1 Introduction

The simultaneous rise to power of state leaders, such as Marine Le Pen in France, Geert Wilders in the Netherlands, Viktor Orbán in Hungary, Vladimir Putin in Russia, Recep Erdoğan in Turkey, Donald Trump in the United States of America, Narendra Modi in India and Rodrigo Duterte in the Philippines, has to some extent brought threats to democracies worldwide (Ashkenas and Aisch 2016; Heydarian 2017a; McCoy 2017; Rodríguez-Garavito and Gomez 2018). The case of the Philippines, with Rodrigo Duterte and his popularity among the middle class, is particularly interesting when viewed from the democratic history of the country. Hence, this study puts its focus on the case of the Philippines, specifically in Davao City where Rodrigo Duterte first entered and established a name in politics.

Thirty years after the end of the Marcos dictatorship[1] in the Philippines, Rodrigo "Rody" Roa Duterte succeeded Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino[2] as the president of the country. Despite not having had any experience in national politics prior to the 2016 presidential race, Duterte was already well-known in the Philippines for being the Mayor of Davao City, a post he held for more than two decades (Bowring 2016; Iglesias 2017). His extreme popularity has polarized people into two groups: those who admire him for his

[1] Due to student radicalization and increasing number of violent demonstrations, the Philippines was placed under a dictatorial regime, under the virtue of Proclamation No. 1081 imposing Martial Law, from 1972 to 1986 during the presidency of Ferdinand Marcos (Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines n.d). Marcos had assumed all governing powers, excluded civilian courts, and systematically replaced instituted the 1973 Philippine Constitution for his own benefits (Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines).

[2] His mother, Corazon Aquino, led the 1986 People Power Revolution that toppled down the Marcos Regime. She became the 11th President of the Philippines.

achievements in terms of cleanliness, security, and safety in the city (Bagolong 2014), and those who condemn him for his alleged violations of human rights (Kine 2015), particularly his assumed involvement in the existence and operations of the Davao Death Squads or DDS (Human Rights Watch 2009).

Duterte's leadership as president, much like his leadership in Davao City, has been characterized by political intimidations and alleged violations of human rights. Despite this brand of leadership posing a threat to democracy, the Social Weather Stations (SWS)[3] exit poll showed that a large share of the better-off and better educated (voters with some graduate level education) middle class cast their ballots for Duterte (Social Weather Stations 2016; Thompson 2016a, 223; Teehankee and Thompson 2016, 126–127).

Theoretically, the middle class is an important catalyst of a society's democratization (Lipset 1959; Lipset 1960; Moore 1966), which was observed in the Philippines during the 1986 People Power Revolution, also known as the EDSA[4] 1, against Ferdinand Marcos. Bearing in mind that the historical event of the ouster of Marcos was participated hugely by the middle class (Ghosh 1986, 1610; Villegas 2012; Bello 2017, 29), it is therefore assumed that this same class would opt not to support the brand of leadership that Rodrigo Duterte has – a leadership that arguably resembles the leadership of Marcos. This is not, however, the case in Davao City and even in the Philippines after the 2016 National Elections. On the contrary, three decades after this symbolic revolution towards the restoration of democracy in the Philippines, Filipinos appear conflicted about their democratic political system as exemplified through their strong support towards the leadership of Rodrigo Duterte and even

[3] Social Weather Stations (SWS) was established in August 1985 as a private non-stock, nonprofit social research institution (Social Weather Stations n.d).

[4] EDSA stands for Epifanio de los Santos Avenue. EDSA is historical in the sense that all the major democratic movements, such as the EDSA 1 and EDSA 2, happened on it.

towards Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos[5], who ran as vice president (Timberman 2016, 138). Therefore, it is worthy for this study to concentrate on the members of the middle class in Davao City, where Rodrigo Duterte first established and strengthened his brand of political leadership.

This study aims to address the following questions:

(1) Under which circumstances did the members of the middle class who are against Ferdinand Marcos, in Davao City, find it necessary to be under the leadership of Rodrigo Duterte?

(2) When and in what way did the members of the middle class who are against Ferdinand Marcos, in Davao City, allow the leadership of Rodrigo Duterte?

(3) Despite the alleged human rights violations, such as summary executions, existence of Davao Death Squads (DDS) and political intimidation, why did the members of the middle class who are against Ferdinand Marcos still seem to have supported the brand of leadership of Rodrigo Duterte in Davao City?

(4) Were there oppositions against the leadership of Rodrigo Duterte in Davao City? How were they handled by the city government? While the fourth question may not be central to this study, the attempt to answer it will help in further understanding the leadership of Rodrigo Duterte in Davao City.

1.1 Theoretical and Conceptual Foundations

This chapter continues by presenting the theoretical and conceptual foundations for the assumptions and arguments that are raised in the study. This section presents literatures, both Western and non-Western studies, pertaining to the orientations of the middle class towards democracy or democratization. Furthermore, different possible theories and concepts to explain Duterte's support from the middle class are explored, specifically from Filipino scholars.

[5] Ferdinand M. "Bongbong" Marcos Jr., the son of the country's late dictator, narrowly lost the vice presidency and has protested the result of the 2016 election (Timberland 2016, 38).

1.1.1 The Modernization Theory's Perspective on the Middle Class

The People Power Revolution of 1986, which toppled the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos, has become a symbolic democratic movement not only in the history of the Philippines but also in the international sphere (Harris 2016, 212; Thompson 2016a, 221). Since then, from Yangon to Beijing in the 1980s, from Jakarta to Belgrade in the 1990s, and the Arab Spring in 2011, civilian uprisings against dictatorial regimes have been dubbed "people power" movements (Thompson 2016a, 221). The People Power Revolution of 1986 is important not only because of its eventual re-installation of a democratic government in the Philippines, but also because it was won by people with a middle class background (Ghosh 1986; Villegas 2012; Bello 2017, 29), together with nuns, priests and students (Ghosh 1986, 1610). This historic event supports the claim of modernization theory – that the middle class is more likely to be in favor of a democratic over a non-democratic government.

The structural co-relation between a society's middle class and democracy, which became an important element of the development of modernization theory, was first observed by Aristotle:

> Aristotle observed that where the rich were the most powerful class, they established exclusionary oligarchies as the form of government, wherein only those with large property holdings could vote or hold political offices. Where the poor were very numerous and well organized, they established what Aristotle called "extreme democracy" – extreme because the poor, badly educated, and tending toward "mobrule," as Polybius dubbed it, often overrode law in their assemblies, and more often followed blindly the lead of a charismatic demagogue. Aristotle observed, however, that where the middle class was prosperous and numerous, they tend to establish a stable form of government based on the rule of law and founded on the inclusion of the entire population in the participatory process of the assembly (Glassman 1991, 3–4).

The recognized proponents of the modernization theory such as Lipset (1959; 1960), Moore (1966), Muller (1988), Glassman (1991; 1995; 1997) and Huntington (1991) have substantiated Aristotle's view that having a strong middle class is a necessary pre-condition

for democratization and sustenance of a democratic government. According to the theorists of modernization, as economic development increases in a society, the middle class population also increases, and this will eventually lead to democratization (Lipset 1959; Lipset 1960). The social structure of a society is changed when economic development causes the increase of the middle class (Lipset 1959; Lipset 1960). It modifies the society's pyramid-shaped to a diamond-shaped social distribution, with the majority of the population belonging to the middle class (Lipset 1959; Lipset1960; Berg 2009, 10). With this change, the potential social conflict within a society is moderated both by reducing the percentage of the lower class that is vulnerable to anti-democratic and extremist ideologies and forces, and by increasing the proportion of the middle class that favors pro-democratic ideologies and forces, which in turn will facilitate the rise and stability of democracy (Lipset 1960; Muller 1988). Furthermore, the proponents of the theory presuppose that modernization's progressive path – where economic development produces a prosperous middle class in a society which inevitably leads to a democracy – is unilinear and can be generalized to all societies irrespective of their country and region (Lipset 1959; Hungtington 1991; and Glassman 1997).

Multiple literatures have addressed the modernization theory. Empirical researches have been conducted to prove the argument raised by the modernization theorists. For instance, several Western scholars like Eulau (1956a; 1956b), Lipset (1959; 1960), Milbrath (1977), Nie et al. (1969) and Glassman (1991; 1995; 1997) have examined and found that individuals belonging to the middle class have more tendency to act in accordance with their democratic beliefs due to their high level of political efficacy (Chen 2002). In other words, they are more aware of the role they play in public affairs and are more likely to have democratic engagements, like political participation, compared to the members of the lower class (Eulau 1956a; Lipset 1960; Milbrath 1977; Glassman 1997; Chen 2002). In addition, the middle class prefers a democratic government that assures them that their rights and private properties can be protected from possi-

ble intrusion whether from the side of the government or from the upper class (Glassman 1995; Glassman 1997; Chen 2002).

Historical events, such as the "EDSA 1" in the Philippines (Ghosh 1986; Thompson 2004; Thompson 2016a), the "Black May" in Thailand and the "Reformasi" movement in Indonesia (Thompson 2004; Thompson 2008), have also been recorded to justify the structural correlation of the middle class and democratization or democracy. East Asia has witnessed several struggles against authoritarian regimes that were spearheaded and/or actively participated in by the middle class. South Korea's new middle class,[6] during the time of Chun Doo-hwuan, joined with the opposition group to press the state to loosen its repressive control over their society, while the Taiwanese new middle class acted relatively independently and was able to exert pressure on the political elites through reform-oriented social movements (Hsiao and Koo 1997, 328). Middle class-driven non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Malaysia have placed a threat on government pertaining to issues of political liberalization and democratization that civil society groups were subsequently banned in the 1990s (Kleinberg and Clark 2000, 7). In Thailand, several members of the middle class who are pro-democracy participated in the 1992 demonstrations against the government of General Suchinda Kraprayoon and have supported NGO-inspired activism (Englehart 2003, 256). It is claimed that in Southeast Asia, with the 1986 People Power in the Philippines, the Black May events of 1992 in Thailand, and the Reformasi in Indonesia in 1998, it was the middle class forces that brought about democratic change via "non-violent, urban-based uprising against hardline dictatorships" (Thompson 2007, 5). The individual separate instances of participation by the middle class in pro-democratic movements are strong manifestations of the modernization theory.

Based on this theory and what transpired during the 1986 People Power Revolution against Ferdinand Marcos, one could assume that the Filipino middle class would hardly go for a leader whom

[6] The concept of the new middle class is discussed in Chapter 2 of this book.

they perceive as detrimental to the democratic government of the Philippines. However, this is not the case thirty years after Marcos was ousted. Rodrigo Duterte, who evidently has close ties with the Marcoses (Juego 2017; McCoy 2017, 518), won the 2016 Presidential Election in the Philippines with 39 percent of the votes, considered to be the third-widest vote margin in the history of the country's post-Marcos presidential elections (Teehankee and Thompson 2016, 125; Casiple 2016, 179; Curato 2017, 143). The inconsistency of the Filipino middle class and its contradiction of the modernization theory, especially in the case of the Philippines in the time of President Duterte, deserves an in-depth analysis.

1.1.2 Non-Western Studies on the Middle Class

The modernization theorists have undeniably established Aristotle's observation pertaining to the middle class' likelihood of backing a democratic regime and democratization. There are extensive studies supporting the modernization theory that are mostly found in Western literatures (Chen and Lu 2011). Although there are some strong instances in non-European context that hold this theory true, the inconsistency of the behavior of the middle class towards democracy and democratization still raises the question of the unilinear claim of the modernization theory. While studies affirming the notion of modernization theory are well-documented in the literature, it is also acknowledged that it is not always applicable to all countries at all times as more recent studies have countered the process of modernization (Chen and Lu 2011).

Scholars like Johnson (1985); Sundhaussen (1991); Rueschemeyer, Stephens and Stephens (1992); Bertrand (1998); Jones (1998); Chen (2002); Englehart (2003); Hadiz (2004); So (2004); Thompson (2004; 2007); and Chen and Lu (2011) have argued that middle class individuals do not automatically promote democratization and/or democracy. These studies, therefore, challenge the unilinear perspective of modernization theory towards the correlation of the middle class with democracy. Chen and Lu (2011, 706–707) found

out that "the middle classes both in Latin America and in Southeast Asia have at times and in some countries supported democratization and democracy but at other times and in other countries supported authoritarian regimes (or rulers), since their orientation towards democracy is contingent on various socioeconomic and political factors."

Some studies conducted in East and Southeast Asia challenge the unilinearity of the modernization theory (Lam 1991; Rodan 1993; Bell 1998; Jones 1998; Torii 2003; Thompson 2004; Thompson 2008; Chen and Lu 2011; Thompson 2016a; Thompson 2016b; Einzenberger and Schaffar 2018; Schaffar 2018). They suggest that the attitude of the middle class towards democracy depends on various societal conditions. The authoritarian regime in Singapore is accepted by a majority of its middle class because the government satisfies their material needs (Lam 1999; Rodan 1993). Similarly, the burgeoning middle class in Malaysia, specifically the ethnic Malays, has either actively supported an increasingly authoritarian state or remained politically apathetic (Bell 1998; Jones 1998; Torii 2003). In Indonesia, a great percentage of their middle class supports the political status quo even though undemocratic at times (Bell 1998; Jones 1998). Although Joseph Estrada, in the Philippines, was loved by the poor voters, he was ousted through another People Power Movement in 2001, also known as EDSA Dos, which was carried out on the streets of Manila by a coalition of the Catholic Church hierarchy, big business leaders, and middle class civil society activists (Thompson 2016a, 222). Furthermore, Rodrigo Duterte's victory during the Philippine Presidential Election in 2016 was unexpectedly supported by the Filipino middle class voters (Social Weather Stations, 2016; Teehankee and Thompson 2016, 126–127; Thompson 2016a, 223; Curato 2017, 150), in spite of his suspected involvements in illiberal democratic practices in Davao City relating to summary executions and the operations of the infamous Davao Death Squad (Sales 2009, Quismundo 2016).

A recent study of Schaffar (2018) contextualizes the concept of the "imperial mode of living" (Brand and Wissen 2017; Brand and

Wissen 2018a; Brand and Wissen 2018b) in order to explain the shifting political orientations of the middle classes in Southeast Asian countries stemming from their practiced lifestyle. Moreover, Schaffar (2018) in the same article emphasized a possible re-orientation to China of the middle class in the region, particularly in Thailand and the Philippines. On a similar note, Einzenberger and Schaffar (2018) have critically looked at the role and influence of China in the emergence of the new authoritarianism in Southeast Asian countries particularly in the political economy perspective. Furthermore, Bünte (2021, 199–200) sees China's growing economic, political, and military roles in the region as possibly limiting Western leverage and diminishing the attractiveness of a democratic model of governance.

From the perspective of the modernization theory, the aforementioned cases of Southeast Asian middle classes contradict how they are expected to respond to threats to democracy. These concrete examples propose that the said theory is limited and, therefore, studies attempting to provide an explanation for the inconsistency find it necessary to also consider the sociopolitical and economic conditions in the respective individual societies (Chen and Lu 2011).

As this study aims to explain the counter-intuitiveness of the support of the Filipino middle class – when retrospectively looking at the People Power Revolution in 1986 – towards Rodrigo Duterte's brand of leadership, it draws its discussions and conclusions mainly from the biographical narrative interviews gathered from respondents in Davao City, Philippines. Nevertheless, this study does not take for granted the available literatures which provide concepts that attempt to back and explain why the middle class in Davao City favors Duterte's brand of leadership. This study also looks at the concept of "good governance" as it offers to some extent a possible explanation in understanding the middle class' orientation towards illiberal democratic governments. Additionally, the concept of populism is also dealt with in this study as it has been widely used to explain Rodrigo Duterte's political style of leadership by many Filipino scholars.

1.1.3 Good Governance Approach in Explaining Duterte's Support from the Middle Class

The concept of good governance can be defined broadly and understood differently in various contexts. This concept has been debated mainly because of its importance as a condition for giving aid to the states by international organizations, such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and Asian Development Bank (ADB) (Munshi et al 2009). For the World Bank, good governance is "epitomized by predictable, open, and enlightened policy making (that is, transparent process); a bureaucracy imbued with a professional ethos; an executive arm of government accountable for its actions; and a strong civil society participating in public affairs; and all behaving under the rule of law" (World Bank 1994, vii). Referring to the Declaration on Partnership for Sustainable Growth, Michel Camdessus (1998), the managing director of IMF, stated in his speech that "promoting good governance in all its aspects, including ensuring the rule of law, improving the efficiency and accountability of the public sector, and tackling corruption" is an essential element of an environment in which countries can achieve lasting prosperity. For OECD, good governance is needed in addressing financial crises rooted in weak government institutions and at the same time in the "decentralization of authority in government structures and the devolution of responsibility" (Munshi et. Al 2009, 6–7). The ADB has identified "accountability, participation, predictability and transparency" as the four elements of good governance (ADB 1995, 8).

This study unrestrictedly adopts Surendra Munshi's definition of good governance after considering most of the available organizational views on good governance, as well as the different critics of the concept. "Good governance signifies a participative manner of governing that functions in a responsible, accountable and transparent manner based on the principles of efficiency, legitimacy and consensus for the purpose of promoting the rights of the individual

citizens and public interest, thus indicating the existence of political will for ensuring the material welfare of society and sustainable development with social justice" (Munshi 2004, 51–52).

Although this study does not aim to arrive at a concrete definition of good governance, it is necessary to present some working definitions that are helpful for the understanding of the arguments raised and the analysis of the research. While the concept of good governance has been extensively associated with democracy, at least in the Western view, its exclusivity to democracy can still be contested most especially when considering the non-Western states, such as East and Southeast Asian authoritarian capitalist states (Thompson 2007; Bloom 2016).

Heavily citing Russia and China as examples, Bloom (2016) offers an in-depth analysis of how economic prosperity in the capitalist world necessitates authoritarianism to promote the coercive rule of "self-disciplining" nations over the liberal and democratic ideals in furthering better socioeconomic conditions. "Similar to almost all tyrannical appeals, the story of authoritarian capitalism is composed of a potent mixture of hope and fear. The hope that with 'good governance' and a willingness to stay the present course, capitalism will deliver socioeconomic progress" (Bloom 2016, 166). Consequently, authoritarian regimes often legitimize their rule by highlighting their performance, primarily on the basis of fast growth in the economy and lower income inequality (Thompson 1993, 471).

Bruff (2016, 114) argues that "authoritarianism" should not be viewed as merely the exercise of brute force, but also be observed "in the reconfiguring of state and institutional power in an attempt to insulate certain policies from social and political dissent." Being under a nondemocratic or authoritarian regime is a phenomenon that is not unfamiliar to Southeast Asian societies. Authoritarian regimes, through their successful developmentalist rule, produced the middle classes in Asia-Pacific and were able to socialize them in the arguments supporting economic development (Thompson 2007). Thompson (2004) argues that the middle classes in Southeast

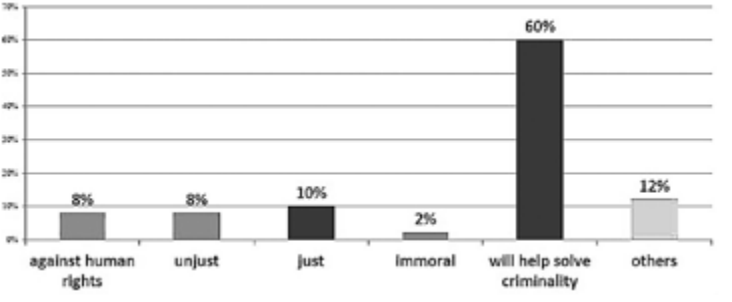
Asia are not necessarily supportive of democracy but of good governance. Furthermore, he points out that "in the name of good governance, reformist movements have turned against democratically elected presidents or prime ministers in the Philippines (Joseph Estrada), Indonesia (Abdurrahman Wahid) and Thailand (Thaksin Shinawatra)" (Thompson 2004, 1089). Such inconsistent support of the electorate towards democratically elected leaders, most especially in the case of the Philippines, ignites interest in focusing thoroughly on how the civil society orients itself towards a certain kind of government and its political leadership.

Taking into consideration that Davao City became a chaotic crossroad of different opposing movements after the end of the Marcos regime (Wilson 2005; McCoy 2017), it can be assumed that the people needed the leadership of Rodrigo Duterte to quickly get rid of the hostilities which impeded them from having a healthy society that promotes economic, political, and social development. Duterte entered the local political scene in Davao City during the surge of the civil unrest brought by the revolutionary movements of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CCP) with its military arm – the New People's Army (NPA) – who later suffered from division between the Reaffirmist (RA) and the Rejectionist (RJ) – and the Alsa Masa, a vigilante group started in Davao against the communist insurgents and politicians (Wilson 2005; Teehankee and Thompson 2016, 126). Moreover, Duterte inherited a city with endemic kidnappings, murders, and drug addiction (Wilson 2005; McCoy 2017, 518). On these grounds, Duterte's brand of leadership, though leaning towards illiberal practices and authoritarian features, was legitimized by the people as it was able to deter the turmoil in Davao City, resulting in a better socio-economic living condition. Several authoritarian leaders try to legitimate their rule by emphasizing their performance, chiefly when it comes to "faster economic growth and lower income inequality" (Thompson 1993, 471).

Autocracy and illiberalism are deemed "necessary evil" to further economic development (Bloom 2016, 145). Irrespective of the

allegations thrown against Rodrigo Duterte, the Davaoenyos[7] supported his city administration possibly because his rule was able to deliver what they wanted – peace and order (Teehankee and Thompson 2016). Basing on the City Wide Social Survey Series 5 conducted by the University Research Council of Ateneo de Davao University in May 2016 (Diaz, Estanda, and Sobrejuanite 2016), 99 percent of the people in Davao City were satisfied with the leadership of Rodrigo Duterte. Some 60 percent said they considered the Davao Death Squad as a group that "will help solve criminality" in Davao City, while 10 percent described it as "just" (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Opinion about Davao Death Squad



Source: City Wide Social Survey Series 5 University Research Council of Ateneo de Davao University (Diaz, Estanda, and Sobrejuanite 2016)

Even though there are no concrete evidences to prove the direct involvement of Duterte in the existence and operations of the Davao Death Squad (Santos 2016; Quismundo 2016), the mere continuance of its presence in Davao City during Duterte's administration creates a probable assumption of his approval of it. On this note, it is assumed that majority of the people of Davao City would rather view Duterte's brand of leadership not as a threat to democracy but as a way to deter crimes, thereby promoting peace and order in the

[7] Davaoenyo, also spelled sometimes as Davaoeño, refers to a person in living in Davao. This term can also refer to the language used in Davao.

city. The Davaoenyos have "allowed him [Duterte] to rule with an iron fist in exchange for social peace and personal security" (Teehankee and Thompson 2016, 126). Duterte boasted of his achievements and leadership outcome during his presidential campaigns in 2016. The Filipinos seemed to be conflicted about their democratic aspirations as Duterte's victory came thirty years after the fall of Ferdinand Marcos and the restoration of a democratic government (Timberman 2016, 138).

The successful overthrow of the Marcos dictatorship is a clear manifestation of the modernization theory demonstrated by the middle class-driven People Power Movement (Bello 2017, 29). However, the succeeding People Power Movement against the Estrada Administration and the strong support towards the Duterte Administration from a huge number of the electorate tend to suggest a diversion in the political orientation of the middle class – perhaps in the name of good governance. In the history of Southeast Asia, as long as developmental regimes delivered what they promised, authoritarian rulers enjoyed their strongest support from the middle class section of the populace, but if they were no longer fulfilling their own ideology of development, the middle class turned into a Frankenstein-style monster destroying its master in the name of good governance (Thompson 2007). In this sense, this paper does not discount the fact that the members of the middle class in Davao City are willing to trade some democratic institutions to enjoy the promise of "good governance" exemplified in the economic and social developments delivered by the brand of leadership of Rodrigo Duterte.

1.1.4 Populist Approach in Explaining Duterte's Support from the Middle Class

Populism, although a concept not well established in Asia, is another convincing way of attempting to explain the support that Rodrigo Duterte enjoys in the Philippines (Curato 2017) – and in Davao City. The concept of populism is still widely contested (Roberts 2006; Barr

2009; Gidron and Bonikowski 2013). The concept varies from literatures focusing on different regions like the movements in Russia and the US in the 1800s; the Latin American-style of populism in the mid-1900s; and the resurgence of populism in Europe, the United States, and in Latin America (Taggart 2000; Jagers and Walgrave 2007; Roberts 2010; Levitsky and Roberts 2011; Rosenthal and Trost 2012). However, "the core idea, as the etymology would suggest, rests with the claim to represent or act in the name of the people, understood as ordinary or common people, the majority, or the masses, as opposed to elites, privileged or special interest groups, the establishment, or the power bloc" (Collier 2001, 11813).

De Castro (2007, 930) referred to populism as derived from the Latin word "Populis," which means "a movement, a regime, a leader, or even a state which claims close affinity with the people". This term often has a negative connotation since "it gives expression to the crudest hopes and fears of the masses and by leaving no scope for deliberation and rational analysis" (Heywood 2000, 178). The victory of Joseph Estrada as the 13th president signaled the full emergence of a Latin American-style populism in the Philippines (Teehankee 2016, 307). The post-crisis regional environment witnessed the victories of democratically elected populist politicians not only in the Philippines but in Thailand as well, in the person of Thaksin Shinawatra (De Castro 2007, 930).

Populist leaders "offer simplistic solutions to complex political problems in a very direct and demagogic language, appealing to the common sense of the people and denouncing the intellectualism of the established elites" (Abts and van Kessel 2015). Being the first local leader from a major city outside the capital to launch a viable presidential bid (Teehankee 2016; 306), Rodrigo Duterte was able "to harness sentiments against 'imperial Manila' to build on his solid support in Mindanao" (Teehankee and Thompson 2016, 127–128). Duterte's promise during his campaigns, interviews, and press conferences to restore law and order in the Philippines in a span of three to six months and through killing criminals represents a populist stance of his leadership which is assumed to have drawn

support from the people (Casiple 2016, 182; Teehankee and Thompson 2016, 125; Thompson 2016a, 220; Thompson 2016b, 258). Duterte has managed to showcase Davao City as an alternative choice in governance, where gentlemanly rules of democratic procedure give way to aggressive solutions to the problems confronting the nation (David 2016; Curato 2017, 151).

Various Filipino scholars (Casiple 2016; David 2016; Abao 2017; Arguelles 2017; Claudio and Abinales 2017; Curato 2016; Curato 2017; Heydarian 2017a; Heydarian 2017b; Juego 2017; Magcamit and Arugay 2017) have conceptualized the brand of leadership of Duterte in the Philippines through the lens of the populist approach. Filipino sociologist Randy David (2016) compared the phenomenon of Rodrigo Duterte with that of Hitler's Nazism in Germany and Mussolini's Fascism in Italy, coining the term "Dutertismo." David (2016) has characterized Duterte's style "as pure theater – a sensual experience rather than the rational application of ideas to society's problems." Similarly, Magcamit and Arugay (2017) describe the Duterte-style populism as a "political style that is performed and enacted." They refer to what Duterte does – "endearing 'the people' to himself and his cause by acting like a reluctant leader who never wanted the presidency, but nevertheless, is willing to sacrifice his own life to protect them from the enemies" (Magcamit and Arugay 2017).

Curato (2016) argues that Duterte's populist appeals can be classified as penal populism[8] (see Pratt 2007), where there is mutual reinforcement of the logics of the "politics of anxiety" and the "politics of hope." She adopted the term "Dutertismo" in reference to Duterte's own "brand of populism," which she characterized as a "departure" from what has been observed in Philippine politics –

[8] Penal Populism is a political style that builds on collective sentiments of fear and demands for punitive politics (Pratt 2007). The term is originally used to describe political rhetoric that taps into the public's punitive stance, resulting to harsher mechanisms for social control to address the public's demand to be "tough on crime" (Pratt 2007), capturing Duterte's phenomenon (Curato 2016).

referring to Estrada's and former vice president Binay's populist approaches (Curato 2017, 145). Duterte-style populism cuts across classes, genders, generations, and political spectrum (Juego 2017). This is because his platforms are not mainly focusing on just the poor people – like that of Estrada's (McCargo 2016, 185–186) – but to a much larger segment as he promises to combat the issue of law and order in the country, an issue that goes beyond any certain class in Philippine society (Curato 2016; Curato 2017; Juego 2017).

Unlike Estrada's traditional populist appeal to the Filipino masses, Duterte was able to deliver his appeal towards other social classes. He has tapped into the frustrations of the members of the growing educated middle class in the Philippines with the limited prospects for economic opportunity and upward social mobility (Liow 2016; Harris 2016, 213). The middle class-driven support for Duterte's presidency was particularly strong among the taxi drivers, small shop owners, and overseas workers, who were worried about their fragile economic gains after years of growth unless "order" is restored by any means necessary (Thompson 2016b, 258).

One of Duterte's campaign slogans, "*Tapang at Malasakit*"[9], translated as Courage and Compassion (Holmes 2016, 33), portrays him as both courageous and compassionate. His supporters bank on his tough opposition against drug addicts, his use of street language, and his demonstration of decisive actions (Arguelles 2017, 65). Being a tough outsider intent upon implementing change (McCargo 2016, 189), he has offered a quick solution to halt rising crimes, end government corruption, and rebuild the country's crumbling infrastructure (Teehankee and Thompson 2016; Thompson 2016a, 220) under a Duterte rule which "will be bloody" (Corrales 2016; Viray 2016; Curato 2016; Curato 2017).

Richard Heydarian (2017a) asserts that Duterte's emergence into power can be understood in the context of a populist revolt against the elite democracy (or the oligarchy). He makes a broad compari-

[9] Also translated as Courage and Devotion (McCargo 2016, 187), Courage and Concern (Capistrano 2017).

son to the cases of Erdoğan in Turkey and Modi in India. Heydarian attempts to make sense of Duterte's victory by looking at the disenchantment of the Filipinos towards the former democratic leaders, who delivered empty rhetoric (Heydarian 2017a). Apart from pointing out the political failures of Duterte's predecessors, Heydarian (2017a) also notes that Duterte is a man of many firsts – including being the first Mindanaoan to occupy "imperial Manila." The 16 million Filipinos who voted for him appear to have done so because they are tired of what they see as ineffective and often corrupt leadership from the past (McCargo 2016, 188; Timberman 2016, 135).

On a similar note, Timberman (2016) and Thompson (2016a) agree that Filipinos in the periphery complain about "imperial Manila," of which Duterte has taken advantage. Most local governments still suffer from inadequate funding, low capacity, elite capture, and corruption (Timberman 2016, 138). Such conditions opened a way for Duterte's calls for a federal system to address "anti-Imperial Manila" sentiments (Teehankee 2016, 306). Moreover, Timberman (2016, 138) refers to the failure of implementing decentralization as a possible contributory factor for why poverty in the Philippines has not declined significantly. Duterte was able to share to his listeners, during his campaigns, stories of his frustrating encounters with a dysfunctional national government and how he dealt with the system to produce tangible results in Davao City (David 2016).

This book draws interest from the argument of modernization theory – that middle class individuals are more likely to support democracy and democratization. This has been witnessed and proven in several historical events, including the middle class-driven People Power Revolution in 1986 that toppled dictator Ferdinand Marcos. It is notable, however, that in 2001, the middle class helped drive another People Power Revolution, but against a democratically elected president, Joseph Estrada, who was accused and later convicted of plunder. This incident counter-argues the impression that the Filipino middle class necessarily supports a democratic government. Thompson (2004) has widely compared this with other Southeast Asian states – Thailand and Indonesia – where the

middle class is not unswervingly supportive of democracy, rather of "good governance." Such argument may prove useful in analyzing the support of the middle class for Duterte's political leadership in Davao City, despite exhibiting illiberal practices and non-democratic characteristics.

Duterte's successful emergence in national politics has frequently been explained by most Filipino scholars using the populist perspective. However, Duterte's brand of populism is different from the traditional pro-poor populism as his supporters include not only the lower class but also the middle and the upper classes.

1.2 Significance of the Study

The middle class' support towards Duterte's brand of leadership deserves an in-depth analysis, in view of the strong middle class democratic movements during the 1986 and 2001 People Power Revolutions in the Philippines, the former against an authoritarian leader and that latter against a populist leader. Most of the studies done to explain Duterte's leadership have been national in scope. Considering that the brand of leadership that Duterte exemplifies as president is not different from his leadership as mayor, zeroing in on the local aspect of his leadership is essential in further understanding the overwhelming support he enjoys from the middle class.

As of the time of writing, there has been no empirically rooted study done in Davao City pertaining to Duterte's political leadership, even though he ruled the locality for more than 20 years. This book, therefore, aims to address that by delving into his early political life in Davao City. In order to further understand Duterte's brand of leadership in the Philippines and his popularity among the Filipino electorate, it is vital to revisit his political leadership in Davao City, where he built his political career with the strong support of the public that allowed him to rule for almost three decades.

This study does not only aim to contribute to existing literature on Duterte's brand of leadership in the Philippines, but also, and more importantly, it seeks to determine and analyze the support

of the middle class in Davao City towards his political leadership. This paper also aims to understand and analyze how and why Duterte established his brand of leadership and the strong support he enjoys from people belonging to all the social classes in Davao City. Since this book draws most of its arguments from the modernization approach in the context of the middle class-driven movements in the Philippines, it focuses principally on the middle class in Davao City, and, thereby, attempts to contribute to the middle class discourse.

1.3 Structure of the Book

This study has nine chapters in total. Following this introduction (Chapter 1), the second chapter discusses the composition of the middle class, the factors which identify middle class in the Philippines, the importance of the middle class and the middle class individuals considered in this study. Chapter 3, methodology, elaborates the research design used for this thesis. Included in this chapter are detailed description of the research participants, fieldworks done, and the ethical considerations applied during the research trips. Chapter 4 gives an overview of Davao City in terms of its profile, history, and contemporary status under the Dutertes.

Chapter 5 lays down the conceptual and theoretical dimensions in discussing the support of the middle class towards Duterte's mayoralty in Davao City, Philippines. This chapter suggests the possible recurrence of "Asian Values" as reflected in some narratives of the respondents. In addition, it also lays out the distinct phenomenon of "othering" in Davao City against alleged criminals and drug personalities.

The succeeding three chapters (chapter 6, chapter 7, and chapter 8) are the empirical parts of the paper. These three chapters contain the presentation and interpretation of the data gathered. Chapter 6 gives the socio-political context of Davao before Duterte came to power. It mainly covers experiences of the respondents during the martial law years under Marcos. Chapter 7 proceeds with a descrip-

tion of the transition and changes as observed by the respondents in Davao City during Duterte's political leadership. Chapter 8 attempts to capture the perspectives of the respondents towards the person of Duterte and highlights the unique initiatives and programs he implemented during his time.

The last chapter (Chapter 9) encapsulates the entire paper by emphasizing major insights, implications, and limitations of the study.