Beyond Patron-Client Relations: Warlordism and Local Politics in the Philippines

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"More than one hundred petty "datus" swagger about among the 100,000 Maranaos, no one of them admitting the existence of any native political superior. Each datu is jealous of the others and zealous in maintaining his own power and prestige. An official from Manila who recently inspected the province of Lanao spent much of his time in listening to bitter complaints growing out this feeling. A datu came to him and said: "You are my father and my mother. I look to you for everything. But I am a very important man. I have a house with an iron roof. I have a fifteen hectares of land and twelve carabaos. My followers are two hundred and twenty men. I have letters from Gen. Pershing and Gen. Harbord. I am the big man here. But you have appointed that little fellow, Datu-so-and-so, as presidente. Why? He has only ten carabaos and one hundred and fifty men. Why am I not the presidente?"

- Ralston Hayden, "What Next for the Moro?" Foreign Affairs, Volume 6, Number 4, July 1928, 636.

A reconceptualization of local politics in the Philippines is long overdue. Political scientists have for years used the framework of patron-client relations to describe both the structure and the transformation of rural politics in the country. Scholars writing in the 1960s described rural Philippine society as "integrated" into the national polity through a "pyramid" of patron-client ties, while their successors in the 1970s attributed political instability and the demise of formal parliamentary democracy to the "breakdown" of patron-client relations. However, the patron-client paradigm fails to account adequately for both change and continuity in Philippine rural politics. Only a mode of analysis that factors in the role of coercion and the autonomy of localities from central control will explain both the persistence of rural elite monopolies on local political power and the emergence of a strong revolutionary movement in the countryside. Evidence abounds that a regime which we might describe as "petty sultanism"-- akin to caciquismo in Latin America, the mafia in Sicily, and "warlordism" in Republican China-- structures contemporary local politics in the archipelago. The importance of this phenomenon is obvious when we recall that scholars have identified the survival of "neofeudal" agrarian elites as an important obstacle in the paths to economic development, state formation, and democracy throughout the modern world.[1]

Patron-Client Democracy: The Static Portrait

Scholarly work on Philippine rural politics in the 1960s used the patron-client framework to explain both the Philippine variant of parliamentary democracy and the putative absence of class and "primordial" conflict in a nation with grossly skewed income distribution and a diverse ethnic, cultural, and religious make up. "Vertical" dyadic relationships of reciprocity between individuals of unequal status, wealth, and power, were said to crosscut and undermine potential cleavages and antagonism between rich and poor by uniting both into supraclass, particularistic alliances based on mutual aid.[2] Such a patron-client relationship, as perhaps

best exemplified by that between a landlord and his tenant, has been described as:

> an exchange relationship or instrumental friendship between two individuals of different status in which the patron uses his own influence and resources to provide for the protection and material welfare of his lower status client and his family who, for his part, reciprocates by offering general support and assistance, including personal services, to the patron.[3]

Rural electoral politics was depicted as resting on a "pyramid" or "vast network" of such patron-client relationships, stretching from tenants to landlords to barrio-level *liders* to mayors, congressmen, and provincial governors,[4] In such a political framework, political competition focused not on a group demands but on the particularistic demands of potential clients:

> elections, legislation, administration, adjudication, and other processes of the government in this system are not ideology-oriented. Voters and candidates do not pay attention to, nor discuss, ideological issues. Seldom are legislators, administrators, and judges moved by ideology; instead they are moved by personalistic, concrete, material and non-ideological ends or things. The things which interest them are personal and practical-what favors can be allocated to supporters and burdens imposed on non-supporters; what personal traits certain public can grant favors and what group cannot give patronage; and the like.[5]

This political system both rested on and reproduced bifactional competition, which fed into the two-party system which dominated Philippine politics from independence in 1946 until the declaration of martial law in 1972. Local factional groupings based largely on personal and familial rivalries in each community, cut across class divisions, as rival local factions were as a rule "virtually identical as to the categories of society from which their support comes."[6] Local factions, moreover, were highly unstable, while bifactional competition maintained a "systemic equilibrium" of sorts:[7]

> competition predictably produces two major groups, each supported by roughly half the population. A group of any significantly smaller proportion of the population would

have little chance of victory and, in a society much concerned with winning factional contests, could be expected to fuse with some other group in order to create a larger combination. Conversely, a group supported by much more than half the population would have an excess of votes and, where votes must be obtained through the doing of favors, would be expending its resources needlessly. This functional bifactionalism is not only the predominant pattern in local politics but... appears to have been a factor in the persistence of a two-party system during most of the country's recent history."[8]

Competition between two (virtually identical factions in a locality and between the two national-level parties maintained this system of "clientelist democracy," since "each party has had a reasonable chance of winning a good number of elections and neither party, having won control of a constituency anywhere in the country, has been able to take its continued hegemony for granted."[9] This guaranteed that the political system would be "highly responsive" to citizens demands. As Carl Lande concluded:

> The substantial influence which the ordinary voter exerts upon decision-making is explained in large part by the unrestrictedness, the closeness, and the intensity of competition for elective offices at all levels of government.[10]

The Breakdown of Patron-Client Relations: Two Competing Versions

In the 1970s, in the context of increasing turbulence in Philippine politics and the declaration of martial law in 1972, scholars began to use the patron-client framework to explain the processes of change observed in Philippine rural politics. Two models emerged which claimed to portray the impact of external economic and political forces on patron-client relationships in the rural Philippines.

One analytical scheme portrayed economic growth and the penetration of national bureaucratic institutions into local areas as forces that were in the process of transforming patron-client relationships and "modernizing" rural politics in the Philippines. A changing pattern of political leadership recruitment was observed, traced to the increasing differentiation of the economy, in which "avocational" politicians

from prominent landowning families were being replaced by "upwardly mobile men from more humble backgrounds," "professional politicians," especially in areas where the concentration of land ownership was low and social mobilization was high.[11] These "new men", with their specialized "political machines", were said to be "more likely than those from old leading families to make political choices that led to the breakdown of traditional local factions...."[12] This supposed pluralization of political officeholders and specialization local organizations thus offered greater potential for democratizing rural society and for stabilizing national party organizations.[13]

Moreover, the emerging local machines were said to be more and more reliant on resources supplied from the provincial and national arenas and thus were agents of "nationalizing influences." "Increasingly," one proponent of this line of analysis argued, "provincial and national considerations are shaping the actions of local faction leaders in those arenas as well as in the local arena itself."[14]

An alternative analytical scheme asserted instead that the penetration of capitalism into the Philippine countryside and the commercialization of agriculture disrupted traditional patron-client relationships and threatened the very structure of the polity. Growing inequality in landholding, population growth and land hunger, fluctuations in producer and consumer prices, the deterioration of village levelling mechanisms, and increasingly effective state protection of landowners' property rights strengthened the bargaining position of landowners vis-a-vis their tenants (and thus of patrons vis-a-vis their clients).[15] The profit motive was allowed to replace the previously binding informal mechanisms of social control. As two scholars concluded:

> When a free enterprise system is imposed on a feudal social structure and bonds between patron and clients weaken, inequality is likely to increase since the restraints on the increased expropriation of surplus by patrons are lessened.[16]

The resultant violation by landlords/patrons of their obligations to their tenants/clients thus delegitimized individual and collective inequalities, paving the way for the emergence of "horizontal" ties along class lines among tenants/clients and the rumblings of class conflict along "big people/little people" lines.

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The breakdown of patron-client relationships also led to growing instability in electoral politics. Factionalism in the competition among elites for political positions grew increasingly intense, expensive, and bloody. Population growth and elite differentiation had increased the number of candidates competing for local office, while the rising proportion of economically insecure clients stretched the capacities of patrons to provide needed resources. These dynamics disrupted the bifactional, two-party system and made "patron-client pyramids particularly fragile as segments of them readily move[d] to the highest bidder."[17] In this context, the abolition of the Congress and the declaration of martial law in 1972 constituted a response to increased factionalism and social unrest, "a recognition by sectors of the national elite that control through increasingly expensive elections is both unwieldy and inefficient."[18]

Beyond Patron-Client Relations

The endurance of the patron-client framework in the study of rural politics in the Philippines attests to its explanatory power and utility. The model convincingly lays out the personalistic networks of pyramid of patron-client relationships that constitute and vertically integrate political parties and elements to the bureaucracy from the barrio up to Manila itself.

Furthermore, such analysis rightly stresses how competition for and dispersal of patronage within these institutions has structured competition in Philippine electoral politics along shifting, supraclass, particularistic cleavages. Finally, it helps to explain the relative unimportance of "ideology," of issues of concern to categorical groups in Philippine electoral contests as well as the organizational weakness of Philippine political parties.

However, the patron-client framework, especially in its original static form, is less useful and convincing as applied to local politics in the rural Philippines. We must question, for reasons detailed below, the failure (by scholars working out of, or in provinces neighboring Manila) to "problematize" the extent of autonomy enjoyed by localities and by local politicians from national level political actors and institutions. Moreover, the portrayal of a society in which patron-client relationships and the adherence of elites to norms of reciprocity effectively smoothed over class and ethnic cleavages and ideologically "incorporated" the population on second glance seems grossly distorted. Finally, the prolonged tenure of numerous mayors, congressmen, and provincial governors contradicts the claims that systematically bifactional competition for local electoral office maintained politicians' adherence to certain norms and guaranteed their "responsiveness" to their constituents' demands.

A rejection of the static portrait's assumptions of integration, harmony, and bifactionalism also undermines the later, "dynamic" depictions of the "transformation" or "breakdown" of patron-client relations. If rural communities were not integrated into the national polity to begin with, then "nation-building" and the so-called "modernization" of local politics must be seen as retarded and uncertain processes. Moreover, if traditional patron-client relationships were not the "social adhesive" which held the postwar rural Philippines together, then their disintegration in the face of capitalist penetration and the commercialization of agriculture did not in fact constitute a vital threat to the social fabric. Finally, if local politics was neither highly competitive nor structured by patron-client networks, then the emergence of specialized patron-client clusters with the growing differentiation of the economy did not necessarily disrupt the stability of the polity.

Petty or Local Sultanism:
An Alternative Model

A rejection of the "patron-client" framework on the grounds outlined above leaves us with a new set of questions about local politics in the Philippines. What are the implications for economic and political development if local communities in fact enjoy considerable autonomy from central state control, if local political leaders depend not on distribution of patronage but on coercive resources to acquire and maintain power, and if monopoly rather than bifactionalism structures local political contests?

Unfortunately, the scholar of local politics in the developing world lacks an overarching conceptual framework for the disintegration of large political units-- through the diffusion of coercive powers among wide strata of the population into local, extra-statal, personalistic power monopolies. Historians and sociologists have written on "caciquism" in Latin America, "warlordism" in Republican China, and the "mafia" in Sicily and southern Italy, but all have limited themselves to single case studies and to geographically and temporarily specific generalizations. In these three examples, the local political order is distinct from both feudalism and patron-client relations in that it rests not on reciprocity but on command and coercion:

> Patrons ought finally to be differentiated from other partly related terms for leadership such as "boss", "caudillo", or "cacique." "Boss" is a designation at once vague and richly connotative. Although a boss may often function as a patron, the term itself implies a) that he is the most powerful man in the arena and b) that his power rests more on inducements and sanctions at his disposal than on affection or status. As distinct from a patron who may or may not be the supreme local leader and whose leadership rests at least partly on rank and affection, the boss is a secular leader par excellence who depends almost entirely on palpable inducements and threats to move people.[19]

Given the absence of well-defined and generalized concepts for the political regimes observed in these historical instances, we must draw from the existing case study literature in order to build a framework for the analysis of the origins and dynamics of what we shall label petty

or local sultanism. Subsequently, we shall demonstrate the relevance of such a framework to postwar Philippine politics.

Caciquism in Latin America

Scholars have identified caciquismo as a political configuration peculiar to Latin America whose roots lie in the pattern of latifundist agricultural production and weak central state power characteristic of Iberian colonial rule.[20] The expansion of plantation agriculture to the sparsely populated frontier areas of the continent spawned fierce and bloody competition over land between hacienda owners backed by private armies. Colonial states, unable to maintain effective central control over such remote regions, delegated control over colonial militias to these local oligarchs, who later headed guerilla units with effective spheres of influence during the wars for independence of the early 19th century. In the political vacuum left by the transfer of sovereignty, the local "bosses" retained and strengthened their local power monopolies and thus constituted virtual shadow governments behind the facades of constitutional, republican regimes:

> In exchange for despotic local control, the cacique guaranteed deputies to state and national legislatures properly compliant with the will of the oligarchy as expressed through the executive branch.[21]

Thus was born caciquism, a political system based on "strong local power organized pyramid-fashion so that the "boss" systems or "chiefdoms"... interlock with one another to form the political infrastructure...."[22]

Within this system of "caciquism" one finds a particular brand of leader, the cacique. The cacique is an indigenous, self-imposed local leader who

> 1) has total or near total political, economic, and social control of a geographic area; 2) has in his power the potential use of physical violence to make his wishes become the law of his territory; and 3) is acknowledged and implicitly legitimized as the only leader of his realm by outside higher political leaders.[23]

Furthermore, the cacique enjoys a great degree of autonomy and freedom from the formal, national institutions of governance, even if he holds political office himself; he possesses informal taxation and police powers. His rule is informal, personalistic and arbitrary.

The legitimacy and power of the individual cacique rests less on charismatic authority than on a combination of coercive patronage, and "derivative" resources for mobilization within his power domain. Lacking legal or traditional authority, among his entourage the cacique must "strive continually to legitimize his claim to leadership through every means at his command. At any given point, this process of legitimization may be incomplete and subject to reversal."[24] Ruling "by his mere presence," the cacique depends on a Latin-style "macho" charisma reaffirmed through domination of women and willingness to use violence.[25]

He maintains an armed retinue of "right-hand men"-- "a core of relatives, 'fighters', and dependents" whose loyalty he must secure by calculated gift-giving (patron-client relationships), and the bonds of affinal, consanguinal, and fictive (compadrazgo) kinship.[26] "Derivative" resources from external actors, often obtained through patron-client relationships with supralocal institutions such as the state or political parties, buttress the coercive powers that the cacique can muster.

Warlordism in Republican China

Scholars have depicted the interwar period in China as dominated by "warlord politics," whose origins lay in the centrifugal impact of 19th century Western imperialism on the Chinese dynastic state.[27] External threats and demands, and the resultant fiscal crisis of the state, led to local rebellions which Beijing could not suppress without the mobilization of local gentry-led provincial armies. A failed reassertion of central state control through the formation of a modern army left a large number of men under arms but with weak loyalties to the central state.[28] Land hunger and unemployment fed banditry and made thousands available for recruitment into private armies. Thus, a system of warlordism emerged: "The country was divided into many separate, independent or semi- independent areas, each with a militarist as the supreme power."[29]

> The basis of warlord politics was the institution of personal armies at the disposal of individual military commanders. The principal warlords were sovereign over their organizations and in their domains, and there were no formal or legal authorities that could regulate or control their actions.[30]

The infamous "warlords" of the period commanded armies as their own private instruments of rule, using them to maintain power over the

territorial bases which they administered and extracted "taxes" from at their own discretion.[3] Patron- client bonds held together the warlords' armies :

> An important criterion for selecting key officers was their personal loyalty to the commander-in-chief. These officers in turn selected subordinates loyal to them, and so on through the ranks. The troops' ultimate focus of authority was thus not the central government but the army's commander-in-chief.[32]

Thus the warlords depended almost entirely on the personal loyalties of their subordinate officers to maintain dominance within their private armies.[33] Intense competition between the warlords made maintenance of the private army rather than considerations of popular legitimacy in his domain, the warlord's primary consideration:

> In the area under his domination, the warlord ran the civil administration and extorted taxes in order to keep his men fed, clothed, sheltered, and equipped. For him and his men, this was candidly a way of living and therefore their basic aims were self-preservation and emolument.[34]

The Mafia in Sicily and Southern Italy

Scholars have traced the origins of the mafia back to state weakness and class self-preservation in the early 19th century.[35] The Sicilian land aristocracy, threatened by the Bourbon state's formal abolition of its feudal privileges and emancipation of the peasantry, and by peasant unrest and banditry, reacted with force: "[M]afiosi were recruited from the ranks of the peasantry to provide the large estate owners with armed staffs to confront both the impact of the State and the restive peasants."[36] The central state, lacking the will and the means to enforce its policies, reached a stalemate with the nobles, whose privately recruited groups it allowed to maintain order on the local level. As the commercialization of agriculture and population growth disrupted patron-client relationships and spawned land hunger, unemployment, and brigandage, the landed class increasingly relied on the mafiosi for protection. The balance of forces between landlords and their mafiosi armed retainers gradually shifted in favor of the latter, to the point where they enjoyed local power monopolies. The mafia system which thus emerged of autonomous local rule through "un-

licensed [yet publicly administered] violence"[37], sustained itself well under the facade of constitutional republicanism:

> In return of their support at elections - support guaranteed quite 'legally' through the maintenance of clientelistic relations, as well as by means of threats, corruption and even sometimes the kidnapping of electors- government politicians granted favors [sic] to the mafiosi and their associates: a guns-license issued, a police report altered, an over-zealous official transferred elsewhere....[38]

Mafiosi, like their Latin American and Chinese counterparts, maintained their political positions through coercive and patronage resources and the skillfull maintenance of personal loyalty within their armed retinue. The individual mafioso

> sought to bring the local area and its people under his patronage, establishing a monopoly of physical violence that allowed him to maintain his own position as long as possible. He tried to 'freeze' the existing distribution of honor [sic], and to soften by regulating and controlling it- the war of each against all that underpinned the system.[39]

Mafiosi, as one author has noted, "ensure and buttress their own intermediate position through the systematic threat and practice of physical violence."[40] The mafioso's staff is bound to him through affinal, consanguinal, and fictive (comparaggio) kinship bonds, and through the "instrumental (and lopsided) friendships" of which patron-client relations are made. However, the mafioso aims to make himself respected within the community at large, to be a "man of honor" (uomini di rispetto). Mafiosi, as men of honor, are invested with a variety of public functions as the guardians of traditional values and the established order. Mafiosi became the civil and criminal judges, mediators, protectors, arbitrators, subsuming in themselves many delicate functions normally exercised by the power of the state.[41]

The honor of the mafiosi "was thus transformed into legitimate power, into authority. The latter then appeared in its turn as a means by which honor [sic] was itself confirmed and extended."[42]

Petty or Local Sultanistic Regimes: An Ideal Type

The preceding analysis of "caciquism" in Latin America, "warlordism" in Republican China, and mafia in Sicily has unveiled structural similarities in the cases that justify subsuming all three systems within the regime-type of local or petty sultanism. In all three cases, personalistic, uninstitutionalized, local power monopolies outside the realm of central state control structure politics within a larger formal political unit. The threat of violence and the mobilization of private armies or "armed patron-client sets" play an important role in political competition, and predatory incomes obtained through coercion mark the accumulation of wealth.

Moreover, the brand of personal leadership exercised by "caciques", "warlords" and mafiosi fits not within the Weberian typology of traditional, bureaucratic, and charismatic authority but must be seen as a localized variant of Juan Linz's ideal type of "sultanistic" rule. Linz defines such a regime as

> based on personal rulership with loyalty to the ruler based not on tradition, or on him embodying an ideology, or on a unique personal mission, or on charismatic qualities, but on a mixture of fear and rewards to his collaborators. The ruler exercises his power without restraint at his own discretion and above all unencumbered by rules or by any commitment to an ideology or value system.[43]

Virtually total control over a locality, minimal institutional constraints, and power maintenance through coercion and patronage observed in the three cases characterizes petty or local sultanship. Moreover, the "private armies" or "armed patron-client sets" of caciques, "warlords", and mafiosi fit Linz's description of the sultan's staff:

> The staff of such rulers is constituted not by an establishment with distinctive career lines, like a bureaucratic army or civil servants, recruited by more or less universalistic standards, but largely by men chosen directly by the ruler...[and] whose power is derived exclusively from the ruler. Among them we find members of his family, friends, cronies, business associates, and men directly involved in the use of violence to sustain the regime.[44]

The ruler's power rests neither on its servicing of class interests nor on popular legitimacy; it is essentially arbitrary and personalistic:

> Support is based not on a coincidence of interest between preexisting privileged social groups and the ruler but on the interests created by his rule, the rewards he offers for loyalty, and the fear of his vengeance. The boundaries between the public treasury and the private wealth of the ruler become blurred.... It is this fusion between the public and the private and the lack of commitment to impersonal purposes that distinguishes essentially such regimes...under such sultanistic system that is at stake is the maintenance and furtherance of the privileges, not of the social class or stratum, but of a group of power holders, often by exploiting even the privileged....[45]

"Petty sultanistic" rule may not only coexist with but even flourish alongside formal national-level political institutions which, paradoxically, buttress local power. The state on a local level becomes what Joel Migdal has called an "arena of accommodation", "a web of political, economic, and social exchanges" in which local strongmen guarantee local stability to state leaders in exchange for "implicit consent not to contest actively the strongman's control in local areas or even their capture of the state's tentacles."[46] In the context of such fragmented sovereignty:

> The strongmen end up with an enhanced bargaining position or with posts in the state itself that influence important decisions about the allocation of resources and the application of policy rules.[47]

Evidence presented in the respective historical case studies of "caciquism", "warlordism" and the mafia suggests the common structural origins of petty or local sultanism . These regimes emerged not only in the absence, decline, or collapse, of central state authority but also in the aftermath of the devolution, diffusion, or state delegation to autonomous local militias, of coercive powers. Moreover, these systems arose in the context of nascent commercialization of agriculture, growing unemployment, banditry and peasant unrest, when lawlessness and crisis allowed for considerable social mobility. Thus "petty sultanism" has developed not simply as a functional mechanism for continued class domination but more precisely as a result of the successful transformation by upwardly mobile
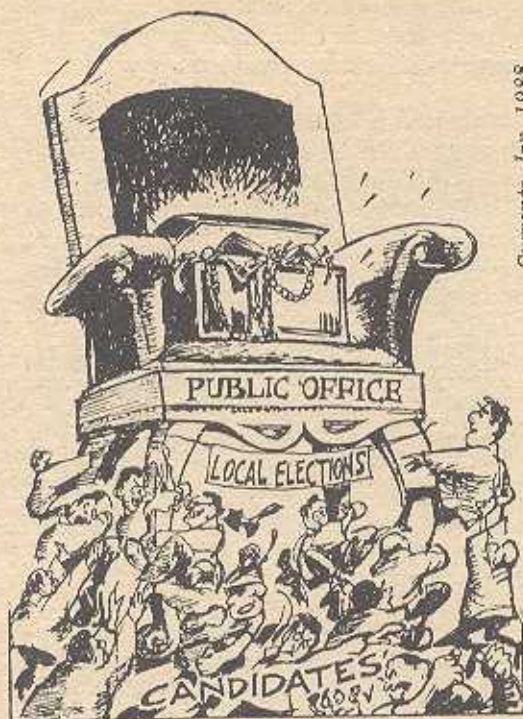
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individuals who challenged the traditionally dominant elites of the terms of the competition for local political leadership.

Conclusion: Petty or Local Sultanism in the Postwar Philippines

As suggested above, scholarly and journalistic accounts indicate that the Philippines' notorious "local kingpins" indeed have a great deal in common with Latin American caciques, Chinese "warlords" and Sicilian mafiosi, and that the structure of local politics in the country falls well within the rubric of "petty or local sultanism". For example, the author of one of the more recent local case studies offers a picture of politics in Nueva Ecija cast in "petty sultanistic" rather than "clientelistic" hues:

> Between elections the wider coalitions tended to dissolve and to re-align leaving only the core group intact. That is, only the families themselves, together with a handful of loyal retainers, maintained continuity between elections. At each new election these core groups again opposed each other in the process of forming larger coalitions that would be powerful enough to win an election. The vast majority of the electorate was non-allied between elections....

The governor and the two congressmen had their own private armies, each consisting of several dozens of men armed with guns and some machine guns ... the armed bodyguards had been given other jobs under the patronage of their bosses, and had been kept on the alert for active duty.

> The threat of violence, more than its actual use remained an indispensable power basis for politicians.[48]

Moreover, Nueva Ecija is not alone-- we need only to think of the late Ramon Durano, Sr.'s grip on the Danao City in Cebu, of the Singson family in Ilocos Sur, of Ali Dimaporo's spectacular display of firepower on the campus of Mindanao State University in the spring of 1986, or of Isabela Governor Faustino Dy's recent contribution to the military of hundreds of high-powered machine guns. The intense and bloody competition which we have witnessed in recent congressional and local elections is a function not of bifactional competition among patron-client networks but rather of warlords' squabbles over zones of autonomy or overlap between their neighboring fiefdoms. As Rudy Fariñas told a rally in Laoag about his rivals for the governorship of Ilocos Norte, the Ablan clan, "If they have guns, I, too, have guns."[49]

In fact, there is ample evidence for the prominent role of violence and the mobilization of armed personal followings in postwar Philippine politics. "Private armies" emerged in the wake of World War II in many parts of the country, [50] and election- related murders spiralled upwards from 24 in 1959 to 128 in 1967, and between 135 and 225 in 1971.[51] Following the declaration of martial law in 1972, the military claimed to have disbanded 145 private armies of political warlords and confiscated nearly 500,000 firearms, of which more than 100,000 were high-powered, and 1.5 million rounds of ammunition- enough to equip 35 army divisions.[52] Yet by 1988 an estimated 512,678 guns were said to be back in civilian hands, many controlled by the one thousand odd organized crime syndicates and private armies identified by the Philippine Constabulary.[53]

Moreover, the persistence of local political monopolies, rather than of bifactional competition, has been quite impressive in many parts of the country. Carl Landé himself shows that by 1961 almost 90% of incumbent congressmen

ran for reelection, and over 80% were returned to office.[54] Despite all the transformations of the Marcos years, 130 (65%) of the 200 congressmen elected in May 1988 have been identified as leaders of "traditional clans" and former local office-holders, while another 39 (19.5%) are scions of powerful local dynasties.[55] One can name numerous provincial governors who have held their posts since the late 1950s who have maintained local dominance over the same time span.

In fact, local politics has by and large been more autocratic and coercive than democratic and responsive, with patron-client links between local "strongmen" and national-level political institutions and actors reinforcing the status quo. For example, Rafael Lacson, governor of Negros Occidental from 1948 through 1953,

> with the help of his provincial special police, made himself a virtual dictator in his province. Aware of the fact that the continuance of his rule depended upon the sufferance of the president, the governor saw to it that his province delivered an overwhelming vote for the president....[56]

More recently, we might think of the mutually beneficial "understandings" reached between several Northern Luzon warlords and an influential close relative of the President, or of the public works projects allocated to certain municipalities in Cebu after key political clans joined the Administration party for the 1988 local elections.

As the common structural origins of "petty sultanism" outlined above suggest, such a regime emerged in the Philippines in the aftermath of the World War II Japanese occupation. The central state had never enjoyed much success in overcoming the resistance of entrenched rural elites:

> The Philippine state... which emerged during the late Spanish and American colonial periods, was characterized by a limited degree of centralization and a weak state apparatus. The land-owning elite in the provinces prevented the development of a strong central state. The class state monopolies known from European history, namely those over violence and taxation, have never been fully developed in the Philippines.[57]

In this context, the peculiar conditions of the Japanese occupation period shifted the balance of forces decisively. With "American supervision reduced to an occasional telegram from McArthur's headquarters,"[58] the widespread destruction and disruption of transportation, and the diffusion of arms among hundreds of local guerilla bands, the terms of political competition between local elites were dramatically transformed. As an historian of the early postwar era has explained:

> For individual members of the Philippine political elite the period of liberalization was a time of great uncertainty and insecurity. The war had jeopardized long-standing patron-client relationships. It had boosted new leaders and new groups into positions where they could compete for power....

> Out of the dislocation of the liberalization something else occurred; not a single organized challenge to the continued political dominance of the pre-war elite, but rather the emergence of hundreds of challengers to the continued political power of individual members of that elite.[59]

Thus, the period witnessed the emergence of "new men", the likes of Durano, Dy, Magsaysay, and Marcos. Of the early postwar provincial governors, some 25% were "newcomers to the power elite on, at least, the provincial level",[60] while those local elite families of prewar prominence who retained their political strength did so by adapting to the changed rules of the game.[61]

"After independence in 1946," one of the leading historians of the modern Philippines has asserted,

> provincial leaders began to deliver large blocs of votes to national politicians in exchange f or de facto local autonomy. By the early 1960s, these local warlords had neutralized the power of the national government and ruled their provinces with private armies.[62]

Given the lack of research and fieldwork on the subject, the future of "warlordism" and its impact upon economic development, state formation, and revolutionary organizing efforts remains hazy at best. Two implications are, however, obvious. First, local political kingpins are under far weaker pressures from their "constituencies" than advocates of the "clientelism" school would have us imagine; the guarantees of their "responsiveness" to popular needs are also few, while in the short term their grip on the political machinery is secure. Secondly, any attempt by the central state apparatus in Manila

to implement reforms that threaten the interests of local bosses (e.g. land reform) will run up against fierce and effective resistance; the frequency of electoral contests further constrains national-level political figures from acting against warlords who can deliver their provinces on election day.

We have seen how warlord clans have retained electoral office through "guns, goons, and gold", in the face of popular disillusionment with the system and despite the presence of armed revolutionary forces in localities throughout the archipelago. In the long term two paths seem plausible. Perhaps, as in Italy and parts of Latin America, local "bosses" can be captured by a national-level political machine (the Cojuangco combine) and drawn into a patrimonial state apparatus. More probably, as in China, competition between "warlords" and their monopolistic and predatory patterns of capital accumulation will continue to spin the web of political disintegration, impoverishment, and chaos out of which a revolutionary movement organized along Leninist principles is bound to weave its triumph.

NOTES:

1. See, for example, Barrington Moore, Jr., *The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966), and Charles Tilly (editor), *The Foundation of National States in Western Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975).

2. See Carl H. Lande, *Leaders, Factions, and Parties: The Structure of Philippine Politics* (New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1964), 10-11. This monograph has long served as the standard text for postwar Philippine political analysis.

3. James C. Scott and Benedict J. Kerkvliet, "How Traditional Rural Patrons Lose Legitimacy: A Theory with Special Reference to Southeast Asia," *Culture et Developpement* 5 (Number 3 1973), 502. See Rene Lemarchand and Keith Legg, "Political Clientelism and Development: A Preliminary Analysis," *Comparative Politics* 4, 2 (January 1972), 140-162, for a similar formulation.

4. Lande, *Leaders, Factions, and Parties*, 10.

5. Remigio E. Agpalo, *Pandanggo sa Ilaw: The Politics of Occidental Mindoro* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines, 1965), 3.

6. Lande, *Leaders, Factions, and Parties*, 16.

7. Similarly, the Nacionalista and Liberal parties persistently dominated national politics while politicians defected and switched parties with great frequency (presidents Ramon Magsaysay and Ferdinand E. Marcos being two rather prominent examples).

8. Lande, *Leaders, Factions, and Parties*, 18.

9. *Ibid.*, 101-102.

10. *Ibid.*, 115.

11. Kit G. Machado, "Changing Patterns of Leadership Recruitment and the Emergence of the Professional Politician in Philippine Local Politics," in Benedict J. Kerkvliet, ed., *Political Change in the Philippines: Studies of Local Politics Preceding Martial Law* (Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii 1974), 77-79. See also Kit G. Machado, "From Traditional Faction to Machine: Changing Patterns of Political Leadership and Organization in the Rural Philippines," *Journal of Asian Studies*, Volume XXXIII, Number 4, August 1974, 523-547.

12. Machado, "Changing Patterns," 122.

13. Kit G. Machado, "Changing Aspects of Factionalism in Philippine Local Politics," *Asian Survey* 11 (December 1971),1198.

14. *Ibid.*, 1183.

15. James C. Scott, "The Erosion of Patron-Client Bonds and Social Change in Rural Southeast Asia," *Journal of Asian Studies* 32 (November 1972), 20.

16. Thomas C. Nowak and Kay Snyder, "Clientelist Politics in the Philippines: Integration or Instability?" *American Political Science Review* 68, 3-4 (September 1974), 1147.

17. Nowak and Snyder, "Economic Concentration and Political Change in the Philippines," 175.

18. Nowak and Snyder, "Clientelist Politics in the Philippines," 1170.

19. James C. Scott, "Patron-Client Politics and Political Change in Southeast Asia," *American Political Science Review*, Volume 66, March 1972, 96.

20. See Eric R. Wolf and Edward C. Hansen, "Caudillo Politics: A Structural Analysis," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Volume 9, 1967, 168-179; Robert Kern (editor), *The Caciques: Oligarchical Politics and the System of Caciquism*, 9

in the Luso- Hispanic World (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1973); Robert L. Gilmore, Caudillism and Militarism in Venezuela, 1810-1910 (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1964); and John Lynch, "Bolivar and the Caudillos," Hispanic American Historical Review, 63 (1), 1983, 3-35.

21. Robert L. Gilmore, Caudillism and Militarism in Venezuela, 1810-1910 (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1964), 32.

22. Robert Kern and Ronald Dolkart, "Introduction," in Robert Kern, ed., The Caciques: Oligarchical Politics and the System of Caciquismo in the Luso-Hispanic World (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1973), 2.

23. Antonio Ugalde, "Contemporary Mexico: From Hacienda to PRI, Political Leadership in a Zapotec Village," in Robert Kern, ed., The Caciques: Oligarchical Politics and the System of Caciquismo in the Luso-Hispanic world (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1973), 124.

24. Wayne A. Cornelius, "Leaders, Followers, and Official Patrons in Urban Mexico," in Steffen W. Schmidt, Laura Guasti, Carl H. Lande, and James C. Scott, eds., Friends, Followers, and Factions: A Reader in Political Clientelism (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977),339.

25. Eric R. Wolf and Edward C. Hanses, "Caudillo Politics: A Structural Analysis," Comparative Studies in Society and History, Volume 9, 1967, 173-176.

26. Paul Friedrich, "The Legitimacy of a Cacique," in Marc J. Swarts, ed., Local-Level Politics: Social and Cultural; Perspectives (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1968),247.

27. See Phil Billingsley, Bandits In Republican China (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988); Jerome Ch'en, "Defining Chinese Warlords and their Factions," Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, Volume XXXI, Part 3, 1968, 563-600; Hsi- Sheng Ch'i, Warlord Politics in China 1916-1928 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976); Lucian W. Pye, Warlord Politics: Conflict and Coalition in the Modernization of Republican China (New York: Praeger, 1971); and Odoric Y. K. Wou, Militarism in Modern China: The Career of Wu P'ei-Fu, 1916-39 (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1978)

28. Following its humiliating defeat in the (1894-95) Sino- Japanese War, the Ch'ing court instructed Yuan Shih-k'ai to build a modern military machine. The model army he assembled was a personal force loyal to him alone; the overthrow of the monarchy in 1911 and Yuan Shih-k'ai's death in 1916 left it faction-ridden.

29. Hsi-Sheng Ch'i, Warlord Politics in China 1916-1928 (Standford: Standford University Press, 1976), 16.

30. Lucian W. Pye, Warlord Politics: Conflict and Coalition in the Modernization of Republican China (New York: Praeger, 1971), 39.

31. Odoric Y. K. Wou, Militarism in Modern China: The Career of Wu P'ei, 1916-39 (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1978), 269. Wou's definition of a warlord corresponds with those of other scholars of the period; his stipulation that a warlord possesses a territorial base is not unanimously accepted but helps to distinguish analytically the warlord from the bandit (even in the frequent cases of bandits-turned-warlords).

32. James E. Sheridan, Chinese Warlord: The Career of Feng Yu- hsiang (Stanford: Stanford University press, 1966), 3.

33. See Ibid., 5, and Pye, Warlord Politics, 43-55 for discussions of familial, regional, clientelistic, and "teacher- student" loyalties.

34. Jerome Ch'en, "Defining Chinese Warlords and their Factions," Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, Volume XXXI, Part 3, 1968, 578.

35. Pino Arlacchi, Mafia, Peasants and Great Estates: Society in Traditional Calabria (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), and Mafia Business: The Mafia Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism (London: Verso, 1987); Anton Blok, The Mafia of a Sicilian Village, 1860-1960 (New York: Harper and Row, 1974).

36. Blok, The Mafia of a Sicilian Village, 11.

37. Ibid., 6.

38. Pino Arlacchi, Mafia Business: The Mafia Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism (London: Verso, 1987), 41.

39. Ibid., 21.

40. Blok, The Mafia, 8.

41. Arlacchi, Mafia Business, 22.

42. Ibid., 22.

43. Juan J. Linz, "Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes," Chapter 3 in Fred F. Greenstein and Nelson B. Polsby, eds., Handbook of Political Science, Volume III, MacroPolitical Theory (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1975), 259-260. The petty sultan, however, hardly operates in a cultural or ideological vacuum; his rule is more culturally "overdetermined" than it is "arbitrary". Nonetheless, he devotes precious few resources to the elaboration and promotion of a coherent belief system legitimating his rule and is free of the ideological constraints of national political institutions. Moreover, the stability of his rule does not depend upon the ideological "incorporation" or "mystification" of the population at large.

44. *Ibid.*, 259-260. The relationship between the sultan and the members of his staff may well approximate what Max Weber described as charismatic authority. What constitutes "charisma", however, depends on the historical and cultural setting. See Benedict R. O'G. Anderson, "The Idea of Power in Javanese Culture," in Claire Holt, ed., *Culture and Politics in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1972).

45. *Ibid.*, 260.

46. Joel S. Migdal, "Strong States, Weak States: Power and Accommodation," in Myron Weiner and Samuel P. Huntington, eds., *Understanding Political Development: An Analytical Study* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1987), 427.

47. *Ibid.*, 427.

48. Wolters, 178 and 49. Sheila Coronel, "Marcos still lording it over Ilocos Norte," *Manila Chronicle*, 12 January 1988,11.

50. In Central Luzon, they were organized by local elites to oppose the peasant-based Huk movement (Benedict J. Kerkvliet, "Peasant Rebellion in the Philippines: The Origin and Growth of the HMB," Ph.D. thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1972, 786; cited in Wolters, 16); elsewhere they arose in the early postwar elections. See Nick Joaquin, *The Aquinos of Tarlac: An essay on History as Three Generations* (Manila: Cacho Hermanos, 1983) 221- 223 on Negros warlord Rafael Lacson's debut.

51. Wolters, 143, 184.

52. Brig. Gen. Jose M. Crisol, *The Armed Forces and Martial Law* (Manila: Agro Printing and Publishing House, 1980). 17-19.

53. Eric S. Caruncho, "A Nation Under the Gun," *Manila Chronicle*, 24 July 1988, 9. One recent study revealed that armed "checkpoints" in rural areas are responsible for at least a third of the markup on retail prices or farm products and processed food in the country ("Checkpoints make life a lot harder for Pinoys," *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 17 July 1988).

54. Lande, *Leaders, Factions, and Parties*, 53.

55. [J. Clark Soriano et al.,] *Political Clans an Electoral Politics: A Preliminary Research* (Manila Institute for Popular Democracy, 1988), 97.

56. Lande, *Leaders, Factions, and Parties*, 66.

57. Willem Wolters, *Politics, Patronage an Class Conflict in Central Luzon* (Quezon City: Ne Day Publications, 1984),3.

58. Alfred William McCoy, "Ylo-ilo: Faction Conflict in a Colonial Economy, Iloilo Provinc Philippines, 1937-1955 (Ph.D. dissertation, Ya University, 1977)," 148.

59. Ronald King Edgerton, "The Politics Reconstruction in the Philippines: 1945-1948 (Ph. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1975)," 18-1

60. *Ibid.*, 87. Edgerton remarks: "this was not ju another group of politicos. All had been tested occupation, and almost all had made the choice resist the Japanese actively. And speaking for t group as a whole, it can be said that they would n have risen as fast in the political structures of the provinces had it not been for their participation in t resistance (Ibid.,96)."

61. This ascendancy of "warlords" over tradition families continued after the war. For example, t notorious Rafael Lacson began his political career a **lider** for the Yulo and Araneta families and w named governor of Negros Occidental through th machinations; he broke with the Yulos in 1948, ho ever, and used a force of some 200 special police drive his political rivals out of the province (McC "Ylo-ilo," 440). Similarly, the infamous Sings brothers were once goons in the employ of long-tir Ilocos Sur congressman Floro Crisologo but emerg as dominant in the province after Crisologo dramatic death in 1970.

62. Alfred W. McCoy, *Priests On Trial* (Ne York: Penguin Books, 1984), 25.