

OSSUARY FOR INCORRUPTIBLE BUDDHIST MONK: A LOCAL RELIGIOUS ARCHITECT IN THAILAND AND CAMBODIA

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ABSTRACT

Buddhism is deeply rooted in Indochina. The belief on holy incorruptible body of Buddhist monk can be seen in this area. The way that the local people manage the dead body of holy monk is interesting. The holy ossuary for incorruptible Buddhist monk is a specific management that can be seen in Thailand and Cambodia.

KEYWORDS: Ossuary, Monk, Incorruptible, Indochina.

INTRODUCTION

Buddhism is deeply rooted in Indochina. The belief on holy incorruptible body of Buddhist monk can be seen in this area. The way that the local people manage the dead body of holy monk is interesting. The holy ossuary for incorruptible Buddhist monk is a specific management that can be seen in Thailand and Cambodia.

CASES

THAILAND

There are also some local Buddhist pagodas in Thailand holding holy ossuary for incorruptible

Buddhist monks. The most famous pagoda is Wat Chipakhao in Singburi province. The big ossuary locates at the front of the pagoda in a large building and becomes the famous pilgrimage site for the local people.

CAMBODIA

There are also some local Buddhist pagodas in Cambodia holding holy ossuary for incorruptible Buddhist monks. An example of famous site is located near PnomChisor ancient temple. The pagoda is namely Wat Pny Meas.

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(A).Wat Chipakhao, Thailand



(B).Wat PnyMeas, Cambodia

Figure 1. Some important holy ossuary for holy incorruptible Buddhist monks in Thailand and Cambodia

DISCUSSION

Incorruptible dead body is the specific ritual phenomenon seen worldwide. For local belief in Indochina, the incorruptible Buddhist monk is usually worshipped by the local people due to the belief that the monk has already been gotten nirvana or becomes arhant. The way that the local people manage the local body might be different. The use of coffin, especially for glass coffin is commonly seen [1]. The local people also usually perform ritual practice at the site of the coffin [2].

Focusing on ossuary, it is not commonly used but can be seen in some specific local pagoda. For general people, the ossuary is usually small and for containing bone. However, the holy ossuary is for containing of the whole body of

incorruptible monk. The ossuary is usually kept in specific building in Buddhist pagoda and becomes the local pilgrimage site.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None

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