

Thesis Title A Comparative Study of Cultural Adjustment
 - of Buddhist Monks and Missionaries for Their
 Religious Propagation: A case study at
 Wat Srisoda in Chiang Mai and at Bethel Bible
 Institute in Chiang Rai.

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Date of Graduation 14 December B.E. 2536 (1993)

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to study of cultural adjustment of Buddhist monks and missionaries for their religious propagation including positive factors of adjustment as well as their problems.

This thesis is divided into two parts. The first part is on Buddhist adjustment and Christian adjustment in the past up until now. The second part is the field research on the cultural adjustment of monks and missionaries to the local culture of the hill tribe people. The data were taken from monks under the control of Phra Dhammajarik program at Wat Srisoda in Chiang Mai and missionaries at Bethel Bible Institute in Chiang Rai. The methods of this study are observation and interviews.

The findings from the document indicate that both Buddhism and Christianity tried to adjust themselves to societies in different

ways, such as language, local beliefs, in order to achieve their real goal. Buddhism emphasizes the use of alternative suitable methods with applied teaching according to persons and socio-cultural situations. As in Thailand, its teaching has been mixed with the original belief and become a Thai Buddhism while Christianity emphasizes teaching together with social services. It is still true in Thailand, Christian teaching came with services and some new technology. Nowadays, both Buddhism and Christianity have developed their role to cope with the social and economic changes in society.

The research findings indicate that the monks and missionaries used similar ways to spread the religious teachings to the hill tribe people, that is, to help them in many possible ways such as in education, economics and public health side by side with religious propagation. Differences reside in the fact that missionaries are apt to adjust themselves to the local communities better than monks because they were trained in local language and culture whereas monks are limited to live within their discipline and they were not trained neither in local language nor in hill tribe culture. However both have problems of the lack of financial supports and personels. Nowadays, the changes in the hill tribe communities are positive factors to the conversion from animism to Buddhism or Christianity. However, Buddhism is more popular among them because Buddhism is the official religion of Thailand, being a Buddhist means that one can identify oneself as a Thai citizen in Thai culture.