

Rice Blessing Ceremony of Thailand and Vietnam: The Relation of Southeast Asia

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Abstract : The objective of this article is to compare rice blessing ceremony between Thailand and Vietnam. Both countries are located in Southeast Asia where agriculture is the main occupation. As a result of the study, it is found that the rice blessing ceremony of Thai and Vietnamese societies have differences and similarities. A person leading the ceremony is a person who has the highest position in the country. For Thailand, it is the king or royal family member while for Vietnam, it is the president. In Thailand, the ceremony began in Ayutthaya period which derived from Buddhism and Brahmanism ideology. It is annually organized in the beginning of raining season. In Vietnam, it is annually organized in the beginning of spring. The first time it occurred was in Tien Le Monarchy period of Thien Phuc era deriving from Chinese ideology. The differences are ideas, believes, objectives and details of the ceremony. It is, in Thailand, to boost farmer's morale and to predict the fertility of crops in each year. Additionally, there is a prediction using royal cows. Meanwhile, in Vietnam the purpose is to worship god of weather for seasonal rain and productive harvesting. Therefore, it is presumed that the rice blessing ceremony of Thailand and Vietnam somewhat have similarities in spite of having different origin but are on the same basis of belief.

Keywords : agriculture, ceremony, culture, Thailand, Vietnam

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