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"RADICAL LEADERSHIP IN POST-PAROJINOG OZAMIS POLITICS"

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Abstract: The history of Philippine democracy is marked with the persistent existence of oppressive forces that subjugate the people. Oppression and corruption are the two historically rooted characteristics of Philippine politics. One of the many reasons for the proliferation of corruption and oppression is the existence of local warlords who impose their power over the masses. These political warlords immure the people by violence in order for them to remain in power. The oppressive structure of governance designed and imposed by these warlords became the mainstream structure of government. Democracy is no longer intended to secure the development of the people, but for the few who are in power. Ozamis city is not immune from such structural injustice; for decades the city was ruled by a family whose failure in running a democratic state is prevalent in the actual lives of the people in the city. Not until a radical shift of power was realized in the advent of a progressive leadership exhibited by Police Chief Inspector Jovie Espenido. Though his critics may brand his leadership as authoritarian, it will be argued that radical means are necessitated in order to restructure society and to redirect its course towards bettering the lives of the people. Disruption is needed not just to challenge the present state. It is intended to uproot the putrefied structure that has taken roots in the system in order to plant a new. This paper intends to philosophically assess Jovie Espenido's leadership following Chantal Mouffe's radical democracy paradigm.

Key words: Radical Democracy, Chief Inspector Jovie Espenido, Political Warlrd, Progressive Leadership

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Introduction

This paper intends to contribute to the emerging literatures which look at how conventional democratic arrangements are to be structured in order for a democratic government to function. In particular, this paper intends to present an extensive account of radical democracy, being the force that confronts the prevalent political structures and which redirects the government's intention towards bettering the lives of the people. Over the past years radical democracy has become a potent force in challenging the

conventional democracy's capacity to realize for everyone the life they find reasonable to live. It presents itself as a critique to the conventional democracy's representative or consensual arrangements, whereupon the interests of the citizens are handed over to the elected representatives with the false hope that these people will be the ones to realize everyone's project of the good life. Under this consensual democracy the people's active and deliberative participation in the making and conceptualizing of institutional schemes and political choices is absolutely identified with the choices the representatives make. Moreover, radical democrats criticize the liberal idea of general consensus, for them the insistence of a general consensus tends to disregard the differences among individual participants in public reasoning. Radical democracy embraces the fact that no one is the same, and that being different in all aspects of our ethico-political backgrounds necessary posit confrontation and conflict. For Chantal Mouffe, democracy should not arrive at a general agreement; rather democracy should create the condition for a conflictual consensus. To this presupposition radical democracy enters as a form of democratizing democracy, it insists on the citizens' greater and direct role in public and political choices, with its insistence of participatory- deliberative democracy. That is rather than simply depending on the representatives' judgments over public problems; the citizens are the ones addressing socio-political problems by reasoning together which possible alternatives are feasible and plausible in solving them. The ambition therefore is to "shift from bargaining, interest aggregation, and power to the common reason of equal citizens as a dominant force in democratic life" (Joshua Cohen, 2018). Radical democracy, therefore, is a radicalization of liberal democracy, but in a nonviolent and non-revolutionary manner; grounded on the idea of liberty and equality (Chantal Mouffe, 2014, 3). Mouffe argues that, "The radicalization of democracy should be envisaged as an immanent critique, a struggle that does not imply radical break but can be done through a profound transformation of the existing liberal democratic institutions" (Ibid.).

This paper, moreover, uses Chantal Mouffe's radical democracy paradigm to critically assess the state of democracy in the country, the prevalent ills and structural injustices immanent in Philippine politics. In particular using Mouffe's radical democracy thesis, this paper will examine the radical leadership of Police Superintendent Jovie R. Espinido in realizing a radical shift of hegemony in the city of Ozamis. For decades the city was run by a political clan whose incompetence in running a democratic society is reflected in the lives of the poor people in the city; majority of the people are poor and stagnation of economic development is prevalent. Typical of a political dynast and a political warlord, the family amassed properties, persisted to remain in public offices and enrich themselves

from the money of the people, while leaving most of the citizens in dire poverty and abject misery. For decades the people were taken as hostage under the Parojing's hegemonic rule; shaping their consciousness in accordance to what the ruling family imposed in public policies and organizations. The paper argues that through Espinido's leadership the people were freed from their political chains that kept them hostages of the ruling political family. Though his critics may brand his leadership as authoritarian, it will be argued that radical means are necessitated and disruption is intended to redirect the course of political arrangements towards bettering the lives of the people in challenging the status quo.

Background

The Philippines has been long a democratic nation. For over a century the country has been enjoying its liberty after its successful revolutionary struggles against two of its main colonizers in history: Spain in 1898 and America in 1946. Despite of its long standing experience of democratic institutions, scholars in Philippine politics insist that the country is suffering from democratic crisis. The crisis is due to the prevalent ills immanent in the country's democratic systems that have taken root from the Spanish colonial period. Paul Hutchcroft describes the country's political system as being a patrimonial or elite oligarch state. A weak state that is ruled by political oligarchs who looted and plundered the country of its resources and enriched themselves by taking advantage of the country's incoherent bureaucracy (Nathan Gilbert Quimpo, 2007, 282) He further explains that "the logic of Philippine politics became driven to a very considerable extent by the politics of patronage: dividing the spoils among the elite and expanding the quantity of spoils available to the elite as a whole" (Paul Hutchcroft, 2003, 266). Elite democracy is one of the three main frameworks of Philippine democracy, Gilbert Quimpo identifies three: "patron-client democracy, patrimonial or elite democracy, and neocolonial or dependency" (Nathan Gilbert Quimpo, Article Online); while insisting that the only way to redeem the country from these political illnesses is to formulate a democracy from below. Even with the emphatic assertion of Hutchcroft that any attempt of challenging from below the dominance entrenched by patrimonial ideology in the country's systems will face greater difficulties (Paul Hutchcroft, 268). Quimpo is convinced that the long history of struggle of subordinate classes and marginalized communities, the persistent existence of social injustices and inequality among the poor and the rich in the country showed to the people the limitation of "minimalist democracy". And that in order to solve these problems a democracy from below should be taken as the best plausible alternative. That is a democracy that "stresses greater popular participation in decision making as well as social and economic equality" (Nathan Gilbert Quimpo, 243). It is a form of radicalization of democracy that places the "common

taos" in active participation in public reasoning and choices; a form of deliberative democracy that challenges the fundamental frameworks of the prevalent democracy and its detrimental rule by a form of "people power".

Furthermore, the rise to power of local elites to becoming national oligarchs in modern Philippine democracy is traced during the Spanish colonization period; when the Spanish government introduced the *Principali* which was the colonial aristocracy of the Spanish Philippines. It consisted of the *gobnadorcillo* who acts as the chief head of a particular municipality, and the *cabezas de barangay* who were heads of the colonial villages. Together they ruled the districts they are appointed to oversee. They were the elites of the time who plundered the land of its resources and who enriched themselves by sharing expanded spoils available among themselves. They live in prosperity and wellbeing while the people who were under their supervision are living in abject misery and absolute poverty. Furthermore, when the the Americans took over the country after the mock battle of Manila Bay in August 13, 1898, these colonial elites were given the same privileges by the new colonizers. Hutchcroft explains that the rise of economic elites to political power was due to the Americans' deliberate creation of new political institutions that greatly favors the local economic elites who were the *illustrados* and the *caciques*. To avoid possible insurgencies, William Howard Taft, who was the first Philippine governor-general and was the one who established the foundations of the American settlement in the country, introduced the policy of attraction which provided the local elites privileges to hold power in the government (Paul Hutchcroft 262-263). Moreover, the American colonizers also assured the local elites' grasps of political power by limiting the number of electorates to few elites and hence limiting the practice of the right to suffrage. In addition, they also discourage all forms of populism and political antagonism that might threaten the power of the elites. This they realized by implementing an anti-sedition law that considers those who go against the American government as rebels and are punished by death (Ibid., 263). All this is in order for the Americans to secure their power over the entire archipelago. Benedict Anderson asserts, "It was above all the political innovations of the Americans that created a solid, visible national oligarchy" (Benedict Anderson, 11). And such system of elitism is furthered even after the Americans left us with a pseudo democracy. Since then the country's democratic institutions are ruled by few individuals who belong to a political clan engaging into oligarchic plunders and lootings of the country's resources. Moreover, the inevitable consequences of elite democracy are the prevalent existence of massive inequality, poverty, and political harassments caused primarily by political dynasties and wardlords in the country. Ronald Mendoza, emphatically asserts that these political dynasties are some of the main reasons why the country is poor. According to him, political

dynasties exist across countries in the world, and particularly among developing countries. And more often than not, they are the main reasons why most of these countries are poor. Mendoza further argues that in a community where political elite clans rule, that is where political dynasty exists, poverty, the narrowing of political competition, corruption, violence and underdevelopment abounds (Ronald Mendoza, 1).

Furthermore in order to remain in power, political dynasts and warlords resort to more radical means of control using political violence and harassments. This was exemplified during the late 1960s and 1970s Philippine elections which were identified with irregularities, often leading towards fraudulent electoral practices, harassments and violence that resulted to the killings of civilians and the opposing political parties; vote buying and the like painted the entire political canvas of the time. Quimpo describes that "The corruption, fraud, and violence at election time became so bad that Philippine elections - and politics in general - were said to have come under the rule of the three Gs: guns, goons, and gold" (Nathan Gilbert Quimpo, 280). Competition among political clans became so viciously violent that political intimidations and harassments are seen to be vital in winning the election; and in order for powerful political families to maintain themselves in power. Politicians hire private paramilitary men whose sole purpose is to instill in the people fear and confusion; with the goal of keeping their hold of power over a particular place; thus the emergence of political warlords with their private armies. John Sidel, in describing the country's political state under the three Gs framework, asserts that Philippine democracy is grounded in complex networks of predatory mechanisms intended towards exploiting and accumulating the country's human, natural, and monetary resources (John Sidel, 1999, 146). These political mechanisms are manipulated by "predatory power brokers" who controlled most of the country's coercive and economic resources in their locality (Ibid., 19).

The "palm days" of cacique democracy was momentarily stopped when Marcos placed the entire country under martial law. Exploiting his one man rule government, Marcos amassed large amount of resources and took most of the large properties of national oligarchs and distributed some of those properties to his cronies. Though Marcos' original intention of declaring martial law was in some sense good, for part of his intention was to stop these national oligarchs from benefitting the country's resources for personal purposes and hence challenging the country's patrimonial oligarchic democracy. But what he did is simply to shift the regime to his neo-patrimonial oligarchic state dividing the produce of his looting to his cronies. Democracy was restored in the country after Marcos was ousted from the presidency through a "people power revolution". The post-authoritarian regime marked the return of elite democracy with the

reinstallation and the domination of previous political clans over electoral politics. Bossism, warlord politics, oligarchic democracy, patrimonial democracy, patron-client democracy, neocolonial democracy and the like became the fundamental characterizations of Philippine post-authoritarian democracy with the presupposition of political corruption and violence as its fundamental properties. Basically the reason for the return of the pre-martial law democratic schemes in the post-authoritarian Philippines is that Cory's administration saw as its primary goal the restoration of the past democracy. So that the shift of power transition from martial law to Cory's restorative democracy to the proceeding political practices that followed after was nothing more but a return and the proliferation of the previous hegemonic elite culture. "To summarize," Hutchcroft writes, "post-Marcos hopes for a new system of politics have been largely undermined by the restoration of much the same institutional structure as that found in pre-martial law politics" (Paul Hutchcroft, 281).

The negative effects of political dynasties are not so much felt in the capital; but their dehumanizing and deplorable consequences are much more experienced in the provinces. Mendoza, Hutchcroft and Quimpo agreed that whenever a provincial community is run by a political dynast the community is poor, due to the absence of competitive and functioning political system. That is, political dynasties worsen poverty and the capability deficit of the people; and they slow the growth of the provincial per capita income of a particular province. The reason for the proliferation of political dynasties in the provinces is primarily because of the existence of weak political competitions, whereupon choices are limited to the few political clans running for office in elections; leaving the people no other choice but to choose from among these political dynasts. And these political dynasts, when place in power, exploit the land of resources to the last drop; totally ignoring the human and economic development of their members. Hutchcroft, Medoza, Quimpo and others are unanimous in their claim that one of the fundamental reasons of the country's democratic deficit is the persistent existence and proliferation of political dynasties in the country. The existence of political power-predators, who in their administrative rule benefitted themselves in plundering the country and leaving the people in dire capability deficit, is one of the reasons why the country is poor and its democratic system is at the brink of total deterioration.

Mindanao is not exempted from the control and dominance of local political families. In fact most of Mindanao's large regions and provinces and cities are dominated by political elites who belong to specific political clans and dynasties. These local political predators engage in politics not with the sole intention of emancipating the people from their state of total capability deficit, rather for the lone reason of enriching themselves by taking advantage of the weak and often incoherent bureaucracy of the country. Moreover, for decades

these local political elites remain in power by winning local elections with the use of political harassments and killings; they bribe the electorates by buying their votes; they intimidate prospect political competitors by their private armies. So that in most of the provinces where political dynasts rule and are engage with active political disputes against another dynasty, election times are often identified with harassments and violence. The persistent existence and the ever growing population of political dynasties and local warlords in Mindanao is one of the reasons why most of the people in the region are poor. Poverty is not a contingent phenomenon caused primarily by the environmental and social atmosphere of the place; rather it is willed and designed by these political predators for power preservation. They allow the people surrounding them to remain in abject poverty, for in the poverty of the people, these political families will flourish. Political dynasty breeds poverty, for such systematic capability deprivation is the best alternative means of controlling the people and to maintaining power. The poor are seen as expendables, mercilessly exploited and used until they are exhausted, while these predators live in extravagance and prosperity. Furthermore, land grabbing and lumad killings and even political hostaging of lumad communities are rampant in rural areas, proliferated by most of these political elites. These phenomena, despite having caused unimaginable sufferings and gross human rights violations, persist to happen for they are the inevitable consequences of political dynasties in the region. They are part of what Hutchcroft referred as the ideology of a patrimonial oligarchic/elite state.

Ozamis City and the Rise of a Political Dynasty:

Among the many provinces and cities that are ruled by political elite families in Mindanao is Ozamis city. Historically Ozamis was not its original name; accordingly, it was named after a Subanen word Kuyamis which refers to a variety of coconut; which links to its original settlers who were the Subanen people. Kuyamis was later on changed to Misamis during the period of Spanish colonization. Shortly before the coming of the Spanish colonizers, the town was constantly ravaged by the "Marauding pirates" which caused the indigenous settlers to flee to the neighboring provinces of Misamis Occidental and Zamboanga Del Norte. Misamis was not conquered by arm but by religion, shortly after the coming of Jusuit missionaries the place was made as the "principal anchorage in Mindanao by the Spanish conquistadors in 1757 with the building of the stone fort - Cotta-" (History of Ozamis, Article Online). Moreover, its foundation as a city was on July 16, 1948 roughly three years after the World War II. And by virtue of House Bill No. 1656, the name Misamis was changed into Ozamiz in honor of the late senator Jose Ozamiz. "Ozamis has gone a long way from an Old Spanish settlement to its present enviable economic position in the region. It is now emerging as one of the fastest growing cities in Northwestern Mindanao" (Ibid.).

Different from any other towns in the region that are ruled by political dynasties whose family profiles are from wealthy and landed families in the past; Ozamis city's ruling elite did not come from such background. Their rising into power is not due to their elite and wealthy backgrounds, but rather from their being one with the masses. The Parojinogs' eventual rise to power was linked to their patriarch's sympathetic character to the poor. Octavio "Ongkoy" Parojinog was conceived to be a kind hearted man, whose sympathy is always towards helping the poor in "Lawis". He often gives money to the poor in his place and whenever somebody from his neighborhood asked for help, he was always ready to give a hand. This all started in 1986, when army Maj. Franco Calanog organized the Kuratong Baleleng which was that a time a counter-insurgency organization intended to battle against the growing communist guerillas in Misamis Occidental, Zamboanga del Norte and Zamboanga de Sur (Jose Torres Jr., Article Online). By the time the threats from the communist guerillas subsided in 1988, the Kuratong Baleleng were dismantled and are left to function on their own without military and government supervision. After the group's disorganization, Torres writes that: "Without military supervision, the group rapidly metamorphosed into an organized criminal syndicate. A lot of kidnapping, robberies, smuggling, murders, and extortion were attributed to the group" (Ibid). Thus the rise of a Mindanao organized syndicate group was realized, a Mindanao mafia was given birth. Ongkoy who was the leader of the group would distribute a portion of his share to the poor people of Lawis, thereby earning the name the "Robin Hood of Lawis". The influence and the impression made by the patriarch of the Parojinog clan to the people of Ozamis was partly the reason why Aldong Parojinog won the 2001 mayoral election by a landslide. The Kuratong Baleleng gained respect and trust of the residents of Lawis and of some people of Ozamis with their "charitable acts" of dividing the produce of the loot to the poor. This, the Parojinog used as their political machinery to completely place the entire city under their power over the past decades. The rise of the Parojinog clan to power was actualized by their immediate affiliation to the Kuratong Baleleng syndicate and their populist ideology of putting the people's welfare at the core of any political projects. The use of political violence, intimidations and harassments is prevalent in Ozamis city every election period, so that nobody would dare go against them every election; thus they were able to retain power for the past decades and managed to put in office their own immediate relatives. Despite of the Parojinogs' apparent notoriety they remained to be popular among the people and maintained the seat of power in Ozamis city for decades.

Radical Leadership and the Fall of a Political Dynasty

I argued in the above discussion that the rise of the Parojinogs to power is partly because of their immediate affiliation to the "Kuratong Baleleng"

and the good impression that their patriarch has made to his constituents in Ozamis."For most of Filipinos, the Kuratong Baleleng is that notorious group of bank robbers that met a bloody end in a supposed shootout with the police on May morning 1995 in Quezon city" (Ibid.). But for some of the people of Ozamis, regardless of whether what they are doing is legal or illegal, the Kuratong is loved and recognized. Moreover, the Parojinog's reign of power in Ozamis was not without sacrifices; being part of the Kuratong - that is engaged in all sorts of illegal activities - means being identified as one of the most wanted criminals in the country. Prior to Aldong's rise to power in Ozamis, three of his close relatives met their end in bloody shooting incidents; Octavio Parojinog (the father) was assassinated, Carlito Calasan (the nephew of Ongkoy) was gunned down by a legitimate police operation in Cebu in 1993, and Nato Parojinog was shot dead by unknown assassins in 20002. All those shooting incidents are linked to their being part of the notorious gang Kuratong Baleleng. Despite of those negativity, Aldong Parojinog remained true to his words that in his administration he will be cleaning the city from lawless individuals and from all kinds of criminality and illegal drug trades. Torres narrated that businessmen, the ordinary people, and even the Catholic Church, acknowledge his productive and truthful performance as the head of Ozamis city (Ibid.). It cannot be denied that the Projinogs have played a vital role in developing the place, both economically and politically. But it cannot also be denied that with the existence of the gang in the city no one really felt safe; and that most of the people in Ozamis are poor and utterly miserable; and the economic development is slow. Moreover, though some of their constituents admire the Parojinogs; others want change, but because of fear of what the Kuratong might do to them and to their family they chose to stay silent.

The beginning of the end of the Parojinog dynasty was marked by President Rodrigo Duterte's rise in power and the President's "war against drugs" campaign. The Parojinogs were one of those narco-politicians whom the President named in public media. Although the family denied their alleged involvement to illegal drug trade in the country; but it would seem that their direct lineage and their identification with the Kuratong is already a substantial reason to link them with transactions of illegal drugs in the country. In fact illegal drugs are rampant in the city, to the extent that anybody can buy one as though buying candies from a convenient store. The president, determined to clean the city from all sorts of illegal activities, assigned Chief Inspector Jovie Espenido as the head of Ozamis city Police Office on December 2016. Prior to his appointment as the head of Ozamis city police, Espenido was formerly the chief of police in ALbuera, Leyte; whose mayor was also identified by the president as a narco-politician. The presence of Espenido in the city of Ozamis made a

radical shift of popular consciousness. The people are reintroduced into the systems law; he mandated a strict observance of the curfew hours in the city during the night, with the intention of cleaning the city of hoodlums and in protecting the people from harm; He likewise insisted on the strict observance of the law for motorcycle riders, proper documents for vehicles, he designed a tariff system for tricycles and the "pedicab" drivers, and frequent checkpoints were done by police officers of the city; he headed drug raids in the city and captured members of the Kuratong, a thing which was never done in the past administrations. With his style of leadership, not everyone was happy. He met negative reactions from people who were close constituents of the Parojinogs. But despite of the calumnies, Espinedo never retracted from his goal of totally cleaning the city. He ran after the Kuratong Baleleng gang resulting to arm encounters with them at some point and which even resulted killing some of the gang's members. He raided "Lawis" -the cave of Ozamis; a place where one could no longer go out alive if he is not a local of the vicinity; the seat of illegal drug trades and all forms of illegal activities -without hesitations. The courage Espinedo showed to the people of Ozamis in going against the super power of the city gave the people a sense of hope for a better change. With the death of the political clan's head and his immediate relatives which resulted from a bloody drug raid in the homes of the mayor and the incarceration of others, the citizens where liberated from the clasp of the ruling power. The people were empowered to speak-out their sentiments about the administration. They were given the courage to lay bare their thoughts about the previous administration, which they have kept for many years in fear that something bad might happen to them and their families. And with the presence of police officers in the city most of the ordinary citizens are feeling a lot safer than before. For decades the people were captives of the ruling elite's suppressive power and manipulative popular rhetoric. They were blinded by the consciousness designed by the ruling power rooted in fear and confusion. But through the radical leadership of chief Espenido a truly popular consciousness emerges from the rubbles of the past captivity.

Radical Democracy and Radical-Democratic Project

Joshua Cohen in "Radical Democracy" writes that in recent political discussions radical democracy reemerges as an ideology positing intellectual and political relevance. Its relevance is grounded on its skepticism over the conventional deliberative democratic arrangements' capacity to truly represent the people's ideals of the good life and its capacity to allow ordinary citizens to freely engage in public reasoning and debates about public and political problems (Joshua Cohen, Article Online). He further explicates that radical democratic ideas are often identified with the merging of two democratic principles of participation and deliberation. The former,

on the one hand, posits the active participation of the people in public decision making. The citizens in this respect are given "greater direct roles in public choices or at least engage more deeply with substantive political issues and be assured that officials will be responsive to their concerns and judgments" (Ibid.). The later, on the other hand, posits that rather than concentrate on power and interests, democratic arrangements should be deliberative. That is a deliberative democracy "in which citizens address public problems by reasoning together about how best to solve them, in which no force is at work – except that of the better arguments" (Ibid.).

Chantal Mouffe's "The Return of the Political" emphasizes the same project of radical democratic schemes. In her view, the conventional deliberative democracy's deficit is brought about by its insistence of a consensual idea of democratic arrangement; whereupon it seeks to present a democracy of unified individuals in identity and in their perspectives of reality and the good; thus putting aside the necessity of contradictions and antagonism. She begins by distinguishing the political from the politics; the former refers to the structures and institutions prevalent of a democratic society, while the later, she refers to the reality of conflicts and contradictions in the socio-political engagements (Christopher Ryan Maboloc, 2018, 116). Mouffe presupposes that any reasonable critique against deliberative democracy must start with the presupposition that conflict and antagonism is vital for a truly democratic system to function. In an interview she said that "The aim of democracy is not consensus. The aim of democracy is to create the conditions for a conflictual consensus" (Allan Dreyer, 4). The necessity of a conflictual consensus to transpire is rooted on her belief that antagonism resolves the problem of inequality. She explains that in order for a hegemonic move to realize one must not see democracy as an inclusive rational consensus, but as providing the proper conditions for different views to flourish and to express themselves in an agonistic struggle (Ibid.). What Mouffe means is that radical democracy embraces democratic approach that builds on the differences of the people in order for the strict implementation of the fundamental liberal principles of liberty and equality be realized; with the sole intention of drawing ordinary citizens to conflictual deliberations over certain socio-political issues. "While citizens desire to achieve the common good through a shared vision, the reality is that there are hierarchical differences in the polity" (Christopher Ryan Maboloc, 2018, 116). Hierarchical differences that the conventional democratic scheme is incapable of addressing fairly. For what happens in a deliberative democratic consensus is that the minority's project of the good life is often overpowered by the manipulative intents of the majority. The best example is how most of the indigenous people in Mindanao are displaced from their ancestral lands due to mining; and how the poorest of the poor citizens of the country are reduced to sheer

expendables in exchange for a larger economic development. Democratic consensus is presented as the only rational way to resolve our socio-political and circumstantial differences and to achieve political unity, but in reality democratic consensus has become an effective political machinery to subdue and arrest the people's political power by the ruling elite in the country. Hence the radicalization of democracy is needed. Mouffe writes, "The radicalization of democracy should be envisaged as an immanent critique, a struggle, that does not imply a radical break but that can be done through a profound transformation of the existing liberal democratic institutions" (Allan Dreyer, 4). The transformation of liberal democratic institutions is realized by putting our fundamental moral principles - liberty and equality - of democracy into practice. For her, there is no need for a revolution to happen and there is no need to look for other moral principles, rather, what is needed is for liberal democratic institutions to put these ideals in practice. Agonistic politics therefore presupposes the necessity of allowing the possibility of confrontation over the different interpretations of the shared conceptions of the good life in politics that is over the "shared ethico-political principles".

Progressive Leadership and the Reawakening of Popular Democracy

Chantal Mouffe's radical democratic scheme is based on the idea of an agonistic democracy. It insists on the possibility of confrontation between individuals having diversified contentions of the common good without having to consider the opposing parties as inimical to one's claim over the shared ethico-political principles of development. It is the act of radicalizing the fundamental moral democratic principles of liberty and equality and putting them in practice. In addition, for Mouffe, radical democracy criticizes liberal deliberative consensus, for it tends to confine the individual under one absolute consciousness manipulated and designed by the ruling elites in the deliberative process of a nation-state building. A city like Ozamis, which has been under the rule of a power predator for the past decades and whose consciousness is molded by the consciousness of the former rulers, would find it hard to put into practice the moral principles of liberal democratic institutions. They were in captivity for a very long time, what they have known only is the competitive representation of social institutions based on power and interests relations; authorities are elected representatives who will realize for the people their project of the good life in legislations and public political decisions, that they seem to have forgotten their active part in the nation-state building. The people of Ozamis who wanted change were looking for a leader that will bring them out to the light. Such progressive leadership was realized in Espenido's courageous undertakings in bringing peace and order in Ozamis city by in clearing the entire city of hoodlums and the Kuratong Baleleng gang. For some Espenido is a hero, who liberated the place from the domain of the oppressive ruling

elites. With its strong and strict implementations of the law, the people were made to act accordingly and equally without prioritizing someone. He believes in the capacity of the people to commence change if everyone only cooperates. A democracy from below begins to sprout from the ruins of the past dynasty. He knew that in order to address the prevalent illness that has taken root in the system for a very long time, radical means is necessitated to challenge the status quo. Disruption is needed, as Mouffe stated, in order to force the society to really put those principles of liberty and equality into practice. Espenido empowered the people to allow a radical evolution of democratic ideals to happen. There was no revolution; but rather simply the liberation of the people and the radicalization of the former democratic arrangements. In the past the possibility of confrontations and conflicts between the ruling class and the ruled was canceled out. No one is allowed to speak against the Projinogs; what is constantly being shown in television programs are the good things the political dynasts have presumably done; mass media in Ozamis is ridiculously useless and utterly blind to the atrocities and anomalies the previous predators were guilty of. But with chief Espenido's radical leadership the people were invigorated and are given the courage to speak-out what are in their minds. Everyone is listened to, from the most insignificant call for help like problems related to household matters, to the more serious call of going after drug traffickers and members of the mafia in the place. Criminality was radically reduced into a minimal number through his police visibility campaign. The city became relatively peaceful with his supervision and the people are liberated from the clasp of the local political elites.

Conclusion

With the country's prevalent democratic deficits and the necessary unjust consequences that these problems of the country's democratic institutions befall to the marginalized sectors of the society, a call for radicalization is timely and necessary. A radicalization of democracy that intends to put into practice the fundamental moral principles of liberal democratic institutions with the active participation of the ordinary people in the deliberation processes of socio-political matters. A kind of democracy from below that takes its roots in the common tao's project of emancipation from their centuries of subjugations and oppressions from the powerful political elites. Chantal Mouffe argues that the necessity of reformulating our present democratic institutions is grounded in the presupposition that consensual democracy tends to naively provide a universal and absolute definition of individuals that disregards individual differences. For her the aim of democracy is not to provide a general consensus among diversified individuals, but rather democracy must provide "the possibility for different views to express themselves in an agonistic struggle" (Ibid.). That is, it is exactly because of individual differences that democracy must create a

democratic condition that caters the possibility of change, conflicts and confrontations. A city like Ozamis, whose long history of oppressions and subjugations and political harassments and violence is caused by the political powers that have ruled it for decades; cannot realize any project of change without the aid of a leader who is willing to protect the people and embody the people's hope for emancipation. The rise to power of the Parojinogs marks the time of the total subjugation of the people of Ozamis, with their most potent political machinery, the "Kuratong Baleleng", they were able to hold hostage the people and silenced all forms of political antagonism. Because of what might befall them, the people cancelled out all forms of protestations against the injustices the ruling family was guilty of. Confrontations and popular power are ruled out, for the state is run by a pseudo authoritarian regime. The traditional democracy which embraces the idea of identifying the power to rule and make relevant socio-political choices to the people is replaced by an authoritarian rule under the Parojinog administration. The emancipation of the people of Ozamis from the oppressive rule of the ruling clan was realized when Chief Inspector Jovie Espenido came and imposed a progressive style of leadership to the entire city. The city was cleaned from hoodlums, it became relatively safer than before his coming; criminality is reduced to a minimal; most of the leaders of the local gang are hunted and are displaced from the city; the people are beginning to have voices, they can now speak loudly about their sentiments on certain socio-political issues; and he brought about the decadence of the dynasty that has been long oppressing and denying the people of their political rights. Through Espenido's leadership the possibility of a grass root democracy is realized; a democracy identified with "people power".

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