

Villar Settlement Farm School for the Aetas: Assimilation through American Colonial Education in Zambales, Philippines

Authors : Julian E. Abuso, Alberto T. Paala Jr.

Abstract : The creation of settlement farm schools at the outset of American colonization of the Philippines was not a matter of accident; rather, their establishment was a major component of a grand plan on public education based on the benevolent assimilation policy of the United States. This argument is illustrated by the case of Villar Settlement Farm School, a school for the Aetas as a non-Christian tribal community in 1907. The study aims to: (1) identify and describe the antecedents for the establishment of Settlement Farm School, (2) explicate the cultural conflicts encountered by Aetas in school, (3) appraise the consequences of education as acculturation among Aeta population. The study made use of the following: historical data based on primary and secondary sources and life histories from primary informants. The Settlement Farm School for the Aetas was borne out of the American's change in policy from military to civilian authority, recognition of education as a tool for benevolent assimilation. The narratives of informants manifested resistance to certain aspects of the educational process.

Keywords : settlement farm school Aetas, tribe, colonial education, Aeta, non-Christian tribal community

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