

Title : "The Economic, Political, Social and Cultural Changes in Esan Villages : A Case Study of the Yur's Village"

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#### ABSTRACT

The purposes of this research were to study the history of the Yur's Village, and understand characteristics of the economic, political, social and cultural changes. It also aimed at analyzing factors and consequences of the changes in the village.

This research was done with extensive field investigations. Techniques for collecting qualitative data included two months of close observation in the village and intensive interviews with the villagers. Moreover, throughout the period of one-year study, a research assistant stayed at the village to follow all events and interview every household head. The data they collected were then analyzed quantitatively so as to ensure and preserve both validity and reliability.

Results of the research determined that the Yurs belonged to the Mnoh-Khmer' group. They originally settled down on the left bank of the Khong River and were known as 'Kha', 'Kui', 'Soai' etc., depending on where they inhabited. Evidence showed that the Yurs migrated to the right bank either to follow their masters who wished to widen their boundaries or to escape from the occasional riots on the left bank. The studied village, dated back to more than 200 years, was situated on the highlands surrounded by swamps. Houses were clustered in the central area, which was the highest. The village was generally in good condition, with electricity and convenient transportation to contact the outside world. As for the structure of population, there was a rather high dependency ratio. Family planning was practised more than in the past.

Concerning economic change, in general the economic pattern turned more and more to the trading system. Various monetary institutions came to play an important role in the village. From simply farming, the village became multi-occupational. The change in labour and labour employment was more evident. Considering political change, the village headman allowed more liberty in expressing opinions. The form of governing as well as the leader's role were transformed. The system of mutual trust and cooperative working also changed. As far

as social and cultural change was concerned, the family institution changed in many aspects roles of parents, division of inheritance, house building and relative relations. Concerning the educational institution, the roles of teachers and schools, as well as the educational values, changed. Interestingly, the language differed very little from before, the Yur language still prevailing over other languages. In public welfare, change was evident in many aspects, especially sanitary arrangements. However, while modern medicine was accepted more, traditional curing, such as yu-faj (post-partum rite), was still in use in some parts. As for the religious institution, the roles of monks as well as conventional ceremonies changed. The rule of abstinence, in particular, became less strict. Seasonal religious festivals were more or less transformed. Besides, the recreational pattern changed in accordance with the development of the village.

Important supporting factors in the economic, political, social and cultural changes were public welfare, ecology, personality, cultural diffusion, government authority diffusion, and influence of the trading system. These factors, sometimes interdependent, affected the village changes in many aspects. Moreover, nearly all factors were in accordance with the hypothesis.

Many consequences followed the changes. The village became more modern materialistically. The villagers improved their quality of life. The village contacted the governmental body more and responded more to their policy. Practice in the household also changed. The household heads had a good attitude towards rural development, governmental body as well as youth. At any rate, the village faced many social problems as it turned towards materialistic modernization.