

WHY POLITICAL CLANS AND DYNASTIES ARE ENEMIES OF GENUINE DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT?

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Development Studies Program and
Development Studies Society

present

A lecture on

Why Political Clans and Dynasties are **Enemies** of Genuine Democracy and Human Development

featuring

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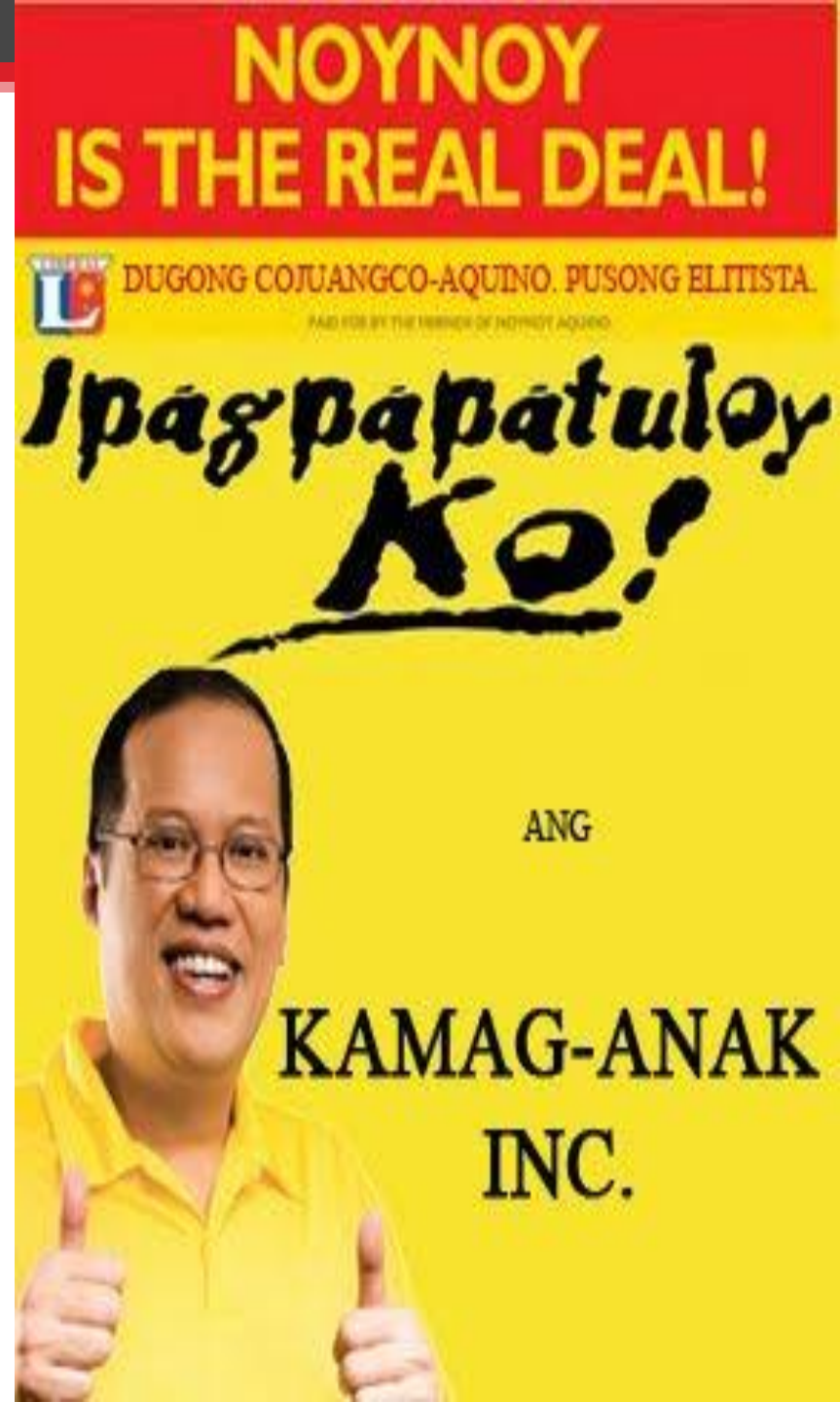
31 July 2012 | 4 pm

RH 313

College of Arts and Sciences



This lecture examines the phenomenon of KAMAG-ANAK, INC., or political dynasties in the country, particularly those in Mindanao. It will address the following key issues and questions:



I. ABOUT POLITICAL DYNASTIES

- What are political dynasties?
- How did they emerge?
- Do political dynasties have any role in our political system and culture?
- What is the connection between economic power and political power at the national and local level of governance, the umbilical cord that allows political dynasties to thrive?

I. ABOUT POLITICAL DYNASTIES

- Who are the political dynasties?
- What are their sources of power?
- How have they managed to entrench and sustain themselves in power?
- Who are the political dynasties in Mindanao?

I. ABOUT POLITICAL DYNASTIES

- Are there any peculiar elements/characteristics in some political dynasties in Mindanao? In the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM)?
- What is the relationship between political dynasties and the current mainstream political parties in the Philippines?
- What is the impact of political dynastic rule on Philippine national development, on our communities, and nationhood in general?

II. STUDYING POLITICAL DYNASTIES

- Is scholarship in this area sufficient?
- What are the existing methodologies employed in the current study of political dynasties?
- What are the existing gaps for future research possibilities?

III. ADVOCACY ON POLITICAL DYNASTIES

- How can we empower our communities to deal with political dynasties?
- How are empowered communities, POs, NGOs and civil society in general engaging, challenging and neutralizing the monopoly of power of political dynasties in certain parts of the country?



IV. HIGHLY RECOMMENDED REFERENCES ON POLITICAL DYNASTIES IN THE PHILIPPINES

I. ABOUT POLITICAL DYNASTIES



WHAT ARE POLITICAL DYNASTIES?

- **dynasty** > noun (pl. -ies) a line of hereditary rulers of a country: i.e. Tang dynasty; a succession of people from the same family who play a prominent role in politics, business, etc. "

- *The New Oxford Dictionary of English (2001)*

WHAT ARE POLITICAL DYNASTIES?

- Using the above definition, we have about **250 political dynasties (families)** who have dominated Philippine politics at the national and local level and who have monopolized political power as families for the past 30 years and more. This is **0.00001667 %** of the country's **15 million families** (CENPEG, 2007)

WHAT ARE POLITICAL DYNASTIES?

- Each of the country's **81 provinces** have political dynasties competing with each other for **national and local elective positions**. Dynasties have also expanded to monopolize many appointive positions.

POLITICAL FAMILY PER PROVINCE



WHAT ARE POLITICAL DYNASTIES?

- Politics is a **family affair**, so that from the national to the local level, we see long family histories of political rule. Husbands, wives, sons, daughters, and close relative occupy many public offices; during elections we likewise see them all running for public office.



WHAT ARE POLITICAL DYNASTIES?

- This hits both administration and opposition officials who ignore the democratic value of "**equal access to opportunities for public service**" at the national and local level.



DIOSDADO MACAPAGAL

**Philippine
President
(1961-65)**



**Cielo Macapagal
- Salgado**
(daughter of
Diosdado)

**Pampanga Vice
Governor**
(1988-92;
1995-98)



**Gloria
Macapagal-
Arroyo**
(daughter of
Diosdado)

**Philippine
President
(2001-2010)**



Mikey Arroyo
(son of Gloria)

reelected Rep.
2nd District,
Pampanga;
former vice
governor,
Pampanga.



**Diosdado
"Dato"
Arroyo**
(son of Gloria)

**Rep. 1st
District,
Camarines Sur**

As for the opposition, there are now **two Cayetanos in the Senate and another in the House.**

>>The Senate seat used to be occupied by the senior "Companero" Cayetetano ; now Alan Peter (who was Congressman 1998-2007) has joined sister Pilar "Pia" Cayetano Sebastian who has been senator since 2004 up to 2010.

>> Alan Peter's wife, Laarni has taken over his House seat, while a brother of Alan, Renren (councilor, 2004-2007) was elected vice mayor of Muntinlupa.



**Renato
"Companero"
Cayetetano**



Pilar "Pia" Cayetano Sebastian

Senator
(2004 - present)



Alan Peter Cayetano

Senator
(2007 - present)





Laarni Cayetano (Alan Peter's Wife)

Mayor Lani Cayetano

How did they emerge?

- For decades, wealthy and powerful families have dominated politics in the Philippines, concentrating power to the elite families, promoting corruption and abuse of power.



How did they emerge?

- Political dynasties are observed to have began in the early 20th century during the American colonial period when voting was limited to rich and landed Filipinos who monopolized public office. In other words, the **lopsided structure of opportunities** and **the social and economic inequalities** allow a few --both in the administration and opposition --to **monopolize wealth and political power.**

How did they emerge?

- Today, political dynasties are supposed to be prohibited by the Constitution. Sec. 26 Art. II of the 1987 Constitution states:

"The State shall guarantee equal access to opportunities for public service, and prohibit political dynasties as may be defined by law."

How did they emerge?

- Though this prohibition does exist, an enabling law is needed . Since 1987, the anti-political dynasty bills filed never got to first base. Why? Most lawmakers from the administration and opposition oppose the Constitutional ban on political dynasties because they too, come from political dynasties and clans, which have been long entrenched in power. New political dynasties have also risen to challenge the traditional political clans in their bailiwicks.

Do political dynasties have any role in our political system and culture?

- Historical and contemporary empirical data reveals a **continuing pattern of leadership recruitment** for our elected and appointed national and local leaders from a small upper strata of our society, mostly **from economic and social elites**.

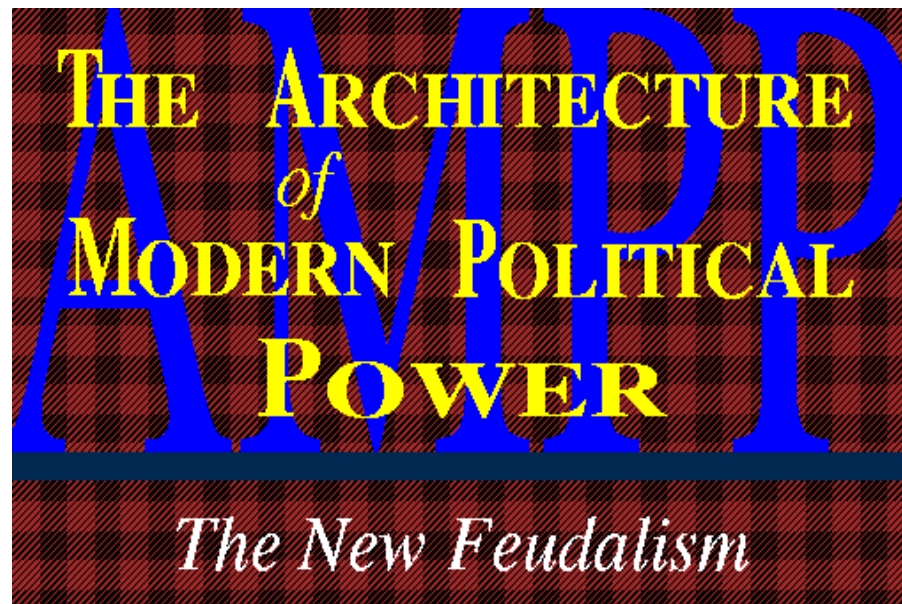
Do political dynasties have any role in our political system and culture?

- Also, historical and contemporary reality have made political dynasties embedded in our country's political and electoral life, and serves to perpetuate a few elite in political power.

Do political dynasties have any role in our political system and culture?

- The phenomenon of political dynasties shows the absence of any real competition in politics because of the lopsided economic structure of inequality which allow only a few to monopolize wealth and power. For precisely, landed wealthy Filipino families have tried to protect their interests by occupying public office.

What is the connection between economic power and political power at the national and local level of governance, the umbilical cord that allows political dynasties to thrive?



- The Philippine political system is structured around patronage and what academics call rent-seeking, or the use of privileges from the state to benefit private and family business. These families are able to control and influence the courts, Congress, and Malacanang, and to control the most profitable parts of our economy. When family, not ideology or principle becomes the norm in politics and public service, **corruption** will flourish. In fact, the existence of political clans and dynasties has encouraged a political system that is dominated by patronage, corruption, violence and fraud at the national and local level.



What are their sources of power?

- Because of their wealth and control of the economy (local and national), the elite families possess the values necessary for the exercise of influence and which gives them more advantages to acquire political power. These values, in addition to wealth and other resources that they control, are education, prestige and skill.



How have they managed to entrench and sustain themselves in power?

- Dynastic public officials have the following advantages which they further exploit to widen, expand and consolidate their economic and political power:
- high concentration of formal power (among relatives with common economic interests)

- gives them considerable license in the exercise of their powers, which they wantonly abuse in the absence of check and balance;
- elite, dynastic politicians not only seek to maintain their position of authority, but also to advance their family's economic interest or interests of their social class.
- In many parts of the country, political dynasties who are also warlords manipulate and thwart the free exercise of the people in their right to vote.

For example, what are the political dynasties in Mindanao?

- **Lanao del Sur** - Alonto, Lucman, Adiong, Dimaporo, Macarambon, Dimakuta
- **Lanao del Norte** - Badelles, Lluch, Cabili
- **Sultan Kudarat** - Mangudadato



- **Cagayan de Oro City** - Emano
- **General Santos City** - Antonino
- **Zamboanga City** - Lobregat, Lorenzo
- **Zamboanga del Norte** - Adaza, Ubay, Carloto, Jalosjos
- **Zamboanga del Sur** - Sagun-Lim, Enerio, Amatong, Cerilles

- **Tawi-Tawi** - Jaafar
- **Camiguin** - Romualdo
- **Misamis Occidental** - Chiongbian, Ramiro
- **Misamis Oriental** - Pelaez, Baculio
- **Saranggani** - Chiongbian, Amatong
- **Sulu** - Amilbangsa, Rasul, Abubakar, Ututalum, Tulawie

- **Basilan** - Akbar
- **Surigao Norte** - Navarro, Barbers, Ecleo
- **Surigao Sur** - Falcon, Pimentel-Serra , Ty
- **Agusan del Sur** - Paredes, Amante, Plaza
- **Bukidnon** - Fortich, Zubiri, Acosta
- **Compostela Valley** - Caballero

- **Cotabato** - Pendatun, Mastura, Datumanong ,
Matalam, Mangilen, Sinsuat
- **Davao City** - Garcia, Lopez, Duterte
- **Davao del Norte** - Del Rosario/Garcia,
Sarmiento
- **Davao del Sur** - Bautista, Cagas
- **Davao Oriental** - Almario/Zosa, Palma Gil

- The Caraga Region composed of the two Agusan provinces and Butuan City is said to be the "**center**" or "**capital**" of **political dynasties** in the Philippines which practically compete only among themselves for all congressional and local positions for the past 50 years or more . Studies made by academics and journalists for instance, identify **no less than 10 members of the Plaza political clan** holding and **monopolizing political power** from congressional seats, governorship, down to mayors, councilors and barangay chairs held by wife, sons, daughters, nephews, inlaws, etc.



Are there any peculiar elements/characteristics in political dynasties in Mindanao? In the ARMM or Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao?



- Many of the Mindanao dynasties are from the landed families, some were cronies from way back during the Marcos regime up to the present. In the ARMM, many are from the prominent landed datu class, are warlords and have private armies or the backing of an armed group that help them maintain influence.

- In many ARMM areas like Maguindanao, the Lanao provinces, Sulu and Basilan, the long entrenched family dynasties have produced warlords who operate above the law, controlling jueteng, smuggling, and using murder by hired killers, goons and private armies to eliminate potential opponents. For example, in Maguindanao, which figured as the center of cheating during the controversial "Garci Tapes" in the 2004 and 2007 elections, the Ampatuan family dynasty tightly control politics.



- The majority of 22 mayors in Maguindanao province are Governor Datu Andal Ampatuan's (formerly Congressman) children, cousins, brothers in law who ran unopposed. One of his sons Zaldy Ampatuan was elected ARMM Governor in 2005 as Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's candidate. An uncle of Datu Andal, Simeon Datumanong, who was a former cabinet member under Arroyo as Secretary of the Department of Public Works and Highways, is now a Congressman.



- A brother, Zamzamin, who was before appointed as the head of the Office for Muslim Affairs (OMA) was appointed cabinet secretary general of the National Anti-Poverty Commission. Datu Andal Ampatuan was the controversial governor of Maguindanao who in the 2007 senatorial elections promised his mayors one million pesos each for a 12-0 win for the administration candidates of the Team Unity under President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

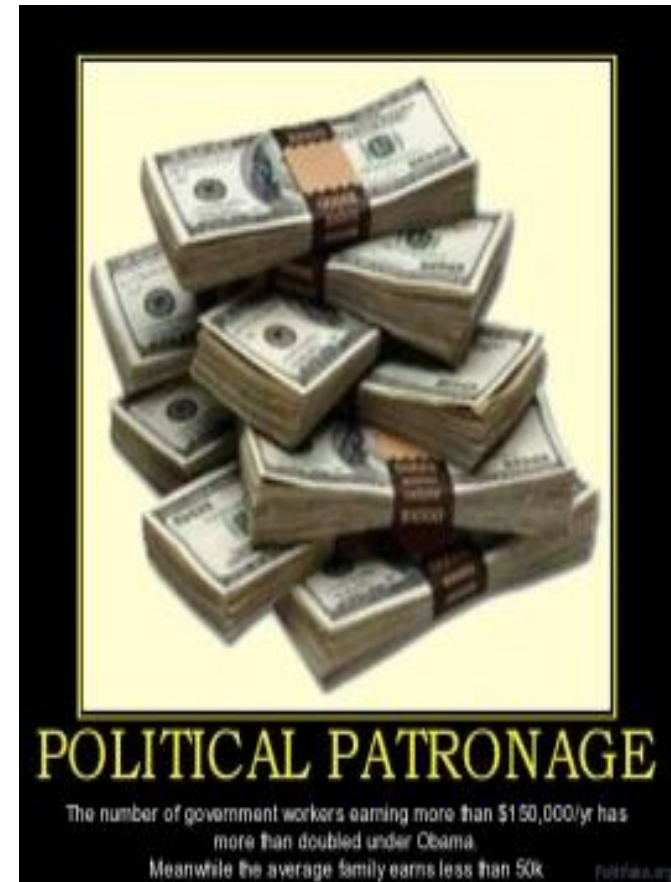
What is the relationship between political dynasties and the current mainstream political parties in the Philippines?

- Political parties are in fact convenient but temporary alliances of political dynasties or political clans. The basis of their alliances are not because of principles or party platforms, but may be based on marriage, business connections, or political accommodation , etc.



- Since there is an absence of ideology of these elite parties and the similarity of their pro-oligarchy and pro-U.S. positions, their members often resort to turncoatism and party-switching. For their loyalty to a particular alliance of elite parties depend on the political patronage and spoils available that in fact determine the alignment and re-alignment of these parties.

- Political parties thus are actually alliances among the economic and social elites/class who have no coherent principle or program. They thrive on money machinery, political spoils from the incumbent, access to power and patronage politics. They assure the monopoly of political power by the economic elite. The vaunted machinery of a bloc of political parties allied with the administration means the use of pork barrel, patronage, cash, violence and cheating in elections, misusing the infrastructure of the state.



Examples of the temporary alliances of convenience between political clans/dynasties are the following:
(PCIJ, 2004)

- **LAKAS-NUCD:** Ablan, Albano, Alfelor, Amante, Amatong, Andaya, Apostol, Barbers, Cayetano, Chatto, Chiongbian, de Venecia/Perez, Dimaporo, Dy, Feleo, Ermita, Espino, Floreindo, Gonzalez, Gordon, Guinigundo, Javier, Lacson, Lagman, Leviste, Locsin, Lopez, Martinez, Monfort, Paras, Perez, Punzalan, Real, Reyes, Salceda, Sandoval, Silverio, Teves, Unico, Violago, Ylagan, Zubiri, etc.

- **LIBERAL PARTY:** Roxas, Abad, Acosta, Aquino, Cua, Defensor, Hizon, Nantes, Ramiro, Suarez, etc.
- **NATIONALIST PEOPLE'S COALITION:** Alvarez, Antonino, Baringa, Bautista, Bondoc, Cagas, Cojuangco/Teodoro, Dilangalen, Duavit, Dumpit, Durano, Escudero, Fuentebella, Garcia, Imperial, Jalosjos, Garcia, Joson, Lopez, Ledesma, Locsin, Maranan, Nepomuceno, Rodriguez, Romualdez, etc.
- **LABAN NG DEMOCRATIKONG PILIPINO:** Angara, Aquino, Biazon, Calizo, Garcia, Lobregat, Plaza, Remulla, San Luis, Sulpicio/Tupas.,etc.



What is the impact of political dynastic rule on Philippine national development, on our communities, and nationhood in general?

- Political dynasties distort governance, and make a sham of democratic governance. Thru political dynasties, public office becomes an exclusive family franchise, a provider of more benefits to family interests. When family members from a single clan dominate political positions in a particular area, we can expect the weakening of checks and balances, and the wanton abuse of power that is detrimental to the community or national interest.

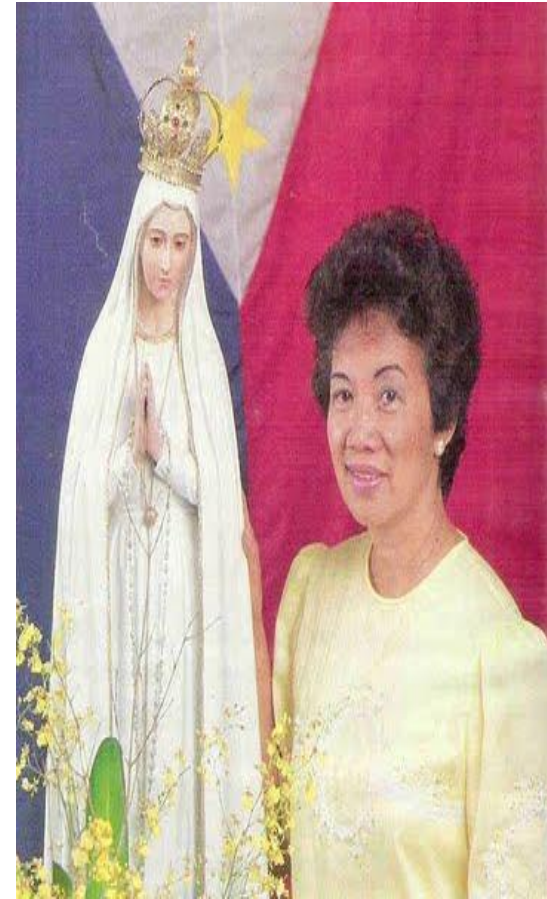
II. STUDYING POLITICAL DYNASTIES

Is scholarship in this area sufficient?

More studies on the oligarchic power structure of the Philippines are needed to examine its strengths and vulnerabilities at the macro and micro-level. This is necessary to identify the openings where civil society can further widen and expand its participation. Foreign scholars have been conducting critical studies of the local power structures since the 60s such as studies by Lande and Kerkvliet. More Filipino scholars should initiate their own studies in this fertile field.

What are the existing methodologies employed in the current study of political dynasties?

- Except for the references highly recommended here, many local studies are actually **hagiographies**, or commissioned family biographies of oligarchic families or individual political leaders. Of course, commissioned or paid hagiographies would treat their subjects like saints with sanitized accounts which are often kind and generous.



- Of course, hagiographies have the advantage of access, access to family material of political dynasties which are given with their cooperation. Unauthorized family studies or biographies may take longer to conduct, but they can maintain the distance and objectivity required of credible, academic research.

What are the existing gaps for future research possibilities?

- There is a need to examine the impact and possible weakening of the economic, political and even feudal stranglehold and influence of political dynasties in their respective areas in the light of the following:

- the Filipino diaspora in other countries (OFW phenomenon) which has made possible more financial/economic autonomy of marginalized Filipinos;
- access to information and technology/ mass media/telecommunications of the rural poor, so that access to information is not anymore controlled by the oligarchy;
- impact of rural and urban organizing and consciousness-raising by people's organizations, NGOs, the radicalized pastoral politicalization of the Church (both Catholic and Protestant), and civil society organizations.

- More studies are needed to study empirically the political disease called cronyism, and to show how fundamentally, politics and business fortunes are so much intertwined. Business empires or big business in general needs to be critically reexamined to see how big business is really done, i.e. how business elites or family interests wheel and deal in the political system. This goes against the grain of competition and fair trade and violates the very principles even of a neoliberal economic system.



III. ADVOCACY AGAINST POLITICAL DYNASTIES


How can we empower our communities to deal with political dynasties?

- Political dynasties are the No. 1 obstacles to the development of genuine political parties in the Philippines which are based on principles and consistent party platforms.



- The role of real political parties is to promote clear social visions and programs and to represent especially the needs and aspirations of the larger sectors of Philippine society, not just a few elite families. The current elite parties of families are money machines, political vehicles and feudal formations controlled by patriarchs that dispense patronage, privilege and protection for the oligarchy.





How are empowered communities, POs, NGOs and civil society in general engaging, challenging and neutralizing the monopoly of power of political dynasties in certain parts of the country?

- But the dominance of political dynasties and political clans is being challenged. Electoral political parties which are elite organized, financed and led are being challenged by effective mass oriented people's organizations, a vigilant and questioning independent mass media, and alternative programs of governance are being advocated. The party list system, which has seen the emergence of issue-based grassroots parties representing farmers, workers, indigenous peoples, women and urban poor, still needs to be improved to allow larger representation from the largest sectors of Philippine society.

- Recent good examples of challenges to political dynasties are Grace Padaca who TWICE defeated the family dynasty of the Dy family in Isabela for the position of governor. Also, Fr. Ed Panlilio of Pampanga who defeated machineries and money politics of two of the most powerful allies of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo who comes from n Pampanga: Lilia Pineda (former Lubao Mayor and wife of Bong Pineda, who is said to be the jueteng king of the country) and Mark Lapid, movie star and son of movie action king Senator Lito Lapid.



- Grace Padaca, a radio announcer who became an alternative candidate by people's organizations, civic organizations and NGOs in the province, trounced the Dy dynasty for the position of governor. The Dy dynasty's patriarch is former Isabela governor Faustino Dy Sr. whose five sons used to monopolize all provincial positions: Benjamin (Governor), Faustino Jr.(Congressman, Governor) but was defeated recently by Grace Padaca; Cesar (Cauayan Mayor), Napoleon (Alicia Mayor) and Faustino III, now the Rep. of the 3rd District of Isabela.

- Other challenges are coming from media celebrities (like Noli de Castro and Loren Legarda), especially at the national level. However, media exposure is making political contests more expensive, because more money is needed by political clans to gain public office thru media exposure. Then, more temptaion there is to recover these costs and expenses through corruption. But politics cannot be a family business forever.

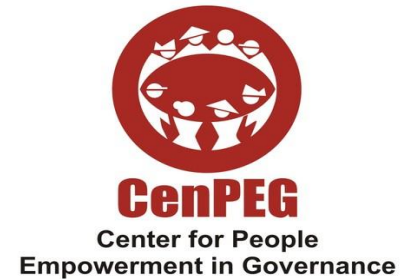


- Real political parties with defined or coherent programs/platform, vision, party discipline and cohesion based on the ideologies they profess, and representing the larger sectors of Philippine society should challenge and replace political clans and dynasties. With better economic opportunities in our socio-economic structure, we can develop a truly democratic electoral and party system.

- Ultimately, the hope in our political system and country lies in education, national consciousness, civic values, transparency in governance and social awareness and organization at the grassroots. There is hope.

IV. HIGHLY RECOMMENDED REFERENCES ON POLITICAL DYNASTIES

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