

THE HALARAN FESTIVAL IN CAPIZ

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By

GRACE ANGELI LAYO BUENO

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ABSTRACT

Bueno, Grace Angeli L., U.P. in the Visayas, Iloilo City, May 26, 1988. The Halaran Festival in Capiz.

This is a local, descriptive study on the Halaran celebration in Roxas City, the capital of the province of Capiz. It sets out to contribute data on the historical, religious and folkloristic aspects of the said festival.

The study has the following objectives: to trace the origin and history of the Halaran celebration; to describe the manner of celebrating the Halaran festival; and to analyse the celebration as reflective of the local culture and values of Capiz.

Data were gathered through unstructured interviews and questionnaires and library researches. The researcher also made use the method of participant observation.

The study revealed that there is only one popular version of the origin of the Halaran which was passed on orally from one generation to another. It was said that Halaran first came into being during the settlement of the six Bornean datus headed by Sumakwel in Panay Island. The first Halaran happened in Punta Cogon, Roxas City.

The manner of celebrating the Halaran festival evolved through the years, major changes in the date, place, duration and activities has been introduced to meet the demands of the changing society. The pagan aspects of the Halaran such as the babaylan, the incantations, the ethnic dances and the re-enactment of the ritual had been eliminated. In its place are the Christian practices

brought about by the introduction of Christianity in the country during the period of colonization by the Spaniards. Among these are the masses, mass weddings, mass confirmation, mass baptism and many others.

The study also revealed the Capiceño cultural values reflected in the manner they celebrate Halaran. It depicted the spirit of kinship, belongingness and the typical bayanihan spirit that is very much Filipino. It also brings out the gregarious and fun-loving spirit of the people, their hospitable nature and most of all, it depicts the peoples' piety. Halaran is a thanksgiving time, where people show their gratefulness to the Creator by giving or offering something special to their fellowmen - be it money, food or love, kindness and joy.

Halaran is a way of life to the Capiceños. It expresses the value of sharing in daily lives, realising that as a way of life, this practice can bring to the people of Capiz a brighter and more secure future.