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PHRAMAHA EKACHAI POCHADOM : A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE STATUS OF ARIYA-PUGGALA (NOBLE INDIVIDUALS)IN THERAVADA BUDDHISM AND SAINTS IN ROMAN CATHOLICISM. THESIS ADVISORS :PICHET KALAMAKASAIT,M.A. SARINTIP SATIRASILAPIN,M.A. PARICHART SUWANBUBBHA,PH.D. 180 P. ISBN.974-664-927-2 .

The purposes of this research were to compare the doctrines involving *Ariya-puggala* in the Theravada Buddhism and *Saints* in Roman Catholicism and to study views, understandings, beliefs and practices of Buddhists and Christians on such *Noble Persons* and *Saints*. Two samples of 100 persons per group were selected for the study. Questionnaires were used for Buddhists and Christians sample groups and 10 interview samples from versed and learned monks and fathers were collected.

The research results showed that in Buddhism all persons can become *Noble* when he or she practices Dhamma to purify his or her mind and eradicates cravings. All persons can become *Noble* whenever they strictly observe the Buddha's teachings. *Noble Persons* have four levels based on the cravings they have overcome. *Saints* in Christianity are those devoting themselves to God. They have strong love and strong faith in God. They strictly observe all disciplines. They endeavor and can sacrifice for human beings and to protect the disciplines. They strictly perform religious activities. All can be *Saints* by grace of God and by serious practices.

From the field research, analysis on data from questionnaires and interviews has showed that the samples of Buddhist and Christians had a consistent belief along the doctrines involving the ideal and the development to achieve the aim of life. They believed that everyone could be *Noble* and *Saints*. To be so, Buddhist samples thought that it needed an accumulation of spiritual development and perfection, but Christian samples thought that it depended on the grace of God. Buddhists have a tendency to attach *Noble* to each individual, more so than Christians do with *Saints*. Finally, it is suggested that both followers should imitate and practice according to the ways for becoming *Nobles* and *Saints* in Thai society.