

Monk with Beard: Extraordinary Famous Buddhist Monks in Indochina

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Abstract

Beard is an important organ at face. In male, beard is a symbol of masculinization. No wearing beard is a rule of some religious practices such as Hinayana Buddhism. In general, Buddhist monk will wear no beard. Here, the authors discuss on some extraordinary cases of famous Buddhist monks in Indochina who wear beard.

Keywords: Beard, Buddhist, Monk.

Introduction

Beard is an important organ at face. In male, beard is a symbol of masculinization. No wearing beard is a rule of some religious practices such as Hinayana Buddhism. In general, Buddhist monk will wear no beard. Here, the authors discuss on some extraordinary cases of famous Buddhist monks in Indochina who wear beard.

Case studies

The case studies are from Thailand, a tropical Indochina county where Hinayana Buddhism is deeply rooted. There are some local famous Buddhists monks who wear beard and become holy symbolization for local people.

Laungpor Rung, WatBangwaen, Chumporn province

This monk was a famous monk for the local in the past (during World War II period). It was believed that this monk had a ironized beard.

Toojao Kruba Rasri, Watthamsuerdao, Chinagmai province

This is another famous monk who was ever been in the northern region of Thailand. His practice is specific to Lanna style.

Laungpu Krao, Watthamrakangthong, Petchabun province

This was a locally famous monk who lived and practice in a forest monastery. His dead body is incorruptible and become famous local saint of local people.

LungporPornchai, Watthamamyoi, Srisaket province

This monk is still alive and practices in a forest monastery near Thailand-Cambodia border.



A.Laungpor Rung, Wat Bangwaen, Chumporn province



B.ToojaoKrubaRasri, Wat thamsuerdao, Chinagmai province



C.LaungpuKrao, Wat thamrakangthong, Petchabun province



D.LungporPornchai, Watthamnamyoi, Srisaket province

Figure 1. Some famous monks with beard

Discussion

Wearing beard might be not according to standard practice in Hinayana Buddhism. The local uddhist Hinayana text namely Jullawaka (จุลวรรค) mentioned that “ภิกษุณีพัตถลีย์แต่งหนวดด้วยการไถร และไว้หนวดไว้เคราเป็นรูปร่างต่าง ๆ รวมทั้งให้น้ำขมิ้นที่แคะออก ทรงห้ามและปรับอาบัติทุกกฎ”.

However, some local famous monks in Thailand wear beard. Local people usually worship to those monks. Wearing a beard might reflect the mixing of other religious believed such as Hinduism and Mahayana Buddhism.

Since wearing beard might look different, a monk with beard is usually attractive to local people and becomes famous person. There are usually stories of magic power relating to the monk. In fact, the belief on a monk with special appearance is rooted in Indochina. A good example is the belief on the monk with “rice” name [1]. These phenomena usually reflect the effect of supernatural animism on the local Buddhist belief in Indochina.

Indeed, external appearance such as style of hair or beard is not the core of religion. The practice for promoting of enlightenment in mind is the core. At present, people usually neglects for the core but focuses on external supplementary issues.

Conflict of interest: None

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