



# PROBING POPULISM IN THE PHILIPPINES

Proceedings of the 2018  
National Consultation on Populism





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December 2020

Published by

The International Center for Innovation, Transformation  
and Excellence in Governance (INCITEGov)

3rd Level Cyberpark Tower 1, 60 General Aguinaldo Ave,

Cubao, Quezon City 1109 Philippines

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Images found in the cover courtesy of the Presidential Communications  
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The National Library of the Philippines

ISBN (PDF) 978-971-93923-7-8

ISBN (Paperback) 978-971-93923-6-1

# PREFACE

The years that followed President Rodrigo Duterte’s ascent to presidency — using a populist frame and largely building on a peace and order platform — saw the immediate backsliding of Philippines’ core democratic values and institutions.

Backed with the support of 16 million Filipinos, Duterte and his allies wielded presidential power and violated human rights and the rule of law; sowed hate, disinformation and political division; and eroded checks and balances among government branches. Brazen and unabated attacks against the media, and the shrinking of civic space for political discussion and dissent were also added to the lethal mix. Meanwhile, Duterte continued to enjoy huge popularity through populist rhetoric and theatrics, dubbing himself the “father of the nation” and a strongman who is pro-poor and understands the issues confronting the masses.

Against this backdrop, the International Center for Innovation, Transformation and Excellence in Governance (INCITEGov) and the De La Salle University – Jesse M. Robredo Institute of Governance (DLSU–JRIG), both members of the Asia Democracy Research Network (ADRN), came up with two reports that examined the case of populism in the Philippines. INCITEGov focused on civil society’s responses to President Duterte’s populist leadership, while JRIG on the utilization of social media for populist agenda. The two papers are part of ADRN’s State of Democracy in Asia (SODA) Report.

The findings of the two reports were presented and validated during the National Consultation on Populism in the Philippines, a multi-sectoral forum organized by INCITEGov and JRIG on Sept. 13, 2018. The activity also aimed to analyze the challenges posed by populism and identify possible action points; expand the scope of action-oriented and policy-driven research; and forge linkages among democracy practitioners in promoting, consolidating, and deepening democracy.

This publication contains the proceedings of the forum and is divided into three sessions: 1) Understanding Populism in the Philippines; 2) Populism and Social Media; and 3) Populism and Civil Society. The first session explores the concept of populism using the economic and gender lenses, and from the perspective of the populist public. JRIG and INCITEGov’s reports were presented in the second and third sessions, respectively, each followed by further insights from a panel of reactors and an open forum.

The national consultation was attended by participants from all over the Philippines, including members of the academe, civil society, international non-government organizations, donor agencies, think tanks, government, legislators, and the media.



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# Opening Remarks

**DR. ADOR R. TORNEO**

*Director,*

*Jesse M. Robredo Institute of Governance*

Former Secretary Edilberto De Jesus; former Secretary Teresita Quintos Deles, chair of International Center for Innovation, Transformation and Excellence in Governance (INCITEGov); former Usec. Manuel L. Quezon III; former Bangsamoro Transition Commission member, Samira Gutoc-Tomawis; Dean Ronald Mendoza of the Ateneo School of Government; Dr. Francisco Magno of the De La Salle University Jesse M. Robredo Institute of Governance (JRIG); friends and colleagues from the different sectors, non-government organizations, civil society organizations, and friends and colleagues from the academe, on behalf of the organizers of this National Consultation Workshop — the Asia Democracy Research Network and its two members in the Philippines, INCITEGov and JRIG — a pleasant afternoon to all of you.

I'm Ador Torneo from the DLSU Jesse M. Robredo Institute of Governance (JRIG) and I'm grateful for the organizers and my mentor, Dr. Magno, for giving me the opportunity to welcome all of you in this National Consultation Workshop on the State of Democracy in the Philippines.



“Who the people and who the elite are is a matter of convenience and preference to populist leaders who channel popular discontent to advance their political agenda.”

Our topic this afternoon is populism in the Philippines. The word “populism” originated in the 19th century and has been defined in a number of ways. There’s no single definition of the term. Conceptually, however, populism may be described in its original form as an ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogenous and antagonistic groups: the people, more often depicted as pure and good; and the elite, often described as corrupt and self-serving. Of course, who the people and who the elite are is a matter of convenience and preference to populist leaders who channel popular discontent to advance their political agenda.

In today’s discussion, the context of populism is concerned with the democratic backsliding, not only in the Philippines nor even just in Asia, but in many parts of the world where populist leaders are getting elected and re-emerging as serious challengers to the established liberal democratic order.

The Philippines has unfortunately become one of the poster cases for populism. We have a populist president promoting, arguably, populist policies, as well as using populist strategy and rhetoric. Given the highly polarizing and detrimental impacts of this in our democratic institutions, it is imperative for those of us here — civil society, academia, and other sectors of society — to fully understand this phenomenon and take the necessary steps in safeguarding the institutions and the values that we hold dear.

In the Philippines, the two member organizations of the Asia Democracy Research Network (ADRN) — INCITEGov and JRIG — conducted their reports on the case of populism in the Philippines. INCITEGov focused on civil society responses to President Rodrigo Duterte’s populist leadership while JRIG focused on the utilization of social media for populist agenda.

This workshop, with a special focus on populism in the Philippines, aims to do three things: *First*, to present and validate the findings of the State of Democracy in Asia (SODA) Report of the Philippines conducted by INCITEGov and the JRIG through a multisectoral consultation. *Second*, to analyze the challenges posed by populism and identify possible action points, as well as to expand the scope of action-oriented and policy-driven research. And *third*, to forge linkages among democracy practitioners in promoting, consolidating, and deepening democracy.

We have a wonderful array of presenters and moderators, and we hope to have a meaningful discussion and engagement with all of you on this topic.

Let me close this welcome remarks with an old Chinese farewell message that says, “May you live in interesting times.” When someone says this to you, you are not sure whether you’re being blessed or being cursed because interesting times usually

bring with them moments of upheavals, troubles, and uncertainty.

While there are risks, dangers, and uncertainty in these times, these are also the times, more than any other in history, when the creative energy of men and women are open. These times provide us an opportunity to be creative, to be innovative, to strengthen our resolve, and to ensure that whatever we learn, the lessons of history will never again be forgotten.

Thank you very much and I’m looking forward to the discussions and exchanges this afternoon. *Magandang hapon po sa inyo.*



# UNDERSTANDING POPULISM IN THE PHILIPPINES

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# An Economic Perspective on Populism

**DR. RONALD U. MENDOZA**

*Dean*

*Ateneo School of Government*

I have been looking at populism mostly from an international perspective, not just the Philippine perspective. I want to clarify that there are two main understandings of populism and I will tackle one of them: the economic lens.

The economic perspective relates to redistribution. The main message is that the possible alternative to this view is predistribution, an approach that some of the Democrats in the United States were trying to advance. Hillary Clinton was reputed to be one of the champions of the predistribution discussion. But it was not as compelling to the broader population, especially when you apply messaging that taps emotions like fear and uncertainty.

Young people, particularly millennials in the United States, were said to have gravitated toward predistribution. I think this is an interesting pattern for us to observe, particularly since we are also a young country.

Populism in economics emphasizes growth and income redistribution, with rising risks linked to higher inflation and deficits later on.



This is what gives the populists of Latin America a bad reputation as far as the economic literature is concerned: redistribution without necessarily changing deep economic inequalities.

Political scientist Cas Mudde has the following observations as a researcher of populism:

**1. Populists can be either left or right, or even centrist.**

It's not gravitation toward a certain school of thought, in terms of policies.

**2. Populism is anti-system but not necessarily anti-democracy.**

I cannot emphasize this enough: Populists win through democratic processes. And if we're not careful, if we always relate it to a nondemocratic tendency, we may overlook the fact that there is some democratic support for the populist and the populist message.

**3. Populism is an illiberal democratic response to undemocratic liberalism.**

This is a key message. Populism is a pushback against too much liberalism, which actually weakens the democratic voice of different groups in an economy. Think, your government tells you, "I cannot increase taxes because the foreign investors might leave." Or, "I cannot raise your wages because they might complain and actually break free and go to Vietnam."

These kinds of messages, which somehow relate to the way that liberalism has come to be linked to how we open up and integrate economies, feed some of the populist waves because people feel like they have no voice and the economic lens is trumping the democratic lens. This, I think, is very interesting. We need to look at this seriously and not always look for the efficiency gains; there are also equity goals for our society.

**4. Populists often ask the right questions but give the wrong answers.**

During election campaigns, populists tend to communicate effectively on some key issues. But when they're already in power, they're inclined to suggest policies and strategies that don't necessarily become sustainable, or don't address the root causes of the problem.

**5. The power of populism is largely determined by the actions of liberal democrats.**

This is a claim by Cas Mudde. I don't necessarily agree with this but he's saying that in part, what feeds the populist backlash is when liberal democrats keep on pushing the liberal agenda that relates to economic policies,

# “Populists win through democratic processes.”

competitiveness, opening of key sectors, and economic integrations like ASEAN, APEC, and WTO. Populists jump on these kinds of situations and there’s a ready base of people who are sympathetic to them when institutions of social protection and inclusiveness are unable to catch up with economic ambition.

## Us vs. Them

Within months of President Rodrigo Duterte taking over, we knew that he had populist tendencies, but we didn’t really know how far he would take it. He went immediately after the “oligarchs” and the tax liabilities of a whole bunch of rich corporations and individuals. Take the case of Mighty cigarette, for example. The previous administration also tried to tame Mighty but it took a Duterte to bring Mighty to the ground.

Statement: *“Yung mga mayaman, talagang kalaban ko ‘yan. Sabihin na ninyo na inggit ako sa inyo, totoo ‘yan. P--- kayo pero magbayad kayo. (Those wealthy people, they’re really my enemies. You may say I’m envious of you, that’s true. Son of a bitch, you should pay.)”*

You can’t be any clearer than this kind of claim and he just kept on repeating this kind of tone while his economic team is cracking down on the tax liabilities of some of the largest corporations. It’s a good strategy if you want to roll out a potentially controversial tax reform program. If I were in their place, this is what I’d lead off with: In a society that is highly unequal, you go after the bigger fish first and then you ask everyone else to pay their fair share.

These liabilities were well-known. It was a travesty that previous administrations were not able to crack down on these well-known liabilities. But finally, through President Duterte, they managed to achieve this.

True enough, it paved the way for tax reforms. But the challenge with tax reform is on the distribution of the impact of the net benefits from TRAIN 1. This is an ongoing research of the Ateneo Policy Center, an estimation on the House version, not yet the

final version. If you look at the benefits arising from the tax reforms, they are the largest in C2 and D1, the upper middle class. D2, which is the lower class, and E, which is the poor, have very little benefits.

There's a whole array of assumptions, like cash transfer programs successfully taking place. But we know that the cash transfers have not been successfully put in place; there's a lot of leakages to begin with and there's delay in disbursement.

We expect reality, maybe a year from now when we have the full dataset, to actually be a little worse than this.

If you look at the communication on TRAIN 1 — give the middle class tax relief through the recalibration of personal income taxes, and increase indirect taxes, like tax on oil and value-added tax — what you are essentially doing is veering away from a progressive personal income tax system and loading up the revenues based on indirect taxes. This is not a recipe for reducing inequality; this is decidedly an efficiency-minded revenue measure.

PhilWeb is another firm that President Duterte went after. He called the majority owner, Roberto Ongpin, an "oligarch." This caused the stock price of PhilWeb to crash. Ongpin transferred PhilWeb's shares to businessman Gregorio "Greggy" Araneta III. Araneta bought 53.7 percent of the shares at P2.60 per share from almost P25 per share before Duterte attacked Ongpin.

Then, after all was said and done, PhilWeb's accreditation from PAGCOR got renewed and its stock prices started to recover. This is an inconsistency in the messaging. You're not going after oligarchs because you merely transferred wealth from one oligarch to another.

Essentially, these raise issues of whether you are changing structurally deep factors that affect inequality and lack of competition in the country. Instead, what we're seeing more is just the transfer of wealth to another group — a rising group, maybe a disruptive but still a rising, potentially oligarchic, group as well.

In terms of misguided economic solutions, I will only flag two:

1. **Misplaced emphasis on rice self-sufficiency.** This is not helpful for our wages because it puts upward pressure on wages. It's not helpful for our industrial push, neither does it help in terms of our poverty reduction efforts because rice is a big chunk of our consumption.

# “Populism is not new in the country. It has always been there.”

**2. Ending contractualization.** This solution might actually be missing the point. The response of some firms to ending “endo” (contractual employment) is to automate, which will not only end endo but also destroy jobs. Since we are in the cusp of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (e.g., artificial intelligence, internet of things), automation might become a more efficient response by the private sector. So, if we are not careful, this antagonistic view between labor and firm owners may not lead us to a lasting solution on decent job creation. Rather, it might trigger the reverse: job destruction.

## **Populism and traditional dynastic politics**

Populism is not new in the country. It has always been there. My proof? I do research on political dynasties and when you hear them talk, when you look at how they govern, you’ll see that populism is well and alive in the countryside. In fact, when we got the mayor from Davao, he basically just communicated how he governed Davao and put it on the national level.

So this is the question: “Do we have populist leaders or do we have numerous populist citizens just waiting for their leader to emerge?”

What strikes me here from an economic lens is, you are addressing distribution and inequality issues at the end of the pipe, but not looking at how to fix the pipe nor at what goes into the pipe. And I think that is the key thing about predistribution: you look at the root causes of inequality. “If this is the root of populism, what are the things that can be changed at the beginning of the pipe and in the pipe itself, rather than wait for the end of the pipe while preserving the entire unequal structure?”

**HOW DOES POPULISM STOP?** Here are my personal observations and hypotheses on populism, populists, and populist waves:

### **1. Populist tendencies are always present, and even more so in countries with high inequality.**

This is why we saw many populists in Latin America. As the population increases but remains unequal, there's a higher risk of populism. Populists aren't always supported by the majority. But because you have high inequality and highly divided societies, a populist can just pounce on the opportunity to take power since the others are so divided. Where have I heard that before?

You don't need the majority but you basically give the perception of a majority. And you only have the majority because the others are so divided and so abrasive to one another and are not willing to unify. Until they actually get the message that they need to unify with an alternative approach, you will always have that strong populist offering this certainty of decisiveness and all of these things that are seductive.

### **2. Populists don't tend to last long except when you throw natural resources (oil), into the mix.**

Thankfully we don't have oil, but we do have something else. In some forums that I attended, they sense a pattern whereby populists in our part of the world tend to be sustained by Chinese support, who have \$1 trillion in their war chest to bankroll whatever self-interest they're promoting.

### **3. Populism can arise in democracies as a natural check of "undemocratic liberalism."**

As long as there is a highly unequal society and a growing margin that is not included in the economic narrative, then populism will always be a risk. You will see this in places like Maguindanao, Lanao del Sur, Dinagat Islands, and even in Makati. There, people can see that society is highly unequal and there's nothing changing. Reformists come and go but the structures are still there. "This guy will never forget you, therefore we will stick to him."

# “Do we have populist leaders or do we have numerous populist citizens just waiting for their leader to emerge?”

- 4. Economic populism should be distinguished from political populism even as both are often intertwined in populist regimes.**  
Political populism tends to be overtly negative because it's divisive, racist, and anti-immigrant. It strikes at your values as a person.

Economic populism, on the other hand, is about equity. Who doesn't like equity? When you end up paying for correcting the inequity, then you don't like it anymore. This is part of the trickier narrative as far as the economic form of populism is concerned.

- 5. Economic populism is often conflated with purely redistributive policies but advancements in policy thinking could point to attacking inequality at its roots, notably through predistribution.**

# Gender and Populisms in Contemporary Times

**DR. JEAN ENCINAS-FRANCO**

*Assistant Professor*

*Department of Political Science*

*University of the Philippines Diliman*

I'm looking at the Duterte populism from a feminist standpoint. My presentation is about gender and populisms in contemporary times. I'm using the word populisms in plural form because I argue that there are many forms of populism.

I use the definition of Benjamin Moffitt that populism is contentious. Nevertheless, there are a lot of traits by which you can actually unite all populists. A populist can also be a woman or a man.

Populism is defined by the political style of the populist. It is performative and usually uses binaries like people vs. the elite. It is characterized by "bad manners" and the construction of a crisis that we all know fits the tendencies of our incumbent president like a glove.

### **Duterte's populist tendencies using the feminist lens**

My presentation is of the gendered political style and responses to President Rodrigo Duterte's administration. It links gender and populism, and how populism as a political style is deployed by Duterte symbolically and performatively.



# “Gender and populism are linked in academic literature and in practice.”

Gender and populism are linked in academic literature and in practice. Women, in the sense that they use their motherhood and their experiences to be able to actually gain more voters and be popular, also use it.

During the 2016 Presidential Elections, Duterte got the youth vote. In fact, the younger the voter, the higher Duterte’s appeal. Duterte had a 12-point lead over Manuel “Mar” Roxas on female voters but he had a 22-point lead over Roxas over male voters. I’m using a newspaper account because the exit polls of 2016 are not yet available.

How does Duterte use his gendered populism? Why does he keep using it? Why is it that there is no significant or massive dissent about what he’s doing?

## **Linguistic manifestations of the gendered populist style of Duterte:**

### **1. Use of “*Tatay Digong*”**

I’m not sure of the origin of the term or if the Davao folks have used this since it’s intrinsically Tagalog. Nonetheless, it’s one way to exhibit political fatherhood and it is part of Duterte’s charisma as a natural leader.

The problem with calling him “*Tatay Digong*” is that it justifies discipline. It is also very gendered because in the family, we always look at the father as the “disciplinarian.” Moreover, it is also familiar because it was used extensively by Marcos and, for that matter, most of East Asian development states.

## 2. Rape jokes

This exhibits hegemonic masculinity. And this is the case despite the fact that since 1997, rape was already a crime against persons and no longer a crime against chastity.

## 3. Rape jokes in an army camp in Marawi as the soldiers' reward for saving Mindanao

While Duterte would churn out rape jokes in an army camp in Marawi as a form of "reward" for saving Mindanao, he would also have a different set of women in his speeches — the "widows of the soldiers." If I'm not mistaken, I think he is the first president to have mentioned the widows of soldiers in his State of the Nation Address. This was endearing to the soldiers.

This also tells you how he hails our soldiers in his political style and in his agenda. Feminist scholars on gender and security say that when you talk about the armed forces, you are not just talking about the military itself but all the units and institutions that support it. The family and the wives are crucial in convincing the military to kill and to go to battle.

## 4. Duterte is extremely macho in terms of his pronouncements vis-a-vis the war on drugs and the martial law in Mindanao.

He uses this "political fatherhood," the way he honors the widows of soldiers to portray an image of somebody who is "decisive" and a "protector" of the people. This is precisely the way populist leaders are looked at.

Unfortunately, the universal image of a leader/president/prime minister has always been male-centric. Even if there are female presidents, men will always exhibit macho tendencies so they will be regarded as "strong and able leaders."

## 5. The President does not shy away from telling the public about his desire for women and looks at it as "natural" or a biological tendency that cannot be controlled.

We would also hear him joke about "bakla" (gay men). The former ambassador of the United States to the Philippines was not spared from that.

## 7. "Pariah femininity" (Schippers, 2007)

Duterte launches attacks on female politicians or public officials through slut-shaming

or, in Vice President Maria Leonor “Leni” Robredo’s case, saying that she is not capable to command because she is a woman. Pariah femininity isolates women leaders and portrays an image of them that will make people believe that women don’t deserve to be in the public sphere. This is unfortunate considering that the Philippines is a prime mover in the implementation and ratification the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), “the most rapidly and widely ratified treaty in history.”

What about those who respond to the misogynist remarks of Duterte? There are also gendered tendencies in the response. For instance, Senator Leila De Lima would say, “My relationship with this person happened because of the frailties of a woman.” There’s no agency in that because it only strengthens Duterte’s statement that women cannot be trusted to be agents of their future or of their actions.

There are also a lot of instances of slut-shaming versus Mocha Uson — to shame her and what she does. There are also accusations that pro-Duterte bloggers are “*bakla*” and are infighting because of this. There’s a great deal of mudslinging from both camps and those who are against Duterte are also guilty of this.

The implication is that Duterte’s brand of populism thrives because of these gendered responses that invoke the familiar. We’re not seeing any massive dissent or protest because for most people, these discourses are familiar and nonthreatening. It does not disrupt the gendered hierarchies that we’ve all been socialized into since childhood. It fits squarely within what Judith Butler would say our “matrix of intelligibility.” It doesn’t go against what we’ve learned and to which we’ve been socialized.

My main argument is that despite Duterte’s misogynist remarks and tendencies, he is popular because it feeds into the familiar. And because it feeds into the familiar, then there is no massive protest against this type of populism.

“Despite Duterte’s misogynist remarks and tendencies, he is popular because it feeds into the familiar. And because it feeds into the familiar, then there is no massive protest against this type of populism.”

# We Are Rodrigo Duterte: The Philippine Populist Publics

**CLEVE ARGUELLES**

*Assistant Professor and Chair*

*Department of Political Science*

*University of the Philippines Manila*

I'll be talking about populism from a different perspective and I would like to decenter the conversation away from the populist to focus on the populist public/supporters.

This is an ongoing research on building an account of populism from the perspective of the "populist publics," not supporters, because I argue that instead of just blindly supporting the president, as most people would assume, President Rodrigo Duterte's supporters are more diverse and have varying motivations than just, "*Idolo namin si Tatay Digong* (*Tatay Digong* is our idol)."

I am currently doing an ethnographic study among the urban poor supporters of Duterte in the slums of Caloocan, Manila, and Quezon City — the same areas where most of the extrajudicial killings (EJKs) took place. It is interesting how the residents continue to support the president despite the murder, for instance, of their brothers, sisters, friends, or neighbors in the area. I started this research in January 2016 and I've had a good start because the vantage point is from before the elections up to the present. Through time, I have seen the evolution of populist supporters in the Philippines.



**“Populism should also be interrogated from the perspective of the supporters. They are as controversial, sometimes as deviant, as the populist leaders that they support.”**

In political science, most populism scholars would argue that the definition of populism has something to do with the people. In Cas Mudde’s hugely influential definition, he asserted that populists construct a society where there are pure people (*taumbayan*) vs. the corrupt elite (“*Dilawan*”). It’s similar to Benjamin Moffitt’s assertion that the appeal to the people is very important.

But my argument here is that despite the centrality of the people in the definitions of populism, sometimes populism scholars tend to miss who these people are and why they would support a populist. We are currently witnessing the rise of the populist publics along with the populists. In discussions on the rise of populism, we have focused on the controversial statements and the vibrant characters of populist leaders like US President Donald Trump and Duterte. But I argue that the rise of populism should also be interrogated from the perspective of the supporters. They are also as controversial, sometimes as deviant, as the populist leaders that they support.

It’s not just Duterte who says that people should be killed, nor is it only Trump who says that blacks are not welcome in America; it’s also their supporters. I want to unpack where they’re coming from. However, presently, we tend to represent populist supporters or the populist public in pejorative manners. In mainstream media and even in academic discourses, they are easily portrayed as the “bad people.” Examples include Hillary Clinton referring to Trump’s supporters as “basket of deplorables,” and in the Philippines, “*Dutertards*” when talking about Duterte supporters.

This research provides accounts of the populist publics against the assumption that they are fanatics,

which makes us pathologize or demonize them. In academic literature, populist voters tend to be represented as “careless voters” who “don’t know what they’re doing” because they are “society’s losers” and they tend to vote for whom they think can rescue them, without putting much thought into why they are voting for that person.

### Stories of women

I conducted interviews and participant observations in the course of my research. I’ve been following some individuals since 2016 until now. Here are two of the stories that I gathered:

Magdalena, 39, lives in a slum in Quezon City and is a solo parent to a family of five. When I met her during the pre-election period, she was pregnant and was facing two problems: one, as a waste scavenger, her income is occasional and unstable, and that’s a source of insecurity on her part; and two, she’s complaining that the buyer of the wastes that she sells in a recycling facility is sexually harassing her.

During the campaign period, she thought that these things would change if she will vote for Duterte. Personally, I wondered why Magdalena claims that Duterte will best represent her interests, given her insecurities and concerns. Magdalena was a vote-watcher during the elections. Even though she wasn’t vote watching for Duterte, she still wanted to guard the votes that he will get.

For Magdalena, Duterte is a man of his word, a real man (“*totoong lalaki*”). Her five children all have different fathers and she would usually compare Duterte to her previous husbands, asserting that the president is different from them. Why? Because

“[He] is a *a real man... he is honest and admits that he is *babaero*. His sexism is accessible and he doesn’t attempt to hide it.”*

“Since he’s consistent with his public and private life, then he is more trustworthy, reliable and relatable... because ‘he thinks like us.’

he is honest and admits that he is “*babaero*” (a womanizer). His sexism is accessible and he doesn’t attempt to hide it. Therefore, there will be no false promises such as, “*Aalagaan kita, kakalingain kita* (I will take care of you).” What you see is what you get.

Recently, I went back to the community and visited Magdalena. She had bad and good news for me: first, her longtime best friend who used to sell cigarettes was killed in a *Tokhang* operation in their community. “What do you think of it?” I asked. She answered, “She used to abuse illegal drugs and we knew it was coming so I’m not blaming anyone.” For Magdalena, it was the fault of her longtime friend.

The second surprise is that she had already given birth. “What’s the baby’s name?” I asked. “Rodrigo,” she said, “in celebration of our victory.” For Magdalena, Duterte’s rise to power is not only Duterte’s electoral victory but also hers.

**WHY DO THESE PEOPLE GRAVITATE TOWARD DUTERTE?** I put forward three things that I’ve learned from them:

1. **Duterte functions as a surrogate voice for their misery.** Only he can articulate their everyday misery, particularly on the issue of peace and order in their community. The issue on drugs and criminality resonates well with these people.

During the election, money flooded in their community but not a single bill came from Duterte's group. Yet, they still overwhelmingly voted for him. They said it's not about the money for them, it's about their issues finally being recognized.

Instead of only considering who can provide material benefits, the populist publics are also concerned with who can represent their voices and their misery well in the public sphere.

## **2. Duterte brings authenticity to politics.**

He's transparent and consistent, like when he admitted that he likes Vice President Maria Leonor "Leni" Robredo's legs. Their argument is that all politicians are like Duterte, but since he's consistent with his public and private life, then he is more trustworthy, reliable, and relatable. He's just an average man whose mind is accessible because "he thinks like us." He's an ordinary person.

## **3. Duterte reflects persistent political will and refrains from using the bureaucratic inertia as an excuse.**

He has the capacity and willingness to overcome barriers, even legal challenges, to carry out promises.

Another quick story: Mira, 26, has four children and is a full-time housemaker. Her two cousins were killed in a *Tokhang* operation in their community in Manila, while three of her four brothers are currently in jail because of *Tokhang* for being illegal drug users. She used to work as a maintenance staff of a government drug rehabilitation center. But for her, illegal drug users are beyond saving because that's her observation in their community throughout the years: drug addicts cannot be saved.

While Mira sympathizes and loves these people, she said she wouldn't be surprised if they become victims of the war on drugs. She will be sad but will take it as a form of justice.

Despite having intimate connections or experiences of the *Tokhang* operations in their community, for people like Mira and her neighbors, their political support for Duterte endures.

“They can say they hate the killings but they love the war on drugs.”

4. For people on the ground, the cops, not Duterte, should be the ones blamed and held liable for the killings committed under *Oplan Tokhang*.

Growing up, the residents have learned to fear the police as much as the drug gangs. They have a history of mistrust, abuse, and corruption among police officers. They don't have that kind of fear toward the president.

They can say they hate the killings but they love the war on drugs.

They also hold the view that the drug war should continue. They embrace it because of its immediate, although temporary, relief. They say they can now walk safely in their communities and won't witness an exchange of illegal drugs in broad daylight. “When you take away the war on drugs, will that also mean that we are going back to the pre-war on drugs status of our community where there was rampant criminality and abuse of drugs?” they asked.

5. Contrary to what the critics of the president think, Duterte supporters value human life.

In fact, they argue that human life is valuable; therefore, those who harm the human life of others deserve to be punished and do not deserve protection.

On the ground, people have yet to realize how central the role of President Duterte is in the violent *Tokhang* operations. In the surveys, people are aware about the

**“Their concern is not sustainability or the long run because they will be dead then. Rather, their focus is on *their daily survival.*”**

EJKs but they don't connect it to the question of who is accountable for these killings. The mistrust of police does not necessarily equate to mistrust of the president. To their mind, it is unthinkable that the president is involved with the minute details of arrests, tortures, and killings.

It is also important to consider how we are going to respond to their immediate fears and needs. In some of these communities, there are church groups and civil society organizations (CSOs) that campaign against *Tokhang*. The residents, in turn, would say that both human rights and democracy are long-term concerns. How about their immediate needs? “*Ayaw na nila ng mga drug addicts sa tabi nila* (They don't want drug addicts around).” Their concern is not sustainability or the long run because they will be dead then. Rather, their focus is on their daily survival. Advocates, dealing mostly with the big picture, might struggle to see and appreciate something as fleeting as temporary relief from everyday misery.

Lastly, they also pointed out that while the war on drugs may save them from further misery, they might not live long enough to enjoy this temporary relief because of rising prices as an effect of the TRAIN Law. While they demand that the killings be stopped but the war on drugs be continued, their support for Duterte cannot endure on empty stomachs.



# Open Forum

*Moderated by Edilberto C. De Jesus*

## WHAT CAN BE DONE TO “TAME” THE POPULIST URGE AMONG THE PUBLIC AND CHANNEL IT INTO MORE FUNCTIONAL FORM?

Based on what I've seen, I don't think you can tame populism. It's always there. There's always the tendency for shortcuts, to fix end-of-the-pipe issues immediately. The difficulty, especially among policymakers and advocacy groups, is to find a common ground to solve the beginning-of-the-pipe problems. I think it's as much a reflection of our inability to unite and find a middle ground that you have many of these populists. And they are not numerous in some countries, especially in the countries that we have today. US President Donald Trump, for instance, didn't win the majority vote, so you can't even say that it's "most of the Americans." And if you talk to the Americans, they will say that they don't actually agree with Trump on this issue or that. It's a single-issue advocacy; Trump is the only one who talked about gun ownership. In the Philippines, President Rodrigo Duterte is the only one who talked about federalism, so maybe he won parts of Mindanao this way.

- Dean Ronald Mendoza

We need to unpack the misogynist rhetoric of the president. While doing so, we need to avoid equally misogynist responses to his remarks and utterances. It's not easy because we are "familiar" with this. We also need to elect more women and sexual minorities in government. I know there's no guarantee that they will espouse gender equality, or

they will be more gender-responsive. But at the very least, they would definitely change the character of governance in this country.

- Dr. Jean Encinas-Franco

For democrats or advocates to confront populism, it should really be about responding to the populist publics. While populist leaders may be enemies of democracy — sometimes they're not, actually, but most of the time they are — I think it would be a mistake to think that the populist supporters/publics are also enemies of democracy. To tame populism is to think of ways to make these people who perceive themselves as losers in the current status and who gravitated toward populist leaders feel that they can win under a democratic setup and under democratic institutions. I think that by responding to their sense of exclusion and frustrations, we will be able to put the fire out of populism, which are the populist supporters.

- Cleve Arguelles

## HOW STABLE CAN FOREIGN-SUPPORTED POPULIST REGIMES BE?

The Latin American populists, based on what I've read, were mostly funded by national resource. And what I'm using is an economic lens, not the divisive rhetoric that the other experts also talked about. What it prolongs, essentially, is not the way of governing, but the economy. It extends the eventual collapse from immediately taking place. Based on what I have gathered from the previous forums that I've attended, some political analysts are saying the Chinese are

essentially funding some of the strongmen in Asia through infrastructure buildups that give several percentage points of growth, whether you are a good leader or not. It's just going to grow. It prolongs what some might consider the inevitable.

I also think that populism is not a line, it's a degree. I think populism is inherent in most political parties, in many leaders, and it's in the way that you negotiate that political space. At least from an economic lens, if you care about redistribution and you have this tendency toward fixing the end-of-the-pipe as an immediate take, then that's a very seductive position because many people really cannot stand more discussions on institutions-building that yield in the long run, when we're all dead. This messaging by the economy is not really sitting well with this entire environment where they want immediate solutions. Unfortunately, that kind of rhetoric doesn't lead to lasting solutions. It leads to temporary solutions but it doesn't fix the beginning of the pipe, which is the big problem.

- Dean Ronald Mendoza

### ARE CERTAIN CULTURES AND SOCIETIES MORE VULNERABLE TO POPULIST SYMBOLISMS THAN OTHERS?

I don't necessarily agree that the Filipino culture is misogynistic. It's patriarchal. It's universal; we must reject patriarchy and male privilege because to say that it is within our culture is actually to normalize it, to make it natural, and to depoliticize

it. So it's really patriarchy that we should eradicate.

- Dr. Jean Encinas-Franco

### WHAT ARE THE SHORTCOMINGS OF DEMOCRATIC FORCES AND CIVIL SOCIETY IN TOUCHING BASE WITH THE COMMUNITIES WHO BELIEVE IN THE POPULIST LEADER?

An environment with social inequality is conducive for populist publics to thrive but it's not sufficient. Of the studies on populism, countries with high inequality are vulnerable to the rise of populist leaders and the populist publics. But if there is no populist leader to fan the flames that will politicize inequality and create an antagonistic rhetoric, then it's not automatic that inequality will lead to populism.

Secondly, on the shortcomings of civil society groups in terms of responding to populism and touching base: First, these communities reject moralist discourses on the good and the bad. In these communities, good and bad is always a gray area so the moralist discourses do not resonate well with them. For example, when you say Duterte is sexist therefore he should not lead, they don't really care about that because all the people around them are sexists as well. So what makes him unqualified "if we are all just like him?"

Next, there were efforts to fact-check the claims of the president and tell the people that some of the news and data are fake. These are important but in my observation

# “I don’t necessarily agree that the Filipino culture is misogynistic. It’s patriarchal.”

in these communities, they don’t really respond to facts unless it’s a narrative that can resonate with their own. They’re not so impressed by facts. For example, when I asked them about Senator Leila de Lima and why they think she’s in jail, these people said it’s because she is a “mistress.” When I provided the right information about it, their response is, of course, that the media are not telling the truth, or that I might be mistaken.

- Cleve Arguelles

The things that Arguelles’ respondents said about Robredo were also the same things that were actually said by anti-suffragists when the 1935 Constitution was being drafted. *Grabe, hindi na tayo umasenso* (We did not progress). So when you want to reject patriarchy, we’re also trying to say that in patriarchy, all of us are losers. Even the men. Men are also discriminated against in the world of patriarchy.

- Dr. Jean Encinas-Franco

## WHY DO ORDINARY PEOPLE BUY DUTERTE’S DEROGATORY RHETORIC ABOUT VP LENI ROBREDO AND SEN. LEILA DE LIMA?

This has something to do with patriarchy. Surprisingly, my women respondents don’t like Vice President Maria Leonor “Leni” Robredo to succeed because she’s a woman and women have no place in the presidency. Moreover, they said Robredo is a solo parent and should be focusing on her children instead of getting too involved in politics. These things have something to do with patriarchy.

- Cleve Arguelles

## WHEN WE SIMPLIFY COMPLEX ISSUES, DO WE HIT THE MARK WITH POPULIST SUPPORTERS?

With respect to my fellow economists, we have not done a good job communicating policy options, for instance, and integrating complexity in the solution with something that is appreciated by most of our citizens. This is a fair enough observation in the economics profession. The challenge, therefore, is that you are up against something that is so simply messaged — such as an end-of-the-pipe solution and endo — and your alternative is really industrial policy that sharpens fiscal incentives that brings in foreign investments.

That is not going to win against “*tapusin natin nang tatlong linggo ‘yang endo na ‘yan nang matapos na ‘yung usapan na ‘yan*” (let’s finish endo in three weeks so we can already end the conversation)” kind of solution. It is an ongoing challenge.

As far as dumbing down, I don’t think it’s “dumbing down” to reach out to our people and citizens. I think simplifying is something that only the sharpest of us can do. The challenge is to explain it to your grandmother and, if you can, then you’re a good teacher. I think that’s the challenge for most of our technocrats. But there’s also a push in some countries against technocracy and against being smart or having data. *Ayaw nilang marinig ‘yan, lahat ‘yan fake. “Ito ‘yung sinasabi sa akin ng populist, tatapusin daw niya. ‘Yang mga pinagsasabi niyo, hindi ‘yan katiwa-tiwala kasi narinig ko na dati ‘yan eh* (They don’t want to hear those because all of those are fake. “This is what the populist leader is telling me, that he will finish it. I don’t trust what you’re saying because I already heard that before”). It didn’t pan out as I expected.”

I think this push against technocracy, this push against appreciating the complex challenge, and the challenge of finding middle ground — which is even more challenging if it’s a populist problem — is an ongoing problem and populists are taking advantage of that.

- Dean Ronald Mendoza

Unfortunately, I think Duterte is a good communicator, at least to his base. The simplicity of language, the perceived authenticity of what he’s saying and doing, continues to contribute to his charisma. If I’m not mistaken, during the 2016 elections, he was the only candidate who gave a timeline even if it has no basis. Because, come to think of it, nobody reads the Philippine Development Plan which contains the targets and the timelines.

He makes it so believable. *Bahala na si Batman kung gagawin o hindi. Eh sorry na lang, nanalo siya dahil maraming naniwala* (Nevermind if it can be done or not. Unfortunately, he won because many believed his promises).

- Dr. Jean Encinas-Franco

Because populism is also a response to technocracy, it’s not just about simplifying but also repoliticizing technocratic issues. What do I mean by that? Populists are good in bringing seemingly nonpolitical issues back to the political realm. For example, we’ve long assumed that the economy should be run by economic experts. Then populists come in and say, “No, let’s decide, as people, regarding this.” This is why populism is not necessarily antidemocratic since it also asserts that it can’t be just a few people, even if they are experts, who will decide about our economic policies. It’s also about repoliticizing that issue and giving the people a hand again in a previously technocratic approach. This,



even if the people won't give much input in crafting. Still, the messaging is like that: we're bringing supposedly nonpolitical issues back to political conversations under the assumption that non-experts can shape these policies and have a hand even if they don't fully understand it.

Some scholars of populism would say that progressives can also take advantage of populist strategies. For example, if you want to campaign redistributive economic policies, maybe it's time to also rely on populist strategies like the 1 percent vs. the 99 percent. Populism scholars would also say that's populist rhetoric — to show people how unequal society is and drive them toward economic reforms that are conducive to combat inequality.

- Cleve Arguelles

### AND, ON THE OTHER HAND, WHY IS DUTERTE EFFECTIVE IN COMMUNICATING TO HIS POPULAR BASE?

I don't think it's a large base. Rather, it's the inability of the rest to unify on the alternative message. And as long as it's divided into small factions, you'll have what seems to be a big base.

- Dean Ronald Mendoza

Part of the problem is crafting that alternative message. But beyond that, I think it's also the source of the message. Who is credible enough among the current leaders to be able to communicate to the electorate and get the alternative narrative accepted? Maybe this is something for the people here to think about.

- Dr. Edilberto De Jesus

“I don’t think it’s ‘*dumbing down*’ to reach out to our people and citizens. I think *simplifying* is something that only the sharpest of us can do.”

HOW CAN WE DEBUNK THE POPULIST DECEPTION THAT INEQUALITIES AND STRUCTURAL PROBLEMS CAN BE SOLVED IN FOUR OR SIX YEARS?

I want to quote former US President Barack Obama when he said, “You can actually win by dividing people but you cannot govern with the same method.” And I think that is the main weakness of populists: they will

not get at the root causes nor solve them if their style is to divide. You need a majority to pass a law, and a popular support to execute it well. So if you continue to divide, you can only satisfy small groups through shortcuts. But you don’t solve lasting, structural problems.

- Dean Ronald Mendoza

# POPULISM AND SOCIAL MEDIA

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# Populism in the Age of Social Media

**DR. FRANCISCO MAGNO**

*Former Director*

*Jesse M. Robredo Institute of Governance*



I'll start my presentation with a discussion on "Dutertismo." When President Rodrigo Duterte ran in 2016, he won the trust of over 16 million Filipino voters — 40 percent of the votes. The other 60 percent, meanwhile, was divided among the other candidates. Duterte emerged victorious through his anti-illegal drugs and anti-criminality rhetoric, even if it was only fifth in the list of urgent national concerns for Filipinos, the most urgent being economic, e.g., high prices and jobs.

Data from the Social Weather Stations (SWS) shows that the ABC income classes, more than the E class, prefer Duterte. The law and order campaign appealed to the urban middle class, as well as the overseas Filipinos, who were concerned about their personal security, convenience, and stability.

Duterte also vowed to scale up the Davao Model of governance to the national level while floating a rhetoric against "Imperial Manila" and the oligarchy. However, does it mean that the oligarchy is only in Imperial Manila? How about the oligarchy in the rural areas?

“DUTERTISMO” is also evident in the following:

- **“Authenticity appeal”** or the use of uncouth words, pejorative, profanity-laced language, and cussing in formal occasions, or the reluctance to read prepared speeches and, instead, “telling it like it is”
- **Attacks against intrusive foreigners**, e.g., US, EU, Obama, UN, etc.
- **Attacks against institutions**, e.g. Commission on Human Rights, media, and the Catholic Church
- **Silencing of critics**, including the imprisonment of Senator Leila de Lima, the ouster of Chief Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno, the attacks on Vice President Maria Leonor “Leni” Robredo, and the revocation of Antonio Trillanes’ amnesty
- **Effective use of social media as platform for propaganda**

Human Rights Watch, an international non-government organization, estimates that the administration’s centerpiece policy, the war on drugs, has already resulted in the deaths of 12,000 people. The Philippine National Police, on the other hand, asserts that of this figure, over 10,000 cases are classified as unknown. This reflects the state’s inability to go after the perpetrators and solve cases.

Moreover, most of the victims of extrajudicial killings (EJKs) came from the lower income class; the big fishes were rarely caught. Ironically, the big fish has become Sen. de Lima.

### **Social Media Use of Filipinos**

The Philippines is 6th in the world in terms of internet use, with 67 million users. Filipinos rank number 1 in the world on social media use — spending three hours and 57 minutes every day doing various activities such as chatting or communication, accessing news sites, watching videos, and posting status or sending messages. Meanwhile, we spend nine hours and 29 minutes on the internet, number 2 in the world, to read the news and do research. This means that the amount of time spent on the internet indicates that the youth has more time to educate themselves using social media rather than reading books, newspapers, and the like.

Of the social media platforms, Facebook is the top application in the Philippines with 67 million users. We are conquering the world through social media.

Urbanization in the Philippines is almost 50 percent but the penetration in terms of internet use is 63 percent, including rural areas. Still, there exists a digital divide between

# “Currently, the substance of political debate in social media is deteriorating due to ad hominem statements, profanity, and name-calling.”

urban and rural communities because the country’s bandwidth is not extensive and is still privately provided by only two players.

## **Mobocracy or Democracy, Noise over Voice**

The Greeks would say that we need to put some discipline in the discourse, in the debate. Otherwise, it will end in mobocracy — the rule or domination by the masses. Are we at this age of direct democracy when we’re going back to a marketplace of ideas? Or is it noise over voice?

Social media platforms had been prominent during campaign periods worldwide. Nowadays, if you’re in front of the computer or you’re using your cellular phone, it appears that you can participate as a citizen. Without the need to be near citizens through television coverage and livestreaming, politicians can now address the public directly. They use the word “I” rather than “my party” and, in effect, the populaces take it as a sign that “This guy can take responsibility.”

Is it good or bad? Personally, I think it’s not very good because when you say “I,” it is only reflective of your opinion. But is your will the general will (*volante generale*)? Or are you supposed to find and represent the public interest?

Unfortunately, under populism, you have the decline of these disciplinary institutions for structuring the debate. Currently, for instance, the substance of political debate in social media is deteriorating due to *ad hominem* statements, profanity, and name-calling.

Politics is all about elevating the discourse to a level where you can find solutions and mobilize people for collective action. It means being civil and being able to aggregate

“Politics is all about elevating the discourse to a level where you can find solutions and mobilize people for collective action.”

and promote the public interest. It’s about moving people toward collective action, in realizing a common goal based on the public interest.

Thus, the concept of “I” — even if it allows the public to “connect” with the guy — should still be based on serious discussion. That’s why policy think tanks and even independent financial institutions are very important in a democracy.

The Duterte government has also invested on social media as a major component of its propaganda and political communications strategy. This is not at all new, aside from the following: One, the appointment of bloggers and social media influencers to key government positions. Two, tapping social media influencers to support Duterte and fight critics. And three, the use of online trolls to crush critics and oppositional views. Moreover, spreading false information and fake content is a strategy that was also employed.

Data is also supposed to be intrinsic to democracy. When the French Republic was established, the first government agency they put in place was the Bureau of Statistics.

Now, there is a lot of contention on what is real and what is not because everybody can be a “journalist.” And supposedly, through social media platforms, you are exercising your right to express your own opinion. However, citizenship requires responsibility.

Without transparency and reliable data, how are you going to compare the budget and the services? This provides the delineation between democracy and the rule of strong leaders.

## **Recommendations**

How, then, are we going to use social media in political socialization and democracy given the increased role of social media in political education? How do we confront historical revisionism and fake news? It must be noted that the youth nowadays are also less reliant on traditional media because they curate, share, and recreate their own content. Democracy and governance may be taught in the classroom with millennial teachers who also use social media.

## **YOUTH ARE ASSETS FOR THE DEMOCRACY CHALLENGE:**

- Strategic use of social media
- Challenge of collective action or organizing, especially now that there are “online rallies”
- Mobilizing: Making democracy inclusive
- “Packaging” or branding democracy
- Translating “noise to voice” or being able to listen to different voices and making sense of them
- “Youth Bulge” and sheer number or political force
- Tech- and social media-savvy
- Innovation-centered
- Optimizing social media for citizenship education

Social media is a battleground. It can be a friend or an enemy. Content is king and queen. In societies where populist politicians are leading the way, it is a matter of how the different forces will use the domain.



## PANEL REACTION

# LOUIE MONTEMAR

*Associate Professor  
College of Social Sciences  
and Development  
Polytechnic University of  
the Philippines*

**I**n 1975, British evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins said, “All this is a meme and memetics. Everything that we create as humans can be considered a meme. A meme is a unit of culture; it’s an idea or a behavior, and we pass it on from one generation to the next.”

This is one thing we must appreciate now: the concept of a meme. That’s because social media is one big political meme-making machine. Social media platforms are knowledge-carrying machines that can be used for both good and bad. We can see so much of it now with the work of trolls and other unscrupulous forces online.

### **Here are my responses to Dr. Magno’s presentation:**

There is a troll army out there and they’re very active. I call them the “Army of the Anonymous” instead of “trolls” because the latter has a negative connotation. But sometimes, some of them can be converted. This army is categorized by fake pictures and thin content. You will realize that they are only

**“Social media is one big political meme-making machine. Social media platforms are knowledge-carrying machines that can be used for both good and bad.”**

out there to pose questions, and to undermine you or make you angry. Because when you are, whatever you say appears to be useless or becomes meaningless.

I first encountered this Army of the Anonymous after the last elections when I posted: 1) thanks in support of my candidate, and 2) comments against other candidates. People then began to send me private messages on Facebook and to curse at me — I think they are monitoring and they hit on people who have many followers.

Admittedly, being “active” in social media is not easy. You should not be short-tempered. You must have a strong gut and be able to stomach the different responses that will be thrown at you. More importantly, it will also help if you have friends who will support you when others are already making personal attacks.

We have to be very conscious that there is an organized effort to use social media. The Army of the Anonymous are masters of the meme-making machine. I think that’s the problem with the traditional political parties: they didn’t

“I see the young becoming more intelligent, more nuanced in their thinking in social media. And that gives me hope.”

exploit social media. You can see it in the way Duterte’s Diehard Supporters (DDS) have used language in the last elections. Meanwhile, the Liberal Party speaks in English, and that can only reach so much in terms of audience.

In terms of the level of cognitive ability, the DDS really simplifies things so much because people have to understand them. We have to find a way to battle against them. They are effective because they have a good soil to plant on: the general public. Since the ‘80s, there have been studies in the politics of the sociology of education which had been pointing out that Filipinos have a certain predisposition to believe in authoritarian leaders and take supernatural things as OK. This is still reflected today: in the results of our national achievement tests, you see that science and math are the weakest areas of Filipino students. I think this is related to the way we appreciate the world.

Just last year, a UK study found that the Philippines is number three out of 30 countries in what they called “the most ignorant peoples in the world.” The ignorance there lies in the fact that we don’t really fully understand how the world works. And if you have people like that, then you can be easily swayed by the meme-making machine of that Army of the Anonymous. So what do we do about that?

When Facebook created Groups, I used the feature to manage my classes and it helped me a lot in communicating with my students. If I find nice memes or reading materials on Facebook, I just transfer them to my group and asked them to comment. And they responded. Thus, I made the commitment to myself to use social media as much as I can in my learning classes. The schools can only do so much.

One of my former teachers once shared that in the ‘70s, the Filipinos lacked awareness. There was a need to inform more Filipinos. Meanwhile, in the ‘90s, the problem seemed to be the lack of hope. Inspiring stories were then needed.

Nowadays, I think we lack both: we still need awareness-building and more stories to inspire. But we also have to be active in this meme-making machine of the young. There used to be no social media. When it emerged, it disrupted things for us politically. Still, I believe that the destruction is temporary. I see the young becoming more intelligent, more nuanced in their thinking in social media. And that gives me hope.

I think the answer will come from the young and their engagement. As the generation that came before them, what we can do is to help them.



## PANEL REACTION

**CARMINA Y.**

**UNTALAN**

*PhD Candidate*

*International Relations  
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*Osaka University*

**M**y presentation will provide more questions than answers about populism and social media. Apart from that, I aim to provide a framework on how to analyze the data that they presented. My presentation is titled "Populism in Social Media" and argues that there is a type of populism that social media has created at this point.

Here are some of the important questions when we talk about populism in social media:

*1. How did social media transform populism?*

The advent of social media might have changed our perspective on populism. There is a different form of populism because of social media. What are the differences and similarities from historical experiences?

*2. What are the major implications of social media populism to Philippine nation-building?*

We keep on saying it is divisive and so on. It has an implication on how we build our nation.

3. *Does populism qua social media reinforce the “too much democracy in the Philippines” argument?* We have heard it a lot of times from Lee Kuan Yew, Mahathir, etc. that the Philippines has too much democracy. But maybe it’s not true — if we look at social media and populism deeper.

4. *How can we counter the negative consequences of populism in social media to our democracy?*

Meanwhile, here are my assumptions when it comes to social media and populism:

**1. Both are neutral, yet powerful political vehicles.**

Populism is not always right wing. It can be left wing or centrist as well. Also, it’s not always bad. Sometimes, populism is actually a vehicle to reveal societal ills.

**2. Both transform and produce power relations and political identities.**

There are different ways of relating with the hierarchies of power. At the same time, there are also different political identities emerging from social media and populism, e.g., Duterte’s Diehard Supporters (DDS), *Dutertards*, *Bobotante*. All of these are identities that we attach to people because they’re easy to create in social media.

**3. Both are tools for citizen participation, representation and protest.**

**4. Both are vulnerable to co-optation and (mis)appropriation from various sectors of the political spectrum.**

The thing with social media nowadays is that everything is diversified. We don’t know where the center is anymore. Thus, I agree that we need to decenter the discourse on populism because it’s not just about Duterte but also the people. And I think that’s the main idea that I want to suggest as a framework.

Populism arises when the public demand does not match institutional capacity. There are three outstanding approaches:

1. **EMPIRICAL:** Characterizes the phenomenon and comes up with typologies and indicators;
2. **HISTORICAL:** Most of the literature on populism in the historical perspective comes from Latin American experience. Most of them are good; and

# “There is no populist leadership without creating ‘a people.’”

3. **SYMPTOMATIC:** The constitution of the people as a political actor. It’s no longer about the leader anymore. Analyzing populism should actually be an analysis of the people.

An analysis of populism cannot be limited to an analysis of the populist leader because there is no populist leadership without creating a “people.” Populism is a mechanism to mobilize and organize the people into “us people” vs. “them,” when backed with a promise, e.g., peace and order, economic abundance.

I also think that social media and populism created a new form of antagonism. It’s not just about the elite versus the people anymore. Rather, it’s about the people versus the other. This means that it’s not just about socioeconomic classes but about the creation of a whole unified concept of people versus some enemy. They say, for instance, that it’s the middle class versus the poor. But according to the data that they presented, we can’t even disaggregate and determine who the huge supporters of Duterte are. It’s very difficult to separate socioeconomic classes at this age of social media.

Populism, therefore, is a mode of identification available to any political actor (Laclau, 2005). That’s why populism should not only be centered to Duterte; we should also study the bloggers or influencers and all the discourse because it can be for anybody.

Social media is a 21st century phenomenon that changed our notion of “public space” from limited geographical areas of coming together to a virtually limitless space catering to both association and antagonism.

In the Philippine case, I think there are three outstanding paradoxes according to the data they presented:

**PARADOX 1: Limiting space through public discourse.** There's a public discourse but the space is limited by the trolls or DDS.

**PARADOX 2: The public coming together through individuated spaces like cloud protesting.** An individual need not go to the plaza to stage a protest. They can do it on their own. How can that be "coming together"?

**PARADOX 3: Connecting like-minded people rather than broadening or diversifying communicative relations** (Milan, 2015)

### **Populism in social media**

How did social media transform the constitution of the Filipino people? How about our perceptions and solutions to our problems?

Who are the Filipinos nowadays? Are they the supporters of Duterte? How about those who are against Duterte?

Who are the "Others"? How did social media help construct our notion of the people in relation to the other?

As I said, it's not just rich versus poor, elite versus the masses. Who are the others? Any foreign country, drug addicts, previous administration, or the oligarchs can be an other.

Anybody can be an other in social media. But what identity of the people came out of this othering? What do we think of Filipinos now? Anti-democratic or pro-authoritarian? We need to think about the kind of identity that emerged from social media.

Populism in social media is a new mode of populism in the Philippines; anybody could be an other. The binary oppositions (rich/poor, educated/non-educated, elite/non-elite, urban/rural) disintegrate in a confused and accelerated mode.

### **Implications for Analysis**

1. Since it's a new phenomenon, there should also be a new framework for analyzing it. **Populism is about the "people" and their identifications.** Populism in social media allows for an understanding of how the "people," as certain sectors of society, are constituted by the "people" themselves. For instance, how do keyboard warriors, even without the input of Duterte, create the notion of who the Filipino is?
2. **Populist leaders, especially in the age of social media, rely on this constitution of the people and how the people imagine them to be for or against them.** Sometimes, we also need to think about how the people see Duterte aside from thinking how Duterte fashions himself. Because whoever Duterte is right now is also a product of our discourse.
3. We have to **take advantage of what social media revealed about the diverse populist sentiments of the people** and work toward a normative analysis of the people's power to transform politics for good or bad. This, I think, will address the question on whether there is too much democracy in the Philippines. Because if there's always transformation, I think democracy is alive.

### **Implications to Philippine Democracy**

Is this too much democracy or suppression thereof? Maybe not suppression, because there is a creation of too many spaces.

What does populism in social media reveal about our post-EDSA democracy? This is something that we should talk about because we are living at this particular juncture where these legacies of EDSA are beginning to crumble down for some reason. Is the post-EDSA democracy an unfinished project?

“In the age of social media, [...] it’s no longer a war that has weapons, but something that plays with our culture and how we think of ourselves as Filipinos.”

According to Arditi, a scholar of populism, populism comes and goes. If there’s something wrong with the system, a populist leader will rise. So it’s a symptom of the limits of the dominant view of democracy (Arditi, 2005).

Can this be an opportunity to reflect about our own limitations as members of the civil society? The normal contention is civil society versus the State, but what if even the civil society themselves are flawed in addressing this problem?

Lastly, I would suggest a “democratic consolidation version 2.0.” In the age of social media, there’s a need to consolidate the people, not just the constitution. I would also like to emphasize that social media is up for grabs — if they can use it, I think we can use it against them, too. So the weapon of the enemy is only useful if it’s with them. But if it’s with us, then we can fight.

Now, there’s the concept of World War Web. We need to be constantly vigilant and mentally resilient because media wars are cultural battles of representations and images. It reorients the behavior and mindset of the “enemy” to weaken their cause. We need to think about how to win this cultural war because it’s no longer a war that has weapons but something that plays with our culture and how we think of ourselves as Filipinos.



## PANEL REACTION

# DR. CHERYLL SORIANO

*Associate Professor  
Department of  
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I was asked to focus on some conceptual discussions that connect the relationship between populism and media. I'll begin my discussion with distinctions in the literature between the concepts of "media populism," "mediated populism," and "mediatized populism."

### **Media Populism**

This pertains to populism among media themselves and independent of any relationship to populist movements. It means that there can be populism instituted and initiated by the media. Kramer's concept emerged in his analysis of tabloid press and talk radio but was also extended in the context of the internet. The increase in the commercialization of the news industry has intensified the media's natural search for mass audiences. The inclination for sensationalism and scandal in a conflict has led to the tendency of media to become populist media.

This inclination has also been identified as the possibility where — by engaging with moods of people, catering to their entertainment needs, and harping on negative stories that

might spread social and political malice — we have objectively created widespread sentiments and opinion climates on controversial issues, e.g., immigration, unemployment, and crime, that have been promptly exploited by populist movements.

In short, the populism happens first, as initiated by the media, and then taken up by the populist leader or movement.

The question of whether or to what extent this complicity is intentional on the part of the media is open, of course, to different interpretations. Therefore, local researchers want to know: 1) How much coverage has media given to the populist issues over others? 2) What are the concrete institutional mechanisms that media used to convert anger into support for populist political movements?

### **Mediated Populism**

This pertains to the outcome of the close connection between media-originated dynamics and the rise of populist sentiments and, eventually, of populist movements. The focus here in mediated populism is the process by which populist leaders, directly or through its army, may use media to make more palatable populist sentiments.

### **Mediatized populism**

This research strand examines the institutional and political-economic dynamics of mediatization and the structures of mediated political fields in which contemporary populist political formations are embedded.

Communication scientists define mediatization as a long-term process through which the importance

**“By engaging with moods of people, catering to their entertainment needs, and harping on negative stories, (media may have created) opinion climates on controversial issues that have been promptly exploited by populist movements.”**

“The president won the elections [...] through a group of small, avid, and dedicated supporters who created the rich interactions online and who appeared to have the collective aim for change to come.”

of media as an institution, and its spillover effect on political processes and political institutions, has increased; and media institutions, technologies, practices and affect are shaping the context and currency of political action and expression.

In short, they look at it as a bigger realm. The influence is mostly in a populist direction, with mediatized politics increasingly exhibiting the main characteristics of populist political expression, namely:

1. A tendency to move toward moralizing simplifications or binarisms
2. The proliferation of crisis and emergency rhetorics
3. The resort to spectacularization
4. The harvesting of emotional or affective repertoires

The coincidence of media commercialization and privatization and the opening up of the economy has several implications for media’s political role and relationship that, in turn, have created particular kinds of political opportunities for the politics of populism.

This trend of looking at the relationship between media and populism critique the contemporary analysis. They look as if social media is also powerful and they attempt to look at it as if technology determines politics. The populist problem is approached as a deviant occurrence

that stands outside of history and the landscapes of democratic politics as usual. Such attempt to mediatized populism calls for a historicization and a political economy analysis of mediatization of politics where population is embedded.

Another offering of a theoretical analysis is research that proposes a four-stage life cycle for mediated populism:

- 1. Ground-laying phase.** We can start imagining this in the context of digital media. In this phase, the media may be engaged in providing a dramatic portrayal of the country's illnesses, denouncing corruption in government, highlighting immigration-linked crime stories, and the like. The media coverage in the long run is likely to diffuse social malice and to trigger popular anger and political disaffection. This domestic political climate represents the ideal milieu prior to the rise of political figures voicing social discontent and claiming to speak for it and the possibility of fixing it. This has clearly, apparently, facilitated the rise of President Rodrigo Duterte whose success was, to a significant extent, buttressed by media, for example, by supporting a favorable political climate.
- 2. Insurgence stage.** Populist movements attempt to enlarge and consolidate their popular and electoral support by exploiting the communication resources that media made available more intensely, unintentionally or not. This is a stage when populist leaders, often media-savvy figures or their people, seek to secure media attention by displaying a wide variety of communication tactics. They create stories that the media covet and cover, thus granting populist actors an enormous, and free, publicity.
- 3. Established phase.** Populism obtains full legitimization in the country's political system, making its allies and decisions, including appointed leaders, acceptable. This theory predicts that this can often mean loss of newsworthiness for the leaders and their stances as they take on more ordinary political roles in the political arena with the consequent lessening of media attention, which may lead to the fourth phase.
- 4. Decline phase.** Their spotlights might be suddenly switched on by the political fall of former media darlings or populist leaders.

“Research says that in the end, the person who is able to sustain an interesting narrative that can be taken up by ordinary people and the media is going to hold people’s attention.”

It would be interesting to see mediatized populism in the Philippines analyzed or predicted using these stages in the context of digital media in a historical and sociopolitical backdrop. The role of digital participatory media in every stage of mediatized populism would be interesting for analytical capture.

President Duterte’s team created its own media army, moving away from relying solely on mainstream or traditional media, and transformed its ideological composition and objectives. A study has shown how the president won the elections not through massive social media presence, but through a group of small, avid, and dedicated supporters who created the rich interactions online and who appeared to have the collective aim for change to come. Duterte’s campaign was compared to former Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago’s campaign, who had the most number of followers but did not really trigger a lot of conversation and engagement.

Another research shows that during past elections, the candidate with the best told narrative was well-placed to win media attention. The same research says that in the end, the person who is able to sustain an interesting narrative that can be taken up by ordinary people and the media is going to hold people’s attention.

How was people's participation through the composite features and affordances of social media — e.g., like, retweet, favorite — harnessed to promote populism sentiments at each stage of this analytical scheme?

We should also look at the architecture of social media platforms that makes this harnessing possible and underlies mediatized populism. Facebook said in July that it had detected a covert campaign to influence the 2020 United States Election through the use of posts on social issues. Consequently, the social media giant deleted hundreds of pages and accounts. A Facebook executive also admitted in a recent US congressional hearing that it's easier for people to create fake accounts than it is for Facebook to remove them. There's also precision targeting, where people who are likely to subscribe to particular topics based on their activity history are continually seeded with the same information. Those likely to get attracted to fake news are fed with more fake news through algorithmic design.

A systematic study on the communicative process that takes places to facilitate support toward populist issues is one thing. How does the deliberate or unwitting interaction between architects of network disinformation, real supporters, and mainstream media facilitate, for example, the demonization of drug addicts, that made it palatable for people to agree to the acceptability of their killings?

What is the language and messaging strategy used and what are the affective dimensions of such language that seemed to appeal to a large population of supporters?

How can the same strategy that has appealed and worked for mediatized populism be used to rethink the communicative strategies of the opposition or the activists that may lead us to the decline or the questioning stage of the publics?



# Open Forum

*Moderated by Ian Jason Hecita*

## HOW CAN GROUPS TRANSLATE ONLINE EXCHANGES TO OFFLINE COLLECTIVE ACTION?

It's very important to link democracy and data as they go hand in hand, but data doesn't speak for itself; it needs to be interpreted. Today, there is decline of democratic values, as well as strategic thinking and evidence-based policymaking. The challenge is about those who produce public knowledge. There is a denigration of education that produces data and analysis. Policy think tanks are the missing elements — they are important for a vibrant democracy. We require policy think tanks; we require research institutions. There are a lot of schools in the Philippines, but they are not producing enough research. We should be sharing evidence, and this is the missing element in the whole discourse. I think we have to revive the stature given to schools and research institutions. The political parties are purveyors of what is of public value because after all, politics is just a measure of what is supposed to be for the common interest. It is really a battle for content in the space.

- Dr. Francisco Magno

It's the young who will set things right, but if you want to do something now, let's work on our teachers. Many teachers are spreading fake news.

- Louie Montemar

I don't think we can combat social media; there's no way to stop social media as an enemy. But for our part, we have to rethink our nostalgia for past ways of protest

because we're entering a new era and I don't think it's realistic to dream of having a second EDSA. I also think that there should be an understanding of the psychology of the people more than the manifestations of populism because if you don't understand what and how people think, it would be hard for us to join them as a collective.

- Carmina Untalan

We need research that will understand the ground-laying phase and the insurgent phase. How did it happen that these kinds of sentiments became acceptable, palatable, and really popular to an audience at the initial couple of stages? We need to fight content with content and explore the possibility of a research-based output. We can come up with a radio network, a collaboration of all universities and also civil society organizations (CSOs), and popularize the research we make. I think it's a matter of fighting acceptable, attractive content with other acceptable, attractive content. It's going to have to be a strategic collaboration that hinges on a real understanding of the Filipino psychology.

- Dr. Cheryll Ruth Soriano

I think we have a big problem with the language. We have to consider that if we want to inform the people online, you cannot do it in English.

- Louie Montemar

There are governance knowledge hubs being created in the regions and they speak in the vernacular. Populism, I think, is this veneer

“Populists  
operate in an  
environment  
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The antidote  
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We have  
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We invest in  
democracy.”

and it homogenizes. There is claymaking being made by populist politicians that says “I represent the people.” The way out of this nest regarding content creation is to look at content being created in the regions by knowledge hubs and people interpreting their own data — data from the local government, budget data — and finding solutions. It will be an answer to the claymaking being made that the solutions to these problems of the country are just in the hands of individual personalities. Content can be created not just in nation-state level but at the different local knowledge hubs.

- Dr. Francisco Magno

#### HOW CAN WE USE TECHNOLOGY TO REINFORCE AND ENHANCE DEMOCRACY?

The challenge is how to invest in democracy. That’s a reality because those who are in power have financial resources. How do we invest in democracy? We invest in financial resources, in human capital, in building partnerships, knowledge hubs, and the capacity of people to interpret the budget, and even to follow the money trail. It’s about using the same tools the enemies of democracy use. It’s important to invest in the education of our youth, in the education of our people, but we also have to look at different local contexts because the content that we are having



right now is very simplified. Populism has a tendency to homogenize and to simplify. It's important to delineate, diversify, and build content based on solutions that will work, because populist politicians have a tendency to claim victories and they operate in an environment of chaos. The antidote to chaos is certainty. We have data, we have explanations. We invest in democracy.

- Dr. Francisco Magno

In government, there are agencies that generate good content. If we know someone in government, we can tell them to use social media more.

- Louie Montemar

It is not just a matter of matching the troll army in terms of number but really coming up with strategic messaging. In the past, research has shown how the same troll army was mobilized by other candidates, but they did not make it because the kind of appeal was not as effective as the other one and how they connected to the masses.

- Dr. Cheryl Ruth Soriano



# POPULISM AND CIVIL SOCIETY

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# Civil Society Responses to Populist Leadership

**TERESITA QUINTOS DELES**

*Chairperson*

*International Center for Innovation, Transformation  
and Excellence in Governance (INCITEGov)*

**W**e are now going from social media back to real people — by that I mean, actual people, not in their virtual presence, but as they are in the real world, as they are, shall we say, in the streets, with their feet on the ground, not in cyberspace. When we knew in INCITEGov that we were going to do a study on populism, we decided to focus on its impact on civil society. Finding the angle, the specific peg, however, came later. In the beginning, we were looking at studying civil society responses in order to be able to better understand populism but, as we heard stories on how civil society was responding to populism, the insight came: That's the story, that's what we need to know about.

The question is: What is the effect of President Rodrigo Duterte's populist leadership on civil society organizations (CSOs) and what are their responses? How they responded and what is now the continuing story between populism and civil society are the areas we decided to explore. By civil society, we mean the organized segment of society — citizens banding together and organizing to catalyze changes and development, also



“We are led by the worst kind of populist leader [...] who tapped into a sense of grievance, and who created divisions among the people [...] This has come, and come hard on the country.”

with the goal of affecting governance. The results of our research that we are presenting today is still work in progress. It is not even close to being exhaustive; we have only started to scratch the surface. At INCITEGov, we have already decided that we will probe deeper into this. We will do a more extended research because we believe it is important to document how we are responding to the challenges of dynamic transitional disruption and transitional politics. We need to study and reflect on what has — what is — happening to make sure that we don't go through this over and over again.

We know how Duterte projected himself as an underdog and an outsider — pandering to that certain audience, championing change, projecting himself as the voice of the masses. He successfully espoused the narrative of illegal drugs and made it a primary narrative of the country's problem. His campaign slogan was “change is coming.” He exploited social disparities, amplified the popular commentary on the current political structure, posturing himself as the outsider ready to fight the elite, imperial Manila, among others. He emphasized crime and corruption, and extensively used social media, as discussed in the previous sessions.

Two years into the Duterte presidency, we see the result on some of his major campaign promises which have made a huge impact on certain segments of society: such as the war on drugs

from which tens of thousands have been killed and thousands of children orphaned, the unfulfilled promise to end contractualization for the labor sector, and the vow to address historical injustice in Mindanao. Among the challenges we currently face are the constricting civic space, misogynistic attacks on women, martial law in Mindanao, and the surrender of our territory in the West Philippine Sea. This is where we are now: we are led by the worst kind of populist leader who makes instant promises without thinking how things actually get done, who tapped into a deep sense of grievance, and who created divisions among the people without thinking about the implications of such polarization. This has come, and come hard on the country. In any discussion on populism and the regression of democracy in the world today, the Philippines always comes into the picture. We are a major model of what is bad for democracy and the rise of populism. It's important, therefore, to look into civil society because the question precisely is: How did this happen in a country which has arguably the most vibrant and robust civil society in the world, where civil society is supposed to be organized to be a force for democratization?

The ADB Civil Society Brief in 2013 recognized the Philippines as having the most vibrant and robust civil society globally. We were listed as having the largest number of CSOs per capita in Asia and, the report further noted that, if civil society has contributed to democratization anywhere, it is in the Philippines. So what happened? *Anyare?* How come, in the country with a civil society that's supposed to be standing up and defending democracy and ensuring not to be overcome by populism, the opposite has happened?

We looked at six sectors: development non-government organizations (NGOs), labor, urban poor, women, youth (although very limited), and Marawi residents or CSOs, although the last are not really organized as civil society the way we conventionally know it. We chose sectors which are directly affected by some of the major policies, or the lack of policies, of the government. We asked each sector about their background, the state of civil society in that sector up to the time of Duterte, their major agenda or the things they are fighting for, how they voted in 2016, and why. We also looked at how they are now navigating the Duterte presidency; where they stand now with regard to the populist vote they followed or fought against, and the whole struggle of democracy they are in.

## DEVELOPMENT NGOS

The Caucus of Development NGO Networks, or CODE-NGO, is the country's biggest coalition of social development NGOs with six national and six regional NGOs representing more than 1,600 organizations. Through the years, it has maximized its skill and synergy to 1) influence public policy, 2) provide leadership in civil society, and 3) increase the effectiveness of social development work. Under President Benigno Aquino III's government, it was in the forefront of civil society engagement with major governance exercises, particularly the Open Governance Partnership and Bottom-Up Budgeting. The coalition has developed a Civil Society Development Reform Agenda (2016-2019).

In the 2016 presidential elections, CODE-NGO's membership came up with a divided vote. There was strong support for Manuel "Mar" Roxas, but also a very strong support for Duterte, particularly from its Mindanao and Visayas constituencies. The primary reasons for the Duterte vote were because he is from Mindanao, and his promise to end illegal drugs.

Its election-related activities in 2016 were limited to coming up with profiles of all the presidential and vice-presidential candidates. It looked at the promises and the track record of each candidate based on the governance pillars or characteristics they decided were most important. The Change Politics Movement, which is the formation that was set up by CODE-NGO in 2010 for its members who chose to directly engage in politics by openly backing certain national candidates, eventually endorsed Roxas.

Currently, CODE-NGO remains divided on Duterte. The Mindanao-Visayas bloc has managed to stop any direct criticism or condemnation of the president. It has come out with public statements critical of some government policies, but stopping short of directly criticizing Duterte. It has issued general statements on democracy and good governance, but no statement on extrajudicial killings (EJKs), among others. It withdrew its membership from *Alyansa ng Samahang Pantao*, which is the coming together of NGOs and people's organizations (POs) in the resistance coalition of *Tindig Pilipinas*, when it was one of the first organizations invited to be part of the alliance and which it initially joined. On the other hand, it assumed the leadership and the secretariat of the Open Governance Partnership, sitting as co-chair with Secretary Benjamin Diokno of the Department of Budget and Management. Disengaging from national political action, it has instead focused on local governance engagement. The members conduct educational campaigns and promote capacity-building. CODE-NGO has given its member-networks the freedom to act separately on their national advocacies because of their inability to unite on some of major national issues.

“CODE-NGO leaders agree that democracy is under threat — that democratic spaces are constricting and that there is a culture of fear [...] not because of Tokhang but of being labeled *‘Dilawan.’*”

CODE-NGO leaders agree that democracy is under threat — that democratic spaces are constricting and that there is a culture of fear. The fear is not because of *Tokhang* but of being labeled “*Dilawan*” because it opens a person to bashing. The preferred mode for them continues to be constructive engagement because, according to them, if you give that up, you will lose your foothold and leverage with government, and you enable government to manipulate those spaces for their dubious agenda. When asked what the possible tipping point is, the answer was — when Marcos gets back to power.

## LABOR

The organized labor movement constitutes a broad mix of ideologically-based unions and what is called “rice-and-fish” unions. It is arguably the most ideologically-inclined of all the basic sectors: every political bloc has a labor component. It is also a very divided movement, not so much because of the issues they carry but because of their long history of rivalries, including leadership and organizational conflicts and ideological divisions. Since the 1990s, the sector has been facing dwindling membership due to the retrenchment of workers from the 1997 financial crisis, the reaffirm/reject (RA/RJ) ideological split among the national democrats, and the proliferation of nonstandard forms of employment, particularly contractualization. Contractualization is the reason why ENDO (end of contract) is such an important issue for the sector; labor organizing has lost members because they are not fully employed; hence, they are not able to form or join unions.

“Workers were feeling unsafe and scared and ‘it sounds reassuring when *someone promises to shoot the enemy.*”

Among the outstanding issues facing the sector before Duterte were the minimum wage, aiming to be a living wage; the high number of political killings under the Arroyo administration which abated under the Aquino presidency; and the issue of contractualization. Ending contractualization was the central issue for the labor movement in 2016.

The labor sector may be divided on various issues but an estimate of 70 percent, especially in transportation and manufacturing, voted for Duterte. This was mainly because of his definitive promise to end contractualization. The sector also resonated with his promise to stamp out crime and corruption, projecting that he was the only one with the political will to do it. His worker-friendly appearance, embodied in his folded sleeves, also made him look approachable. On a deeper level, people were looking for an alternative after four decades of globalization. Workers were feeling unsafe and scared and, I quote, “it sounds reassuring when someone promises to shoot the enemy.”

The labor sector, however, has since moved in its position on Duterte from ovation to curses. When the president was elected, he reiterated his promise to immediately end ENDO, but nothing happened after several meetings. During the 2017 Labor Day mobilization in Davao, almost all labor groups went. But during this year’s Labor Day government commemoration in Cebu, hardly anyone attended.

Instead, for the first time in 20 years, the entire labor movement came together for a unified Labor Day march in Manila. This was because of the nonfulfillment of the ENDO promise. The Coalition Against Contractualization was formed, uniting rival labor centers and coalitions.

There were other cracks in Labor's alliance with Duterte, including the banning of jeepneys on major roads to shift to electric power, which shift the drivers said they cannot afford. When Duterte said, "*Magutom kayo (Starve), I don't care,*" it put a major crack in the labor movement's support for the president. The closure of Boracay and the Kuwait fiasco, when our workers in Kuwait needed to be brought home — these also mattered.

Now, labor leaders still engage with the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), as has been their tradition based on their long years of experience and practice, but they no longer attend meetings called by the Office of the President. They join actions on labor rights, but the united focus is on ENDO. They have made it clear that, on the issue of ENDO, they are seeking accountability directly from the president and not his subalterns because it is the president who made the promise to them and he has exposed his inability to keep his promise. In the long term, they are working on a broader coalition with other sectors to build a system that respects human rights, which is a prerequisite for the struggle of workers.

## URBAN POOR

The long-standing issues of the urban poor sector include housing, land tenure, social protection and services, as well as the lack of jobs. One problem raised by the sector was the decline in organizing. After the ouster of Marcos, people thought that there was no more need to organize. Funding windows for community organizing work closed as funders wanted to see more concrete and immediate results. The Church became less present among the poor as religious, and stopped living in urban poor communities. NGOs shifted their focus to "bigger" campaigns such as climate change and disaster response.

Only the political blocs are visibly organizing among the urban poor but it was noted that this is more directed towards mobilization on national issues rather than actually addressing

“The political blocs raise the issues in their public advocacy but very few are engaging in the day-to-day work to help the urban poor address and find solutions to their problems.”

the long-standing issues of the sector. The political blocs raise these issues in their public advocacy but very few are engaging in the day-to-day work to help the urban poor address and find solutions to these problems.

The urban poor sector was also divided in their vote in 2016 — those already engaged with the government supported Roxas while the national democratic-affiliated KADAMAY went with Grace Poe and Duterte. While ideology was a major factor for KADAMAY, other reasons for the urban poor vote for Duterte included the general impatience with the slowness of reforms and Duterte’s promise of quick change and the end of criminality.

As to how the sector is navigating the Duterte presidency, at first, the sector wanted to preserve its gains by avoiding confrontational approaches in raising their issues. *Tokhang*, however, hit them quickly, resulting in a climate of fear. There was also the issue of the populist and ideological co-optation of the *Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino* Program (4Ps). On this specific issue, a new organization, the *Samahang Nagkakaisang Pamilya ng Pantawid* (SNPP), was formed which membership was drawn from the beneficiaries of the conditional cash transfer (CCT) program or 4Ps who had gone through parent leadership training and decided to organize to preserve their gains. Of course, another major issue for the sector is the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN) program resulting in inflationary high prices which hit the urban poor hardest.

Today, there is great anger over the continued killings. There is still a pervading sense of helplessness and fear. On the other side, organizing has started and there was the successful pushback

on the manipulation of CCT, causing the government to change its policy from direct rice distribution, with its proven leakage problems, to cash distribution. They also lobbied for the legislation of the CCT program which bill was already passed in the House of Representatives. High prices remain an issue.

## WOMEN

Women's organizing had been waning with advances in gender mainstreaming over the years. Policy and legislative gains have been made, with the last major legislative battles already won: the Magna Carta of Women in 2009 and the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act of 2012. Thus, the focus of women's rights advocacy had shifted to working for local ordinances for women; gender and development (GAD) training for the bureaucracy; and women, peace and security (WPS) agenda, especially in relation to the Bangsamoro peace process.

Duterte's rape joke about Australian missionary Jaqueline Hamill raised the alarm for women very early in his presidential campaign. Except for GABRIELA and some Davao-based women's constituencies, the women's movement did not only decide not to support Duterte, they campaigned against him. A group of women filed a complaint with the Commission on Human Rights, which they won, accusing Duterte of violating the Magna Carta of Women with his rape joke. GABRIELA voted for Duterte in line with the Makabayan position while the Davao women pointed to the progressive women's ordinances that had been passed in Davao under his mayorship.

“It is in the women’s sector that a clear resistance emerged. They are angry and outraged, waiting and praying for the tipping point.”

It is in the women's sector that a clear resistance emerged early in the term of Duterte. A new coalition, EveryWoman, was formed in the face of the slut-shaming of Senator Leila de Lima led by Duterte. EveryWoman was initially born as a hashtag but it did not stop there. EveryWoman has focused its actions on Women Defending Democracy, and on the EJK issue, with the *Luksa ng Kababaihan* annual commemoration of UNDAS and also the *Kabataang Natokhang*. There is a *Bantay Bastos* FaceBook page, and there are efforts to raise the gender aspect of issues, including TRAIN, the West Philippine Sea, and federalism. *Babae Ako* carried out a highly successful social media campaign in protest over Duterte's public kissing of an overseas Filipina in Seoul.

So where are the women? They are angry and outraged, waiting and praying for the tipping point, pushing the links between misogyny and authoritarianism, and seriously interrogating: How did we come to this?

## MARAWI CSOs

Marawi society is traditionally organized along clan or sultanate and religious lines. Civil society organizing has always been according to need. In the past, together with the rest of Bangsamoro society, organizing and actions have been focused on peace and security issues surrounding the struggle for self-determination. As such, CSO organizing in Marawi has been loose and thin in terms of organizational structures but very quick and adept in responding to crisis, including negotiations to resolve incidents of violence.

The Meranao vote overwhelmingly went to Duterte despite the absence of CSOs endorsing him. A very small CSO segment voted for Roxas because of the peace process. The vast majority voted for him because his promise to end drugs resonated in the Lanao provinces, where the drug problem was perceived to have reached the level of narco-politics. For some of the Marawi CSO leaders, it was a very emotional choice to go for Duterte, as they saw in him a presidential candidate who understood the problem, promising to address "historical injustice" — to have, finally, a President who was one of them.

Except for one Tausug, all Duterte appointees to high office are Meranao. There are two interrelated major issues confronting Meranao civil society. The first is the stalled peace process, with the Bangsamoro Basic Law, now renamed the Bangsamoro Organic Law, taking two years before it was finally passed. In the meantime, while awaiting the delayed passage of the law, there was a return of insecurity and the fear of the possible resumption of war because of the re-arming of groups, the potential weakening of the hold of the MILF on the edges of their constituency and the potential ascendancy of violent extremism. The

“It was a very emotional choice to go for Duterte, as they saw in him a presidential candidate who understood the problem, promising to address ‘historical injustice’ — a President who was one of them.”

slow legislative movement and Duterte’s accommodation of Misuari in pushing federalism also caused some concern not just in Marawi but to the larger Bangsamoro.

The most pressing issue, however, is the Marawi siege which caused the devastation of the entire city. It was not just the loss of lives; it is the loss of the city which carries the identity of the country’s only Islamic city and is symbolic for the entire Bangsamoro. There are the continuing displacement of Marawi residents, and the many more deaths — of the old and the sick — even after the siege had ended. To date, there is no clear rehabilitation plan and no participation of the affected residents in the planning. Martial law is still in force, which may be benevolent in the rest of Mindanao but not in Marawi where there are very visible checkpoints and early curfew. To add insult to injury, they were even blamed for coddling the Maute brothers.

Today, the residents are very angry with the military but many still voice their support for Duterte. Among civil society leaders, however, there is a major turnaround among supporters and a growing pool of visible leaders who are speaking out, feeling a deep sense of betrayal. Every civil society leader who speaks out is displaced, has no home, and is in debt, yet they need to find spaces for engagement to pursue rational, responsive rehabilitation because the government is not talking to them. They are also working out the dynamics, trying to find the balance between supporting the peace process, which has

reached a major milestone in the Bangsamoro transition, and protesting against the handling of the Marawi siege and martial law. They struggle with the question: How do they wage protest and resistance in a state of humanitarian crisis?

## YOUTH

More research has to be done on the youth sector but the main issue that has awakened the youth is Marcos revisionism, particularly surrounding the burial of Marcos in the *Libingan ng mga Bayani*. Being millennials, the fire sparks up but then it dies down. The youth are very averse to being controlled or regulated by others.

## OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Philippine civil society was already weakening even before this administration and the Duterte presidency, with its populist face, definitely made an impact in further undermining its agency and sense of empowerment. Civil society experienced paralysis due to painful internal divisions coming from different sources. But, at the same time, we are seeing the emergence of unifying formations, overcoming historical divisions. And there are glimpses of reviving, revisiting, even the possible reinvention of sectoral organizing, which is already happening especially with women and the youth.

Organized resistance is growing. There has been a return of “aging warriors,” but we have also observed that protests and mobilizations are not being fueled by conventional NGO organizing. Mobilizing is rather happening mainly through the political hubs and the new formations are mainly outgrowths from the citizens participation in the “nonconventional” electoral campaigns of 2010 and 2016. We are trying to find the right mix of mass mobilizations and creative actions, including smarter social media use, and deepening discourses about democracy and its present threats. We see the imperative to learn our lessons to prevent another repeat of our present tragedy.

“We should realize that it’s not enough to end this regime, it is important to figure out how we move forward, repair the damage, and prevent its repeat.”

To conclude, I think the question still is: Where is civil society as we have known it? Where are the young, conventional, civil society?

## RECOMMENDATIONS

We should continue to ask, Why? We should continue to study and reflect more deeply to understand what happened to civil society. We should realize that it’s not enough to end this regime. It is essential to figure out how to move forward, repair the damage, and prevent its repeat.

*Tuloy ang Laban!* (Continue with the fight!) We don’t give up on democracy!



## PANEL REACTION

# MANUEL L. QUEZON III

*Columnist*

*Philippine Daily Inquirer  
Editor-at-Large, SPOT.ph*

I always find that the answer lies in a phrase Leon Ma. Guerrero came up with when he was justifying martial law. He said, “Today began yesterday.” It all began yesterday and the trends were there, the cleavages were there. The instruments were developing as were the ways those instruments would immediately and radically affect our popular behavior. It just came together in 2016 in a way that shocked everyone. Prior to the formal declaration of President Rodrigo Duterte’s campaign, the question was really, “Who could offer a better version of what exists?” It was all about the economy.

Someone mentioned it was all about framing, and that’s absolutely correct. It was the ability of one man to shift the frame from the economy to public safety. But the real lessons are, that it was much easier to do than anyone thought. All it required was a little drama. You pretend to run — no, maybe you won’t run — and therefore, you create this excitement about whether you will run at a time when everyone else is making boring speeches about fiscal policy.

“Do you realize,  
in 30 years  
of restored  
democracy, we  
have not trained  
*a successor  
generation in  
civil society*  
because civil  
society members  
and leaders  
got drawn into  
government?”

One politician said, “Do you realize, in 30 years of restored democracy, we have not trained a successor generation in civil society because civil society members and leaders got drawn into government?” A kind of cleavage occurs in civil society and young people may not want to join or, more importantly, may not grant the same respect and deference to their former leaders.

In many races, people aren’t even trying to run for office. They don’t have competition. This leads to the entrenchment of dynasties; it leads to formerly competing dynasties dividing the spoils without even the need for a contest which drives even more people away from trying to contest the thing, and a general lack of interest in or investment in our politics.

Surveys since EDSA over the past 20 or 30 years consistently show an average of 10 percent who were always telling the survey takers that they want a dictatorship. Ten percent in any group is negligible because if we were in a group, we were more likely to be all like-minded and that person is deviant in their opinions.

# “At the end of the day, if you rely on fear and intimidation, people get fed up and you will eventually lose the power that you gained that way.”

What the internet makes possible is for that 10 percent to connect with every single other person who holds that minority view and therefore, they don't even feel the social ostracism — that fear and concern that normally keeps that sort of extreme kind of behavior repressed. Therefore, it becomes much more powerful because it can be mobilized in a way that is particularly best for politics.

In any organization, I doubt if you could get people to say, “I want a dictatorship,” especially in a country like ours. But now they can do it: they can post it and all the other 10 percent can like it. Ten percent of 100 million people is 10 million people, enough to get you elected in the Senate at the very least. That's where we are. We are at the confluence of trends that were always there, behaviors that were always there, inclinations that have always been there. The things that previously moderated all of those things have been removed.

The same Facebook bullying that had everyone freaking out over the past year led to a change in behavior, and that change will be validated. You probably feel more free in sharing your opinions in a Viber group or in a private group than on your social media — that's where the conversation has shifted. It's interesting in one way — it's very difficult for anyone in power to figure out what's actually going on; it's far more difficult to manipulate. In fact, it's far more free. It's also far more intimate. It is there that the conversation has shifted.

In many ways, we try to catch up and figure out something that has already changed and moved on, and figured out a way because at the end of the day, people prefer to be free, they prefer not to be scared. They prefer to do things that will get things better and not just always run about fear. Because at the end of the day, if you rely on fear and intimidation, people get fed up and you will eventually lose the power that you gained that way. It's just the way things are.



**P**opulist authoritarianism, or authoritarian populism, is not unique to the Philippines. It's an international phenomenon. We always have to remember that President Rodrigo Duterte got voted into office with 40 percent of the voters — 16 million. That's only 30 percent of all the registered voters, which is more than 50 million. Earlier it was said it's more important to look into the populist public, the people supporting the populist leader, and I agree with that. It's important to understand why people voted for Duterte more than looking at how he's performing.

Civil society organizations (CSOs) are not a united sector. What's true for the general public is true also for the CSOs. For many CSOs, there was resentment about or dissatisfaction with the situation and the lack of action on sectoral issues. They got enamored with the campaign promises of Duterte on endo, coco levy, teachers, and federalism, among others.

## PANEL REACTION

# SIXTO DONATO MACASAET

*Executive Director  
Foundation for a  
Sustainable Society*

# “Think tanks may be important but maybe we also have to have *‘feel tanks.’*”

Facing the rise of authoritarian populism as CSOs goes back to the standard strategy of CSOs: conscientize, organize, mobilize. Alongside these, we also have to consider important factors depending on the sector.

How do we mobilize the youth? They do not have a memory or active experience of martial law so they can easily fall into the trap of revisionism. Social media is another important arena for our work. How do you become a more effective actor in social media? Communication is important.

Going back to 2016, there is dissonance in the rationale, or the way people think, and emotion. Most of us who are in this room are more inclined with the rationale — we want evidence-based, we want studies. We forgot the emotional. The Duterte campaign was effective in using emotion and passion.

Think tanks may be important but maybe we also have to have “feel tanks.” We must gauge how the community feels. We should assess how we, as CSOs, connect with our fellow Filipinos.

**H**ow populist is populist? How do we measure what is popular? Is it about what is acceptable? Maybe CSOs also dictated which are included and which are not. Are surveys the determining factor? When martial law was implemented, we were all surprised that there was no organizing and enlightenment. This shock value devalued the common values we hold so dearly as movements that were associated with peace building.

Martial law actually galvanized CSOs. The abuse of our human rights made us stronger and fight harder. However, organizing rallies are not how we express ourselves. We do focus group discussions in mosques and in our church groups. That's how we organize. I asked who are included and who are not because we must look at those who are excluded, who are not part of the process, and who are not given a voice in the journey.



## PANEL REACTION

# SAMIRA GUTOC- TOMAWIS

*Former Member  
Bangsamoro Transition  
Committee*

# “We must look at those who are excluded, and who are not given a voice in the journey.”

We in the Bangsamoro transitioned to a higher form, supposedly, of government. We also ask and re-ask ourselves, re-assess if this is the way we want it. As one of the speakers put it: you just transfer one oligarch — you transfer the same power to another source of power.

Populism is about messaging, it's about content. As a media professional, we studied how, for so long, there were no stories which are not about violence. It is our continuing assertion that we need to deconstruct and construct. We need solidarity, we need to go beyond, and we need to guide each other. CSOs are the only group sector that really stood out for us on this difficult circumstances. It is only the International Center for Innovation, Transformation and Excellence in Governance (INCITEGov) which has a research initiative on martial law and its impact on us.

My takeaway is that whatever track we take, content will be key. Popularizing continuously the traditions and values that bind us as humanity must always be for the powerful and the powerless. I'm afraid of the burden you laid on me, to be somebody who will stand up for us. But if it's for the sake of popularizing a counternarrative, then we will take a stand.



# Open Forum

Transport groups have no united stand on phaseout. The challenge now is how we will join together to defeat the common enemy, which is the threat of dictatorship. If all civil society organizations (CSOs) will take a stand, no president will stand a chance against us. The problem is there are CSOs who join the government and become one of the enemies. History just repeats itself. We'll fight, but who will replace them? How do we keep an eye on those who replace them?

- Transport and labor groups

Nobody mentioned a shift is already happening in social media. All our conversations are happening in chat groups where it's intimate, controlled, and targeted, but we have different types of audiences. We don't get trolled so we feel safe and we get to say what we want to say in a very intimate way. A lot of power is happening and developing in the chat groups and some are organizing through chat groups. This is something we have to look at very closely.

- People Power Volunteers for Reform (PPVR)

We really find it difficult to come up with a position, and we are also aware of the shrinking civic space. Still, we commit ourselves in continuing to safeguard the fundamental freedoms and promote the protection of human rights of all. We agree that civil society is weakening because we see it happen even in our own backyard. We ask ourselves what is the tipping point when we can all consolidate our forces?

- CODE-NGO

There were a lot of instances when we saw how Rodrigo Duterte rose to popularity because we saw how he delivered his promises. When Duterte promised to end contractualization and to equalize the minimum wage across the country, it was as if the labor sector saw a messiah. We just hope that whoever will replace him will deliver on his promises.

- National Federation of Labor

Social media indeed has a huge influence on everyone. When Piñol said *Pantawid* funds should be shifted to agriculture, all 4Ps leaders from different regions stood against him and that's when we realized the power that collective action has.

- *Samahang Nagkakaisa ng Pamilyang Pantawid* (SNPP)

## ON CHAT GROUPS

These chat groups are important because it serves as our safe space, it's where like-minded people can discuss, consolidate, and organize. But we also have to go out of our comfort zones and engage those who do not share the same opinion as ours. Social media has the tendency to enclose us in our safe spaces with people who share the same opinions, but it's important to have a healthy discourse with those who have contrary or different opinions.

- Sixto Donato "Dodo" Macasaet

Let us remind ourselves that the digital divide still exists. There is the population that doesn't have access to the opinions that control communication and

**“Chat groups are important because it serves as our safe space, it’s where like-minded people can discuss, consolidate, and organize. But we also have to go out of our comfort zones and engage those who do not share the same opinion as ours.”**

information. While we are affirming the value of countering populist dictatorships or authoritarianism, we also need to stand up for those who do not have access to that kind of counter to the populist dictatorship.

- Samira Gutoc-Tomawis

When we were deciding whether we will allow free Facebook on mobile phones, India was making the opposite decision. India banned free Facebook. This had political consequences. It’s a business decision the government was very stupid to understand, but it can have profound influences on our behavior. It’s only because Facebook is free that it became so dominant. If everyone had to pay for it, even the politicians wouldn’t be able to use it as much because it will be 10 times more expensive.

At the same time that all of these are happening, public affairs shows were put in the ghetto. That, and the random nature of shows like TV Patrol had a profound effect on our society because it is really the one thing that affects everyone’s approach to the news. When all the public affairs

shows were shifted to cable where a small minority can consume it, then the thing we had taken for granted, even from the time prior to martial law, which is the importance of public debate and discussion, was eliminated.

The random nature of the TV news also affected us. When I talk to students today, I always ask them about their news consumption, and this is the fundamental difference between all of us: we make a conscious decision to sit down, to watch the news, to read the newspaper. But for them, it’s background noise.

The segments of TV Patrol are determined by a minute-by-minute survey; that’s why you cannot figure out when the foreign or local headlines will come out because it’s being measured against the competitor and who is getting audience share by the minute. A random approach to the news will produce a random society that has no hierarchy of value and which has a very short attention span.

- Manuel L. Quezon III

# Closing Remarks

**TERESITA QUINTOS DELES**

*Chairperson,*

*International Center for Innovation, Transformation  
and Excellence in Governance (INCITEGov)*

Thank you very much for staying through this time. It's really impressive how long we have sat in our chairs for this conversation. I hope everyone agrees that this conversation has been so exciting, so full. This is something that the DLSU Jesse M. Robredo Institute for Governance (JRIG) and INCITEGov commit to continue. Our Terms of Reference with the Asia Democracy Research Network (ADRN) is very minimal: a paper with only 6,500 words. That's not going to say very much. But clearly, from this afternoon's discussion, we are going to have to invest our own resources to make sure that this will contribute to how democracy moves forward despite these hard times.

On the one hand, I am happy that the topics that we chose really involved real-life dilemmas in these dark times. It is wise that we did not choose to do a paper that will be floating up there without making a difference in the way we live and shape our democracy. I think that the panels today on social media and civil society, not to mention the panels on populism, managed to break into our lives, into our thinking, and into the things that we need to confront. And that is what research is



“I hope that all these information inspired us to act and make sure that we reclaim our democratic space and our place to be the people that can define ourselves.”

supposed to be about. Both JRIG and INCITEGov believe that research is not to do papers that will go into some bookshelf — we want research that will really affect our actions.

As I said, this is still work in progress. As far as INCITEGov goes, we are going beyond the 6,500 words to produce real case studies to try to understand because we really think we cannot keep on doing this. I was not a senior then, I’m senior now, I can’t do this again. I think that for many of us here, this has to be the last time, and the way to do that is to make sure we learn from the experiences here.

I hope that the afternoon has fed us all with valuable information. I hope that we go home provoked, at the same time sad, because so many of these are so disturbing. But I hope they inspire us and push us to really try to understand more of what is happening in our country. But more than that, to act and make sure that we reclaim our democratic space and our place to be the people that can define ourselves.

*Maraming salamat po.*

# APPENDIX A

## INDICATIVE PROGRAM

### NATIONAL CONSULTATION *on Populism in the Philippines*

12:00 NN – 1:00 PM	<b>Lunch and Registration of Participants</b>
1:00 – 1:15 PM	<b>Preliminaries</b> <b>National Anthem</b> <b>Welcome Remarks</b> Dr. Ador R. Torneo Director DLSU-Jesse M. Robredo Institute of Governance (JRIG)
1:15 – 2:15 PM	<b>UNDERSTANDING POPULISM IN THE PHILIPPINES</b> <i>Panelists:</i> Dr. Ronald Mendoza Dean Ateneo School of Government Ateneo de Manila University  Dr. Jean Encinas-Franco Assistant Professor Department of Political Science University of the Philippines - Diliman  Cleve Arguelles Assistant Professor and Chair Department of Political Science University of the Philippines Manila  <i>Moderator:</i> Edilberto De Jesus
2:15 – 2:45 PM	<b>OPEN FORUM</b>
2:45 – 3:00 PM	<b>POPULISM IN THE AGE OF SOCIAL MEDIA</b> <i>Presenter:</i> Dr. Francisco Magno Former Director DLSU-Jesse M. Robredo Institute of Governance (JRIG)
3:00 – 3:45 PM	<i>Reactors:</i> Louie C. Montemar Associate Professor College of Social Sciences and Development Polytechnic University of the Philippines

Carmina Y. Untalan  
PhD Candidate, International Relations and Politics  
Osaka University

Dr. Cheryl Ruth R. Soriano  
Associate Professor  
Department of Communication  
De La Salle University

*Moderator:* Ian Jason Hecita

3:45 – 4:05 PM

**OPEN FORUM**

4:05 – 4:20 PM

**CIVIL SOCIETY RESPONSES TO POPULIST LEADERSHIP**

*Presenter:*  
Teresita Quintos Deles  
Chairperson  
INCITEGov

4:20 – 5:10 PM

*Reactors:*  
Manuel L. Quezon III  
Columnist, Philippine Daily Inquirer,  
Editor-at-Large, SPOT.ph

Sixto Donato “Dodo” Macasaet  
Executive Director  
Foundation for a Sustainable Society

Samira Gutoc-Tomawis  
Former Member  
Bangsamoro Transition Committee

**OPEN FORUM**

5:10 – 5:30 PM

**Closing Remarks**

5:30 – 6:00 PM

Teresita Quintos Deles  
Chairperson  
INCITEGov

**MARDI MAPA-SUPLIDO**

*Emcee*

# APPENDIX B RESOURCE PERSONS



From left to right: Cleve Arguelles, Dr. Mary Racelis (INCITEGov Board Member), Marilou Ibañez (INCITEGov Executive Director), Dr. Cheryll Soriano, Reuben James Barrete (INCITEGov), Dr. Francisco Magno, Dr. Ador Torneo, Ian Jason Hecita, Teresita Quintos Deles, Samira Gutoc-Tomawis, Dr. Edilberto de Jesus, Manuel L. Quezon III, Sixto Donato Macasaet, and Mardi Mapa-Suplado (INCITEGov Board Member).

**Ms. Teresita Quintos Deles**

Chairperson, INCITEGov

**Dr. Ronald U. Mendoza**

Dean, Ateneo School of Government  
Ateneo de Manila University

**Dr. Francisco Magno**

Former Director  
DLSU-Jesse M. Robredo Institute of Governance

**Dr. Jean Encinas-Franco**

Assistant Professor  
Department of Political Science  
University of the Philippines Diliman

**Dr. Cheryll Soriano**

Associate Professor  
Department of Communication  
De La Salle University

**Cleve Arguelles**

Assistant Professor and Chair  
Department of Political Science  
University of the Philippines Manila

**Louie Montemar**

Associate Professor  
College of Social Sciences and Development  
Polytechnic University of the Philippines

**Carmina Y. Untalan**

PhD Candidate  
International Relations and Politics  
Osaka University

**Manuel L. Quezon III**

Columnist, Philippine Daily Inquirer  
Editor-at-Large, SPOT.ph

**Sixto Donato Macasaet**

Executive Director  
Foundation for a Sustainable Society

**Samira Gutoc-Tomawis**

Former Member  
Bangsamoro Transition Committee

# APPENDIX C

## LIST OF ATTENDEES

### ACADEME

Arguelles, Cleve (*UP Manila/ILEAD*)  
Baulete, Elaine (*MSU-iiT/DLSU*)  
Credo, Jan Antoni (*Siliman University*)  
Espiritu, Ana (*DLSU-JRIG*)  
Franco, Jean (*UP Diliman*)  
Hecita, Ian (*DLSU-JRIG*)  
Juliano, Hansley (*ADMU*)  
Magno, Francisco (*DLSU-JRIG*)  
Mendoza, Ronald (*ADMU*)  
Montemar, Louie (*Polytechnic University of the Philippines*)  
Ordoñez, Jesse P. (*Colegio de Dagupan/DLSU*)  
Pacheco, Jessa (*DLSU-JRIG*)  
Racelis, Mary (*Institute of Philippine Culture, ADMU*)  
Tagorda, Yasmin (*DLSU/MSU-Marawi*)  
Tena, Mejedín (*Polytechnic University of the Philippines*)  
Torneo, Ador (*DLSU-JRIG*)  
Untalan, Carmina (*DLSU-JRIG*)

### CIVIL SOCIETY

Aguilar, Jaime (*NCTU-SENTRO*)  
Ala, Yasser (*Ranao Rescue Team*)  
Alejandro, Antonio (*National Federation of Labor*)  
Buenafe, Ludivina (*Samahan ng Nagkakaisang Pamilya ng Pantawid*)  
Catacio, Jeana (*Samahan ng Nagkakaisang Pamilya ng Pantawid*)  
Cruz, Ernie (*NCTU-SENTRO*)  
De Dios, Oyie (*Women and Gender Institute, Miriam College*)  
Del Mundo, Mariefe (*CODE-NGO*)  
Deles, Jojo (*People Power Volunteers for Reform*)  
Dominguez, Belinda (*Samahan ng Nagkakaisang Pamilya ng Pantawid*)  
Fulgado, Antonio (*National Federation of Labor*)  
Gutoc, Samira (*Ranao Rescue Team*)  
Honculada, Jurgette (*PILIPINA*)  
Lininding, Drieza A. (*Moro Consensus Group*)

Lopa, Corinna (*Innovation for Change - East Asia*)  
Lopa, Isabel (*Makati Business Club*)  
Macasaet, Sixto Donato C. (*Foundation for a Sustainable Society, Inc.*)  
Malonzo, Ibarra (*KFI Center for Community Development Foundation, Inc.*)  
Maruji, Rhodora C. (*Samahan ng Nagkakaisang Pamilya ng Pantawid*)  
Natalio, Analiza (*Samahan ng Nagkakaisang Pamilya ng Pantawid*)  
Ortiz-Luis, Lot (*People Power Volunteers for Reform/EveryWoman*)  
Rodeo, Jay Rose (*PhilDHRRA*)  
Tubello, Angela (*Samahan ng Nagkakaisang Pamilya ng Pantawid*)

### GOVERNMENT

Deles, Paola (*Office of Sen. Aquino*)

### MEDIA

Quezon, Manuel III L. (*Philippine Daily Inquirer*)

### INCITEGov

Ambolodto, Ina  
Ambolodto, Teng  
Azotes, Jenel  
Barrete, RJ  
Chu, Meann  
De Jesus, Edilberto  
Delos Reyes, Johanna  
Ibañez, Marilou M.  
Lim, Bertie  
Mapa-Supido, Mardi  
Oleza, Cecilia  
Perez, Margarita  
Sandoval, Gettie

### No indicated affiliation

Lapuz, Jing L.  
Magtara, Ma. Victoria Z.  
Paquera, Kay



Published by:



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and Excellence in Governance (INCITEGov)**

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INCITEGov is a policy research and advocacy center that catalyzes and provides support to democratic movements and reform initiatives in the Philippines. It firmly believes in the democratic process and the rule of law as the bedrock of the Philippine society.

INCITEGov applies the P-G-D lens in its analysis of key national issues and underscores that Democratic Politics (P) must be linked to Good Governance (G) to ensure that Development Outcomes (D) will secure the interests of the poor and marginalized.