

3636917 SHCR/M : MAJOR : COMPARATIVE RELIGION : M.A.
(COMPARATIVE RELIGION)

KEY WORDS : RELIGIOUS PRECEPTS / ALTITUDES / PRACTICE

PHRAMAHA PHICHITCHAI YOMPHALPHAI : A STUDY OF
OPINIONS OF THE THAI BUDDHISTS' ON THE FIVE PRECEPTS IN PRESENT
THAI SOCIETY: A CASE STUDY OF THE FIRST PRECEPT. THESIS
ADVISORS : DR. SUMANA TANGKANASINGH, Maitrise de Sociologic, Doctorat
de 3^e cycle en Sociologie, BOON KETUTSSA M.A., GUNYARAT PUNTHONG
M.A. 186 P. ISBN 974 - 662 - 247 - 1

The first of the 5 religious precepts in Buddhism is to refrain from killing. It is a central teaching of Buddhism, which is prevalent in Thai society, but at the present time there are statistics showing an extremely high level of 'killing' of all kinds. The results of this 'killing' will create a lack of kindness and increase crime and brutality.

The objective of the research is to study the opinions of Thai Buddhists on the 5 religious precepts, especially on killing animals, and to compare this with the results of research in understanding practice and obstacles to the practice of the first of the 5 precepts. The research is divided into 2 parts : documentary research and field research.

The research findings confirmed that avoidance of killing is important since it is the practice aimed at peace, and life security which diminish fear and suspicion among mankind and animals. Breaking the first precept means that the killing is composed of five elements: first, the animal has life, second, the killer must know that the animal has life, third, the killer must have the intention to kill, fourth, the killer must try to do so, fifth, the animal is killed. If all 5 components are not present, the precept is not violated. If the animal remains alive, the action is considered as a lack of kindness.

The way to practice the precept is by 3 methods which are: promising not to kill, avoiding killing when confronted by such a situation and regularly avoiding such situations. The person who practices the precept will receive the benefit of living in peace, happiness and will be able to continue their practice for higher levels of meditation.

Field research demonstrates that at present the majority of the people have the right understanding of the precept but they can not perfectly practise it due to their way of life. But they still believe that killing animals is sinful. The person who misunderstands how to preserve the precept will think that avoiding killing is too difficult and will give up.