tao. Under limited space, we only concentrate on one division, the Fa-YiChong-De, however, the practices and core texts of all divisions basically are derived from the same sources, of Eighteenth Patriarch Zhang Tian Ran's design, and there are no large differences among them. The only differences come from the newly revealed texts generated by spirit writing. More about this issue later.

The scriptures in the Fa-Yi-Chong-De can be used both as reading materials and as some of the sacred items appearing in the ritual settings.

First, we will look at the ritual settings. The ceremonies in the Fa-Yi-Chong-De include daily and monthly rites, initiation rites, rites for special memorial days, and so forth.

For these ritual occasions, several scriptures appear, either as icons for worship or as manuals for procedure instruction. The first is the *Temporary Tao Etiquette and Questions* (by Eighteenth Patriarch Zhang), which regulates the procedures and occasions of all rites and ceremonies in the I-Kuan Tao. As for the second and third, within the worship hall,

by the two sides of the main altar, on each side wall hangs a framed short scripture facing out into the room. One is the I-Kuan Tao's self-generated scripture, *The Purpose of Tao*, which totals only 108 Chinese characters; the other is the classic *The Age of Grand Commonality* (*Li Yun Da Tong Pian* 禮運大同篇), which totals only 107 Chinese characters. The former is a short text coming from Master Zhang's book *Answers on I-Kuan Tao*, which summarizes how Tao followers should behave. The latter is a passage from the classics the *Record of Rites* (*Liji* 禮記). *The Age of Grand Commonality* is one of the most celebrated texts in Confucian literature and has traditionally been taken as representing Confucius' highest ideal for a harmonious social order. The idealized social order, the Grand Commonality (*Datong* 大同), is the age in which the world was shared by all people (*tianxia wei gong* 天下為公; see de Bary & Bloom 1999:342-343).

Another two short scriptures, which are well bound in hardcover, are placed on each side of the altar. One the right side is an elaborated version (see below) of *The Purpose of Tao*, and on the left side is a scripture from folk tradition, the *True Scripture of the Peach Garden Holy Emperor Kuan Who Illuminates the Sacred* (*Tao Yuan Ming Sheng Jing* 桃園明聖經). Both of them were generated by spirit writing.

The former text was generated between 1985 and 1992, collected from 28 occasions of the spirit-writing ceremony. The spirit-writing texts in the I-Kuan Tao are called *xunwen* (訓文), which literally means “instruction texts,” or “revelational texts.” The later *xunwen* version of *The Purpose of Tao* has 21,148 Chinese characters, in which is embedded the original ext of *The Purpose of Tao*. This kind of “text embedded in text” in *I-Kuan Tao* has been called *xunzhongxun* (訓中訓), or “revelation embedded in revelation.”

The other scripture positioned on the altar, the *True Scripture of the Peach Garden Holy Emperor Kuan Who Illuminates the Sacred*, is a folk spirit-writing text already popular before the formation of the I-Kuan Tao. The contents of the scripture propagate those Confucian moral precepts such as filial piety, loyalty, respecting elders, and so forth. Due to the fact that the Fa-Yi division's founder, Grand Senior Elder Han was cured by merits accumulated through patronizing the publishing of this scripture, this scripture was elevated to be the core scripture worshiped by all Fa-Yi followers.

Besides being used in these ritual settings, the scriptures are used for studying most of the Fa-Yi-Cong-De's collective activities. As mentioned before, there is a series of training sessions from bottom level to advanced level. The learning of scripture is a main part of these courses. The scriptures come from several sources: (1) the classical scriptures from Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism; (2) scriptures generated by patriarchs and senior elders of the I-Kuan Tao; and (3) new scriptures generated by spirit writing or channeling.

The core texts in the list of the classical scriptures of the I-Kuan Tao can be seen from the recent I-Kuan Tao Scripture Reciting Competition. This contest was held in 2005 by all main I-Kuan Tao divisions together, in commemorating the I-Kuan Tao's 100th anniversary. It took place in Taipei in the form of an international platform for a scripture reciting competition, with a total participation of more than 50,000 people, coming from all over the world.

In the reading list for this contest, in the reading list, there are both required and optional scriptures for reciting. The required scriptures are all very short texts, including: (1). *The Purpose of Tao* by the I-Kuan Tao's own patriarch; (2) *The Age of Grand Commonality*, from the *Record of Rites*, a Confucian text ; (3) the Heart Sutra, a Buddhist text; (4) *Scripture in which the Supreme Lord Lao Explains Perpetual Purity and Serenity* (太上老君清靜經), from Taoism; and (5) *The True Scripture of Maitreya's Relieving the Distressed*. (彌勒救苦真經), which is a short text generated spirit writing in the I-Kuan Tao in 1926, totals 514 characters, and represents the folk myth of the Three Eschatological Periods in a simplified form. Each of these five scriptures is just under 1,000 Chinese characters.

Optional texts for this scriptures-reciting competition (a competitor could choose either one or two texts with which to enter the contest) are the Confucian Four Books----the *Analects* (*Lun Yu* 論語), the *Book of Mencius* (*Meng Zi* 孟子), the *Great Learning* (*Da Xue* 大學), and the *Doctrine of the Mean* (*Zhong Yong* 中庸)----the Taoist *Tao De Jing* (道德經), and two Buddhist texts--the Diamond Sutra and the Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch.

Here we should emphasize that, within the Four Books used by the I-Kuan Tao, the versions of the *Great Learning* and the *Doctrine of the Mean*, are not the commonly

known Zhu Xi (朱熹) versions; rather, they are versions generated by spirit writing, entitled, respectively, *Testimony and Interpretation of the Great Learning (Da Xue Zheng Shi 大學證釋)* and *Testimony and Interpretation of the Doctrine of the Mean (Zhong Yong Zheng Shi 中庸證釋)*.

According to Zhong (2000:17-21), the *Testimony and Interpretation of the Great Learning* and *Testimony and Interpretation of the Doctrine of the Mean* were generated by spirit writing in a religious sect called the New Salvation Sect (救世新教) around the 1920s. The spirits descending to produce these two texts included Confucius, Mencius, Yan Hui (顏回), Zeng Zi (曾子), Zi Si (子思), Lu Dong Bin (呂洞賓), and so forth. The spirit-writing versions of the *Great Learning* and the *Doctrine of the Mean* alter the structures, words sequences, and contents of the versions once edited by Zhu Xi. The spirit-writing version of the *Great Learning* now has 11 chapters instead of Zhu Xi's 10 chapters. The new version of the *Doctrine of the Mean* now has 9 paragraphs and no chapters, unlike Zhu Xi version with 33 chapters.

Due to the limitation of space, we do not have the chance to list all of the differences between the Zhu Xi version and the spirit-writing version. But it is extremely interesting to notice that for any changes appearing in the newer version of the texts deities or saint-spirits have descended to explain the changes and they sometimes have even expressed their regrets for mistakes appearing in the previous version.

For example, the first paragraph of the Zhu Xi-edited version of the *Great Learning* is: "What the Great Learning teaches, is---to illustrate illustrious virtue; to renovate the people; and to rest in the highest excellence." (大學之道，在明明德，在親民，在止於至善, see translation in Legge 1960 1:356-357). Now, the spirit-writing version is: "What the Great Learning teaches, is---to illustrate illustrious virtue; *to treat relatives with affection* [emphasis mine]; to renovate the people; and to rest in the highest excellence." (大學之道，在明明德，在親親，在新民，在止於至善).

After this change, the spirit of Confucius soon descended and said:

So the Tao of the Great Learning now is completed. The Confucian doctrines

transmitted by saints are also completed now. It is very important for us to know this. Later generations missed out the character *qin* [親 “familiarity”] and the two characters “to renovate the people” [*zai xin* 在新]. Although Zhu Xi cited the *Kang Gao* [康誥, a classical history book] “to renovate the people.” to interpret the word *qin* [familiarity] as *xin* [to renovate] is quite inspiring and creative, yet it misses out the real meaning of “treating the people with affection” and thus cannot make Confucianism complete. (*Testimony and Interpretation of the Great Learning* 2002 : 37)

Any real fundamentalists certainly may be amazed by the above paragraph’s idea that even the classical scriptures could be revised by descending spirits.

In the preface of the spirit-writing version of the the *Great Learning*, Yan Hui descends and says:

Confucius this time comes to testify and interpret the *Great Learning*. Mistakes should be corrected. These mistakes have been wrongly followed for a long time; people have already failed to understand the real meaning behind [them]. Confucius takes serious this problem, and wants to correct it, as well as to expound it in more detail. The previous version and current version will be compared side by side. Thus the true meaning can be clarified (*Testimony and Interpretation of the Great Learning* 2002: 28)

In the postscript of the spirit-writing version of the *Great Learning*, the spirit of Zhu Xi even comes down and says:

I was foolish before. Now I come down together with the spirit of Confucius. Once [I] listened to his teaching, I was enlightened. This moment was so great and never happened before. Those who have a chance to learn the lesson admire it very much, as well as are inspired. When I was alive in the human realm, I studied scriptures and looked for teachers. Yet many things in the Classics I couldn’t understand. Even though I worked very hard, there was still a gap between the saints and me. Many years passed, [but] I still did not catch it [the essence of Tao]. Now in the current magnificent gathering, saints instruct me. I get the chance to know saints’ real

intents behind the scriptures....In the past, I exerted myself to explain those things I did not understand, thus missing out on all the essences. Now thinking about these things, I so regret and feel deeply guilt about my past. (*Testimony and Interpretation of the Great Learning* 2002: 220)

Therefore, this is to say that Zhu Xi admitted his annotation of the *Great Learning* was not accurate at all, either in the interpretation or in the way of paragraph division. His version of the *Great Learning* cannot shed light on the real intents of the saints. Now only the spirit-writing version the *Great Learning* appropriated by the I-Kuan Tao, can reveal the truth approved by all these great saints.

Besides the scriptures coming from the classical in Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism, in the I-Kuan Tao there remains another vast category of scriptures, the spirit-writing texts, or the revelation texts, the so-called *xunwen* (訓文). Revelation texts usually are generated during the important collective rites, in which deities descend to give lessons for the rites' participants. Mediums can produce the spirit writing through either oral or written communication.

In the Fa-Yi -Chong-De division, parts of the revealed texts coming from Ji Gong, also the eighteenth patriarch's incarnated deity, have been collected into a series of pamphlets collectively called the *Bright Wisdom* (光明的智慧). This text has become the most updated scriptures for the Fa-Yi -Chong-De. The contents of the *Bright Wisdom* cover issues about ways of self-cultivation, life philosophy, emotion management, and so forth. During the training sessions, the *Bright Wisdom* texts are part of the core reading for followers.

One form of the revealed texts, the *xunzhongxun* mentioned above are something like crossword puzzles in which intersecting sentences are hidden within the revealed article. Because the revealed texts are generated spontaneously, it seems impossible to consciously insert such meaningful phrases or sentences within the texts. The result thus embodies the true magical effects coming from deities. The above-mentioned main scripture of the Fa-Yi division, the elaborated version of *The Purpose of Tao*, was generated in a form of *xunzhongxun*, in which 108 Chinese characters are embedded in a longer article totaling 21,148 characters. In the long process of creating this version of *The Purpose of Tao*, 3 years, 15 locations, 28 settings of collective rituals, and 13 deities

were involved.

4.2. The I-Kuan Tao's Attitude toward Scripture

Within the global political context, under the pressure of globalization and modernity, people may appeal to an absolute and sacred authority to counteract external forces. Usually the religions with the revelational scriptures have a higher probability of this fundamentalist response breaking out, because in the revelational tradition, the revelational texts can be more easily appropriated as an absolute base to revitalize further social and political practices.

Thinking about the I-Kuan Tao sect, it does look like a revelational kind of religion. Although the sacred messages come from not only one but various deities sources, the magical revealed texts have been taken as absolute and unquestionable sources of sacred authority. The form of the texts, such as the *xunzhongxun* itself has been proved to be magical; without deities' direct involvement, there is no way of creating this kind of sacred texts. Whereas with regard to the Classics, in the I-Kuan Tao it is also believed that although these Classics may not have been written by deities' spirits, yet at least they were written by saints, who actually attained the highest mental state, that of enlightenment, that any spirit being could possibly reach.

Nevertheless, comparing the I-Kuan Tao to monotheist revelational religions such as Christianity and Islam, some noteworthy differences should be pointed out.

Even without referring to the obvious distinction between monotheism and polytheism, two things in the *I-Kuan Tao* are already in great contrast with most fundamentalism in other areas: (1) For the god or deities behind the revealed texts, there is a still higher and ultimate authority behind them. This authority, say Tao, has the characters of being imminently interpenetrable to everything around it. Therefore, the wills of gods are conditioned by this Tao and cannot be arbitrary. (2) The relation between human beings and gods is both a continuing and mutually discernible. That is, a person can attain the status of deity during the personal journey of self-cultivation and moral endeavor, as well as can sense and communicate with the deities' intentions any time if he or she has a purified mind. Therefore, deities and people are always interacting

and have the potential of mutually transforming.

With regard to the issue of theism, indeed, the I-Kuan Tao has evolved into a religion with an appearance of monotheism, having the Eternal Primordial Mother as the sole supreme deity for people's eternal salvation. However, because this new system evolved from traditional folk religion, it still recognizes the already existing folk deities and the hierarchical relations among these deities, thus this new system still sharply contrasts with a typical monotheist system, in which the authority of God is in conflict with any other sources of authority.

In the I-Kuan Tao's system of "deities/Tao/ heaven," these three all can be referred to as the entities embodying with the ultimate truth. Although ordinary people could possibly reach this ultimate truth, however, an enlightened master's or spiritual saint's mediated role would be crucial. This mediated role can function either through the initiation ritual's mystical transmission of Tao or through text writing to reveal the hidden truth, therefore making the ultimate truth more accessible to ordinary people.

Within the "deities/Tao/heaven" triumvirate, the dynamics of Tao are pivotal. Tao is omnipresent, penetrating into government, community, family, personal cultivation, and so forth. Tao is the rather dynamic and invisible principle within the human and natural realm, not like a deity or heaven that can be referred to as a visible and specific entity.

Since Tao is an omnipresent and dynamic principle, a fixed designation cannot confine its essence and mechanisms. Therefore, if one only focuses on worshipping a specific deity or reading a limited pool of scriptures, according to the principle of Tao, one may risk not only binding oneself in a fragmentary and biased understanding of the truth, but also one may be actually totally missing the point. For this reason, from the very beginning, the *I-Kuan Tao* always claimed itself to be a "Tao" rather than a "religion" (*jiao* 教), because it believes that any kind of fixed arrangement, either in doctrine or organization, is bound to circumscribe and restrict the dynamics of Tao.

Since Tao is omnipresent and beyond social hierarchy, anyone can embody this Tao. This immanent nature of Tao makes it so that no one can monopolize Tao. However, presumably there is a Tao Lineage, in which some historical figures had embodied Tao and transmitted Tao. It is believed that this Tao Lineage manifests either in wise and virtuous emperors or in the saints and profound persons who can really

appreciate Tao. The latter, since they do not have real political power and thus may be free from the danger of corruption, may embody a purer state of Tao. To this sense, Tao's embodiment is not only beyond social hierarchy but also may actually reveal itself much more in those people without governmental position. For example, in terms of Zhu Xi's (朱熹) construction of the Tao Lineage, even though his intention was not exactly to create a religion, in his depiction of this Tao Lineage, he showed it starting from the legendary political figures Yao (堯), Shun (舜), Yu (禹), Tang (湯), Wen (文), Wu (武), and the Duke of Zhou(周公), then in later transmissions of this Tao Lineage Confucius and Mencius are added as nonpolitical figures.

At least until Mencius in this Tao Lineage succession, Zhu Xi's construction has been accepted by all of the I-Kuan Tao divisions.

Furthermore, in the I-Kuan Tao's own words, to link this Tao Lineage with the current social context, an argument about recent historical development has been elaborated: 13-14):

In the very distant past, there was no differentiation between “emperor” and “teacher”---- all bore the mandate of heaven. This means that there were two kinds of authority, authority to govern people and authority to educate people. Later, politics and education differentiated. The mandate of heaven could confer to either the emperor or the teacher. Such was the great virtuosity of Confucius; he was not an emperor yet bore the mandate of heaven. His mandate of heaven was to be a saint and to be the model of a great teacher....

The greatly virtuous people would bear the mandate of heaven. Neither “emperor” nor “teacher” could monopolize this mandate of heaven. The “emperor” could be an emperor only on a very short term, yet the great teacher would be commemorated by later generations over a long period of time....

Once the teachers could not bear the great responsibility of education, the mandate of heaven would be conveyed to ordinary people. History now is fated to this new direction. (Lee & Lin 1992:13-14)

The I-Kuan Tao's own characterization of this Tao Lineage thus shows that the great tradition now has already been transmitted to the ordinary people. Why? Because of the Westernization, the emperors are gone, and Confucian intellectuals were replaced by Westernized technicians and scholars. Now only ordinary people are left to bear this Tao Lineage and mandate of heaven. The quotation at the beginning of this current paper also has shown that, under recent historical disturbance, I-Kuan Tao members found out their legitimacy and responsibility to embody as well as to spread Tao. Before this, the responsibility and legitimacy never had fallen on commoners.

Another interesting question is: When appropriating Chinese classical scriptures as its main texts, why does the I-Kuan Tao still need to revise and reedit the scriptures, and even have Zhu Xi's descending to confess his own mistakes in reorganizing the Four Books? May this stance be sharply at odds with the orientation of fundamentalism?

Here, we may say that the classical Confucian scriptures, within the circle of Chinese Confucian intellectuals in earlier time, had not yet been embedded with strong religious tenets. Then, after the Tang (A.D.618-907) and Song (A.D. 960-1279) dynasties, there was a big switch in Confucian intellectuals' interpretation of traditional scriptures. The so-called Second Epoch of the Confucian Way, where there was a "creative response to the Buddhist and Taoist challenge and an imaginative reinterpretation and re-appropriation of classical Confucian insights," began a new path of Confucianism. This Neo-Confucian path, as represented by Zhou Dun-I (周敦頤), Zhang Zai (張載), Cheng Hao(程顥), Cheng Yi(程頤), Zhu Xi(朱熹) and Lu Xiang Shan(陸象山), takes an anthropocosmic vision of Confucianism (Tu 1993:167-177). Zhu Xi's restructuring the priority of the Confucian scriptural tradition by placing the Four Books (*Si Shu* 四書) above the Five Classics (*Wu Jing* 五經) and giving the Four Books a particular sequence—the Great Learning, the Analects, *the Book of Mencius*, and *the Doctrine of the Mean*—was especially crucial (Tu 2003:174).

This Second Epoch of the Confucian Way not only redirected Confucianism into an anthropocosmic vision emphasizing a process of self-transformation together with its cosmic connectedness, but it also gave Confucianism a perspective very close to that of religion.

Zhu Xi's construction of the Tao Lineage, this act itself, already shows a sign of a

creative shift, in order to give Confucianism a parallel appearance to Buddhism's religious patriarch lineage.

However, after all, the Second Epoch of the Confucian Way only made Confucianism more anthropocosmic rather than making it a religion in which spiritual beings may interact with the human realm. Regarding this, a revising of traditional Confucian scriptures and an appeal to deities' descending thus may enhance the "Second Epoch of the Confucian Way into a religious template.

In this sense, without checking in detail the textual differences between Zhu Xi's version of the *Great Learning* or the *Doctrine of the Mean* and the I-Kuan Tao's versions, it is already enough for us to notice that, since Zhu Xi's anthropocosmic view of Confucianism still greatly departs from a supernaturalized version of Confucianism, therefore for the general populace a new version of the scriptures, supported by the deities' descending to rectify the texts, under Chinese cultural contexts and at the current historical moment, is crucial and necessary. The actual internal mechanisms involved in the process of generating a newly revised version of the classics at least includes what follows:

1. To create a grassroots fundamentalism in Chinese tradition, the first step is to push the classical scriptures, especially Confucian scriptures, into a revelational kind of text. After this, the great Chinese cultural tradition, following the Second Epoch of the Confucian Way's anthropocosmic shift, can be transformed further into a new assembly with immanent needs for both personal salvation and collective cultural identity.

2. After accepting the new form of the Classics, which are backed up by the deities' approval at the current historical moment, whether psychologically or physically, the traditional classical texts immediately are conjoined to the present time frame and world arena and thus have an up-dated connectedness.

- 3 A new footstep coming from descending deities also renews and reaffirms the linkage between deities/Tao/heaven and human beings, thereby recharging people's religious faith and engagement.

4. As the traditional classical texts are open to all of the general public, a renewed version of the texts, although it may present a sectarian boundary to the readers, yet also stimulates an exclusive kind of feeling. That is, as the previous Classics actually were too diffused to be appropriated as a base for fundamentalist response, reformed texts with specific deities' revealed codes may make Chinese cultural tradition both inclusive and exclusive at the same time and thus can possibly stimulate further bounded engagements and coagulate collective identity under a broader and more diffused kind of cultural background.

4.3. The Construction of Dispensationalism to Substantiate Cultural Fundamentalism

One important element of Christian fundamentalism is the concept of “dispensationalism.” It was the fruit of renewed interest in the details of biblical prophecy, which developed after the American Civil War (Marsden 1991:39-41). Dispensationalism is a conceptual overview and interpretive framework for understanding the overall flow of the Bible. It teaches biblical history as a number of successive economies or administrations under God known as “dispensations.” In the Christian tradition, the idea of dispensationalism posits that the Bible explained all historical change through a pattern of seven dispensations, or eras. In each of these dispensations God tested humanity through a different plan of salvation. Humans failed each test, and each era ended in a catastrophic divine judgment (Marsden 1991:40).

According to the above schema, we live in the sixth era and are heading toward catastrophe and divine intervention. Finally, after a tumultuous seven years of wars and calamities, Jesus will establish a literal kingdom in Jerusalem and reign for a thousand years (Marsden 1991:40).

In Protestant fundamentalism, the construction of dispensationalism is crucial. Dispensationalists show us that historical manifestations strictly follow the Scripture, thus linking the fundamentalist attitude with actual historical development. This linkage both revitalizes the scripture and transforms people's daily life. After inserting a dispensationalist

interpretation into scriptures, fundamentalism enhances an even stronger future orientation and gets a firmer motivational base for missionary activities.

In predicting the coming of the future savior, dispensationalism implies a pessimistic attitude toward the current historical moment. Marsden (1991:41) argued that:

Dispensationalism itself was strikingly antimodernist. In many respects it looked like the mirror image of modernism. Modernism was optimistic about modern culture; dispensationalism was pessimistic. Most importantly, each centered around an interpretation of the relation of the Bible to history. Modernism interpreted the Bible through the lens of human history. Dispensationalists interpreted history exclusively through the lens of Scripture. Where modernism stressed the naturalistic, seeing social forces as being crucial to understand religion, dispensationalists accentuated the supernatural, making divine intervention the direct solution to the modern problem of explaining historical change.

This antimodernist attitude behind dispensationalism of course means that as the chance arises it may further evolve into antimodernist acts.

Here, dispensationalism may not derive directly from the literal truth of a scripture. It needs some further interpretation of the scriptural text to manifest the evolutionary secrets and the concrete historical codes behind the text. Yet its approach, in claiming total loyalty to the instruction of scriptural revelations, and being willing to sacrifice all temporal gratification for an eternal salvation, is fundamentalism. We can say that dispensationalism is an implicit fundamentalism, in the format of staying close to the literal truth of the scripture. However, some further interpretation and constructions to accompany the scripture are necessary in order to make current history perceivable through the lens of the revealed texts.

Indeed, orthodox Confucianism has never been a prophetic tradition. Confucius and his disciples never claimed to have received a revelation from above. They did not consider themselves privy to divine secrets (Renard 2002:462).

However, Chinese sectarian groups for their own special needs may renew those Confucian classical scriptures by juxtaposing the descending spirits of the ancient saints and

arranging those scriptures in newer chapter sequences, thereby revitalizing those classical scriptures in a new revelational forms, as in the case of the I-Kuan Tao.

Here again, something very close to the Christian fundamentalist idea of dispensationalism has been introduced into the I-Kuan Tao, which substantiates Chinese fundamentalism with both a definite historical time frame and a perceivable salvific schema.

Two dispensationalist constructions could be found in the I-Kuan Tao. The most salient one is the idea of the Three Eschatological Periods, which presumes that the Third Eschatological Period, the White Sun Period is coming. Another is the construction of a system of apostolic succession (Jordan & Overmyer 1986:289-292), in which the mandate of heaven is represented in a more monopolistic yet populist form. The construction of both are mutually corresponding as well as reinforcing.

The idea of the Three Eschatological Periods, of course, was already a long sectarian tradition found in Chinese lands. This idea was borrowed for the first time from the Buddhist idea of *kalpas* (in Chinese, *jie* 劫) and later was appropriated by the White Lotus Society (Bai Lian Jiao 白蓮教) in the Song dynasty. We see that the White Lotus Society had already postulated that, to save humanity, the great goddess would send buddhas down to earth to teach a salvific morality to her wayward children. Human beings being “steeped in wickedness,” however, their salvation required repeated efforts. She sent down, in succession, the Lamp-Lighting Buddha (Randengfo 燃燈佛) and Sakyamuni Buddha (Shijiamonifo 釋迦牟尼佛). Yet each could save only some of her children, leaving most of humanity still benighted. The salvation of the remainder would be undertaken by a third and final god, Buddha Maitreya (Milefo 彌勒佛). (Chang, 2004:52) .

Now, following this traditional schema, the I-Kuan Tao claims that its seventeenth patriarch Lu Zhong Yi (路中一; 1849-1925) was the incarnation of the Maitreya. So since Lu, the third and last eschatological period already has been activated.

The other dispensationalist construction in the I-Kuan Tao, is the I-Kuan Tao’s newly generated schema of apostolic succession. Although different divisions of the I-Kuan Tao provide slightly different variants for this schema, yet all of them came from the same source: the catechism book *Questions and Answers on I-Kuan Tao* written by the I-Kuan

Tao's eighteenth patriarch Zhang Tian Ran. In the book, one question asks about the Heritage of Tao. Within the answer all of the patriarchs of the I-Kuan Tao have been listed, starting from the beginning of the earth to now. Some of the most interesting parts (Zhang Tian Ran 1988[1937]:89-91) are cited below:

The first saint of mankind was Fu Xi Shi [伏羲氏]....This was the beginning of the descending-from-heaven Tao....From Fu Xi Shi until Duke Zhou [周公] was the Green Sun period. It was the period of the God-descended-from-heaven Tao, onto admirable rulers who governed the world with Tao according to God's will. This Tao was manifested externally yet was transmitted continually without interruption.

After King You [幽], the Red Sun Period began and the Heritage of Tao was carried on by scholars. Unlike emperors and kings, who could rule and lead subjects to follow God's will, scholars did not have the authority and could only use teachings based on the truth to inspire people to bring out goodness....Since teachings were carried out by religions, it was a period of spreading Tao by religions. The first three great religions appeared in the world about three thousand years ago, and they were Taoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism....

Confucius conveyed the essence of Tao to Zeng Zi [曾子]. Zheng Zi conveyed it to Zi Si [子思]. Zi Si conveyed it to Mencius.... China was in turmoil.... There wasn't anyone who could continue to carry on the mission of spreading Tao, and the Heritage of Tao ceased to continue in China....

Later, the philosophers Zhou Dun-I, Cheng Yi, Zhang Zai, Zhu Xi, and others began to bring forth the full sense of this "doctrine of an all pervading unity". Through them, the true teachings became prosperous and glorious. Alas! they did not meet with good luck; finally they failed to succeed and preach the Great Tao, because this Great Tao had gone over to the Western regions before the birth of Mencius. Buddhists then transmitted the Tao and began to preach the true teachings. Though the scholars of the Song dynasty appeared in succession, they could do nothing but answer their duties

and chances of explaining and manifesting the principal ideas of the Great Tao....

Since Lord Buddha Shakyamuni [i.e.Gautama, the historical Buddha] converted his first disciple, Patriarch Arya Mahakasyapa, the Great and True teachings were individually imparted to the chosen until the 28th generation. Patriarch Da Mo [Arya Bodhidharma] was the sole recipient of this principle of Truth. He came over to China from the West....

Henceforth the true teachings were transmitted in ranges without any break right up to saint Wang Jue Yi [王覺一], the fifteenth patriarch of the I-Kuan Tao. He transmitted Tao to the saint Liu Qing Xu [劉清虛]. The Red Sun period ended on Liu. Tao then turn to the White Sun period. Buddha Maitreya descended, [who is] the seventeenth patriarch Lu Zhong Yi [路中一], the incarnation of the Maitreya, also the first patriarch of the White Sun Period.

At present, Zhang [張] has succeeded. He sets about to fulfil and complete the last task that was entrusted to him....

As we can see, these saints came to this world as kings, scholars, and commoners to fulfill their missions. In the Green Sun Period [before the Zhou Dynasty B.C.1066], rulers could not lead people by God's will, so the saints descended as kings and emperors to carry on the Tao Lineage. In the Red Sun period (beginning from Zhou Dynasty), rulers couldn't lead people anymore, so the saints descended as scholars to carry on the Tao Lineage. As the influence of religions weakened, the saints descended as secular devotees of Tao to maintain the Tao Lineage. Now that the Last Catastrophe of the White Sun Period is near, ethics and morality have deteriorated extremely. As a result, many catastrophes have occurred. It is an emergency for saving all souls; Tao is made available to all now. After one receives the Heaven's Tao, he or she has the chance to attain Tao and becomes a buddha after the Final Catastrophe of the White Sun Period.

The things most interesting in the above paragraphs are not the detailed dates for each patriarch; actually the gaps between any two patriarchs of this Tao Lineage are often illogical and incomprehensible. Rather, the implications manifested by the Tao Lineage above invite us to reflect on how the I-Kuan Tao successfully builds a dispensationalism for popular religion under this Chinese cultural context.

In this dispensationalism, the mandate of heaven has been transmitted from emperors, to saints, and now to commoners. The Third Eschatological Period started with the I-Kuan Tao's seventeenth patriarch, and now it is the I-Kuan Tao's eighteenth patriarch, Zhang Tian Ran, also the last patriarch, who transmits this mandate of heaven to the human realm.

Furthermore, some most important implications behind this constructed dispensationalism can be pointed out:

1. The contents of Tao are inclusive, available to everyone, yet the Tao Lineage is exclusive.

This Tao Lineage never breaks. Before the I-Kuan Tao's eighteenth patriarch Zhang Tian Ran, the Tao Lineage always was singular. That is, at one time, only one line could monopolize the legitimacy of the Tao Lineage. We often refer to the "three teachings in one" (*san jiao he yi* 三教合一), which implies that Chinese local sectarian groups treat Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism equally. However, this constructed dispensationalism clearly shows that at one time, only one patriarch bears the Tao Lineage. This Tao Lineage, being descended from the Taoist Laozi, and later given to Confucius and during the middle age to Buddhist patriarchs, now is exclusively borne by the I-Kuan Tao. Therefore, the umbrella of this "three-in-one" does not mean that all three shared equal legitimacy; rather, at one historical moment, the real truth still exclusively comes from only one bearing Tao Lineage.

2. However, in China, the Tao Lineage did break between Mencius and Da Mo (達磨). This clearly shows that simply being a Confucian is not enough to be saved. For example, even the Confucian philosophers Zhou Dun-I, Cheng Yi, Zhang Zai, and Zhu Xi had great contributions to maintaining Tao, yet they still were alienated from the true Tao. It certainly proves that the Tao Lineage is not equal to Confucian knowledge. The Second Epoch of this Confucian anthropocosmic transformation was still not enough to make

Confucian intellectuals bear the Tao Lineage. Most Confucian intellectuals in history actually were departed from Tao. Now the Tao Lineage has already descended to commoners. It retains Tao's revelational attributes and popular bent, which are both different from a solely Confucian stance. At last, commoners win the orthodoxy, intellectuals lose. The grace would be open to everybody, however, only through the Tao Lineage of the I-Kuan Tao.

One thing as yet unmentioned is that if dispensationalism usually is constructed from a special way of literal interpretation of the scripture, then from what is the I-Kuan Tao's dispensationalism constructed? Definitely it is not from Chinese classical scriptures, since they are not the prophetic type of books. Rather, we can say that they come from the common tradition in the sectarian milieus since the Ming dynasty.

The so-called *baojuan* (寶卷, "precious scrolls") since the Song dynasty have been produced by sectarian leaders or collective spirit writing, and many of them were printed, thus making sectarian teachings available to a wide readership (Seiwert 2003:228). Among those volumes, the most conspicuous one is Luo Menghong's (羅夢鴻; 1442-1527) *Five Books in Six Volumes*, published around 1480. The book borrow Buddhist ideas and then documents clearly the ideas of the Three Eschatological Periods and the Eternal Primordial Mother in a recitable form. Although Luo Menghong himself is the patriarch of a specific sectarian group, the ideas in his books soon became the common teaching sources for most sectarian groups in the Ming (A.D. 1368-1644) and Qing (A.D. 1644-1911) dynasties.

Given this background, to construct the dispensationalism for any later sectarian groups then does not involve reinterpretations of the classical scriptures, since: (1) at least there are no commonly recognized classical scriptures documenting this mythology, and (2) *baojuan* can be seen as a scriptural kind of book, yet *baojuan* come from other groups and cannot be considered our own group's scripture.

Instead, then, we found that for any newly established sectarian groups, with regard to this issue of dispensationalist construction, the main task is to generate new texts to monopolize the mandate of heaven. In the I-Kuan Tao, two main texts are relevant here: *The True Scripture of Maitreya's Relieving the Distressed* already mentioned above, and

another scripture called the *Ten Admonishments from the Eternal Primordial Mother to Children* (*Huang mu xun zi shi jie* 皇母訓子十誡), a spirit-writing book generated by the I-Kuan Tao in 1941, in which a total of 10 chapters represent the myth of the Three Eschatological Periods in the language of the heavenly mother's earnest yearning for children.

As the newly generated texts have represented the popular eschatological myth in the monopolistic form, that is, making the Tao Lineage or mandate of heaven specifically belong to "our sectarian group," then we can say that this construction of dispensationalism has been accomplished. After this, any further elaboration could be more freely delivered by the patriarch of the sectarian group, since the mandate of heaven has been given to the Tao Lineage he represents. In the I-Kuan Tao, we see that Eighteenth Patriarch Zhang Tian Ran's description of the Tao Lineage, as cited above, thus could be an authoritative source accepted by all I-Kuan Tao followers.

Here we see clearly that the construction of dispensationalism in the Chinese cultural tradition is not by exegetists' endeavors to literally interpret the classical scriptures; rather, it is through generating a newly monopolistic version of texts documenting the commonly accepted mythology. A substantially historical understanding and interpretation thus is replaced by a sectarian vision of empowerment, in which through the confirmation of the Tao Lineage, both the feeling of cultural orthodoxy and one's hope for future salvation have been enhanced.

5. Summary, Discussion, and Conclusion

Fundamentalists are those who are interested in appropriating and renewing the use of traditional cultural symbols in order to counteract the influence of modernity as well as to protect themselves from imperialists' invasion. Within a specific religious tradition, fundamentalists usually claim that there is an absolutely sacred authority in the perennial tradition that can resist external corrosion. In the revelational kind of religion, the monotheist religion, and the religion with a commonly accepted canon, because of their having a readily identifiable sacred core, we may expect that the fundamentalist response will be more easily to be adduced.

In many circumstances, the tendency toward fundamentalism is easily intertwined

with strategic political mobilization. However, even within the same tradition, once the fundamentalist response is elicited, there may be quite a wide spectrum of variation, beginning from the fundamentalists' choosing to be self-isolated, to the other extreme, fundamentalists who may accept the legitimacy of taking violence as the necessary means to protect the religious and moral truth (ter Harr 2003:4).

Several dimensions may affect the configuration of a specific fundamentalist movement. For example: (1) The previous religious tradition is diffused or institutional, where in the diffused tradition, every time the core is revitalized it needs a redefinition of what the cultural core actually is. (2) The background civil setting. In a rather mature democratic regime, even when gradually becoming militant fundamentalists still can be led into the public debate rather than going directly into violent action. Or, in other places, such as Taiwan, people at the grassroots level are getting used to limiting their influences on the nonpolitical sphere, thus fundamentalism could be just a means for local empowerment rather than direct political mobilization. (3) Who is the main agency initiating the fundamentalism? The state? The clergy? The cultural elite? The majority who feel marginalized by the secular state? Or the minority who think to take the violent means to extend their global political influence? The variation in these dimensions always affect what a fundamentalist movement actually looks like.

Regarding the fundamentalism in the Chinese cultural tradition, in the current global arena we do see governmentally mobilized Confucian revitalization in several East Asian countries, such as Korea and Singapore, as well as Taiwan. The purpose behind this for sure, is not really cultural concern; rather, it is economically driven. However, this kind of top down nonspontaneous fundamentalism has neither long-standing influence nor much effect in solving each individual's real life problems.

In Taiwan, however, since the 1980s, a bottom up sectarian group called the I-Kuan Tao has continually claimed that it is embodying the true Tao Lineage in the Chinese cultural tradition. Even under the very harsh control of martial law between 1945 and 1987, it gradually prospered, and now with more than 1,000,000 participants it has already become the biggest sectarian group ever in Chinese history.

Can we say that the I-Kuan Tao is a fundamentalist group? And, of so, what does its success teaches us about Chinese fundamentalism?

To generate a bottom-up Chinese fundamentalism in modern times in a Chinese cultural arena, due to the traditional configuration of Chinese culture, as well as the ways different cultural agencies play their roles in the traditional cultural sphere, we found that there are some obvious internal difficulties involved:

1). If fundamentalism is to return to the cultural core, then looking at the cores of Chinese culture from its surface, as the Confucian scriptures have shown, they are only some moral precepts and life philosophy and have never been a coherent entity of religious teachings. Thus the question may be raised: To what extent can we say that we have really found the cultural core, and where it exists?

2). Before the Ming dynasty in China, with regard to the competition for of cultural hegemony, in addition to the emperor in his role as the representative of the mandate of heaven, the most powerful cultural and political position, there would always be the Confucian intellectuals. These intellectuals were able to engage in literary composition and creation. They were the main legitimate incumbents of Chinese culture at that time. Since the mid-Ming, sectarian movements started to compete with the cultural orthodoxy represented by the Confucian intellectuals. Yet under enduring brutal persecutions, even though these movements mobilized vast constituencies and social resources, they never attained their final goal (to build an egalitarian utopia without exploitation) and never had a chance to wash out the mark of cultural inferiority and social marginality.

That is, due to both the lack of religious quality in the Chinese cultural core as well as the commoners' previous marginal position in the culture and limited cultural resources, it is almost beyond possibility to see a fundamentalist movement starting from the populace in the Chinese cultural area.

However, during the Opium War (1839), China was bombed, opening its doors to foreign powers. Things changed.

For China, a series of international failures were followed continuously by a series of internal reforms and revolutions. Then, under the name of cultural and political reform, Western technologies and institutions replaced the traditional education system,

bureaucracy, and all classical knowledge. Not only the traditional Chinese culture retreated, the previous main agency of Chinese culture, the imperial court and Confucian intellectuals, also retreated.

Therefore, in China, or say in the areas embedded with the Chinese culture, now is the first time that the cultural agencies with a high social position are no longer willing to protect the traditional cultural resources. Or they no longer think that the traditional cultural resources can enhance or embellish their social status. Regarding the populace, or say the popular sectarian groups, they are now the only cultural agency left still willing to be associated with the already marginalized traditional culture. And since now only very few people in the high position still care about the traditional culture, these sectarian groups then can appropriate and manipulate the traditional cultural symbols without many others interfering.

Before, the repository of traditional culture was dominated by the emperors and Confucian intellectuals and was associated with the maintaining of cultural hegemony. Now the repository of traditional culture is no longer dominated by the upper classes, and it even could become the symbolic emporium offering resources for the subordinated class's self-empowerment and identity construction.

As the subordinated class wants to appropriate and consume the classic symbolic repository, for whatever reasons, at least these proletarians transiting from a traditional agrarian society prefer a mystical and supernatural power style rather than the style presented in the version edited by the Song Confucians, which emphasized abstract principles without presuming the existence of any spiritual beings. However, the exact problem is that the classical scriptures in China, especially the Confucian scriptures, were never revelational texts. At best, they were only prepared by Song (宋) Confucians' "anthropocosmic vision," which may have allowed the space for Confucianism to develop into a revelational kind of religion.

Now once the populace has a need to revitalize the traditional cultural symbols, if they want these symbols colored by religious authority and deities' endorsement, they have no choice but to paint the old symbols in a new color. If fundamentalism means a new painting of old symbols in Chinese culture it happens in dual procedures. First it needs to transform the traditional cultural symbols into religious codes, then it needs to

associate these codes with the modern arena.

Thanks to a lack of a clearly defined cultural core in Chinese lands, at least there was no fixed canon. This situation may be a major barrier to generating a cultural fundamentalism, yet it also opens a large gray area now allowing those previously on the cultural margin to do what they want.

In reformulating the cultural core----reediting the traditional scriptures, generating new scriptures backed by astonishing magic such as the *xunzhongxun*, renewing the dispensationalist cosmology, asking legendary deities and previous patriarchs to descend to this human realm----all are parts of the quasi-fundamentalist project in Chinese culture.

Although in the monotheist tradition, with a fixed historical archive such as the Bible, only a one-time revelation is allowed in the history, even though it still leaves possibilities for interpretations. Under this religious background, once one chooses to be a fundamentalist, sticking to the principle of literal inerrancy, one begins to follow the black-and-white rules of what is right and wrong. Through this principle, people can also renavigate themselves through the decayed and chaotic world.

In contrast to the above-mentioned “textual fundamentalism,” we may label the I-Kuan Tao as “cultural fundamentalism,” in which followers adhere to a set of fundamental principles defined or redefined by cultural essence rather than by the strict wording of the Scripture. Under this cultural fundamentalism, the I-Kuan Tao allows for multiple revelations. Every time there is a need, new scriptures can descend, in the name of corresponding to the “Heaven Tao.” This scriptural redundancy of course may water down the authority of the scripture. However, this is not the point; the point is that these “disposable scriptures” allow each individual to get a position within the interconnected spiritual network and within the grand salvational schema. We notice especially that these revelational texts (*xunwen*) must be generated in the setting of the collective rituals, which belong to every participating follower.

However, even under this “multiple revelations” approach, we cannot say that the I-Kuan Tao followers do not belong to the camp of fundamentalism, since these followers still take a strict black-and-white perspective in perceiving the things happening in this world and continually construct a cultural boundary for self-protection.

Nonetheless, this attitude of black-and-white, in the I-Kuan Tao, is always joined

together with a feeling of emotional empowerment. In addition to the universal feeling of exaltation stimulated by the fundamentalist stance, in the I-Kuan Tao, the followers' feeling of exaltation still has been aggrandized by other factors.

To put it simply, in Chinese culture, now is the first time that commoners, previously the cultural marginality, are allowed to be in the position of mastering the cultural rudder derived from the traditional cultural symbols. To master this cultural rudder, in addition to venting the feeling of outrage and frustration stimulated by Western imperialism, is itself a novel experience of gratification.

For the first time, both the country's political leaders and the intellectuals are discarding the type of cultural hegemony delineated by the traditional cultural symbols, and they are even unaware of how powerful these cultural weapons still could be. Now from these commoners we hear the exclamation: "Hurrah! We majority in the population at last have become the cultural orthodoxy—no one can marginalize us now." Also: "the mandate of heaven at last corresponds to the place it ought to be, the honest, simple, and unadulterated commoners!" And: "The last chance of salvation soon will come. The truth will manifest itself. We'll see!"

All fundamentalists take a perspective of black-and-white. However, fundamentalists in the Chinese cultural background, behind the shield of black-and-white, are involved in much more complicated mechanisms----we are not saying they are subtler however----to demarcate the line between black and white.

This is because there is no fixed canon of Chinese classical scriptures. When people want to go back to the cultural core, it is not a natural and straightforward thing. For sure, Confucian scriptures such as the Four Books definitely belong to the cultural core accepted by all Chinese. Yet the Taoist *Daode jing* and the Buddhist Heart Sutra, for whatever reasons, both have gained the status of scripture in Chinese culture.

To return to the Chinese cultural core, thus, is not just to return to one or two scriptures, or one or two religious schools; rather, it is to return to a crystal prism in which different angles may reflect out differently colored beams of light. At least, retrospectively, as Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism all have been prevailed in Chinese history and Chinese lands, most Chinese commoners thus would like to admit that all Confucian, Taoist, and Buddhist scriptures belong to the same culture core. And

actually, we do find out that these designations of this cultural core are various but have similar meanings, such as the Taoist designation “Tao,” the Buddhist designation “buddha nature,” the Confucian designation *li* (理, “the ordering principles of all that exists”), and the popular phrase “your original face” (*benlai mianmu* 本來面目), and so forth. Among them, “Tao” becomes the most popular candidate and the designation used not only by Taoists. Here, the name of the I-Kuan Tao, literally meaning “Way of Penetrating Unity” does embody this long-standing popular tradition. In the popular designation, Tao is the penetrating principle of everything. Of course, this Tao now can be referred to as a crystal prism in which Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism each form only one reflected beam of light from this cultural core.

Nevertheless, it would be totally a mistake to assume that, as a Chinese person accepts all religious teachings reflecting out from the same Tao, he or she does so just out of a naïve feeling of wanting to embrace all of the good things of the culture. That is, according to Jordan and Overmyer (1986:10), the syncretism in China comes from local people’s needs for democratic participation, thus they want to remove the cultural barriers between different traditions and want to join the three best traditions (Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism) in China at the same time. Here, I would like to argue, Jordan and Overmyer mistakenly take the result as the cause, thus drawing a wrong conclusion.

Of course commoners want to remove out the cultural barriers between different traditions. Yet in Chinese culture, the cause for this syncretism may be due more to China’s own cultural configuration than to preference of popular mentality. We see that in the Chinese cultural roof, the three pillars of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism are complementary and interdependent. Confucianism offers the cultural resources in guiding social organization and personal interaction, Buddhism offers the cultural resources for supernatural explanations and transcendental thinking, and Taoism enchants this world with a rather delicate view of organic interconnectedness and various thaumaturgical means for manipulating situations. If we lack any one pillar of the three, there would be not enough to bolster up the cultural roof that could cover all commoners’ social and religious needs.

Nevertheless, since these three are all parts of the same cultural roof, or say are beams of light reflecting out from the same crystal prism, the cultural core, at least

functionally thinking, is only the one rather than the three. To this sense, I would like to argue, both the academically and commonly used term “syncretism” actually is not a good phrase to depict Chinese mentality; rather, “converging-ism” maybe better. Whereas the former makes different religious teachings or cultural elements equal on the same scale, the latter emphasizes a cultural core with the quality of both transcendentality and immanence that could encompass multifarious cultural elements.

A final thought: If fundamentalism is elicited from one’s feeling of belonging to the cultural orthodoxy, it should be popular in the place connected most to with the cultural orthodoxy. Now why it is in Taiwan, the place very much departing from the central land of China, that we see a most vibrant fundamentalist movement arising?

A simple answer would be: This kind of sectarian movement just cannot be legalized under the Chinese Communist regime, therefore Taiwan is one of the very few places left that could allow this kind of fundamentalist orientation to develop.

A more refined explanation: Fundamentalism is about the “construction of the feeling of orthodoxy being marginalized.” So, the methods and technology involved in the process of collective interaction and symbolic construction, people’s feeling of being marginalized in facing cultural imperialism or secular modernity, and people’s awareness of their belonging to or being possibly accessible to the religious orthodoxy, all these three factors are crucial in fostering people’s fundamentalist tendency.

For example, in discussing U.S. Fundamentalism, Bruce mentioned (2000:117):

The strength of the religious tradition is one consideration; the extent to which social change bears directly on a population is another. So US fundamentalism began in the north-east, where the press of modernization was felt first, but found its stronghold in the southern states, where Protestantism was strongest.

Referring to the above thinking, and considering the case of the I-Kuan Tao in Taiwan, we would argue that:

1) Among those areas embedded with Chinese culture, Taiwan is the place where the

press of modernization was felt much earlier than it in the Mainland China. Therefore, the newly experienced social change may bring Taiwanese to an earlier step toward cultural fundamentalism.

2) However, the earlier American Fundamentalist leaders, as described by Lechner (1998:198), were by and large highly educated urbanites, several of whom came from elite intuitions. In the areas embedded with Chinese culture, as we have described, the sectarian movements colored by fundamentalism mainly came from the formerly marginal cultural position—that of the commoners. Besides, this is also the first time for these commoners to have a chance to become the main agency, or say the last remaining agency, to master the cultural rudder of traditional Chinese cultural symbols. Since this sectarian propriety was started from a marginal cultural position, therefore in Taiwan it would not be at odds with Taiwan's marginal location within the Chinese culture. It is just this marginality of Taiwan and the feeling of "Taiwan under siege" that resonate with the general feeling of "orthodoxy being marginalized." Besides, since these previously marginalized commoners are now getting a chance to talk, why cannot a marginalized Taiwan now be the representative of true Chinese culture, especially since Mainland China has already become the enemy of traditional Chinese culture?

3) Last but not least, the modernization of Taiwan also allows commoners in Taiwan to have the means to construct a vitalistic participatory group empowered by the feeling of linking to the Tao Lineage. These advanced means for collective interaction and symbolic construction at least include the vast amount of publishing, media use, public transportation, telecommunication, and so forth.

To sum up: On one hand, we witness a bottom-up Chinese colonization of Taiwan. Since the I-Kuan Tao was brought by Chinese mainlanders to Taiwan, it has always had a strong bent toward the Chinese Tao Lineage. On the other hand, the I-Kuan Tao has shown how much construction can do, and how attractive the feeling of belonging to the orthodoxy actually is; therefore commoners in the "marginal land" of Taiwan would like

to surrender themselves to this imported “orthodox Tao Lineage.”

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Glossary

achieving perfection (*zhishan* 至善)
baojuan (寶卷, "precious scrolls")
 Chen Hong Zhen (陳鴻珍 ; b. 1923)
 Chong-Xiu (崇修) Temple
Doctrine of the Mean (*Zhong Yong* 中庸)

Eighteenth Patriarch Zhang Tian Ran (十八祖張天然; 1889–1947)
 Enlightening Master or Initiator (*Dian Chuan Shi* 點傳師)
 Eternal Primordial Mother (Wu sheng lao mu 無生老母)
 external merits (*waigong* 外功)
 Fa-Yi-Chong-De (發一崇德, “Promote Oneness and Exalt Virtues”)
 Five Classics (*wu jing* 五經)
 Four Books (*Si shu* 四書)
 Fu Xi Shi [伏羲氏]
 Grand Senior Elder (*Lao Qian Ren* 老前人, “emeritus division head”) {*Laoqianren*}
Great Learning (*Da Xue* 大學)
 Han Yu Lin (韓雨霖; 1901–1995)
 I-Kuan Tao [一貫道, “Way of Penetrating Unity”]
 internal merits (*neigong* 內功)
 Liu Qin Xu [劉清虛]
 Lu Xiang Shan (陸象山)
 Lu Zhong Yi (路中一; 1849–1925)
 new person (*xinmin* 新民)
 nourishing virtues (*peide* 培德)
 Patriarch Da-Mo [達摩祖師 Arya Bodhidharma]
 practicing virtues (*xingde* 行德)
Record of Rites (*Liji* 禮記)
san-gang-wu-chang (三綱五常, “the three cardinal guides and the five constant virtues”)
 senior elders (*qian ren* 前人, “division heads”)
Tao De Jing (道德經)
Ten Admonishments from the Eternal Primordial Mother to Children (*Huang mu xun zi shi jie* 皇
 母訓子十誡)
Testimony and Interpretation of the Doctrine of the Mean (*Zhong Yong Zheng Shi* 中庸證釋)
Testimony and Interpretation of the Great Learning (*Da Xue Zheng Shi* 大學證釋)
The Age of Grand Commonality (*Li Yun Da Tong Pian* 禮運大同篇)
 Tong Xing (同興) Temple
True Scripture of the Peach Garden Holy Emperor Kuan Who Illuminates the Sacred (*Tao Yuan
 Ming Sheng Jing* 桃園明聖經)
 Wang Jue Yi (王覺一; 1821–1886), the fifteenth patriarch
 White Lotus Society (Bai Lian Jiao 白蓮教)
 worshipping virtues (*chongde* 崇德)
xunwen (訓文), which literally means “instruction texts,” or “revelational texts”
xunzhongxun (訓中訓), or “revelation embedded in revelation”
 “vegetarian assembly” (*huo shi tuan* 伙食團)
 Zhou Dun-I (周敦頤) {Zhou Dunyi}