



Learning About the Tao Half Way Around the World Part 1

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The anticipation is over. Walking through the glass doors of Tom Bradley Terminal at LAX International Airport was eye opening, heart thumping, and spiritually awakening. Our group of Tao cultivators was ready to go to Taiwan to better understand the depth of the Tao Te Ching by some of the Senior Masters.

We had gotten the emails, the memos, and the phone calls. Finally, our bags were packed and we were ready to go. Just what was this trip all about? After going through baggage check, passport check, and obtaining our boarding passes, we were finally ready to begin our journey to the other side of the world. Many of our family members and friends could not understand why we would take a thirteen hour trip, half way around the world, live with a collective in a Temple, just to learn more about a different culture, a gentle philosophy, and, in short--another way, which some refer to as The Path.

After listening to Derek Lin, in person and online, along with Bill Bunting on the 'Go To Meeting' Forums each Sunday, questions began being asked. I remember one particular online guest lecturer named Carmen. Carmen talked about her trip to Taiwan many years ago. She also talked about experiencing the hospitality, the food, the culture, the dedication of Tao cultivators, and about the great time she had.

That did it! One of the people in our Sunday study group with is Yola Wong K. Yola is this vibrant, energetic, young, graduate student who was born in Los Angeles but grew up in Belize. Her father's father was Chinese and her mother is from Belize. She was studying for her doctorate in Environmental Engineering focusing on water quality, but I believe, perhaps, that this trip has led her to explore different options. Perhaps Yola's inquisitive mind was a catalyst for Master Joseph, Master Cheri, Master William and others, to begin to put their magical wheels together to make this extraordinary trip happen through fundraisers and a whole lot of diligent work on both ends.

Upon getting to our seats aboard EVA Airlines, the realization that this was going to be the longest trip of my life, finally hit me. I was immediately put at ease with the anticipation of this trip when I saw the soft new disposable slippers in each seat pocket for all passengers. Something about the simplicity of the implied gesture of 'relax--take your shoes off and put on these slippers' seemed to put me at ease.



飛越半個地球學習道(上)

◎ 中譯 詹蕙靜

期待終於落實了。抵達洛杉磯國際機場後，我穿過湯姆布蘭德利國際航廈的玻璃門，雙眼圓睜、心臟怦怦跳，並且精神為之振奮。我參加的這個道親團，已經準備前往台灣，期能更深度地理解前人輩們所詮釋的《道德經》。

經過多次 E-mail、備忘錄以及電話聯繫，我們終於整理了行囊，準備踏上旅程。這段旅程成行的意義又是什麼呢？通過行李與護照的檢查、拿到登機證後，我們即將開始這段到地球另一邊的旅行。許多親朋好友無法理解我們為什麼願意坐一趟 13 小時、飛越半個地球的飛機，與一群人住在道院裡，只為了要瞭解某個不同的文化：簡而言之，就是一種溫和的、人家稱之為「道」的哲理。

在參與林信价學長還有 Bill Bunting 每週日的線上論壇後，許多人開始提出相關問題。我特別記得有一位線上客座講師名叫 Carmen，她提到多年前到台灣的旅行，談到她當時所體驗到的熱情好客、美食、文化、道親的虔誠，以及在此度過的美好時光。

就是這個人——我們星期日讀書會的成員之一——Yola Wong K.。Yola 是一位在洛杉磯出生，於貝里斯長大，朝氣蓬勃、充滿活力又年輕的研究生。她爺爺是中國人，母親是貝里斯人。她正攻讀環境工程博士學位，研究領域是水質；不過我相信，或許這趟旅程將會帶領她探索出不一樣的領域。而 Yola 打破砂鍋問到底的好奇心，也許就像催化劑般，讓陳立夫點傳師、徐翠好點傳師、郭詩永點傳師以及其他的人，開始將所有的魔法輪組合在一起，透過籌款及雙方許多的努力，成就了這趟絕妙的旅程。

坐上長榮航空的座椅，才終於理解：這是我一生中最漫長的飛行。不過，當我看到每張椅子後方的袋子裡都放著拋棄式拖鞋後，不安的心馬上得到了緩解。似乎就是這些「放鬆吧，把你的鞋子脫下，換上這些拖鞋」簡單的小細節，讓我安心了不少。

The plane was huge and at full capacity. Shortly after takeoff, I knew then that my life was about to change forever. We had been warned that the flight was a very long flight and it was. I was able to read, sleep, write, talk, exercise, and get in a few meals, which, by the way, were not bad for an airline! Before I knew it, the flight attendant was telling us to turn off all electronic equipment, put our snack trays up, straighten our seats, put on our seat belts and prepare for landing. I followed all instructions and exchanged my mentally and physically comfortable airplane slippers, and put on my black tie up shoes. The compression socks, that a friend suggested for a long trip, worked like a charm.

After going through the usual—showing our passports at customs, getting our luggage, and exchanging currency, we were on ‘the other side’. Whalaa! We were immediately greeted by Master Cheri and others. It was wonderful to see familiar faces. It was a beautiful experience. Our volunteer tour guide’s name was Brian. He left nothing out and took care of the tiniest details for us! He even took the time to make creative name tags for us, in both English and Taiwanese, and made sure we immediately had water to stay hydrated in the hot weather.

The red carpet that was about to be rolled out for our group was nothing short of miraculous. The kindness and display of genuine welcoming was overwhelming and was shown at Temple after Temple. The Tao Cultivators and the Masters were lined up at each Temple and were clapping and singing as our big bus pulled up.

Upon getting out, we were greeted and bowed to as songs of joy were exclaimed. I do not speak Taiwanese but the translations of the smiles on their beautiful faces said it all.

At Chung Jen Temples, Senior Master Chen Te-Yung came out and spoke to us from the podium, despite his having caught a cold. This 96-year-old senior Master had compassion and strength in his voice. He told us that he had to meet us and that he was very happy to welcome United States’ fellowship to attend the memorial celebration of the five year passing of Senior Master Chang Pei-Cheng.

(To Be Continued)

這是架大飛機，且座無虛席。才剛起飛一會兒，就讓我覺得人生將從此不同了。我們曾經被提醒過此趟航程十分漫長，果真如此。我在這段航程裡讀了書、睡了覺、寫了些文字、聊了天、也運動了，還吃了幾餐不算差的飛機餐。在我發覺即將抵達前，空服員開始請乘客關掉所有電子用品、把餐桌闔上、挺直座椅、扣上安全帶，準備降落了。我遵從所有的指示，還把不管是在心靈上或身體上都讓我感到舒坦的拖鞋，換成了整齊且繫好鞋帶的黑鞋。有位朋友建議我在長途旅行中穿的壓力襪，它就像有魔力一樣地發揮了作用。

在通過海關的護照檢驗、領取行李、換取外幣這些必經的程序後，我們到達了地球的另一邊。真的！一下飛機，徐翠好點傳師和其他人立刻前來迎接我們，看見熟悉的面孔是很棒的事，真是個美好的經驗。我們的志工導遊名叫 Brian（游士慶學長），他無微不至地照顧我們，一點小事都沒遺漏掉！他甚至花時間幫我們做了充滿創意的中英文名牌，還確保我們隨時有水飲用，在大熱天裡保持水分充足的狀態。

去過一間又一間的道院後，我們對於十足的善意以及熱烈的歡迎感到受寵若驚，如果說紅毯在下一秒為了我們鋪出來，我也一點都不會覺得驚訝。當我們的遊覽車到達時，許多點傳師及道親們總是在道院前方排成隊伍，拍著手、唱著歌歡迎我們的到來。

當我們一下遊覽車，馬上有人對我們招呼鞠躬，歡樂歌聲隨即響起，雖然我不會講台灣話，但是我從他們臉上的笑容讀出一切。

到達全真道院後，陳德陽前人雖然感冒，仍然出來迎接我們，還在講台上為我們賜導幾句話。他已經高齡 96 歲，嗓音中卻保有熱情及力量。他告訴我們他一定要出來迎接我們，還說他非常高興有美國來的道親來參加張培成老前人成道五週年的追思活動。

（續下期）