

Thesis Title Belief and Behavior of Vegetarians : A Case
Study at Pathom-Asoke Village, Amphoe Muang,
Nakornpathom Province.

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ABSTRACT

This Anthropological study in 72 vegetarians was conducted by the writer who spent 6 months (February-June 1991) in the Pathom-Asoke village where these vegetarians were living. The objectives of the study aimed upon their beliefs, motivations, behaviors and environments. Moreover their general health status included general physical examination, hemoglobin test and stool examinations were performed.

Results revealed that Pathom-Asoke is a successful Buddhist village for those strictly practicing "Dharma" under the guidance of "Pothi-Rak" of Santi-Asoke. These vegetarians were called Yatitham, who were introduced into the village by their previous strong belief in 'Dharma' or by the influence of closed relatives and friends. The daily performance were numerous. Some of them were even resigned from the professions and joined the activity as full-time members. They

consumed vegetarian meal once a day, participated in publication of Asoke journals and books, tape-recorded the preach, and some even practiced agriculture and harvested in that piece of land.

Regarding vegetarian food consumption, these people believed that this practice would enhance purification of their soul as well as improving their health status. Some would believe that this will bring a better life upon the reincarnation.

The living condition in Pathom-Asoke consisted of the "four essences" of life, namely, food, clothing, medicine and housing. People were self-sufficient marked by the solemnity of life. They strictly followed the community rules and regulation. The housing was simple, serving basic need and situated among natural environs. The belief was that this would bring about serenity, freedom and even enlightenment.

Results of eating vegetarian foods among members of the Pathom-Asoke showed that vegetarian foods are very useful to both physical and mental health. This is confirmed by physician's examinations and laboratory test, that most members were in good health. Then, vegetarian foods is recommended for one who seeks for happiness.