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| <b>14. ABSTRACT</b><br><p>With grave national and international security implications, a continued partnership between the United States and the Philippines is crucial to promote regional prosperity, stability, and security. In pursuing an effective partnership, President Trump and his foreign policy advisors must realize an important characteristic of Filipino politics: family dynasties dominate the political landscape. Current President Duterte's family dynasty differs in key ways from those of previous Filipino presidents, though. The United States must recognize and understand the differences in the Duterte dynasty from those of previous administrations. Without an examination of political family dynasties, the background of the current president, and a comparison of his family dynasty's influence on his political tenure to the dynastic influences of previous Filipino presidents, leaders will commit significant errors as they develop policy between the two nations. To prepare Trump for future diplomacy with the Philippines, advisors must realize that Duterte breaks the mold of traditional dynastic presidents and they must recognize how the intersection of his dynasty and state may impact his future decisions.</p> |                                                                |                                                                          |                                                                                     |                                                                                              |                                                                   |
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The Duterte Clan: A New Paradigm in Filipino Political Family Dynasties  
Implications for Security in Southeast Asia

Lena Christine Kaman

A paper submitted to the Faculty of the United States Naval War College Newport, RI in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

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November 21, 2017

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## **Introduction**

On April 29, 2017, US President Donald Trump spoke with President Rodrigo Duterte of the Philippines over the phone. Both leaders were newly sworn-in as the presidents of their countries, and the phone call signified their first conversation since Trump assumed office.<sup>i</sup> Significantly, the discussion indicated a critical aspect of regional security in Southeast Asia: strengthening of the US-Philippines alliance. During the amicable call, Trump signaled the importance of the alliance in facing regional threats, to include the Philippine's volatile neighbor to the north, North Korea.<sup>ii</sup> The phone call concluded with Trump's commitment to attend the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Summit hosted in the Philippines in November 2017.<sup>iii</sup>

Over the summer, tensions between the United States and North Korea escalated. In his speech to the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in September, Trump articulated the magnitude of the threat to international security by warning, "North Korea's reckless pursuit of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles threatens the entire world with unthinkable loss of human life."<sup>iv</sup> North Korea does not pose the only regional danger to the established world order, though. Trump also highlighted the threat to sovereignty in the South China Sea. He implicitly reproached China for disrespecting maritime law and territorial borders and advocated for protecting allied nations and their interests through renewed respect and peaceful engagement in the sea.<sup>v</sup> The speech also emphasized the vital necessity of reciprocal and fair economic relations with our trade partners in the Indo-Pacific region.<sup>vi</sup> With such grave national and international security implications, a continued partnership with the Philippines is crucial to promote regional prosperity, stability, and security.

In pursuing an effective and healthy partnership, Trump and his foreign policy advisors must realize an important characteristic of Filipino politics. Traditionally, family dynasties dominate the democracy's political landscape.<sup>vii</sup> Figure 1 illustrates a timeline of Filipino presidents and their associated familial political connections. Following form, Duterte hails from a family dynasty, spanning three generations of rule from his father and uncle to a cousin and his children.<sup>viii</sup> His family dynasty differs in key ways from those of previous Filipino presidents, though. The United States must recognize and understand the differences in the Duterte family's political dynasty from those of previous administrations. Without a close examination of political family dynasties, the background of the current president, and a comparison of his family dynasty's influence on his political tenure to the dynastic influences of previous Filipino presidents, American leaders will commit significant errors as they develop policy between the two nations.

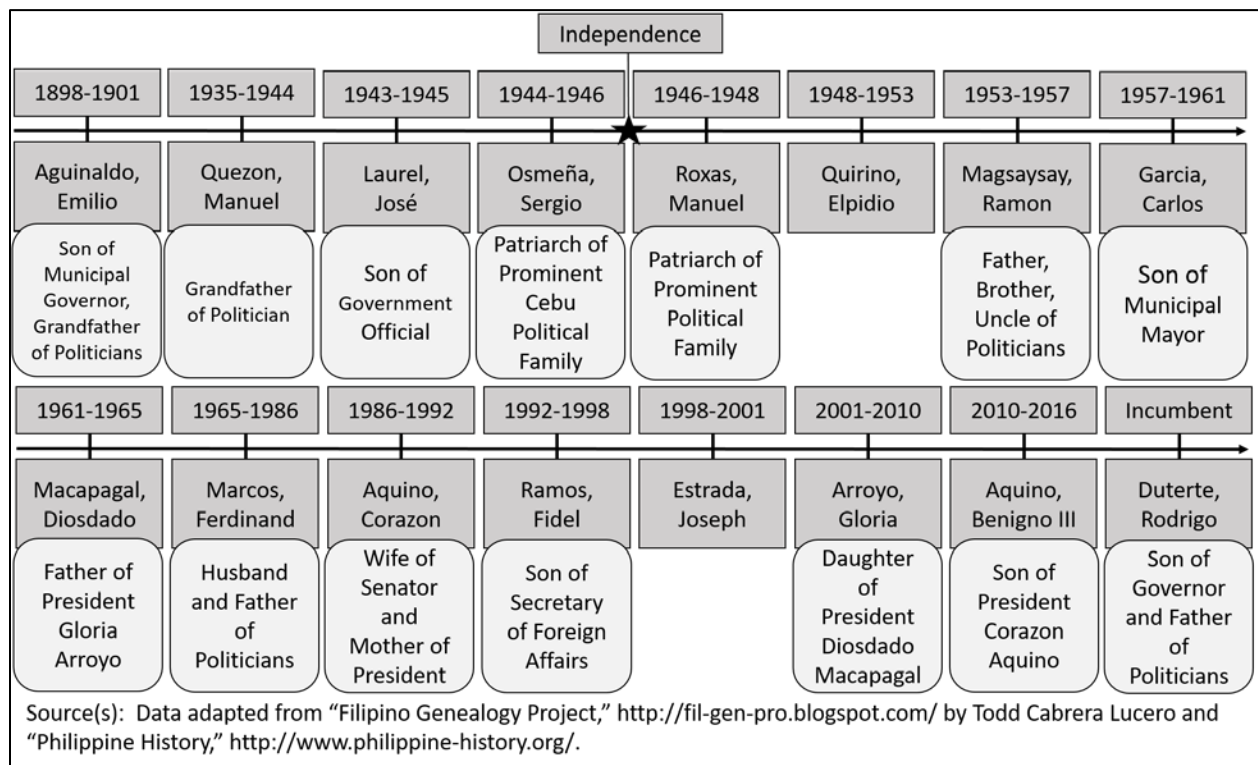


Figure 1. Presidents of the Philippines: Timeline and Family Dynasties

### **Limitation**

Filipino family dynasties exist at nested levels within the political system. The dynasties that will be addressed in this paper are those at the presidential level, and not provincial, level. Provincial family dynasties not only exert a significant level of control in their region but also prop up presidential and national-level interests, primarily through delivering votes.<sup>ix</sup> In return, presidents favor the family by providing financing for its province.<sup>x</sup> The Durano family of Cebu is a prime example of kinship politics at the provincial level. Since the 1940s, the Duranos have operated at the juncture of provincial and national level politics; on the one hand, they have reigned over Cebu province, and on the other, they have operated as a vote-gathering machine for a successive line of presidents.<sup>xi</sup> While the researcher acknowledges that provincial family clans, such as the Duranos, can impact state politics, examining the extent of their influence in the past and present is beyond the scope of the paper.

### **Filipino Family Political Dynasties**

Family dynasties are at the core of the political environment. As defined by Filipino Supreme Court Justice Carpio in 2011, a political dynasty is a “phenomenon that concentrates political power and public resources within the control of a few families whose members alternately hold elective offices, deftly skirting term limits.”<sup>xii</sup> To illustrate the widespread occurrence of kinship politics, authors Tadem and Tadem of the University of the Philippines offer statistics following the mid-term election in 2013. 83 percent of sitting senators, 74 percent of House of Representative members, 85 percent of provincial governors, and 84 percent of town mayors belonged to family dynasties.<sup>xiii</sup> Political dynasties are the norm, not the exception.

This tendency is long ingrained in Filipino history. Scholarship in the field attributes the origin of the practice to the 400 years of Spanish colonial rule. During that time, political power

rested with those with Spanish ancestry, known as the *Principalia* class. Around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the practice continued with elites of Spanish-Filipino and Chinese-Filipino descent, known as the *Indios* class.<sup>xiv</sup> The roots of dynasties continued to spread during American colonial rule at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when colonial rulers forced masses of farmers off their lands.<sup>xv</sup> Small town bosses filled the void by privatizing the land's resources and establishing local monopolies. The United States attempted to utilize fair election processes during the democratization period from 1902 to 1938. However, certain rules virtually guaranteed the continuance of family dynasties. For example, the United States required candidates for public office to be literate and to own property. Those who qualified tended to belong to the *Principalia* and *Indios* classes.<sup>xvi</sup> While the practice began during the Spanish colonial era and continued through the American era, it did not end when the Philippines ceased to be a colony.

Conditions have facilitated the ability for family dynasties to continue into modern times. After the nation gained independence in 1946, the central government floundered while family dynasties persevered.<sup>xvii</sup> Throughout the 1950s, the *Principalia* and *Indios* elites branched into manufacturing, adding economic power to their already strong political and land-owning power bases. Oligarchy resulted.<sup>xviii</sup> President Marcos declared martial law in 1972 and dismantled established oligarchs, depriving them of their power and wealth. However, relief to the country from dynastic power was short-lived as he continued the vicious cycle by accumulating the wealth for himself and his family dynasty.<sup>xix</sup> After the fall of the Marcos regime, Tadem and Tadem submit, "The resilience of the established political dynasties across the decades was in great part due to their ability to diversify economically, enabling them to adapt and hold on to their political power."<sup>xx</sup> Moreover, Brian Fegan, in an essay in *An Anarchy of Families*, a book

on state and family in the Philippines, suggests his theory regarding dynastic staying power. He posits, “A family is a more effective political unit than an individual because it has a permanent identity as a name unit, making its reputation, loyalties, and alliances transferable from members who die or retire to its new standard bearer. Being born into the household of a political family provides role models and an apprenticeship as well as an identity as a member of a prestigious family.”<sup>xxi</sup> Dynasties have become entrenched in the Filipino political landscape.

Familial political dynasties impose consequences to Filipino society. Family clans eliminate healthy political competition through violence and corruption.<sup>xxii</sup> Dynasties also manipulate state funding. The family’s figurehead keeps government kickbacks while neglecting community welfare and development. Unfavorable conditions such as poverty, underdevelopment, and socio-economic inequality are the result.<sup>xxiii</sup> Furthermore, weak provincial economies feed into a weak state system, potentially causing cascading effects to regional and international security.<sup>xxiv</sup> Tusalem and Pe-Aguirre, assistant professors from Arkansas State University and the University of Central Arkansas, respectively, agree that political dynasties are detrimental to good governance. They provide evidence of high crime, poor infrastructure development, low healthcare spending, and high unemployment rates in provinces controlled through kinship politics.<sup>xxv</sup> When advising the administration on foreign policy matters regarding the US-Philippine alliance, US foreign policy leaders need to be aware of the adverse effects of political dynasties.

Attempts to implement a checks-and-balances system to limit the power of family clans have failed. Families find loopholes to congressionally imposed term limits by alternating family members in and out of the same position or by vacating a position for a short time and then re-contesting it.<sup>xxvi</sup> Notably, Article II, Section 26 of the 1987 Constitution stipulates, “the

State shall guarantee equal access to opportunities for public service, and prohibit political dynasties as may be defined by law.”<sup>xxvii</sup> However, “as may be defined by law” is problematic; legislators have failed to pass any of several proposed anti-dynasty provisions into law to bring the article into effect. Those who vote on the legislation are members of dynasties themselves and have no interest in voting themselves out of a livelihood.<sup>xxviii</sup> Moreover, civil society does not rebel against the practice. A January 2016 Pulse Asia poll revealed 32 percent of 1800 registered voters agreed with allowing family dynasties, 34 percent disagreed, and 34 percent were undecided.<sup>xxix</sup> Political dynasties are perpetuated by those in power and tolerated, if not accepted, by the Filipino people.

### **Duterte Family History**

In striving to ensure they do not commit errors regarding their diplomatic efforts, American foreign policy leaders must first fully understand Duterte’s origins. Rodrigo Roa Duterte was born in the city of Maasin on the island of Leyte in 1945. His father, Vicente, was a politician, and his mother, Soledad, a public school teacher and civil activist.<sup>xxx</sup> He is the fourth of five children and the only one to become involved in politics, although his younger sister earned a political science degree.<sup>xxxi</sup> His parents moved the family to Davao City on Mindanao in 1951, when Duterte was six years old.<sup>xxxii</sup> The move to Davao City marked the beginning of his immediate family’s kinship politics in Mindanao.

Duterte’s father Vicente set the example of public service. The elder Duterte served in local and regional political positions throughout Rodrigo’s childhood, up until his death from a heart attack at the age of 57 when his son was only 23 years old.<sup>xxxiii</sup> Vicente’s political experience began before moving his family to Mindanao. He hailed from Cebu province where he first served as mayor of Danao.<sup>xxxiv</sup> Records do not indicate if he held political office while

on Leyte. On Mindanao however, Vicente served as mayor of Davao City, the largest city on the island, followed by serving as governor of the then-undivided province of Davao. He was not elected to the governorship by public vote, however. Rather, his childhood friend, Alejandro Almendras, autonomously promoted Vicente to the position when Almendras ran for senator.<sup>xxxv</sup> Vicente was then summoned to the country's capital city of Manila by President Marcos to serve a short stint in national government as the head of General Service, akin to today's Department of the Interior and Local Government. He passed away shortly after returning to Davao City.<sup>xxxvi</sup> Vicente's career as a public government official laid a foundation for his son to parallel.

While records do not indicate Vicente's style or effectiveness as a politician, they do describe the extent of the family's role in politics and its ties to other well-known familial dynasties. Vicente's brother Ramon, a lawyer by trade, served as the vice mayor of Cebu City in the 1950s, while Sergio Osmeña Jr. of the Osmeña presidential clan was the mayor. When Osmeña vacated the position to run for Congress, Ramon promoted into the job. Three decades later, Ramon's son Ronald, President Duterte's cousin, served as Cebu City mayor.<sup>xxxvii</sup> Figure 2 depicts three generations of the Duterte family, with political family members shown in the shaded boxes. Not only do the Dutertes have ties to the Osmeña clan, but their lineage also connects to the influential Durano clan through marriage.<sup>xxxviii</sup> Adhering to Fegan's theory cited earlier, Duterte was prone to succeed in politics since he belonged to a familial unit. With links

to two other powerful dynasties as well as the influence of his father and uncle as role models, Duterte was set up well to begin his own life in politics.

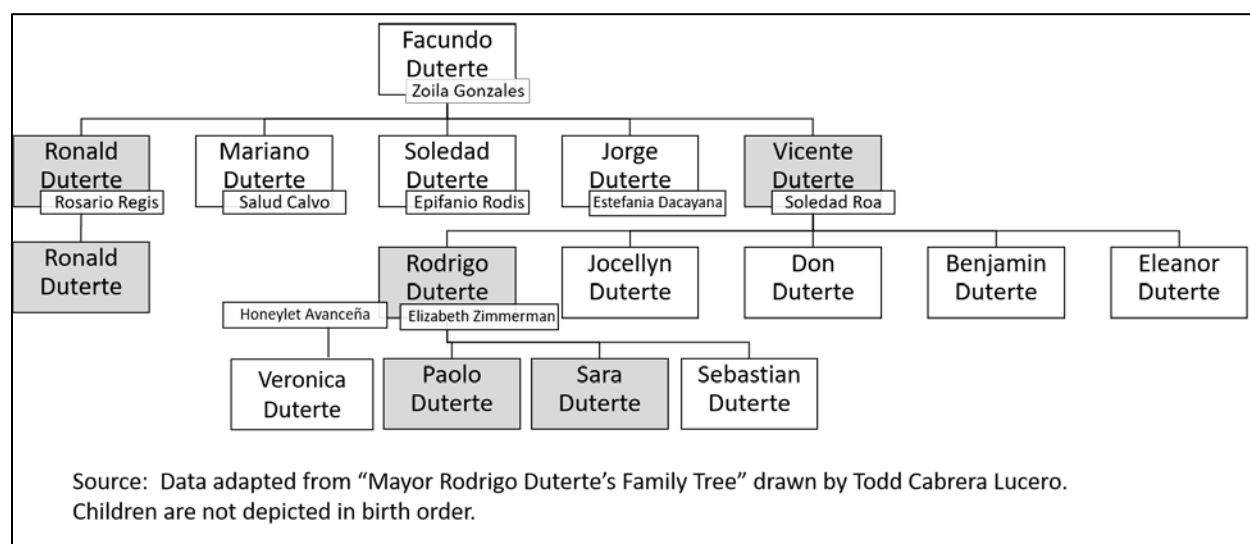


Figure 2. Duterte Family Tree

Before being elected president, Duterte gained political experience by serving in local positions. After graduating law school in 1972, he spent five years performing legal work before transitioning to politics. In his first post, he worked in the city's prosecution office. Subsequently, he was elected vice mayor of Davao City.<sup>xxxix</sup> Following in his father's footsteps, he was then elected as Davao City mayor in 1988 and served in that capacity intermittently for 22 years, alternating once with Benjamin de Guzman and twice with his daughter, Sara, until his presidential election in 2016.<sup>xl</sup> Of particular note, Duterte did not have any experience at the regional or national level prior to assuming presidential office. The family's influence in Mindanao politics did not end with Duterte's election as President. His daughter Sara remains as the mayor of Davao City.<sup>xli</sup> Additionally, his eldest son Paolo serves as the Davao City vice mayor.<sup>xlii</sup> The third generation of the Duterte kinship is well ingrained in local political positions.

### Comparison with Previous Presidents' Family Dynasties

American foreign policy advisors should also understand the comparison of how Duterte's family dynasty affects his political rule to how family dynasties of previous presidents affected their political reign. Duterte is a populist, a radical departure from the presidents during the 30-year period preceding him who fell within the broad political category of liberal democracy.<sup>xliii</sup> The campaign slogan for his 2016 presidency bid, "Change is Coming," indicates that he sees himself as different, and necessarily so, at least from the incumbent president.<sup>xliv</sup> Scholars of Filipino politics also perceive Duterte as different from others, pointing out poignant aspects of his familial background that influence his **populist** thought processes and governing style. Where he's from is an initial indicator of his dissimilarity to previous presidents.

Duterte's geographic origination is important for American foreign policy leaders to comprehend. As the only president from Mindanao, Duterte's identity is critical to his decision making as President.<sup>xlv</sup> Several experts endorse this perception. Julio Teehankee, the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and professor of political science and international studies at De La Salle University in Manila, posits, "Not only does he represent Mindanao's resentment towards 'imperial Manila,' but also a historical blowback against 'US imperialism'."<sup>xlvi</sup> Duterte snubbed his proclamation ceremony in Manila, remaining in Davao City instead. By refusing to travel to Manila for the event officially declaring his victory, he signaled contempt for the capital city.<sup>xlvii</sup> William Overholt, president of the Fung Global Institute, reasons that Duterte's Mindanaoan origins facilitate his resentment toward the U.S., stating, "When the United States seized the Philippines from Spain in 1898, the most brutal fighting, still vividly remembered, took place in this region. . . .In response [to Southern Filipino guerrillas], the United States invented the Colt .45, a weapon that would knock down the guerrillas before they could charge."<sup>xlviii</sup> Stephen

Kinzer, a senior fellow at the Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs at Brown University, agrees, contending that Duterte's heritage shapes his views, causing him to harbor grievances towards the United States for colonial rule, despite the United States granting independence almost a century ago.<sup>xlix</sup> His nationalism and outrage for colonial-era bygones have manifested themselves as anti-American rhetoric and an adoption of an independent foreign policy.<sup>1</sup> By recognizing the reason behind Duterte's sentiments, US policy makers will better interact with their Filipino counterparts when engaging in diplomacy.

The second item of importance for US policy makers to realize about Duterte's heritage is the nature of the political climate when he first became mayor of Davao City. Marcos' dictatorship had just fallen in the People Power Revolution of 1986. Violence and unrest became the norm throughout the country, but particularly in Davao province where guerrilla warfare was rampant.<sup>li</sup> As Southeast Asian historian Alfred McCoy of the University of Wisconsin-Madison submits, "When I visited Davao in 1987. . .this remote southern city had an air of desolation and utter hopelessness."<sup>lii</sup> It was in the midst of this violent volatility that Duterte, with his beliefs on law and order coalescing, launched his career. Shortly after assuming office, he dispatched a vigilante group, the Davao Death Squad, to quell violence in the city through his now trademark measure: extrajudicial killings.<sup>liii</sup> In the race for the 2016 presidency, he pointedly contended that his Davao Death Squad transformed "the murder capital of the country. . .into one of the most competitive in city indices, named one of the Top 20 Most Liveable Cities in Asia."<sup>liv</sup> Other attractive city improvements added to his brand of penal populism. He offered Davao City residents a "peace and order paradise" with streamlined processes to improve bureaucratic efficiency, a 911 emergency response system, and a police department that enforced the laws.<sup>lv</sup>

Ultimately, he offered hope to a nation that viewed his success in Davao City as a model for the successes he could achieve as the nation's highest leader.

A number of previous presidents had also endorsed violence before being elected. However, in *An Anarchy of Families*, McCoy stipulates that their type of violence served to further their own familial interests.<sup>lvi</sup> Ferdinand Marcos was a notorious perpetrator of provincial violence in the quest to gain power through the elimination of influential opponents. McCoy observes,

Marcos learned politics in his father's prewar campaigns for the National Assembly, and he began his own political career as a defendant charged with murdering his father's rival in their home province of Ilocos Norte just after the 1935 legislative elections. Hardened by wartime experience in combat, black marketeering, and fraud, Marcos emerged as a politician who combined a statesman's vision with the violence of a provincial politician....In a practice that Filipinos came to call 'salvaging,' loyalist factions within the Marcos-controlled military detained and tortured opponents, discarding their brutalized remains in public places.<sup>lvii</sup>

McCoy also points to President Carlos Garcia's sanction of provincial violence in Danao City, Cebu to garner votes for his presidential election.<sup>lviii</sup> While Duterte staunchly supports violence as a means to an end, his use of violence aims to fight crime and corruption, not to further his family dynasty by offing the competition. He proudly claims his Davao Death Squad killed upward of 1,700 criminals and drug pushers during his terms as mayor.<sup>lix</sup> The trend of extra-judicial killings in the name of crime reduction has continued during his presidential administration.<sup>lx</sup> Ronald Holmes, a political science faculty member at De La Salle University, finds, "Rodrigo Duterte won the presidency by a convincing margin, the outcome of a clear and focused campaign focused on a single issue – fighting criminality – backed by a record of prior performance in addressing the concern as Davao mayor."<sup>lxi</sup> In a December 2016 survey of 1,500 Filipinos, 85 percent reported satisfaction with his performance against illegal drugs.<sup>lxii</sup> As additional evidence that he is different than those who use violence to protect their legacy, in

September 2017 he boldly declared in a speech, “I said before my order was: ‘If I have children who are into drugs, kill them so people will not have anything to say. So I told [my son Paolo]: ‘My order is to kill you if you are caught. And I will protect the police who kill you, if it is true.’”<sup>lxiii</sup> Unlike previous presidential family dynasties, Duterte bucks the trend of using violence to advance personal familial interests.

American foreign policy advisors must be aware of another essential element of how Duterte’s family dynasty differs from those of previous presidents. While Duterte belongs to a family dynasty, it is not considered an ‘elite’ dynasty. Experts agree that a number of previous presidents fit into the elite oligarch category.<sup>lxiv</sup> Oligarchs linked their political power with their economic power through “monopolistic control over both coercive and economic resources within given territorial jurisdictions or bailiwicks.”<sup>lxv</sup> Many elite families owned monopolies in industries in addition to owning land.<sup>lxvi</sup> For instance, the Aquino family, which yielded two presidents and other national-level politicians, illustrates a landed elite dynasty. They concentrated their economic power in Hacienda Luisita, their expansive sugar plantation. President Corazon Aquino based her rise to the presidency on a platform of reform and development.<sup>lxvii</sup> Yet, she stopped proposed land reform measures because she “was not about to jeopardize her control and profits from Hacienda Luisita.”<sup>lxviii</sup> Likewise, the public celebrated Corazon’s son, President Benigno Aquino Jr., for his anti-corruption initiatives. Again, however, he favored his family’s interests and failed to deliver on land reform, choosing instead to impeach the chief justice who advocated for subjecting Hacienda Luisita to reform.<sup>lxix</sup> Elite family dynasties use and abuse their power to strengthen themselves to the detriment of the state and common people.

Some argue that the nation achieved its highest economic growth under Aquino Jr.'s leadership. The economy grew by six percent annually during his six years as president.<sup>lxx</sup> But the ones who benefitted the most were the elites, not the poor. McCoy finds, "Just 40 elite Filipino families on the Forbes' wealth ranking controlled 76 percent of this growth, while a staggering 26 million poor struggled to survive on a dollar a day as development projects, accelerated by all this growth, were evicting many from their squatter shacks and subsistence farms."<sup>lxxi</sup> Aquino Jr.'s promised prosperity never reached those who needed it most.

Duterte and his family, in contrast, do not hold the economic power of elite politicians. They are not a landed family nor do they own a business. Ramon Casiple, executive director of the Institute for Political and Electoral Reform, summarizes that a vote for Duterte was a vote against the elite. "In essence, it is a vote against the way the post-[People Power Revolution] governance favoured the political and economic elite over the interests of ordinary Filipinos."<sup>lxxii</sup> He postulates that one can view the Duterte victory as a shift against an "elitist democracy" and "towards a more inclusive democracy."<sup>lxxiii</sup> Duterte's non-elite family dynasty poses severe implications regarding how he may pursue his policies.

US diplomatic leaders must understand yet another aspect of Duterte's familial dynasty. Unlike previous presidents, Duterte does not endorse patronage politics. McCoy's research in Filipino state and family illuminates the standard practice of politicians buying their constituents' votes, often by manipulation enforced through the "three Gs" - guns, goons, and gold.<sup>lxxiv</sup> "Elected through the support of rent-seeking political brokers, successive presidents were forced to cultivate these powerful politicians with local and national benefices, regulating the cash flow to reward and punish loyalty."<sup>lxxv</sup> According to Dr. Nicole Curato of the Centre for Deliberative Democracy and Global Governance of the University of Canberra, Duterte, conversely, eschews

corrupted vote-buying practices and his “populist style interrupted the usual practices of patronage during electoral campaigns.”<sup>lxxvi</sup> She also submits that Duterte has selected a diverse group of cabinet members, rather than an inner circle of power brokers as many of his predecessors have done.<sup>lxxvii</sup> Instead of using traditional manipulation and coercion, Duterte supports honest, focused, corruption-free, non-elitism methods in his brand of politics.

Although several of Duterte’s policies differ from those of previous presidents, his resistance to anti-dynasty legislation is an important similarity to past presidents. As cited earlier, all proposed anti-dynasty bills have stalled before being ratified in the nation’s Constitution, lacking congressional and presidential backing.<sup>lxxviii</sup> Of note, President Aquino Jr., verbally advocated his support for an anti-political dynasty bill in a speech the year before he left office. In practice, however, his term was plagued with instances of corruption resulting from dynastic tendencies, to include appointing family members, as well as those of other elite family dynasties, to his advisory team.<sup>lxxix</sup> As for Duterte’s position on proposed legislation, as of 2015, he opposed the anti-dynasty bill. He argued that the legislation was undemocratic and infringed on an individual’s right to run for office.<sup>lxxx</sup> Sources do not indicate his current stance on the matter, a little over a year into his term. In addition to an anti-crime posture, Duterte ran on a platform advocating for a shift to a federalist state.<sup>lxxxi</sup> If he follows through and transitions the Philippines to a federalist system, the timing would be ideal for him to revisit his position on anti-dynasty legislation and insert a provision into the new Constitution.

### **Comparison with American Family Dynasties**

Some may argue that US foreign policy advisors should survey American presidential political family dynasties to gain a better understanding of those in the Philippines. Similar to in the Philippines, dynasties in the United States reach far back in history and affect families on

both sides of the political spectrum. For example, Stephen Hess considers the Adamsses, Roosevelts, Tafts, Kennedys, and Bushes to be some of the most influential names in American family dynasties..<sup>lxxxii</sup>

However, studying dynasties of American presidential families could cause foreign policy leaders to fall into a mirror-imaging trap when analyzing Duterte and forming predilections on his future behavior. Based on a definition offered by the Central Intelligence Agency, mirror-imaging occurs when foreign policy leaders fill a gap in their knowledge by assuming an unknown person or organization is likely to act in a certain way based on how the United States would act..<sup>lxxxiii</sup> Furthermore, McCoy highlights that Filipino family dynasties are unique from those in other countries for several reasons. For instance, “rival elite families, a weak central state, a hybrid capitalism, and a protracted experience of elections” combine to form the ideal conditions for family political dynasties to thrive in the Philippines. Even if policy advisors examined the characteristics of American dynasties, the economic and political environment of the Philippines sets a completely different framework than that in America. The two countries are too dissimilar to draw parallels between American and Filipino presidential counterparts.

### **Conclusion**

Filipino family political dynasties are detrimental to Filipino democracy. Dynasties permeate the political culture, promote corruption, and stifle healthy competition. They exaggerate the income divide by allowing the wealthy to represent their own interests while the poor remain disempowered. The hegemony of dynasties has proven to be resilient and has survived throughout the history of the nation. While Duterte belongs to a family dynasty, a review of his background reveals that his dynasty differs from those of previous presidents. A

close examination of the influences of family dynasties on presidents' actions and policies discloses dissimilarities between Duterte and a number of previous presidents. His familial background has directly contributed to his populist political style.

As promised, President Trump attended the ASEAN Summit in Manila on November 13, 2017 and offered remarks to the attending nations. He proclaimed, "I speak to you on behalf of 350 million Americans with a message of friendship and partnership. I'm here to advance peace, to promote security, and to work with you to achieve a truly free and open Indo-Pacific, where we are proud and we have sovereign nations, and we thrive, and everybody wants to prosper."<sup>lxxxiv</sup> He also held a short bilateral meeting with Duterte on the same day, focusing on terrorism, illegal drugs, and trade.<sup>lxxxv</sup> For the future, to prepare Trump for future diplomacy with the Philippines, advisors and administration officials must realize that Duterte breaks the mold of traditional dynastic presidents. He bases his actions on what he believes to be best for the country and the people, not on what is best for his familial dynasty. Unlike many of his predecessors, he offers the Filipino people hope through a new paradigm of kinship politics.

Duterte promised change. Whether his promised change will be a change for good is yet to be determined. With almost five years remaining in the Filipino president's term, US foreign policy leaders must remain vigilant in recognizing how the intersection of his family dynasty and state may impact his future decisions.

### **Recommendations**

- The Trump administration should demonstrate continued commitment to the US-Philippine alliance.
- The United States should encourage the Philippines to continue progressing toward democratic solutions.

- US foreign policy leaders should not mirror-image when predicting President Duterte's actions.
- US foreign policy makers should read the yet-unpublished book by Richard Javad Heydarian, *The Rise of Duterte, A Populist Revolt against Elite Democracy*. The book, expected to be published in early 2018, will offer an analysis of the significance of Duterte's rise and the implications to regional and national security, as well as a prediction of the future of Filipino politics.

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