



Holy Tug-of-War: Specific Tradition in Indochina

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Abstract

Generally, tug-of-war is a specific game that groups of people staying at two opposite sides try to pull an object at the middle point toward their sides. A tug-of-war is a game for fun. However, it can sometimes be a holy tradition. Here, the authors present and discuss on holy tug-of-war, which is a specific unique tradition in some Buddhist communities in Indochina.

Keywords: tug-of-war, holy, Buddhism, Indochina

Introduction

Generally, tug-of-war is a specific game that groups of people staying at two opposite sides try to pull an object at the middle point toward their sides. A tug-of-war is a game for fun. It is usually held at a sport activity festival. However, it can sometimes be a holy tradition. Here, the authors present and discuss on holytug-of-war, which is a specific unique tradition in some Buddhist communities in Indochina.

Cases

A. ChakPrabat (Figure 1)

ChakPrabat is a uniqueness. This holy tug-of-war is annually held at a local immunity namely Taporn, khlung district, Chantaburi Province of Thailand. It has been regular held for centuries. The holy object for tug-of-war is a holy cloth paint as a holy Buddha footprint. Each year, tug-of-war is performed. People from two nearby villages joined the activity. The team of the village that wins tug-of-war will receive right for holding the holy Buddha foot print cloth for 1 year before the new round of holy tug-of-war

B. YaengSobpra (Figure 1)

YaengSobpra is a specific tradition on Mon communities who live in Mon state, Myanmar and Thailand. This is specifically held at a funeral ceremony of a local famous Buddhist monks. Before funeration, local people who join funeral ceremony will divide into two group and perform holy tug-of-war for the specific holder of coffin of corpse Buddhist monk.

Discussion

Holy activity is an important way of life. In area with deep route religious practice, there might be many interesting holy traditions. Here, the authors present two interesting cases of tug-of-war which are performed in Buddhist communities. The tug-of-war can represent the respectfulness of local people towards a holy object. This way of life can help sustain the religious practice in the communities. It is also a way for promoting practice according to religious pillars.

For ChakPrabat, it can reflect the traditional and cultural belief on Buddha footprint in Indochina [1]. The area without existence of natural Buddha footprint might find a representative for their communities' holiness and peace. For YaengSobpra, it is specifically deals with dead body. Indeed, many specific way of dealing with dead bodies exist in Indochina. YaengSobpra is directly with dead body of famous Buddhist monk. Sometimes, corpse of famous Buddhist monk might be incorruptible and conserved in glass coffin [2]. In other cases, funeration might be set. Activities during funeral festival can reflect deeply respectfulness to the dead Buddhist monk who is a respectful person for the local people.



A. ChakPrabat



B. YaengSobpra

Figure 1: Examples of tug-of-war

Conflict of interest: None

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