



TRACING THE AKLANON ASEAN CONNECTION THROUGH LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

This paper was a pioneering attempt to investigate the Aklanon ASEAN connection through their distinctive language and that of the language used by their ASEAN neighbor, specifically Indonesia. Aklan is a province in the island of Panay in Western Visayas, Philippines. The researcher tried to match common words that were similar in meanings to Bahasa Indonesia, as well as those which, although the same common terms, peculiarly took on different meanings. The *Maragtas*, or *History of Panay from the first inhabitants and the Bornean immigrants from which the Bisayans are descended to the arrival of the Spaniards*, written by Pedro Alcantara Monteclaro, told of the coming of ten Bornean datus who settled in Panay Island. These rulers and their families, apparently, were being maltreated by Sultan Makatunaw so they decided to leave Borneo. They reached Panay Island, and after successfully negotiating the purchase of the lowlands from the Ati chieftain, Marikudo and his wife, Maniwantiwan, with a gold salakot and gold necklace, settled in the lowlands. In many towns in Aklan, religious festivals tell of the barter and these were commemorated in the Ati-Atihan festivals. While there is no historical evidence on the barter of Panay Island, the researcher tried to prove that similarities in the two languages indicate contact, whether direct or indirect, between the inhabitants, giving clues to the movements of peoples or ideas, or both. Knowing the extent of similarity between the two languages establishes the kinship between the Aklanons and the Indonesians.

KEYWORDS: Aklanon, ASEAN connection, language

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