

Thesis Title A Comparative Study of Social Roles of
 Protestant Churches in Thailand : A Case
 Study of Development Activities in
 Eradication of Poverty

Name Sanya Ladaphongpattana

Degree Master of Arts (Comparative Religion)

Thesis Supervisory Committee

 Pinit Ratanakul, Ph.D. (Yale)

 Sumana Tangkanasingh, Docteur en Sociologie
 (Grenoble)

 Somchart cha-umthong, D.Min. (Columbia)

Date of Graduation 27 May B.E.2535 (1992)

Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to study and compare the conceptual and practical dimensions of Christian social development as engaged in by Church of Christ in Thailand (CCT) and Evangelical Fellowship of Thailand (EFT).

The thesis consist of two parts. The first part is document analysis based on the study of the Bible, related documents and manuscripts. It analyzies the history and role of Thai Christian social development since the period of King Narai up to the present. The second part consists of data collected from field research at

Samlong Training Center and Suksan community. It draws upon interviews with prominent persons such as the director of Social Development Section of CCT and Field director of World Vision together with about 200 trainees.

The field research found that it is important that Christianity in Thailand address both the spiritual and material needs of Thai society. But at present, there is a lot of emphasis by Christian organizations on meeting the material needs of the poor regardless of religion than on the spiritual dimension of Christian Social development.

The thesis concludes that CCT and EFT have same goal of achieving eradication of poverty through occupational training projects. But it was observed that CCT has been more successful in this venture than EFT because of its better organizational structure. While EFT's emphasis on mission and preaching leaves affairs of social development to individual members, resulting in conflict of methods and less organized social activity.