

DIVINE PATH TO ETERNAL LIFE

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The Dharma of Altruism and Selflessness for a Public Life against Private Aims

Today, Bần Đạo will continue to explain more of the "essential philosophy." For this reason, this sermon might be a little bit longer. All of you please sit if you are tired.

Each time we attend these midnight ceremonies, we are attempting to explain a philosophy so complex we could write a book about. Instead, I am summarising it into short essay but adequate essay. It is not an easy task.

Tonight, Bần Đạo continue to explain the contention at the Cung Hiệp Thiên Hành Hóa regarding the secrets of uniting institutions. This is closely related to the philosophy of "Altruism and Selflessness" or "A Public life against Private aims;" this is also called the Bí Pháp or "Secret Dharma." If this dharma is realized on earth, we can harmonize various human systems, and save humans from the incessant fighting and killing.

Furthermore, in the Cung Hiệp Thiên Hành Hóa, the Divine Beings use the theory of constant evolution as the foundation. Even in terms of philosophy, religious freedom remains in the hands of the Divine Beings. They are influenced by Confucianism; in which one elevates the public, and diminishes the private. Also, religious belief enables us to understand the value of Divine rewards and punishments, as well as the power of the Supreme Being over both the visible and. Unfortunately, the philosophy of Confucianism mainly has influence on human intellectuality. It is a method to facilitate freedom of thought and belief. Humanity is influenced by it, but they are unable to attain true freedom. Thus, the Cung Hiệp Thiên Hành Hóa, the intellectuals object and say: "We are seeing on this planet that all beings are protecting their lives by using many unjust devices. Society is in chaos; the

strong are winning, the weak losing, the silly being destroyed, and the smart standing strong. We see clearly on this planet that such drama goes on endlessly. The Enlightened Beings have been finding was to harmonise the situation where various institutions are pushing humanity towards perdition. In the future, if there is an invisible power that decides the destiny of humanity, will it be capable enough to protect humanity and prevent injustice?

If the question is put to us in this way, it seems a very hard issue to resolve. But fortunately in the Cung Hiệp Thiên Hành Hóa the Perfect Beings tackle the challenge. They reply: "Because humans live for themselves rather than others; they put selfishness over altruism. Whenever this drama still takes place, the relative law that decides the destiny of human activities is still active. Whenever humans live for others and uphold altruism, it will be time for their liberation.

We see that earthly life is not very different from the Divine Realm. The major difference is that all human institutions are formed on the basis of selfishness. It leads to competition, fighting and ultimately destruction.

All beings are affected by the law of nature. This law puts the community over the self, whether in society or in the family. In a family, all the members are supposed to gear themselves towards the common good. If they elevate their own aims, chaos and poverty will ensue. Nationally, the people must live for their country, so that the nation will be strong. But if they are selfish or only care about their own happiness, or if they do not make sacrifices for their community, then the country will slide towards chaos. Likewise, nations of the world only care about their own well-being and wealth. This is also an egoistic attitude. When one country wants to be better than the others, there is objection and competition. It will lead to mutual killing and destruction. This is not strange. It is the natural law of progress. But how can they progress? It can only be achieved by unity, i.e. selflessness. However, humanity does not yet have this sort of spirit. They do not regard selflessness as just or righteous, but as base, crude and backward. No wonder that this world turns upside down and falls apart.

Friends, can you hide? You are invited to get out of the Cung Hiệp Thiên Hành Hóa and go down to the earth to look at the situation of its evolution then decide from what power. Standing in front of the door of the Diêu Trì Cung

under the banner of Đức Diêu Trì / The Universal Mother Goddess, we see a map on display for us to examine. We see an area of land jutting out to the sea, part of it muddy, part hilly, with a sign for sale "300 francs." This piece of land is the town of New York, which is desolate and cheaply priced at 300 Francs. Then, we see how it changes its form. It becomes a little town, like a small harbour town, where the merchants come to trade. Next, we see it change into a big town, where many come and go, trading gold as the busiest activity. Then, it becomes huge with many bustling about. It is the time of La Fayette. At this time, the people of New York City were trying to liberate themselves from the yoke of the English. Then, we see more changes as the buildings arise, the harbour full of ships, the people even busier, the buildings rising one hundred stories. They are magnificent. The muddy areas have become part of a vast harbour teeming with incomparable wealth. Because of the early selflessness, New York has developed itself into the situation as it is now. Which one would humanity like to keep, the muddy piece of land or the noble metropolis?

The Divine Beings said, "...it's not finished yet. It is still changing. Not only New York City but also the whole world will change when it comes time.

Vietnamese friends, let us look at the map of Saigon City. We can see on this map along either bank of the big river, sedge is growing wild. Next, on the little river, there are a few fishing boats. That is Bến-Nghé covered in mud and surrounded by a large river which runs far into the paddy fields overrun with sedge. Now and then, we see the form of the landscape changes, sedge withdrawing, people putting up houses and trading boats crowding the river. Then, we see even more change. Near the banks, people are gathering to build houses, forming a bigger village. The scene is now full of houses and boats. In the next scene, we see dry paddy fields and houses with dirt floors everywhere, mostly those with tiles and thatched roof. More changes come, and we see that the little river now has turned into the Charner Avenue (Nguyễn Huệ street in Sài Gòn). The people are very busy now; the city is bustling. After more changes, the little river disappears. On both sides of the big river, there are no more stilt houses. Many ships come and go, full of merchants. More changes turn the town into a prosperous trading center. And then come the palaces and government offices. It goes on until the town is like what we see now.

The Divine Beings asked, "Do you want to keep Saigon City as it was previously, covered with the mud and the paddy fields, or do you want to keep what we see today?" Then they said, there are still more changes to come.

Now, some insist on seeing changes in the Cao Dai religion for evidence. We see on the plot of our Holy See, the map shows a jungle, trees, tigers, panthers, monkeys and all sorts of other wild animals. Then, we see a few thatched cottages in the forest. After some changes, on this land they build a temple with a few thatched cottages for accommodation. After more changes, we see thatched huts built everywhere, one next to the other in the forest where there is cleared land. After more changes, we see people entering the temple, which is clean and honourable. A few government officials enter the temple whilst outside there are a number of people who are scolding and abusing them. After even more change, we see crowds of poor people coming to fell the trees and level the undulations of the land. The temple comes to have tile roof, and then gives place to the current one. Buildings begin to rise up everywhere.

Would we, the Cao Đài religion, like to keep the desolate forest, or the current temple, or to keep it as a private domain?

Those Divine Beings said all these changes serve the common good, whether it is New York City or Saigon City. They cannot serve private aims. The houses we now build are only really the beginning of public efforts; no private interest is allowed.

Can you see how the Divine Mystery spreads from the Bát Quái Đài to here? Walking past the temples and buildings, we must know that the craftsmen have sculpted them. All the things we see on our way are also made by our own hands, for the entire public. This is true even up to Phật Mẫu (Buddha Mother, The Universal Mother Goddess). On earth we see and recognise that Phật Mẫu is also our mother here. She Herself gives birth to our physical being. Phật Mẫu is thus a public Being. And the Supreme Being, who we will see next, is our common Father. He will unite all for the common good. There will be no more private aims. These Divine Secrets govern both heaven and earth to form a stable power.

On this earth, only when humanity dedicates itself to public purposes and relinquish all private interests, will they achieve happiness.

Bát Quái Đài - The Council of the Great Spirits which heads the Eight States of Soul, the Eight-sided Palace of God's presence, the Eight Trigrams Palace.

Bí Pháp - Secret Dharma, esoteric teaching, esoteric doctrine.

Cung Diêu Trì - The Heaven of the Creation under the Mother Goddess.

Cung Hiệp Thiên Hành Hóa- The Realm of Divine Beings who hold the power to control all human beings in a universe of many planets. The Realm (or department) of the Divine Alliance for preaching (The Dao).

Diêu Trì Cung - The Heaven of the Creation under the Mother Goddess.

Đức Diêu Trì - The Universal Mother Goddess.

Phật Mẫu - The Buddha Mother, The Universal Mother Goddess.