

Thesis Title : An Analytical Study of Buddhamamaka (Buddhist Devotees) in Thai Society

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Degree : Master of Arts (Buddhist Studies)

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ABSTRACT

This Thesis is qualitative research, It is of three objectives as follows : -

- 1) to study the history and the practice of Upasaka-Upasika at the Buddha period,
- 2) to study the history and the practice of Buddhamamaka in Thai Society, and
- 3) to analyze the quality of Buddhamamaka in Thai Society.

From the study, it is found as follows : -

At the Buddha period, The Buddha's disciples who declared their wishes to the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha, and adhered to the Triple Gem and relied on the more precious than anything else, it was called "Upasaka-Upasika". There are two kinds of approaching to the Triple Gem. The first one is Supramundane, one who has an access to the spiritual Nirvana and can switch to the Noble One. The second one is Worldly, one who has an access to spiritual faith, it is firmly belief. The Buddha taught the methods of practice for Upasaka-Upasika to be 5 Doctrinal Qualities as follows :- 1) to be of Faith, 2) to be of Sila, 3) to believe in Kamma, 4) do not seek for the Dakkhineyya-Puggala outside Buddhism and 5) to make merits in Buddhism. These Upasaka are called "The Upasaka Ratana". If one practices in the opposite ways as follows :- 1) to be of no Faith, 2) to be of no Sila, 3) to believe in Rumour and Superstition, 4) to seek for the Dakkhineyya-Puggala outside Buddhism and 5) do not make merits in Buddhism. These Upasaka are called "The bad Upasaka"

At present, in Thai Society there are those who declare themselves to be the Buddhamamaka and those do not declare themselves to be the Buddhamamaka. The Buddhists who do not declare themselves are not called “Buddhamamaka”. The principles of practice for the Buddhamamaka are 3, namely :- 1) to get rid of the bad actions, 2) to do the good actions and 3) to purify one’s mind.

Regarding the quality of Buddhamamaka in Thai Society, the researcher found as follows :- 1) Buddhists should to be of the right faith in Triple Gem and Kamma but most of them are of the wrong faith, 2) Even Buddhists have observed Sila already but most of them do not preserve Sila and they remain do these actions are killing, stealing, adultery, lies and drinking, 3) Buddhists declare to respect the Triple Gem but most of them are excited the rumour, 4) Buddhists do not seek for the Dakkhineyya-Puggala outside Buddhism but most of them always seek for the other Gods who perform a ceremony that they believe to cause wealth and good fortune and 5) Buddhists should make merits in Buddhism by donation, Sila and Bhavana but most them only donate. They would not like to keep Sila and practice Bhavana to cause the wisdom to arise.

Therefore the Buddhamamaka in Thai Society should study and know the Dhammas to have the knowledge about them, the fact of which is the mental strength to cause one to practice rightly and to be the good Buddhamamaka full of the five Doctrines,