

Committed Suicide, Misinterpretation on Religious Concept, Cases from Indochina

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Abstract

Committed suicide is an important psychiatric problem. Sometimes, the rooted cause of committed suicide is related to ritual belief. Here, the authors discuss on committed suicide related to misinterpretation on religious concept. Cases from Indochina that are related to misinterpretation of a Buddhist religious belief, Anakatowong, are discussed.

Keywords: Committed Suicide, Religious, Misinterpretation.

Introduction

Committed suicide is an important psychiatric problem. Sometimes, the rooted cause of committed suicide is related to ritual belief. Here, the authors discuss on committed suicide related to misinterpretation on religious concept. Cases from Indochina that are related to misinterpretation of a Buddhist religious belief, Anakatowong, are discussed.

In brief, Anakatowong is a belief of next generation Buddha. It also described about committed suicide practice for worshipping to Buddha. This practice is believed to be the way for Bodhisattva, being Buddha in the future time.

Case studies

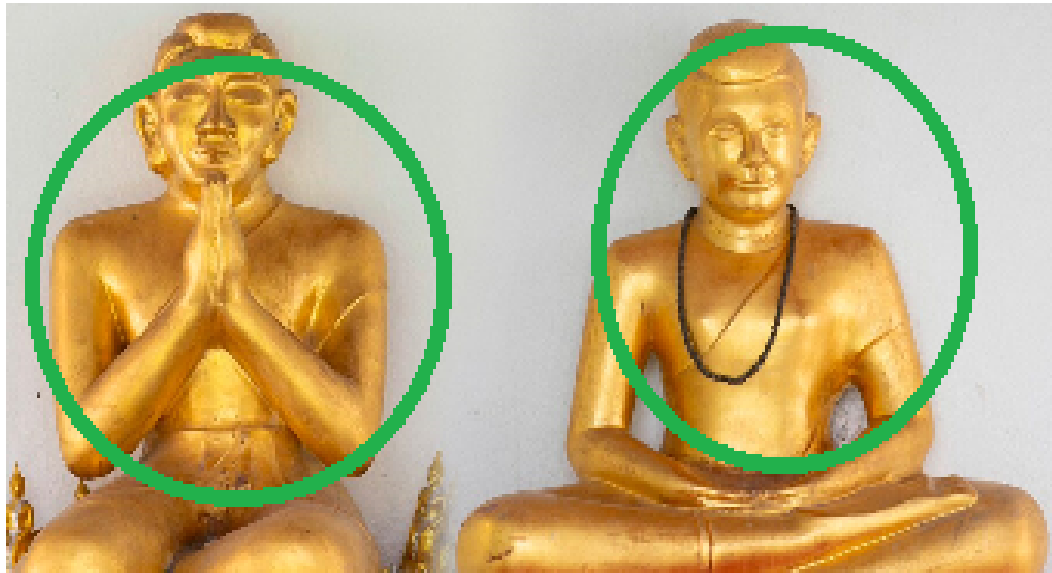
A. Self-burning

Self-burning is mentioned as way for achieving Bodhisattva stage. This is an actual concept for getting rid of bad thing and thought in oneself. However, it is misinterpreted. Some famous cases of committed suicide by self-burning occurs in history in Thailand. The statue of famous cases (NaiNok and NaiReung) presently exists at WatArun (Temple of Dawn) in Bangkok.

B. Self-beheading

Self-beheading is mentioned as way for achieving Bodhisattva stage. This is an actual concept for getting rid of bad ideas in brain in oneself. However, it is misinterpreted. The

statue of famous case is recently reported at a rural pagoda namely PhuHin Gong. Atthis pagoda, there is also a statue indicating self-beheading for worshipping Buddha.



A. Self-burning



B. Self-beheading

Figure 1. Some examples of committed suicide according to misinterpretation of religious concept

Discussion

Misinterpretation of a religious concept is not uncommon. When one deeply attaches to a misinterpreted religious concept, one might do a strange thing. For examples, a terrorism might relate to a misinterpreted religious concept. Here, another important scenario of committed suicide due to misinterpretation of religious concept. Indeed, Dervic et al, mentioned that “Religious affiliation is associated with less suicidal behavior in depressed

inpatients [1]” and religion should be an immunity to committed suicide. However, religion might induce problem if it is misinterpreted.

The Anakatawong is a Buddhist story seen in Indochina. The story of next generation Buddha and Bodhisattava is mentioned. Additionally, symbolizations are used in the storyline of Anakatawong. When a local practitioner who has no critical thinking concept can easily misinterpret the storyline and committed suicide is an unwanted consequence. Nevertheless, some people who might have schizophrenic background might express in an atypical clinical presentation such as ritual spiritual processing. In Indochina, this is not uncommon. There are many religious related spiritual processing phenomenon (such as Kwanyin holy spiritual processing [1]). How to manage the ritual relate psychotic and psychiatric problem is a very interesting issue in clinical psychiatry.

Conflict of interest: None

References

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