

The Third Wave Democratization: Local Strongmen Political Dynasty Phenomenon

Case study: Aquino Family in the Philippines and Zukifli Nurdin Family in Jambi, Indonesia.

Putri Oktaviani

Department of Political Science
Faculty of Social and Political Science, Universitas Indonesia
Depok, Indonesia.
putrioktaviani@hotmail.com

Dea Alita Marsanty

Department of Political Science
Faculty of Social and Political Science, Universitas Indonesia
Depok, Indonesia.
deaalitamarsanty@yahoo.com

Muhammad Budi Kurniawan

Department of Politics and Government
Faculty of Social and Political Science, Universitas Diponegoro
Semarang, Indonesia.
mbudikrnwn@yahoo.co.id

Abstract— Democracy is a form of government in which all citizens have equal rights in decision-making. According to Huntington, there are three waves of democracy growing in the world. This study discusses one of them, namely the Third Wave Democracy. The third wave democracy usually occurs in countries with procedural democracies like some countries in Asia. This research examines how the practice of the third wave democracy, especially in the case of political dynasties of the local strongmen in the Philippines and Indonesia. As the case study, this work observes the Aquino's family in the Philippines and Zulkifli Nurdin's family in Indonesia.

Keywords— *democratization, Philippines, Indonesia, local strongmen, dynasty.*

I. BACKGROUND

The practice of democracy in developing countries such as in Asian countries is often classified as the third wave democracy. It is because in most cases, democracy emerged along with the internal problems such as rebellion or military-coup to the government. Hence, it is often referred to as the procedural democracy. A procedural democracy that occurs in a country tend to be caused by an internal problem, and it happens differently from one country to another. Its practice could lead to the phenomenon of local

bossism that occupies the government as what happened in the Philippines and Indonesia.

The political dynasty in the Philippines began since the colonialism period by the United States. The colonialist's strategy was to create a stable and intimate relationship with the native by forming a legislative body that was majorly occupied by the Filipino elites such as the landlords and heirs from the dominating clan. The US's desire to maintain their power had become a culture in the Philippines political system. Hence, it is only natural when the positions in the government were mostly occupied by the Mestizo Chinese clans.

The government of the Philippines was mostly occupied by the loyalists to the ruling government and the landlords who had a strong political capital. Besides a strong financial capital, the landlords usually had the opportunity to get a proper education. This group of rich people can be labeled as the "local strongmen" or local elite who were formerly known as the informal elite, but then eventually they became the political elite. Their role did not only limited to the political scene but also infiltrated to the local arena. One example is the Aquino's family who hereditary inherited the family political throne. The Aquino's family, like other political families in the Philippines, became the political elite as well as the business elite. It can be seen from Benigno

Aquino and Sr. To Bam Aquino that the Aquinos were still existed and known as a successful family in the political arena of the Philippines. This poses a challenge to democracy in the Philippines because the democracy showed a tendency to progress slowly after the authoritarian rule and coupled with the local bossism phenomenon that still occupies the government. Adding to that is the fact that the political elite often commits fraud to get support from the constituent.

Local bossism also occurs in Indonesia, although there are no special clans that dominate the government, the political dynasties can often be found at the local-level politics, for instance, the Zulkifli Nurdin dynasty in Jambi. Coming from a businessmen family, Zulkifli Nurdin had the chance to dominate the political parties in Jambi. Hence, he could easily and successfully do the social control to the society of Jambi. No wonder he easily gave the government's seat to the members of his family and colleagues. The domination of the local elites shows that their participation in the government had become a culture, as they kept the continuation of ruling the government. Democracy does not seem to stop their participation. It is democracy does not close the opportunity for anyone to participate in politics, but it becomes interesting when these landlords continued to be the main characters not only in the economic sectors but also in politics.

II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This study uses several concepts to examine the problems. First, the concept of the democracy's third wave of Samuel Huntington which emphasizes on the development of the third wave of democratization that generally occurs in countries that still implement procedural democracy such as the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, etc. The developed democratic system tends to follow the culture of its people. This happens due to several factors. First, the economic failure of the previous regime that leads to the assumption that democracy comes with a solution. Second, the economic growth of the 1960s due to the emergence democracy. Third, the doctrine of the Catholic church which promotes anti-authoritarianism. Fourth, the policy made by the influential countries such as the United States. Fifth, the snowball effect from a democratic country to the undemocratic state. Kapstein and Converse consider democratization as a solution. However, there are many failures in the initial phase of its implementation.

The second concept is about the involvement of strong local people. Generally, the existence of strong local people in politics cannot be separated from the capital that they own. The capital helps them to managed to put themselves and their family to participate in a political position in order to ease the implementation of government duties. This is in line with John Sidel's view that local bosses defend the political network in order to monopolize society control over economic resources and coercive forces.

Bossism is caused by the competitive and periodic elections which involve a high political participation. Thus, these powerful local people would use various means, to do

the intimidating and repressive actions. According to Sidel, in practice, these strong local people are joining the institutions which are expected uphold the value of the democracy such as the parliament, political parties, and elections. This concept reveals that it is understandable that the presence of the strong locals is a way to gain more profit. Although democracy doesn't close the possibility for anyone to participate, if the government is occupied only by the same people and dominated by the elite, then the people will feel underrepresented.

Regarding the political participation, the authors take a simple concept from Ramlan Surbakti, which describes that political participation is the activity of the citizens to influence the process of making and implementing political decisions. Participation is divided into two, namely active and passive. Actively, it includes the activities that are related to the input and output processes. While the passive participation is only oriented towards the output process. The elites of local strongmen could be categorized as having active political participation considering their involvement in policymaking.

III. DISCUSSION

The fall of the authoritarian regime of Ferdinand Marcos after ruling the country for three terms (1965-1986) had made Corazon Aquino (Cory) become the president of the Philippines. Cory introduced a new leadership style with a seemed to be more democratic. Cory is the wife of Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino who was asked to become the presidential candidate for the 1973 election due to his frequent criticism of Marcos' regime. Seeing the favorable support to Ninoy, Marcos then issued a martial law to punish people whom he considered as threatening, including Benigno. However, at that time Ninoy was sick and had to undergo a surgery in the United States, soon after finished his treatment, he was mysteriously shot in Manila in 1983.

After Ninoy's death, Cory was motivated to make a change like Ninoy's dreams. Although initially refused, but due to the enormous support, she was willing to become a presidential candidate with Salvador Laurel. This made Marcos anxious and conducted black campaign, one of it was the alleged murder of Evelio Javier from Marco's party, by one of Cory's sympathizers. Marcos's actions certainly could not make Cory gave up, because the political constellations actually benefited her. The strong support that she received during election resulted in her victory as the President of the Philippines.

Cory's victory brought many changes to the Philippines, including the change to the previously authoritarian democracy in the country. In addition, political participation and press freedom were getting better. The EDSA revolution that reflected the power of the people also brought a significant impact in ending Marcos's reign. During the leadership of Cory, the NGO became one of the political forces, so that the people were no longer in the shackles of the political elite who often used their power to carry out oppression.

However, the dreamed democracy could not be achieved smoothly, because there is still the practice of a powerful local elite group. It is not a secret that in the Philippines, the position of a politician is influenced by the family clan. Elections in the Philippines are commonly dominated by elite politicians; there are around 250 politicians who have family relationships. Political dynasties in the Philippines did not only to fulfill the political positions, but also to do business activities. Democracy in the Philippines according to Ben Anderson, can be interpreted as a cacique democracy, because the run of democracy since the beginning of Cory's era, the landlords and political family got the political position from the central government to the local level provinces and cities. The position was targeted because it was beneficial for the economic elite in the future, especially on the direct control and regulation of local resources and privileges at the local level. The boss or the elite of the Philippines economy stood from an old landlord with a patron-client network among them. The economic bosses who plunged into politics include Lacson's family and Montelibanos from Negros Province, Osmeoas and Durano from Cebu, even Corazon Aquino from this family base.

If we draw the line from the Aquino's family oligarchy, Ninoy was the son of Benigno S. Aquino, Sr, who was the spokesman of the Philippines Parliament when Japan ruled the country during World War II. During his attendance at the law school at the University of Philippines, Ninoy met Marcos who later become his political opponent, as well as Cory, a daughter of a Banker who later married to him. The Aquino family's bust in politics was continued when Ninoy became the Mayor of Concepcion, then the Vice-Governor of Concepcion, Governor of Concepcion, Secretary-General of The Liberal Party, before finally becoming a Senator.

After Ninoy's death, Cory lived with his five children and then continued the Aquino's Political oligarchy. After Cory became President of the Philippines and finally died, apparently the Aquino dynasty was resumed by Benigno "Noy" Aquino III, who was traumatized by the death of his father. Noy was a member of Congress in 1998, Senator in 2007, and became President of the Philippines in 2010. Clean "image" and the big name of the Aquino are two factors that are believed to boost his electability. Based on the results of the Pulse Asia survey in 2013, the majority of the Filipinos would rather vote for the families they know, than the candidates who have the best criteria. Therefore, it is no wonder that Noy had an absolute win in 2010 and became the 15th President of the Philippines.

Finished with Noy, Aquino's family has a successor named Paolo Benigno "Bam" Aguirre Aquino IV, who is Noy's cousin. Bam is the son of Paul Aquino who is the younger brother of Noy. Bam Aquino served as a Senator. In the Philippines political culture, financial capital is not the only factor; voters also consider the origin of the candidate. Philippines politics is famous for the "Political Family" oligarchy so that when a politician steps out of office, it is no wonder that a successor from the same family is ready to take the position.

Meanwhile, in Indonesia, there is Zulkifli Nurdin, the Governor of Jambi who served the province for two periods (1999-2004 and 2005-2010). Inheriting his father's, Nurdin Hamzah, business network, he led several organizations such as the Chamber of Industry and Commerce (Kadin) and Jambi Association of Indonesian Entrepreneurs (Gapensi). Zulkifli's political career began when he joined the *Golongan Karya* (Golkar) Party until he became Treasurer of the Party in 1996.

In addition to his career at Golkar, Zulkifli had also joined Partai Amanat Nasional (PAN). Furthermore, he became a Member of the House of Representatives in the 1999 election, then he ran for governor of Jambi and won it in the same year. Although Zulkifli is rated as an entrepreneur with minimal political experience, his track record proves he can defeat his opponent who had more political experience. During his term as a Governor, Zulkifli proved himself to be a populist by providing social assistance, and the strategies he developed. Zulkifli used his position brilliantly, extending his power by giving his relatives a strategic position, and putting power in social and political power, such as the press in Jambi.

In 2005, Zulkifli succeeded in maintaining his power as Governor of Jambi with 80% vote. It was a direct election, and Jambi was the pioneer of direct election for Governor and Vice Governor. However, the victory does not mean that Zulkifli runs the government cleanly. Zulkifli's administration is indicated to be not immune from the practice of corruption, collusion, and nepotism. For instance, the Chairman of the Provincial Legislative (DPRD) who was also an entrepreneur, Sudiro Lesmana, who provided Rp 10,000,000,000 for the election campaign and in return he was entrusted with the Water Boom project after the inauguration of the Governor.

Zulkifli also develops family business, especially in the field of property; he is known to control the majority of shophouses in Jambi. Zulkifli's power also freed him from the allegations of corruption that was addressed to him. Water Boom project, for example, he only called by the KPK as a witness, and later it was canceled. The case has apparently received attention from his opposition including the student activists, trade unions and peasant unions such as the Jambi Farmers' Union and the Indonesian Prosperous Trade Union. During his reign, people considered that he failed in creating prosperity. Many demonstrations were held by the community groups to oppose his rule, but it did bring a significant impact as Zulkifli maintained his position until the end of his term. The end of his term did not mean the end of his power.

There are several relatives and colleagues who occupied strategic positions including his son, Zumi Zola, who became Regent of Tanjung East Jabung in the period 2011-2016 and then continued his career by becoming the Governor of Jambi. His wife, Ratu Munawaroh Zulkifli, was a member of the House of Representatives in 2009, his sister Hazrin Nurdin became the chairwoman of the DPW PAN of Jambi Province. Then, Sum Indra, his nephew acted as the Deputy Mayor of Jambi period 2008-2013. Even Katamsa,

his former aide, got the position as the Vice Regent of Tanjung Jabung Barat.

The characters of Zulkifli as a political figure cannot be separated from the image of his father, Nurdin Hamzah, the richest businessman in Jambi. Nurdin Hamzah is well known as a generous donor who always donated his wealth to the underprivileged community especially during the Eid ul-Fitr. Because of that habit, Nurdin Hamzah became very famous in Jambi, especially in the city of Jambi. This brings a good image for the family's political career because people see him as a trustworthy character.

IV. ANALYSIS

Based on the concept of the wave of democratization, the Philippines had experienced the third wave democracy because there had been an attempt to achieve democratic consolidation when internal problems happened to the state. The problem was the Marcos' government which did not work in accordance with the people's will and unable to provide justice while also raised the fear towards the government. During Cory's leadership, the country underwent many changes such as the openness and civil liberties even though the culture of political dynasties was still alive where the dynasty is built based on the clan of each of the politicians. The majority of the officials were still coming from the elite group of landlords in the Philippines.

Using Huntington's democratization, it can be seen that the Philippines had met the five factors he mentioned. They did not only experience economic failures are perceived but also the failure of the government system which could not provide a comfortable life for the society. Then there was an economic growth which gave birth to new elite classes, and who demanded democracy. Furthermore, there were also church groups that began to disbelieve authoritarianism and see democracy as a response to problems in the Philippines.

Trends that developed across the countries, democracy is seen as a better system, compared to authoritarianism. Procedurally, democracy in the Philippines is better although in practice the political dynasties are still growing in government. Political dynasties trends in the Philippines like Cory Aquino has been hereditary; we can see the dynasty from Benigno S. Aquino to Bam Aquino. The influence of Aquino name has a big role into Philippines political system despite their performance in the national political arena, political system in the Philippines is still held by some "political clans," such as the Ampatuan, Aquino, Mangudadatu, and others

The challenge of implementing democracy in the Philippines is also experienced in Indonesia. The presence of political actors coming from a clan can be seen in Jambi whose majority of government seats occupied by Zulkifli Nurdin's family and colleagues. Zulkifli Nurdin is one of the prominent people in Jambi Area because of his loyalty to the society. Jambi's people tend to choose candidates from his family and this condition utilized by Zulkifli to include his

families into the political sphere in Jambi. The phenomenon that happens in both countries shows that the dynasty of strong local people can occur and develop in a democratic country. In Indonesia and Philippines, this local strongman phenomenon is both built from the local to the national level, as evidenced by the Aquino clan that became President and Zulkifli Nurdin who became members of the House of Representatives

V. CONCLUSION

The observation above leads to the conclusion that democracy in the Philippines and in Indonesia was challenged of the existence of the political dynasty that came from the strong local elite clan. In the case of the Philippines, the fall of authoritarianism does not in any way guarantee the disappearance of the established political dynasty from the Philippine political system. One proof is Cory himself who came from the family of the landlords. The Philippines began to adopt a system that upheld civil liberties and human rights enforcement after the EDSA revolution, but politically it remains inevitable that elections cannot be separated from the influence of the landlord elite. It shows that the government in the Philippines need people who not only have strong financial capital as well as a campaign strategy, but also the name of the family. This happens because in the Philippines some "clan" can be trusted by the community to lead the government, as what the Aquino family did. Aquino family join the political sphere Philippines starting from the murder of Ninoy Aquino.

On the other hand, in the case of Indonesia, although political dynasty is not becoming a culture yet, we can still find such occurrence some areas, such as Jambi. The majority of government seats are filled by Zulkifli Nurdin's family and relatives. In fact, the local electoral system applied in Indonesia cannot affect the existence of Zulkifli Nurdin's family in Jambi's political sphere. The presence of local bossism makes their families have the diverse positions in government structures, so they have the power to influence policies based on their self-interest to improve their economic condition. This condition makes the Philippines and Indonesia run a consolidated democracy, but civilians who may not belong to the elite can not have the same bargaining position with the elite and causing the political dynasties to keep growing.

Moreover, in both countries, a clan still can affect ballots so, it is only natural if the government's structure is occupied by a certain family. Government is still controlled by a family that joins politics with enough capital and good strategy. It can be seen from Aquino's clan that hereditary became politic elite and businessmen at the same time, as well as the Zulkifli Nurdin's family that participate in the governance structure of Jambi Province.

REFERENCES

- [1] Anderson, Benedict. 1998. *Cacique Democracy in the Philippines: Origins and Dreams*. New Left Review, No. 169, Mei-Juni 1998.

- [2] Aspinall, Edward and Greg Fealy (eds.). 2003. *Local Power and Politics in Indonesia: Decentralization and Democratization*. Singapura: ISEAS.
- [3] Case, William. 2002. *Politics in Southeast Asia: Democracy or Less*. Surrey: Curzon Press.
- [4] Celoza, Albert. 1997. *Ferdinand Marcos and The Philippines: The Political Economy of Authoritarianism*. Portsmouth: Greenwood Publishing Group.
- [5] Clarke, Gerard. 1998. *The Politics of NGO's in South-East Asia, Participation and Protest in the Philippines*. London: Routledge.
- [6] Diokno, Maria Serena I. 1997. *Democracy and Citizenship in Filipino Political Culture*. Quezon: The Third World Studies Center.
- [7] Harris, John dkk. 2004. *Politicising Democracy, The New Local Politics of Democratization*. New York: Plgrave Macmillan.
- [8] Hedman, Eva-Lotta E. 2000. *Philippine Politics and Society in the 20th Century: Colonial Legacies, Post-Colonial Trajectories*. London: Routledge.
- [9] Hidayat, Syarif dan Gerry van Klinken. *Provincial Business and Politics* dalam Geert Arend van Klinken dan Joshua Barker, *State of Authority: The State in Society in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009).
- [10] Huntington, Samuel P. 1991. *Democracy's Third Way*. Journal of Democracy Vol. 2 No. 2 Spring. Oklahoma: The University of Oklahoma Press, 1991.
- [11] Kapstein, Ethan B. & Nathan Converse. 2008. *Why Democracies Fail*. Journal of Democracy, Vol. 19, Number 4. 2008.
- [12] Leo, Agustino dan Mohammad Agus Yusoff. *Politik Lokal di Indonesia: Dari Otokratik ke Reformasi Politik*. Jurnal Ilmu Politik, Edisi 211, 2010.
- [13] McCoy, Alfred W. 2009. *An Anarchy of Families: State and Family in the Philippines*. Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press
- [14] Mietzner, Marcus. *Indonesia's Direct Election: Empowering the Electorate or Entrenching the New Order Oligarchy* dalam Edward Aspinall dan Greg Fealy, *Soeharto's New Order and Its Legacy* (Canberra: ANU Press, 2010).
- [15] Migdal, Joel S. 2004. *State in Society*. Cambridge: Cambridge university Press.
- [16] Munif, Achmad. 2007. *50 Tokoh Politik Legendaris Dunia*. Yogyakarta: Penerbit Narasi.
- [17] Sidel, John T. 1999. *Capital, Coercien and Crime: Bossism in The Philippines*. Standford: Standford University Press.
- [18] Sidel, John T. 1989. *Beyond Patron-Client Relations: Warlordism and Local Politics in The Phillipines*. Kasarinlan, A Philippine Quarterly of Third World Studies 1, 1989.
- [19] Siriyuvasak, Ubonrat. 2005. *People's Media and Communication Rights in Indonesia and the Philippines*. Inter-Asia Cultural Studies, Vol. 6, No. 2, 2005.
- [20] Surbakti, Ramlan. 1992. *Memahami Ilmu Politik*. Jakarta: Grasindo.
- [21] Timberman, David G. 1991. *A Changeless Land: Continuity and Change in Philippine Politics*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.
- [22] Wui, Marlon A. – Ma Glenda S. Lopez. 1997. *State, Civil Society Relations in Policy Making*. Philippine Democracy Agenda, Vol. 2, 1997.
- [23] Yu, Samuel C. K. 2005. *Political Reforms in the Philippines: Challenges Ahead*. Contemporary Southeast Asia 27. No. 2. 2005.
- [24] Zuhro, R. Siti, dkk, 2009. *Demokrasi Lokal Peran Aktor dalam Demokratisasi*. Yogyakarta: Penerbit Ombak.

Internet

- [25] Anonim. *Selebriti dan Keluarga Elite Parpol Ramaikan Pemilu Sela Filipina*”, 14 Mei 2013, dikutip dari (<http://dunia.rmol.co/read/2013/05/14/110351/Selebriti-&-Keluarga-Elite-Parpol-Ramaikan-Pemilu-Sela-Filipina->).
- [26] Ariyanto, Yus. *Keluarga Aquino, Sejarah Dimulai dari Pembunuhan di Bandara*”, 12 Oktober 2013, dikutip dari (<http://news.liputan6.com/read/718284/keluarga-aquino-sejarah-dimulai-dari-pembunuhan-di-bandara>).
- [27] Hasugian, Maria Rita. *Dinasti Politik Langgeng di Asia*. 17 Maret 2015, dikutip dari (<https://dunia.tempo.co/read/650780/dinasti-politik-langgeng-di-asia>).