

CHAPTER II

THE PHILIPPINES BEFORE DUTERTE'S ADMINISTRATION

This chapter discusses general condition and political situation of the Philippines before Duterte's administration regarding general information about the Philippines in a glance: its demographic condition, natural resources, social and economic condition. It also explores the Philippines history, since ancient times, its establishment to its condition under colonialism. It is followed by more detailed information related to political situation from the past to modern political history, especially from the past 50 years. The chapter also discussed the Philippines under a long-term ESDA administration as well as the election of 2016 that put ESDA to an end, a brief profile of Rodrigo Duterte, and how Duterte won the election in 2016.

A. The Philippines in a Glance

Located in South East Asia, on the eastern shore of the Asian Mediterranean Sea, the Philippines is an archipelago of over 7,000 islands with a total land area of about 300,000 square kilometers. It has three major groups of islands: Luzon in the north, Visayas in the middle, and Mindanao in the south, with about 101 million in 2016 (World Population Review, 2018). The national language is Filipino, which is rooted in the Tagalog language, but English is also considered an official language. With regard to religion, 80 per cent of the Filipinos are Roman Catholics, while the other major religions include Islam and Protestantism.

Tourism is currently an important component of the Philippines' economy due to its significant contributions to the gross national product (GDP) as well as the large number of people working in the industry. The biodiversity of the nation is a big magnet for tourists, particularly in the rainforests and mountains of the nation. The second and third main industries in the country are agriculture and manufacturing. According to World Bank statistics, about 27.7 percent of workers in the Philippines were engaged in agricultural activities in 2017. The

nation exports a wide range of goods, both manufactured and agricultural (World Atlas, 2018).

The Spanish-American war that started in Cuba has changed the history of the Philippines. The Europeans were led by the United States on 1 May 1898. Navy Admiral George Dewey targeted the Spanish Navy in Manila Bay with the help of Emilio Aguinaldo. Faced with defeat, Spain ceded the Philippines to the United States in 1898, after paying 20 million US dollars to Spain under the Paris Agreement, which ended the Spanish-American War. The Filipinos, led by Emilio Aguinaldo, declared independence on 12 June 1898. The U.S., which had plans to take over the colony, opposed this declaration. This led to a guerrilla war against the Americans. Aguinaldo was captured in 1901 and declared loyalty to the United States. And William Howard Taft was elected the first U.S. governor of the Philippines. The U.S. passed the Jones Act in 1916 with the creation of an elected Filipino legislature by the House of Representatives & Senate. The United States passed the Tydings-McDuffie Act in 1934. Congress created the Commonwealth of the Philippines and guaranteed independence to the Philippines by 1945. The Act also provided for the position of President of the Commonwealth of the Philippines. Manuel L Quezon was elected President of the Philippine Commonwealth on May 14, 1935. In 1941, however, Japan attacked the US fleet at Pearl Harbor. Japanese troops invaded the Philippines on 10 December 1941 and captured Manila on 2 January 1942. American troops returned to the Philippines in October 1944 and recaptured Manila in February 1945 (Local Histories, 2018). In compliance with the Tydings-McDuffie Act of 1934, the Philippines was granted independence on 4 July 1946 and that was the day when the Republic of the Philippines was born and Manuel Roxas was the first president of the newly independent republic, the Republic of Philippines (Philippine History, 2018).

Ferdinand E. Marcos won the presidency in 1965 and was the first to be elected president in office for a second term. Marcos He embarked on an ambitious public works program and maintained his popularity through his first term. His support

began to decline as a result of alleged dishonesty in the 1969 election, slowing economic growth, corruption in government, and deterioration of peace and order. In 1972, at the end of his second and final term of office, he declared martial law. Senator Benigno Aquino (Ninoy, who was later in self-exile in the United States) and Senator Jose Diokno were among the first to be arrested. The Filipinos reached the height of their endurance when Benigno Aquino was shot and killed at the airport on August 21, 1983, on his return from exile in the United States to the Philippines. He became a hero, and the Filipinos were furious at his death. The death of Aquino marked the day that the Filipinos began to fight. His grieving wife, Corazon Aquino, showed the strength and courage of the Filipinos and of the nation to restore the monarchy stolen by Ferdinand Marcos to his own caprice. During the years of Martial Law, Marcos kept an iron grip on the country with the help of the military. Opposition leaders we have been jailed and the parliament has been disbanded. Marcos was governed by presidential decrees (Philippine History, 2018).

B. Modern Political History

Over the last 50 years, major political turning points in the Philippines have shown a transition from authoritarianism to an ostensible process of democratization. The country was under the tyranny of Ferdinand Marcos during 1972 and 1986. Sustained by martial law, this era of authoritarianism brought about a consolidation of state power within the hands of the rulers themselves and the plundering of national wealth for the Marcos family and their corporate associates. The weak economy of the country and the murder of Benigno Aquino further aggravated Filipino frustration. In an effort to regain support among the people, Marcos held an early presidential election on 7 February 1986, facing Corazon Aquino, a strong and powerful opposition. It exploded into the so-called bloodless revolution. February 25, 1986 was a major national activity etched in the hearts and minds of every Filipino. This part of Philippine history gives a strong sense of pride, particularly because other nations have tried to emulate what the Filipinos

have shown to the world about the true power of democracy. The "People-Power Movement" of 1986 put an end to the autocratic system headed by Marcos. This was accompanied by the formation of the so-called "EDSA Republic." The real liberation of democracy was illustrated in EDSA (abbreviated from Epifanio de los Santos Avenue) by its successful attempts to overthrow a dictator by a non-tolerant display of violence and bloodshed (Philippine History, 2018). The new republic was marked by the hegemony of another class of ruling elites, headed by President Corazon Cory Aquino (who came from a wealthy landowner's family, Benigno Aquino's widow), and underpinned by a new constitution that enshrined the political principles and institutions of liberal democracy. In other words, the Republic of EDSA has resulted in the return of the hegemony of a specific section of the political elites. It created an illusion of democracy by, inter alia, holding regular elections and allegedly reimposing checks and balances between branches of government.

No exception, EDSA also adopted aspects of institutional democracy, including constitutional guarantees for civil liberties and political rights. The 1987 Constitution, deliberately formulated as an anti-Marcos document, used all sorts of bureaucratic restrictions to defend against presidential dictatorship. Today, the Philippines is one of the most rambunctious nations, even though ordinary citizens possess a discursive autonomy unparalleled by any country in the region. It became an unfinished project by EDSA uprising. If the elite represented by the Aguinaldos, the Buencaminos and the Paternos hijacked the first Philippine Revolution, the elite group that elected Cory Aquino as its leader hijacked the "EDSA Revolution" (Greenleft, 2016). Cory decided to favor the interests of the Filipino people rather than the interests of the US. During the last few months of Cory's six-year term, it was very clear: she campaigned vigorously for the retention of U.S. military bases, but lost overwhelmingly to the Senate that voted against retention, with mobilizations and support from people. Frustrated by the post-EDSA regime's limited developmental progress, a growing number of people have flirted with historical revisionism and strongman rule fantasies, particularly among the

youth and educated. Nonetheless, a more reasonable assessment shows that what the Philippines wants is not a return to autocracy, but a genuine democracy that it has never had before. (Huffpost, 2016).

Political system in the Philippines is a constitutional democracy headed by the President of the country under the 1987 Philippine Constitution. Sovereignty are divided into three branches; the executive led by the President, the Legislative represented by the Congress composed of the Senate and the House of Representative, and the Judiciary with the power of judicial review (United Nations, 2018). Since introduced, the practice of this new form of democracy did not seem to meet with what people expected. The EDSA Republic's liberal-democratic regime has long been a disaster. As a result, its dominance is challenged by various forces across the political spectrum. The crisis stemmed from the institutional failure of the EDSA regime to meet the constitutionally proclaimed national aspirations of political democracy, economic revolution and social justice (Juego, 2017). It was claimed that EDSA was a mere continuation of elite rule as it retained most of Marcos ' international interest-friendly policies while ensuring a return to economic and political power. The new class of Marcos cronies was added to the existing oligarchy, which now remains in top places even after Marcos ' downfall (Greenleft, 2016). Today, EDSA is synonymous with traffic jam and urban chaos — a poignant reminder of the inability of the post-Marcos government to provide residents with even the most basic services. As the historian of the Philippines Vicente Rafael put it, “The memory of People Power is daily dissolved by the reality of masses rushing in disaffection, absorbed in their alienation.”Filipino political scientist Amado Mendoza concluded that the EDSA's uprisings essentially returned the nation to the pre-Marcos oligarchy, more interested in protecting its own rights than in fostering the wellbeing of a new post-colonial state. No wonder the Philippines soon became a capitalist monarchy in the late 1960s, one of the fastest-growing economies in the world in the 1950s, with the country's second-highest per capita GDP. (Huffpost, 2016).

The Philippines again filled international headlines with another "EDSA" rebellion from 17 to 20 January 2001, resulting in the ouster of President Joseph "Erap" Estrada. The rebellion of the four-day people was dubbed "EDSA II" in reference to the first revolution that took place on the same site on 21-25 February 1986, when the dictator Ferdinand Marcos was overthrown. The chaos occurred from April 25 to May 1 on the same historic EDSA site in less than four months. It was dubbed "EDSA III" or the "poor power revolt" by its leaders to reflect its participants' predominantly urban poor composition. A "assault" capped the latest eruption at Malacañang's gates, Presidential palace, with approximately 50,000 unarmed demonstrators marching from the EDSA site to the palace early in the morning of 1 May (UCA News, 2016).

The great success of the nonviolent, passive resistance and accession to Corazon C. Aquino's presidency of the EDSA bloodless revolution was that it was a mass movement and relatively bloodless. It was an anti-dictatorship protest movement that proved that huge numbers could change the political status quo. The middle class was inspired by social activists and champions for human rights, the Catholic and Protestant Churches, and supported by the international exile political dynasties. The revolution's great weakness and failure was not a "revolution." It was the return to power of the exiled dynastic families who lost their economic power and plotted the downfall of Marcos from abroad. It was not such a revolution in the historic revolutions of France, Russia, China, Cuba — violent and ideologically inspired, supported by the poor, oppressed and hungry masses, led by communists and other political groups (UCA News, 2016).

Today, the Philippines is one of Asia's poorest countries with per capita income equivalent to sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America's landlocked nations. It's also one of the world's most unequal societies. Recent years have seen rapid economic growth in equality, but 40 richest families have consumed 76% of newly generated income, The worst form of concentration of development in Asia. Political institutions are equally monopolized: nearly 178 political dynasties govern 73 out of a

total of 80 provinces, with the overwhelming majority (70 per cent) in the political dynasties. Not even in Latin American countries such as Mexico (40 per cent) and Argentina (10 per cent) (HuffPost, 2016), a single oligarchic degree of domination is imaginable. Thirty-two years after its passage, the Edsa Constitution remained in place, unmodified and unmodified. Strictly speaking, we might conclude that we are still operating under the Edsa system. Despite the increasingly transparent denigration of the symbols of Edsa and the ideological revival of the Marcoses, no regime change has taken place. Yes, the government continues to mark the humiliating exit of the Marcoses from Malacañang as a non-working public holiday. Yet, unlike in the early years, the sense of joy is gone. Nevertheless, there is hardly any public recognition of the importance of those landmark days in February 1986. (Untalan, 2016).

C. A Brief Profile of Rodrigo Duterte

Duterte was born and raised in the southern provinces of the Philippines (Inquirer, n.d.). He was born in Maasin, South Leyte, on March 28, 1945. His uncle, Vincente G. Duterte, was a lawyer from Cebuano, acting mayor of Davao, and then governor of Davao Province. Instead his family moved to Mindanao, the country's province of Davao. Duterte said that he hates criminals, because he' has been born into a family hate criminal. He was finally admitted to high school at Holy Cross University (now CorJesu College) in Digos, where he started his schooling after being suspended from two colleges for unheard-of conduct. He was sent to the Lyceum of the Philippine University, Manila, after high school. He was admitted. He completed his political science degree in 1968. He then entered San Beda Law College and took his bar examination in 1972. Rodrigo Duterte was far from an obedient scholar; on the contrary he himself seems not to be a stranger to violence. Speaking about his high-school years he admitted that he shot one of his classmates. As The Enquirer explains, the student bullied Duterte and and got shot for that, luckily not to death. It is worth mentioning other examples of Duterte behavior such as his statements on

personally killing three criminals as a mayor of Davao. Duterte was elected mayor for the first time in 1988. During the following decade, he was elected twice, as a mayor and as a president. Due to the term-limit restriction, he did not run for mayor in 1998, but he successfully earned a seat in the Philippines House of Representatives re-presenting Davao. Upon the completion of that term in 2001, he returned to Davao City and was once more elected mayor. The above-mentioned restrictions were imposed again in 2010, when he occupied the position of vice-mayor, and his daughter Sara served as mayor. In 2013, Duterte returned to the mayor's office, this time alongside with his son Paolo (Panarina, 2017).

Duterte served as a criminal attorney in Davao City from 1979 to 1986 before being elected president of the nation in May 2016. After the end of the Martial Law under Marcos, he began politics as a vice-mayor and as a city officer (1986-1988). He was subsequently elected mayor (1988-1998), congressman (1998-2001), mayor (2001-2010) and again mayor (2010-2013). During his political career, he never lost any vote. His main political fight was against illicit drugs and crime (Barrera, 2017). Duterte has been famous for successfully transforming the city of Davao, which has the highest crime record in the island nation to become the safest city in the Philippines during his role as mayor of Davao for more than 20 years. According to the official website of Davao City, the 3-digit crime rate was reduced from 10,000 in 1985 to 0.8 per 10,000 from 1999 to 2005 on a monthly basis. Around 90 percent are minor offenses that do not affect the city's overall condition of peace and order (Filipinohomes, 2016). Duterte has not just transformed Davao city from 'the murder capital of the Philippines' into 'the peaceful and dynamic city', he has also executed some landmark legislations and innovations in local governance. Some include the Davao City Investment Income (2269-94), the Comprehensive anti-smoking Ordinance of Davao City (042-02) and changes to guidelines for enterprise establishments with foreign nationals (029-07). In a list of remarkable achievements and recognitions Duterte had demonstrated as Mayor of the city of Davao such as:

1. Most Competitive Metro City in the Philippines, 2001, 2003, 2005,
2. Most Livable City in the Philippines, 1996-1999,
3. Destination of the Year, 1997 Kalakbay Awards,
4. Most Child-friendly City in the Philippines, 1999, 2000,
5. Most Outstanding Regional Peace and Order Council, 1999, 2001, 2004, 2005,
6. Most Peaceful City in East and Southeast Asia, 1998-2005,
7. Best Police Office in the Country, 1999-2005, etc.

What most added to Duterte's appeal was likely that it offered an alternative to elite-dominated politics that his opponents could not. He is an antithesis recognized until now by a traditional Filipino leader. Duterte tended to be man, tactile, honest, and often coarse, as an ordinary person who was not concerned with politicians' luxurious lifestyles. He used to wear regular clothing, lived in a common house and spoke the common language of the Filipinos. He also came from the south of the Philippines where the mass of wealth and power in « Imperial Manila » are a source of neglect (Untalan, 2016). The selection of Duterte could be easily understood as a result of protest votes. His promise to introduce "true change" was none other than that of previous and rival candidates. Some parallels existed, perhaps enough to cancel the picture of Duterte as different. He was like Jejomar Binay, the Philippines' vow to turn into the City of Makati. He was like Roxas, who led a different political family as well. He was like Poe, who wanted the status quo to question. He was faced with allegations of corruption, as was the case with the majority of the presidential roster; worse, the notorious Davao Death Squad, the supposedly Davao Vigilante squad, reported to have engaged in the deaths of thousands of suspects. Nevertheless, Duterte was selected, perhaps less so, because the electorate had no choice, but because Duterte represented the people—a powerful man. (Untalan, 2016).

D. Election 2016

Five candidates advanced for the presidential election. They were Jejomar Binay, Miriam Defensor Santiago, Rodrigo Duterte, Grace Poe and Manual Roxas II. The winner would replace Benigno Aquino III and sit in the presidency for six years. Based on a survey conducted by the Standard Poll, Duterte occupied the first position that is favored by the public who will come out as a winner. Approximately 32.4 percent of residents claimed to choose the Davao Mayor to become the next Philippine leader.

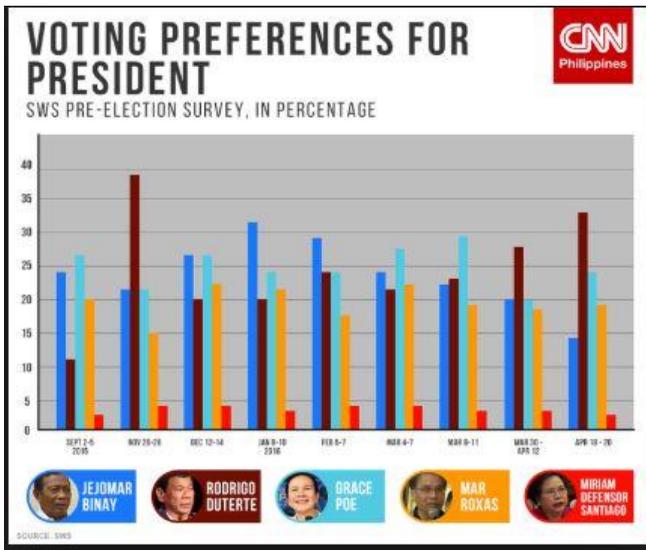


Figure 1. Voting Preferences for President. Source: CNN Philippines, 25 April 2016

Another favorite presidential candidate is Grace Poe. The 45-year-old woman gained public support through a survey of 24.6 percent. Poe is the daughter of a well-known Filipino actor who then also had time to advance in the election, Fernando Poe Jr. However, at that time Fernando failed to be elected President because the election results were rigged. This fact makes the public sympathize with the Poe family. In addition, Poe has a

clean image and has not been involved in widespread corruption scandals in Philippine politics. For the sake of being able to take part in this year's election, Poe released the US citizenship he had. The goal is so as not to be seen by political opponents as the lackeys of Uncle Sam's country during the election (Rappler, 2016).

Since Marcos returned the presidential election in 1981, the Filipinos reached a tipping point. He ran for president and won 88.02 percent of the votes. His questionable victory exacerbated the public resentment that had grown over the years, instead of legitimizing his authority. The controversial 1983 murder of Benigno Aquino, leader of the opposition, further enraged the public and provided the opposition leaders with the opportunity to reassert their control. Marcos called a 1985 snapshot and contested against the nominee for the opposition, Corazon Aquino's Widow of Ninoy. The citizens, indignant and helpless, acted to overthrow the dictator and elected the president Corazon Aquino. Aquinas ' era was the starting point for a Philippine democracy that has been restored again in the historic EDSA People Power Revolution in 1986. The protests that are now simply called EDSA I played a major role in determining the fate of the Philippine Presidents. The public demonstrations were focused on the strong legacy of EDSA I. Two attempts were made to replicate EDSA I up to the post-Marcos era. Joseph "Erap" Strada was kidnapped on account of EDSA II by impeachment. His vice chairman, Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, took over his constitutional mandate, facing two failings: the EDSA III, and several charges on allegations of trickery in elections held in 2004, She ran for the presidency officially. Arroyo remains sadly in place and is a congresswoman today. Obviously, in a country formerly stripped of democracy, in colonialism and decades of authoritarian rule, the election of the Philippine President was a celebration of independence. In contrast, experience in the Philippines after 1935 indicates that widespread demonstrations have become essential to legitimizing a leader in the formal voting process. Particularly since EDSA I, public protest has been used to protect their sovereignty against national leaders who seem to threaten it. At

the beginning, it seems that since independence, the Filipinos firmly welcomed the gift of freedom. Nonetheless, as noted, many Filipino voters have elected a strongman to run their country for the next six years, given the relatively short and fiery past of defending democracy from its enemies. (Untalan, 2016).

As Rodrigo Duterte began his campaign for the presidency, at the start of his own attempt to be a standard bearer in the US Presidential elections, he appeared unlikely to win as Donald Trump. Looking at the results of the Philippine elections in depth, it is clear that the victory of Duterte was accomplished by disproportionately winning the urban vote. While results (including those from Duterte) showed a normal pattern of local votes for 'how candidates' that represented language groups and clan networks; in urban municipalities with 100,000 or more populations across regions, Duterte dominated the vote (Panarina, 2017).

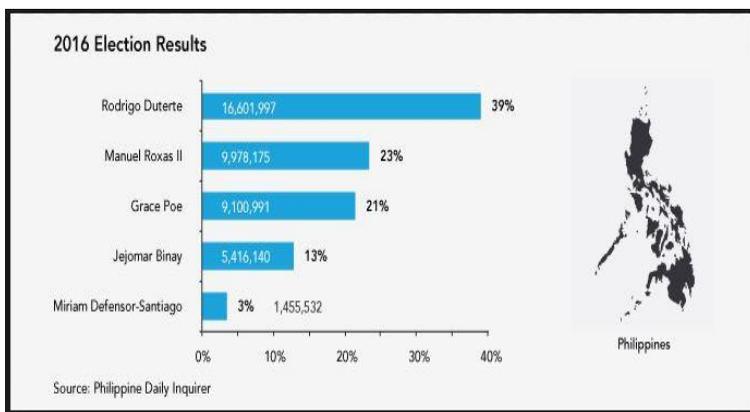


Figure 2. The Philippines’ 2016 Election Result Source: Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, 24 June 2016

In 97 of 148 towns, the city won 45% of all urban votes and received 54% of its own votes. This reflected both the efficiency of his social media campaign (with the most urban people) and his appeal to his key messages, especially that a

ruthless campaign was carried out in urban poor and middle class communities against criminal use of drugs.

The EDSA People's Power Revolution of 1986 saw the rebirth of Democratic institutions of the country in Filipinos. This episode in history was a triumph against authoritarianism and since that time has been the symbol of Philippine democracy. Nearly 3 decades later, however, The election of Rodrigo "Digong" Duterte in 2016 brought another turning point in Philippine politics. Duterte's slogan, "Change is coming," was the change that he wanted as president of the Philippines and the change that the majority of the Philippines wanted to make. Duterte distanced himself from the usual campaign strategy of using tacit sound bites to attract voters. He worked honestly, vigorously, and often undiplomatically. Duterte also moved from the normal economic growth and anti-corruption policy issues. He stressed the battle against corruption as the key precursor to the growth of Philippines. His pledge, through all practicable steps, including extra-judicial assassinations and restored death penalties, to restore domestic peace and order was highly brave and transparent. While there had been criticism by the right-wing groups which opposed the pacification plan, Duterte had continued to be the municipal mayor of Davao City before the polls, with the promise of a Davao-like Philippines prevailing among electors. The Filipino majority voted for an authoritarian leader contrary to what you could expect from a democracy. With a margin of 12.8 percent, Duterte won a landslide victory. In the face of unabated domestic and international protests, the newly elected President held 72% approval ratings six months after its inauguration on 30 June and demanded his withdrawal from some areas of the country. The unbridled popularity of Duterte is a nation torn between defending democracy and challenging its continuity; the ability of a state to collapse under authoritarian rule seems to be a danger that improves the political and socioeconomic conditions of a country (Untalan, 2016).

As reported by BBC, Duterte has gained a lot of support. The man who served as mayor of Davao also vowed to change the presidential system into a parliamentary system. In the realm

of foreign policy, the man nicknamed 'The Punisher' said he would take multilateral talks to resolve the dispute over the South China Sea. The negotiations, according to him, must invite Japan, Australia and the United States (BBC News, 2016). Scholarly research has shown that, as long as he or she provides basic public services and ensures law and order, a majority of Filipinos prefer a decisive leader who does not bother with election competitions.