Aspects of Acceptance and Adaptation of Innovations within Traditional Horticultural Systems of the PNG Highlands

Regarding the various degrees of change from traditional subsistence farming to present agricultural standards in the PNG highlands during the past decades there are a number of features bearing particular socio-anthropological relevance.

Concerning the matter of technical devices it is most significant that archaic hand tools of more or less Neolithic type were in this course not gradually replaced by more improved hand tools of European origin or other agricultural implements of the European pre-industrial period but instead became completely out of use within just one generation due to the introduction of modern agro-machinery.

A similar situation applies regarding animal husbandry since the import of new zoological specimen to PNG scarcely led to an improvement of traditional smallholder farming but instead only resulted in the absolute dominance of vast cattle stations.

Still there were a number of attempts towards the one or other live stock introduction at an experimental stage carried out either by mission staff, by government officials or private development managers mainly during the late quarter of the past century which at limited range were of some marked influence, efficiency, and acceptance by the local population. Though with different results this was the case with the dairy farm of Fatima, W.H.P., the sheep breeding and wool manufacturing centre near Goroka, E.H.P., the tylopode training station of Popago, S.H.P., and several projects of minor success like the establishment of poultry batteries and fish ponds in other areas of the PNG highlands.