

SOCIAL SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES

Manuscript info:

Received November 4, 2018., Accepted November 12, 2018., Published November 30, 2018.

PHILIPPINE POLITICAL ECONOMY 1998-2018: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Ruben O Balotol Jr,
rbalotol@gmail.com
Visayas State University-Baybay



<http://dx.doi.org/10.26739/2573-5616-2018-12-2>

Abstract: In every decision than an individual deliberates always entails economic underpinnings and collective political decisions to consider that affects the kind of decision an individual shape. For example governments play a major role in establishing tax rates, social, economic and environmental goals. The impact of economic and politics are not only limited from one's government, different perspectives and region of the globe are now closely linked imposing ideology and happily toppling down cultural threat to their interests.

According to Žižek (2008) violence is not solely something that enforces harm or to an individual or community by a clear subject that is responsible for the violence. Violence comes also in what he considered as objective violence, without a clear agent responsible for the violence. Objective violence is caused by the smooth functioning of our economic and political systems. It is invisible and inherent to what is considered as normal state of things. Objective violence is considered as the background for the explosion of the subjective violence. It fore into the scene of perceptibility as a result of multifaceted struggle.

It is evident that economic growth was as much a consequence of political organization as of conditions in the economy. It also manifest that society's laws could be described on the same economic principles used to explicate society's choice of roads, bridges, hospitals, and schools.

To elaborate the point of the study. First it discusses the Philippine politics and economy from Spanish to American period. It highlights the transformation of primitive politics and economy in the Philippines as shaped by colonialism. Second, it examines the divided political and economic policy from Estrada to early administration of Duterte. Finally, the study critically presents the 21st century phenomena of Philippine political economy and the transformation Filipino's ideologies.

Key words: Political economy, colonialism, violence, Dutertismo, Philippines

Recommended citation: Ruben O Balotol Jr. Philippine Political Economy 1998-2018: A Critical Analysis. 11-12. American Journal of Research P. 15-31 (2018).

Introduction

In every decision than an individual deliberates always entails economic underpinnings and collective political decisions to consider that affects the kind of decision an individual shape. For example governments play a major role in establishing tax rates, social, economic and environmental goals. The impact of economic and politics are not only limited from one's government, different perspectives and region of the globe are now closely linked imposing ideology and happily toppling down cultural threat to their interests.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, World Trade Organization (WTO), Moody's and other international arbiter of economic and political stability affects individual and the communal political prospects, it is forced to sacrifice elementary political freedoms and hampers economic sustainability which the adverse effect manifest in the inability to expand determinants of freedom such as educational and health accessibility as well as the exercise of political and civil rights (Sen, 1999; Cohn, 2012).

It is evident that economic growth was as much a consequence of political organization as of conditions in the economy. It also manifest that society's laws could be described on the same economic principles used to explicate society's choice of roads, bridges, hospitals, and schools (Usher, 2003). Thus, this study is a critical analysis of

Philippine political economy from 1998 to early of 2018. The year 1998 to early 2018 is considered significant because it marks revolutionary changes in political populism and reevaluation of democracy are prevalent among scholars.

Furthermore, to elaborate the point of the study critical analysis was employed. A philosophical method which emphasizes that the search for truth depends on the rigor of thinking. As it seeks answers to those questions that have implications to human life. To elaborate the point of the study. First, to discuss the Philippine political economy from Spanish to American colonial era. It is a crucial part of Philippine history that would serve as a guide in understanding thoroughly the climate of modern political economy in the Philippines. Second, examines the divided political and economic policy from Estrada to early administration of Duterte. Finally, the study critically presents the 21st century phenomena of Philippine political economy and the transformation of Filipino's ideologies. As the country enters into the crucial phase of the present administration

Revisiting Philippine Political Economy from Spanish to American Colonia Era

The absence of political unity allowed Miguel Lopez de Legaspi to impose Christianity and established a feudal colonial rule to the majority of the Filipinos. All the

protestations of friendship, equality, and brotherhood were empty words which meant nothing in practical terms. But what the Spanish rule did mean was an interruption and redirection of technology, economy, religion, politics and society (Casi?o, 1982; Constantino, 1994).

The Spanish conquest eventually shaped fundamentally the lives of the native population. The Spaniards forced the natives to adapt to new ways, to take on the immense labor of producing enough food for their masters and themselves, causing to develop a consciousness of national solidarity from a century of common grievances. In addition, the introduction of new systems affects the economic development, paving to three distinct economic systems that existed in the Philippines; a Western economy, a native economy, and a Chinese economy. The Spanish galleon trade, Manila-Acapulco became a potent stimulus for the increase of migrants and which eventually monopolized by the Chinese, making them an indispensable and established institution in Philippine economic life not until the coming of British traders since the Spanish crown could not sanction rival European powers due to the distance, supervision is difficult (Casi?o, 1982).

While the increasing commercialization within the Philippines was the handiwork of the Chinese who did business with the native producers, Spanish governors and friars, it was the commercial

activities of the British that radically modifies the economic life. English merchants and the East India Company at start occupied positions of importance second only to the Chinese traders, by the end of nineteenth century, the English had attain commercial primacy in Manila (Constantino, 1994).

The demands of the capitalist modernity forced Philippines to developed export-crop economy, fostering a national market, attracting commerce. Tobacco industry was the first large-scale commercial venture in the Philippine agricultural economy (Fenner, 1982; Constantino, 1994; Casi?o, 1982).

Moreover, the liberalism of the ilustrados in Europe and in the Philippines failed to secure administrative reforms and promote class participation in the political rule. The attempts to establish an independent Philippine governance is first manifested in Rizal's La Liga Filipina, the blueprint constitution of a Filipino nation, which sought to involve the people directly in the reform movement.

However, the struggle was marred with personal interests within the ranks of the revolutionary government which resulted to the passage of leadership of the movement from the proletariat to the hands of the elite-Illustrado claimed that the direction and control of the revolution would be best guided under their stewardship. Future events would demonstrate how the revolutionary forces of the people would be used as a bargaining lever

by the elite for the protection of their economic and political advances (Constantino, 1994).

In Hong Kong, Americans have cunningly guaranteed Aguinaldo not its mercenary motives but for the sake of humanity, considered it as apropos to extend their protective mantle over Philippines, thus making Filipinos as the first colonial possession of the United States in South-East Asia following the Spanish-American War. Unlike other American conquest, the Filipino politician resisted and again used the common people as the bargaining lever to protect their interest. When the Americans established its rule in the country, the businessmen and hacenderos (landed elites)cross over to the camp of the new colonizers. The failure of the American government to establish land reform because they were careful not to threaten the landed elites who constantly supply agricultural products for the U.S. market (Villacorta, 2002; San Juan, 2007).

According to Renato and Letizia Constantino (1978) together with the English, the public school system, and the fairly rapid Filipinization of the bureaucracy, colonial politics became a vehicle for the political education of the Filipino as colonial citizen at the same coopted into the American colonial establishment, a new generation of leaders to succeed the *Ilustrado* collaborationists. Philippine politics became a colonial version of American war politics and

featured a perpetual scramble for position and patronage which the colonial power satisfied as reward for acquiescence to its own political and economic objectives.

Philippine Politics and the Economy under Estrada, Arroyo, Aquino III and Duterte administration

The discussion approaches the examination of politics and economy of the 21st century Philippines by critically reflecting the governance of Estrada, Arroyo, Aquino III and the most recent administration of Duterte. It is deemed relevant to tackle their political and economic agendas sourced from various medium. It relies on publicly available reports, studies and information.

Joseph Ejercito Estrada (1998-2001)

On May of 1998, the actor turned politician was elected as the thirteenth President of the Philippine Republic. Estrada's over a hundred movies where most of his character depicts of an *astig* hero who defends the weak and the poor from the vices and the corrupt society. Estrada recognized the influence of television to the ideological formation of the Filipinos in matters of politics and morality he then fused his movies and political persona to gain advantage during the 1998 presidential election. Thus, making his slogan of governance and propaganda, "Erap para sa mahirap," which eventually become a successful

rhetoric (Abinales and Amoroso, 2005; Hedman, 2000).

Estrada started his political career in 1969 as mayor of San Juan, Manila until 1986. In 1987, he was elected to the Senate where he voted the removal of U.S. bases in the country and pushed for some agrarian reform legislation. He was elected as Vice-President in 1992 and President of the Philippine Republic in 1998. However, assuming the office was tainted with controversy of different sorts.

To promote economic growth and political stability. In 1999, Estrada with the approval of the Congress deemed that to destroy militant acts of the Moro Liberation Front camps and the takeover of Jolo Island, American military expertise and the reestablishment of their bases are necessary in the aid of the campaign. In addition, Estrada gave his cabinet secretaries autonomy to manage their office where despite of financial constraints, the Development of Agrarian Reform, Bureau of Immigration, Civil Service Commission, and Bureau of Treasury performed credibly (Abinales and Amoroso, 2005).

The political commitment of the Estrada administration provided positive growth in the Philippine economy, particularly the export and import industry. The agricultural sector, although with decelerated movement provided a growth higher compared to the historical trend. The electronic sector (electrical machinery) had the most

contribution due to rapid expansion made by some local firms from contract assembly process to elements of design. In addition, the service sector also registered growth fueled by the transport, communication and storage sector. The surge in purchase of cellular phones and the completion of Metro Rail Transit contributed vibrant activity to the economy. (Yap, 2001; Abinales and Amoroso, 2005).

The economic and governance improvement was short-lived, since Philippine politics are marred with anomalous "mafia style" alliance. Estrada's proposal for the next series of reforms needed to sustain economic recovery was refused by the House of Congress. Moreover, issues on government costly war in Mindanao; the accusation of government connivance on illegal activities; resignation of his cabinet members, particularly Vice-President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, who called for Estrada's resignation; and the withdrawal of alliance by some political personalities led to Estrada's downfall (Nadeau, 2008; Rivera, 2011; Abinales and Amoroso, 2005).

The collapse of Estrada's political career gain momentum in October of 2000 when trapo politician turned protagonist Luis Chavit Singson, upon learning that Estrada planned to set up a bingo network to rival his jueteng (illegal lottery) organization, publicly reported that Estrada received an amount of 414 million pesos as bribes from illegal gambling, skimming funds from

tobacco excise tax and other corrupt practices that rival politicians deemed ground for impeachment. Before the end of October 2000, Estrada was already demanded to resign by the Catholic Church, civil society groups, political parties and private sector business clubs (Abinales and Amoroso, 2005; Queribin et al, 2003).

The House of Congress passed the articles of impeachment to the Senate turning the Senate as an impeachment court with Chief Justice Hilario Davide, Jr as the presiding officer and the senators as judges. Estrada was charged with plunder, graft and corruption. The political turmoil affected vehemently the economic activities of the country where the value of the peso depreciated and the stock market continued to sink. In January 2001, Estrada became the first president to be impeached or resigned as the armed forces withdrew its support, the growing civil unrest dubbed as Epifanio De Los Santos Avenue (EDSA) 2 which is shrouded with controversy where citizens received text messages from their cellular phones, persuading people to gather at EDSA to protest led to the government takeover by Vice-President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and was declared by Supreme Chief Justice Hilario Davide, Jr, as constitutional successor of Joseph Estrada. However, the declaration and ouster was marred with much foreboding, clouded with doubt and tarnished with signs of deceit and betrayal (Queribin et al, 2003; Rivera, 2011, Batalla, 2016).

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo (2001-2010)

Gloria Arroyo was the daughter of the former President Diosdado Macapagal. She studied economics at Georgetown University in U.S. and earned her Ph.D. in economics at the University of the Philippines. From 1977 to 1987, she served as an assistant professor at Ateneo de Manila University and as a professor at the University of the Philippines.

A member of political elite and her personal credential made her even popular and credible to unite diverse political and economic ideology of the country based from her educational attainment. Arroyo served as assistant secretary and undersecretary during the presidency of Corazon Aquino at the Department of Trade and Industry and as Cabinet secretary of Social Welfare and Development during the presidency of Joseph Estrada. In 1992, she was elected senator and elected Vice-President in 1998. In 2001, she replaced Estrada after a coup de tat dubbed as People Power 2 (Sicat, 2001; Abinales and Amoroso, 2005).

Arroyo replacing Estrada and taking over the government was faced by the following major political and economic issues: One is to assure the people who rallied behind the ouster of Estrada that her governance is for the promotion of Filipino's welfare. Second, the handling of Estrada's case, where his constituents are the poor. Third, some of Estrada's loyal political allies were elected officials in the Senate

and Congress making them a threat to Arroyo's legislative agenda. Fourth, economic vitality and recovery was far more important and the needed reforms for Philippine economy since the country are faced with fuel hikes and depreciation of peso (Yap, 2001).

Arroyo's governance were littered with corruption and political scandals. She faced serious challenges including destabilization and impeachment attempts whom she survived these challenges and ended her term in June 2010. "People Power 2" was the first hurdle of President Arroyo after Estrada's arrest in 2001. For two days supporters of Estrada attempted to replicate People Power 1 and 2. Marked by riots and vandalism; People Power 3 ended unsuccessfully on May 1 after the mid-term general election it strengthened Arroyo's hold on government (Abinales and Amoroso, 2005).

Moreover, on 2003 occurred the Oakwood Mutiny, in which some military members seized a luxury serviced apartment facility in protest. The Magdalo group rallied against because of alleged anomalies in the Armed Forces of the Philippines. In 2007, armed military officers being tried for their involvement of the Oakwood mutiny laid siege at the Manila Peninsula after they walked out of the trial held at the Makati Regional Trial Court. On February 2006 bombs exploded in different places in Metro Manila. In an unsigned statement faxed to the

media outfits the Young Officers Union of the New Generation (YOUng) and the Reformists Armed Forces of the Philippines (RFAP) claimed responsibility for the blast. The discovery of military participation led to the immediate replacement of top ranking officials of the Scout Rangers and Marines (Nadeau, 2008; Batalla, 2016).

The most severe of them all which still haunts her credibility as political leader was the Hello Garci scandal which implicated Arroyo in electoral fraud. The controversy surrounded on the issue when an audio recording leaked asserting to reveal Arroyo on the phone with Election Commissioner Garcillano talking about paddling her vote margin. The scandal led to the withdrawal of support from former President Corazon Aquino to members of the Arroyo Cabinet and Liberal Party allies in Congress. The scandal led opposition to pursue legal channels for removing her from the office. From 2005 to 2008, impeachment complaints were filed at the House of Representatives (Batalla, 2016; Rood, 2010).

In terms of Arroyo's administration of the economy, the country showed a significant rise with the following reasons and indicators: increase in remittance from Filipino's working abroad; the enactment of the Electric Power Industry Reform Act which helped alleviate National Power Corporation, a government-owned engaged in power generation and distribution, financial woes by

generating a net income of close to 90 billion pesos from 2005 to 2006; the Arroyo administration adopted revenue enhancing reforms: first, government procurement were streamlined, which resulted a substantial savings; second, revenue administration at the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) and the Bureau of Customs was strengthened; and third, reform in value added tax law which resulted in the increase of tax revenues. Although the economic activity was booming, poverty and hunger was on the rise, economic growth were not broadly shared by most Filipinos. The poverty rate had gone up by about 40 per cent, and social indicator such as education, health, and domestic unemployment and underemployment remained troubling, the inability to curb social problems was due to debt servicing which consumed more than 25 per cent of national budget in 2002 (Hays, 2008; Abinales and Amoroso, 2005; Batalla, 2016).

Benigno Simeon Aquino III (2010-2016)

The 15th President of the Philippines comes from the political elites of Tarlac and bourgeois society. The son of Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino and Corazon Cojuangco-Aquino. Aquino III started his political career when he served as Representative of the 2nd District of Tarlac from 1998 to 2007. In May 2007, he joined the Philippine Senate. After the death of his mother he declared to ran for the

2010 presidential election replacing Liberal Party bet Mar Roxas, who became his vice-presidential running mate as a result of the changes.

The governance of Aquino III is criticize as a man pushed by fate and media gimmickry to the presidency. From 2010 until 2016 his presidency faced controversy which usually misuse of funds or the loss of lives. As demanded by general public his stands are considered vague or nothing at all.

There are three controversial issues which draws national and international criticism which adversely affected the political career of Aquino III both present and future:

Manila Hostage Crisis. In August 2010, eight Hong Kong tourists were killed by a former police officer Rolando Mendoza, after a failed rescue attempt supervise by Aquino himself causing a strained ties between Philippines and Hong Kong. The former police was reported furious about his dismissal on corruption charges and demands compensation at gunpoint.

The relatives and the victims considered the handling of the President as lacking of empathy, the criticism comes after Aquino III appeared smiling during the press conference following the incident (Chan, 2015). The hostage crisis enrage the Hong Kong government and its citizens. It issued a travel ban order and urged Hong Kong citizens visiting Philippines to leave the country. The disappointment of Hong Kong led the Aquino

administration a high-stake blame game centered on the police, the press and the President. Moreover, it was also reported that Filipinos working in Hong Kong were racially attacked by their employers and some citizens (Rauhala, 2015; Calonzo, 2015).

Typhoon Yolanda Aftermath. In November 2013, a super typhoon wreak havoc across the central Philippines and killing 6,3000 people, 14 billion dollars of economic damages and 2.5 million people in urgent need of humanitarian relief. A day before the landfall of the typhoon, Aquino III assured the nation that they are prepared and relief goods were pre-positioned in the areas expected to be hit, as the typhoon landed after Aquino's promise of planes, ship and relief supplies never materialized forcing people to loot and rummage for food. The extent of devastation and the harrowing stories of survival and loss captured by the local and international media was tearful. Together with the howling sorrow, anger and frustration made the victims to pour their outrage to the poor leadership of Aquino III. It shows that the politics of Aquino III is disastrous and that magnifying his association to his father's nationalistic ideology is nothing but a media gimmick (Ramos, 2014, Heydarian, 2017).

The response of the government draws a heavy criticism not only locally but including the international community, where the Department of Social Welfare and

Development headed by an insensitive Dinky Soliman was implicated of an alleged pilferage of relief donations, since thousands of survivors reported that they struggled with hunger, chaos and disease.

Moreover, in a post-disaster joint committee hearing of Congress featured Tacloban Mayor Alfred Romualdez. The inquiry also called DILG Secretary Manuel Roxas to give testimony, but did not attend. Romualdez declares to the committee the reasons for the meagerness of action which led to the intention of the United Nation to take manage the crisis: First, Roxas repeatedly refused to grant for additional police personnel to keep the peace in Tacloban, and for trucks to help in the recovery of the bodies and debris clearance. Second, Roxas told Romualdez to write a letter signifying that he could no longer perform his duties as mayor, so the DILG could takeover. Third, Roxas told Romualdez that he could not be given help because he was a Romualdez, and the President is an Aquino. Romualdez proved his allegations by providing a video-recorded conversation between him and Roxas, a proof that the Aquino III played politics in the middle of emergency (Makabenta, 2013).

Mamasapano Tragedy. Aquino III embroiled in a controversial death of forty-four Philippine National Police-Special Action Force (PNP-SAF) and others during an anti-terrorism mission in Mindanao. Aquino was primarily blamed for

letting suspended police chief Alan Purisima actively participate the mission despite his suspension over graft charges. As a result of their irresponsibility Aquino is facing graft and usurpation of authority while then PNP-SAF commander Napelas and Purisima are facing charges of usurpation of public functions and graft before the Sandiganbayan (Jose, 2018; Ballaran, 2017).

Moreover, according to Sicat (2016) the economic performance of Aquino III administration can be evaluated in varied ways. One way is evaluating the overall growth, fiscal and monetary policy, trade payments and investment. Second is to point out deficiencies and gaps in performance.

The macro-economic performance under his term recorded an impressive activity between 2010 and 2015. Economic has been fastest in the secondary and tertiary sectors, especially financial intermediation, construction, real estate, manufacturing, transportation and communication, trade industries. However, agriculture registered a disappointing performance (Batalla, 2016; Sicat, 2016).

The growth in domestic demand has been fuelled by overseas remittances as well as the expansion of the information technology and business process outsourcing (IT-BPO) industries. Remittances from abroad amounted to almost 25 million US dollars in 2015, where the Philippine Statistics Authority survey estimates found the reason

for the growth is because there are approximately 2.4 million overseas Filipino workers most of them are contract-based. The IT-BPO industry also served an important source of employment and foreign exchange revenues. These industries include call centers, transcription, software development and animation leading to the rise of revenue and employment (Batalla, 2016). In overall perspective on the economy during the Aquino presidency, according to Lopez (2016) that Filipino consumers, not the economic planners and economists of Aquino, are responsible for the strong growth of the economy. Economic growth would still be seen and even higher without Aquino.

Rodrigo Duterte: Local to National Strongman

President Rodrigo Roa Duterte becomes the 16th President of the Republic of the Philippines after a landslide victory with 16.6 million votes. He is the first from Mindanao, and the first local chief executive to get elected straight to the Office of the President.

Rodrigo Duterte's rise from being a mayor of Davao City to running the entire country is a feat not only to himself but to the manner of how Filipino chose its leaders. A huge radical change to the way Filipino reflects the future. Duterte strategically place himself in the mindset of the Filipino being the candidate to spend the least for the campaign, no national political post, what he have are stories of Davao's almost cigarette ban,

fireworks are not allowed, curfew, alleged Davao death squad, Duterte driving his motorcycle roaming around the city at night and other illegal activities that in most part of the country blatantly operates.

Duterte's unusual political style earned glaring him satisfaction and trust ratings despite of outrageous tirades ranging from Barack Obama, Holocaust to Pope Francis still draws a number of defenders. As an effect varying views emerge in social media conversation resulting to the phenomena of Duterte's and the opposition are labelled as dilawan who both heatedly exchange rants online. In the analysis of Professor Maboloc to the governance of Duterte, he emphasized that though some sectors in the society castigate Duterte's governance style, he remains popular among Filipinos because he is depicted as a President who possesses a strong leadership compared to the previous presidents, particularly Aquino's III inept and weak leadership (Maboloc, 2018).

War on Drugs

The prevalent selling and abuse of illegal drugs are not only features of newscasts, tabloids and films but they are enmeshed into the daily activities from gated communities and to people living in slums, favelas and so on, even before Duterte run and becomes a President. The recurring problem of illegal drugs abuse and trade brought distress to family relations, to security and safety, and to bureaucracy. It is in this context and Duterte's loathe over the menace of illegal drug trade

gained favorable momentum to Duterte's political agenda which is pleasing to people from various social class. It resonates among the public who recognizes threat and fear that deters individual to name and shame personalities in the illegal trade particularly, vend of shabu (crystal methamphetamine).

The most controversial project which generated much attention locally and international community is the war on drugs which claimed a thousand of deaths alleged to be involved in a drug trade. Most Filipinos are divided on the issue where some considered that the war on drugs that led to the deaths and imprisonment of thousands of individuals as a result of their involvement with the illegal drug trade and abuse are justified, that they deserved to be killed. While others are banking on the notion that justice must not be coupled with killings and people who are identified involved in the drug trade deserves due process. Duterte when he was still seeking his presidency and as President in his speeches pledge to wipe out drug trafficking and addiction which entails a price at the expense of Justitiaremain blind folded. In addition, the International Criminal Court and the United Nations Human Rights Council launched an investigation of alleged violation against human rights.

The reproach on Duterte's infamous war on drugs comes after a glaring increase of people killed in what the Philippine National Police (PNP) describes as lawful anti-drug

operations, alleging the suspects fought back during raids (nanlaban). Aside from PNP, there are also reported of unidentified assailants throughout the country, killing drug related personalities. The Commission of Human Rights in the Philippines blatantly implicated Duterte for the callous war on drugs where some innocent civilians are also targeted, which Duterte would claimed as collateral damage. For Duterte illegal drug users and sellers are beyond redemption, rehabilitation is no longer a viable option. Most victim's guilt are assumed based from their criminal records, community status, exterminating them is the only possible solution (Thompson, 2016).

Moreover, the hard stance of Duterte on war against drugs is coming from the idea that as a leader it is his duty to protect public order and that whether it is perceive moral or immoral it is no longer Duterte's concern. Duterte's critics with the Oplan Tokhang comes in the form of either religious blunder, human rights activists or the disillusionment of media (Maboloc, 2018). The bloody war on drugs may consternates advocates of human rights, rule of law, and due process but to Duterte it is the only urgent solution to purge society from the latent yet publicize social cancer that could derogate the country.

Diplomacy

Another issue that has taken its toll to Duterte's presidency is his foreign diplomacy. The tendency to isolate the Philippines from Western

influence, particularly America. Duterte's opting for China and Russia openly as economic and political partner's boosted trade and investment at the same time deteriorates relation with the U.S., some European countries, and the Middle East which some critics considered the move as risky, making the Philippines indebted, particularly to China whose loan-diplomacy needs to be considered for the future of the Philippine economy. As the relation with Western community sours some pro-American/Western politician in the Philippines had been lambasted by Duterte reminding everyone not to sacrifice the country's dignity just to save foreign aids which stirred a nationalist sentiments among the Filipinos.

There are provocative full-mouthed statements that contributes to the tangy relation both local and foreign communities for what Duterte considered a response for meddling in his style of governing the country:

First, Duterte's callous comment on the rape and murder of an Australian missionary. The comment occurred during Duterte's election campaign in Quezon City in a crowded sports complex. He narrated the story of the Davao City prison siege where Jaqueline Hamill was raped and was brutally murdered. After the siege, knowing that everyone had lined up to rape her, he jokingly told the crowd that the mayor should have been the first. After that incident a series of crass

joke came to emerge ranging from ordering military to shoot communist guerrilla in their vagina, that the reason for growing number of rape case in Davao because there are many beautiful women in Davao, owning a sex tape of politician Leila De Lima to calling her daughter as drama queen for confessing that she was a victim of sexual assault.

The misguided machismo of Duterte drew fury from rape victims and women rights activists describing it as an irresponsible chauvinism and misogyny, rather a form of freedom of expression which Duterte claimed. Duterte's misogynist comment could be parallel to an Australia's most senior Muslim cleric, Sheik Taj al-Hilali causing a furor when he said: "If you take uncovered meat and place it outside of the street-and the cats come and eat it... whose fault is it-the cat's or the uncovered meat? The uncovered meat is the problem" the comment comes after a group of Muslim men had been jailed for rape.

Immanuel Kant developed the notion of antimony of pure reason which suggest that individuals are capable of constructing valid arguments for both sides. Thus, the rape jokes/comments of Duterte is coming from the argument that male are helpless when faced by sexual temptation and that in a patriarchal society female are an object to sexual desires. In contrast to this presumption is the argument that men are capable of sexual restraint, that male are not blind slave of their

sexual drives. Kant would further claimed that if this conflict of reason is not resolved skepticism would dominate.

Second, calling U.S. President Barack Obama as 'son of a whore' and 'black and arrogant' which Obama cancelled the supposed meeting during the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) summit which Duterte admitted the comments comes after having known that some U.S. politicians and officials are attacking his notorious war on drugs campaign. Duterte retaliated by cancelling the joint military exercise with the U.S. and reoriented alliance policy, upending Asian geopolitics.

Recently President Duterte had drawn favorable attention from U.S. President Donald Trump expressing concern over the unfair treatment of UN Commission for Human Rights to the Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte. The action being taken by the UN is considered by Trump administration as bullying tactics.

Duterte's constant pronouncement of anti-U.S. and Western ideologies can be drawn from his orientation of communism which he pointed that Philippines historically had been treated unfairly by the U.S. and the culprit for the impoverished condition of the country. In general his approached to foreign diplomacy is not geared towards nepotism with U.S. as previously held most past presidents and politicians. Duterte had launched curse-laden tirades to some world leaders and other

international organization who publicly maligned Duterte's political and economic agenda for the Filipinos.

Third, Duterte's continued effort to justify the alliance to China and Russia. According to Duterte partnership with Russia will help the country's security and modernization of the military. Russia is more favorable than the U.S. because of the lack of political conditions. He further claimed that the move to build stronger ties with China and Russia was a necessary and timely that befit the Filipino mind. In his visit to China, he made a statement by that his governance is chartering a new course one of which is severing ties between U.S. and Philippines both in military and economics that he is to promote verve relation with China at the expense of traditional alliances.

Duterte's anti-U.S. government sentiments and redirecting of its foreign policy to China and Russia are not simply rhetoric, an invention of Leftist orientation but cemented through his personal experience. One is the Michael Meiring incident, who during his term as mayor, the treasure hunter accidentally triggered an explosive device despite of being held for investigation the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) help escape Meiring to America which still at the present annoys Duterte. Next is Duterte's contempt with the American immigration where he was denied visa to visit United States and later he claimed to be mistreated by

immigration authorities at Los Angeles International Airport.

Thus can be pointed that such frustration building up against United States that any criticism coming from the U.S. government in the Philippine affairs, avolley of tirade and policy shift are expected to follow. The outburst of Duterte is not simply because of misguided moral principles but it is simply a product of objective violence.

Dutertenomics

On handling the economic growth, Duterte provided some key indicators that would boost the economic activity. First is the implementation of the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN) Law, believing that the redesigning of the tax system would be fairer and more efficient over all, while also raising the needed resources to boost infrastructure and to promote the welfare of the poor and middle class.

As a result the government revenue boosted by increasing levies on sugary drinks and oil products. The downside of such economic policy is the rise of inflation range which exceeded the government's target causing anxiety to the consumers particularly those with less spending power which concerns Duterte since the introduction of the tax reform is geared towards the poor and to boost competitiveness. It is a challenge to "Dutertenomics" since it is built around the promise of inclusive growth. Moreover, Duterte's economic managers had responded to the issue by pointing

that it is true that TRAIN Law a factor to inflation but the jump of oil prices in the world market, weak peso currency and the hoarding of some rice traders and cartels were the main culprits for the high rate of inflation. Duterte economics emphasizes choice, giving taxpayer greater control over how their hard-earned money is saved or spent (Lema, 2018).

Second is the "Build, Build, Build" flagship of Duterte which is expected to generate millions of jobs by the end of his six-year term with almost 5000 projects that are involved. According to the Philippine Information Agency, the 8.4 trillion peso infrastructure modernization program will serve as a catalyst in sustaining the economy's high growth trajectory and in transforming it to a high-middle income one by 2022 while lowering poverty incidence to 14 percent by that time. Moreover, the program to increase infrastructure in the country is to provide access and distribution of wealth to the countryside. According to Finance Secretary Carlos Dominguez III it will also help urban community to enjoy lower prices of basic goods because of the reduced costs of transporting and distributing them (build.gov.ph).

Conclusion

The Philippine economy and politics in its initial condition is favorable compared to other developing world. The civil institutions were well developed, one of the highest educational standards among the countries in Southeast

Asia, and capable of sustaining decades of rapid agricultural growth. Yet, despite of the potential, development has been disappointing, missing almost completely on the Asian boom (Balisacan and Hill, 2003).

The manipulation of the powerful political-business oligarch that is enormously dominant in all sectors of economy and politics presently can be traced back during the American colonial era. The Americans co-opted local caciques into the newly formed political institutions and in time extending their local power base to provincial and national level (de Dios and Hutchcroft., 2003).

The 21st century Philippine politics and economy participates in the terminology of Slavoj Žižek communication, devoid of moral compass. The distress of political anxiety and impossibility are taking its toll waiting to erupt into an extensive unrest. The unnoticed history of the country in the modern global discussion would fail to understand Duterte's avowed hatred on drug dealers and corruption where majority of the Filipinos are forced to be silent.

The path of the 21st century political economy are gearing towards blood and tribulation set by Duterte. The idea of concretely uplifting the lives of the Filipino and at the same time the economic policies that are in place are bloody as Filipinos plunge into what Kierkegaard describe that towards depth of the unknown abyss anxiety

and hope are indistinguishable. Hegel was correct that the path to enlightenment is through the movement of opposing ideals. Duterte may seem to be the answer to Filipino struggle and poverty but Zizek pointed that change need not to be bloody.

References

Books

Abinales, Patricio and Amoroso, Donna. *State and Society in the Philippines*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005.

Casino, Eric. *The Philippines: Lands and Peoples, A Cultural Geography*. Philippines: Grolier International, 1982.

Constantino, Renato. *The Philippines: A Past Revisited (Pre-Spanish-1941)*. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1975.

Nadeau, Kathleen. *The History of the Philippines*. London: Greenwood Press, 2008.

Usher, Dan. *Political Economy*. Australia: Blackwell Publishing, 2003.

Zizek, Slavoj. *Violence: Six Sideways Reflections*. New York: Picador, 2008.

Journals

Batalla, Eric Vincent. "Divided Politics and Economic Growth in the Philippines" *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs* 35, no. 3 (2016):164-167.

Maboloc, Christopher Ryan. "The Radical Politics of Nation-States: The Case of President Rodrigo Duterte." *Journal of ASEAN Studies* vol. 6 no. 1 (2018) [article online]; available from <https://doi.org/10.21512/jas.v6i1.4458>, 111-113.

Rivera, Temario. "The Middle Classes and Democratization in the Philippines: From the Asian Crisis to the Ouster of Estrada." *Southeast Asian Middle Classes: Prospects for Social Change and Democratization* (2011):230-261.

Thompson, Mark. "Bloodied democracy: Duterte and the death of liberal reformism in the Philippines." *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs*, 35 no. 3 (2016): 39-68.

Yap, Joseph. "The Philippine Economy: what lies ahead in 2001" *Philippine Institute for Development* XIX, no. 1 (January-February, 2001): 1-5.

Electronic Sources

Calonzo, Andreo. "Controversies under PNoy: loss of lives, misuse of public funds" *GMA News* (July 2015) [article online]; available from <https://www.gmanetwork/news/nation/528862/controversies-under-pnoy-loss-of-lives-misuse-of-public-funds/story>. Accessed January 2018.

Chan, Samuel. "Smiling Aquino 'ridiculous' and 'lacking empathy,' Manila hostage Crisis. *South China Morning Post* (April, 2015) [article online]; available from <https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/politics/article/1772721>. Accessed February 2018.

Holmes, Oliver. "Duterte tells Obama 'son of a whore' remark wasn't personal." *The Guardian* (September 2016) [article online]; available from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/sep/10/son-of-a-whore-was-not-meant-to-be-personal>. Accessed August 2018.

Geducos, Argyll Cyrus. "Duterte: foreign policy shift necessary." *Manila Bulletin* (May 2018) [article online]; available from <https://news.mb.com.ph/2018/05/06/duterte-foreign-policy-shift-necessary>. Accessed August 2018.

Jose, Ashley. "44 counts of homicide sought Aquino, 2 others over Mamasapano." *Manila Times* (January, 2018) [article online]; available from <https://manilatimes.net/44-counts-homicide-sought-vs-aquino-2-others-mamasapano/3763851>. August 2018.

Lema, Karen. "Inflation in Philippines a faultline for Duterte's 'Build, Build, Build ambition." *Reuters* (June 2018) [article online]; available from <https://www.reuters.com/>

article/us-philippines-economy-inflation-duterte/inflation-in-philippines-a-faultline-for-dutertes-build-build-build-ambition. Accessed September 2018.

Lopez, Tony. "Economic growth under Aquino." Manila Standard (February, 2016) [article online]; available from <https://manilastandard.net/opinion/columns/virtual-reality-by-tony-lopez/198354/economic-growth-under-aquino.html>. Accessed September 2018

Mariano, Nathaniel. "Duterte: War on drugs has made even god my enemy." Manila Standard (July 2018) [article online]; available from <https://www.manilastandard.net/news/topstories/271547/duterte-war-on-drugs-has-made-even-god-my-enemy.html>. Accessed September 2018.

Makabenta, Yen. "A Crisis of Competence: Lead, Follow, or Get out of the Way." Manila Times (December, 2013) [article online]; available from <https://manilatimes.net/a-crisis-of-competence-lead-follow-or-get-out-of-the-way/59890>. Accessed August 2018.

Parameswaran, Prashanth. "Why the Philippines' Rodrigo Duterte Hates America: A deeper look at the Philippine president's anti-American views." The Diplomat (November 2016) [article online]; available from <https://thediplomat.com/2016/11/why-the-philippines-rodrigo-duterte-hates-america/>. Accessed October 2018.

Heydarian, Richard. "Philippines' Haiyan Tragedy: What went wrong?" Huffington Post (January 2014) [article online]; available from https://huffingtonpost.com/richard-javad-heydarian/philippines-haiyan-typhoon-response_b_4283845.html. Accessed July 2018.

Ramos, Marlon. "Yolanda Aftermath." Philippine Daily Inquirer (November, 2014) [article online]; available from <https://inquirer.net/yolanda-aftermath>. Accessed July 2018.

Rood, Steven. "Examining the Arroyo Legacy in the Philippines." Asian Foundation (April, 2010) [article online]; available from <https://asiafoundation.org/2010/04/07/examining-the-arroyo-legacy-in-the-philippines>. Accessed September 2018.

Sicat, Gerard. "The Philippine Economy and Benigno Aquino III's Presidency, 2010-2016." Philippine Star (January, 2016) [article online]; available from <https://www.philstar.com/business/2016/01/05/1539645/philippine-economy-and-benigno-aquino-iiis-presidency-2014-2016>. Accessed May 2018.

Tidwell, Alan. "Duterte, Mindanao, and Political Culture." Asia Pacific Bulletin (November 2016) [article online]; available from https://www.eastwestcenter.org/system/tdf/private/apb362_.pdf?file=1&type=node&id=35880. Accessed August 2018.

Villamor, Felipe. "Duterte joke about rape again. Philippine women aren't laughing." New York Times (August 2018) [article online]; available from <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/31/world/asia/philippines-rodrigo-duterte-rape-joke.html>. Accessed September 2018.

Vulliamy, Elsa. "Philippines presidential candidate who made rape joke widens lead in polls." Independent (2016) [article online]; available from <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/Filipino-presidential-candidate-philippines-rodrigo-duterte-joke-rape-raping>. Accessed September 2018.