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O35 - Ethnoastronomy in the Cordilleras: Exploring the Astronomical Beliefs of the Bontoc People

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This study explores the indigenous astronomical knowledge of the Bontoc people in Barangay Maligcong, Bontoc, Mountain Province, Philippines, and its continuing influence on subsistence practices, language, and sociocultural identity. As Ambrosio (2010) notes, the ways celestial bodies are interpreted often depend on the natural resources available in the area and the daily activities of local communities. Using ethnographic fieldwork that included interviews with community elders, alongside a review of historical and linguistic sources, this research shows how lunar phases once guided planting, constellations marked seasonal changes, and astronomical objects informed ritual and language. Although the community today depends on weather forecasts and climate observations, these star traditions remain important cultural markers. Linguistic analysis further suggests that celestial terms in the Bontok language stem from Austronesian roots, reinforcing links between astronomy, history, and heritage. By preserving these perspectives, this study contributes to the archive of Philippine Ethnoastronomy and underlines the value of indigenous knowledge in enriching science and encouraging more inclusive approaches to education.

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