

Transitional Stage of Kakilingan Negritos: From Shifting Cultivation to Plow Agriculture

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This essay presents a case study of Pinatubo Negritos' traditional subsistence system and its transformation. The data used in this essay were collected by myself. My field research was carried out in Kakilingan village located at the southwestern foot of Mt. Pinatubo from October, 1977 up to April, 1979.

Kakilingan village was built by Ecumenical Foundation for Minority Development Inc. in the middle of 1970's, in order to promote sedentary plow agriculture for Negritos who practiced shifting cultivation in surrounding mountains. The Foundation leased one carabao (water buffalo) and one hectare farm land to each Negrito family coming down from the mountains to settle in the village. It encouraged them to plant sorghum for the first year and then to plant upland rice from the second year. However, improving labor quality as well as acquiring new agricultural techniques are indispensable for Negritos to change their subsistence system. Many Negrito farmers could not follow up this radical change and had very poor harvest every year. That is to say, the Foundation project could not obtain good results at least by the time I left the village. In spite of the failure in sedentary agriculture project, the Foundation exerted strong influence on Negrito subsistence system and their daily economic activities.

The object of my study is to analyze the problems which Kakilingan Negritos were facing at their transitional stage of subsistence system, namely from shifting cultivation to plow agriculture. In doing so, I also present detailed analysis of the changes which were actually occurring in their economic life by the impact of the Foundation project.