The Working Class and Democracy
Organized labor amidst democratic consolidation in the Philippines and Indonesia

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Abstract

Since the transition to democracy in the Philippines and Indonesia, economic, political and social changes began to manifest that warrant further analysis in relation to an equally important process – democratic consolidation. This exploratory paper reviews the literature on democratization in the Philippines and Indonesia to develop a research question on the relationship between democratic consolidation and economic (read: capitalist) development. Most of the works reviewed in the paper have moved beyond the "transition paradigm" and focused on the relationship between democratization and the structural factors associated with economic development. However, one of the outstanding issues found in the literature is the dearth of attention paid to the role of the working class in democratic consolidation. As such, the paper proposes the following general question: how do we explain the similarities and differences of organized labor's engagement with democratic institutions and processes in the Philippines and Indonesia since the transition from authoritarian rule? To address this general inquiry, the following specific questions are proposed: (1) why did working class parties and labor organizations experience limited electoral success in the Philippines and Indonesia from 1986 to 2016? (2) how do labor parties and organizations perceive electoral participation and competition in their respective countries? And, (3) how do labor parties and organizations perceive democratic institutions and processes in their respective countries?

Key words: working class, political participation, democratization, late capitalist development, Philippines, Indonesia

1. Introduction

> Hegel remarks somewhere that all great, world-historical facts and personages occur, as it were, twice. He has forgotten to add: the first time as tragedy, the second as farce.
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> Karl Marx[1]

> The view that history is the story of the lives of those who want to grasp the power of the throne means that in our cultural life we know nothing but power. We have not known humanity as the driving concept in life in our traditional art and culture. Forgive me if I am mistaken.
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> Pramoedya Ananta Toer[2]

The year was 1986. The dictator, Ferdinand E. Marcos, was still clinging to power just as he was clinging for life. But in a curious turn of events, heannounced the previous year that he will hold a snap election on February. Corazon Aquino, the widow of the murdered opposition stalwart, Sen. Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr., challenged the dictator for the presidency after much prodding from the leaders of the elite opposition and the Catholic Church. When the results of the controversial election were revealed, Filipinos have had enough of such travesty of democracy. Cracks in the once-monolithic military establishment began to manifest as certain elements, led by then Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile and Gen. Fidel V. Ramos, bolted out of Marcos' camp and occupied Camp Aguinaldo along Epifanio de los Santos Avenue (EDSA). The dictator and his loyal minions planned to attack. But the people rallied behind the mutinous soldiers, with Catholic Church leader, Jaime Cardinal Sin playing an influential role. The next few days saw one of the most dramatic popular uprisings the world has witnessed.

More than a decade later in another country, another dictator was forced out of power in quite a similar fashion. When the 1997 Asian financial crisis hit Indonesia, the Suharto regime that ruled Indonesia since the mid-1960s began to unravel. Amid the economic crisis, demands for reform echoed across different sectors in Indonesian society – students, Islamic groups, the middle class, the poor, and some elements within the military establishment – ushering in the period known as *reformasi*. As the crisis deepened, the regime seemed ill-equipped to steer the nation from collapse. By 1998, student groups began to launch massive protests that snowballed into a nationwide reform movement that also demanded Suharto's resignation. The regime responded, as it did throughout the *Orde Baru* ("New Order") regime, with brutal repression. Violence erupted in the streets and the country had fallen deep in turmoil. By May of that year, Suharto was forced to give up the presidency and his regime collapsed just as it had been built three decades ago – out of economic crisis, violence, and bloodshed.

The 1986 People Power Revolution that ushered the re-democratization in the Philippines was a cause for celebration as much as it remains a contested phenomenon. The 1998 *reformasi*

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[1] "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte", p. 594, in Tucker, Robert, ed. 1978. *The Marx-Engels Reader*, Second Edition. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., pp. 594-617.

[2] 17 August Oration, read in 'Orasi Kebudayaan 2002' at Kafe SALSA, Jakarta, 20 August 2002, in Vickers, Adrian. 2013. *A History of Modern Indonesia, Second Edition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 202.

Pramoedya Ananta Toer (20 February 1925 – 30 April 2006) is an Indonesian novelist and playwright. After World War II, he joined the nationalist struggle against Dutch colonial rule. He was arrested by Dutch authorities in 1947 and sent to a prison camp for two years. After independence, Pramoedya had become sympathetic to the *Partai Komunis Indonesia* (Indonesian Communist Party, PKI) and thus, he was imprisoned again by the military during its bloody suppression of a communist-led coup in 1965. He was released from prison in 1979 and was kept under house arrest in Jakarta until 1992. (*Source: https://www.britannica.com/biography/Pramoedya-Ananta-Toer*)

period that fueled the re-democratization of Indonesia has suffered similar fate. This is partly because the legacies of their respective authoritarian past remain as democratic consolidation unfolded in these countries. Thus, this paper reviews the literature on democratization in the Philippines and Indonesia to understand further the problem of democracy in these countries. This exploratory work aims to develop a research question on the relationship between democratic consolidation and economic (read: capitalist) development.

The paper will be organized as follows. The next section reviews the works on democratization in the Philippines and Indonesia. The issues and gaps in the literature are discussed in relation tothe conceptual and theoretical issues associated with democracy and democratization. The third section developsa theoretical framework to understand therole of labor movements amidst democratization and capitalist development. Finally, the concluding section charts the direction for further research.

2. (Re)Democratization in the Philippines and Indonesia

2.a. Democracy: An "essentially contested" concept
Democracy is one of the most contested concepts in contemporary political and social sciences. It is both a practice – a form of government where collective decisions is reached via peaceful means – and an ideal (Hague & Harrop, 2004, p. 36). The ongoing tension between these two dimensions – reality and ideal – has become part of the democratic condition (Hague & Harrop, 2004, p. 36). As Grugel (2002, p. 3) noted, neat theories of democratization stand in stark contrast with the messy experiences of the countries in the real world.

At the turn of the twentieth century, representative liberal democracy has already become the main basis of defining democracy in the West. The interwar years saw the defeat of alternative forms of organizing power in modern states, like fascism. There is also a much larger imperative for adopting such definition. The Cold War became an ideological struggle between capitalism and communism and thus, it was also a struggle of competing ideas about democracy – capitalist democracy and socialist democracy.

With the onset of what Huntington called the "third wave of democratization" during the 1970s and the end of the Cold War by late 1980s, liberal democracy gained ascendancy on a global scale. Liberal democracy highlights the importance of the conduct of free elections, the existence of multi-party political system and the rule of law. Still, Grugel (2002, p. 6) argues that the existence of these elements does not guarantee the existence of key democratic freedom and rights. But how much democracy is necessary for a given society? The main dispute concerns those who argue for a minimal (or formal) definition of democracy in contrast to those who favor a more substantive definition (Grugel, 2002, p. 6).

The minimalist definition of democracy highlights the importance of electoral competition and the institutionalization of democratic norms and values that would permit such competition, following Schumpeter's original formulation. In addition, Dahl used the term "polyarchy" to distinguish between the ideal democracy and its actual practice, especially in Western states (Grugel, 2002, p. 19). Polyarchy rests on a combination of elected government and civil liberties, which could ensure that various groups in society have access to the political system (Grugel, 2002, p. 19). This conception has become the basis for describing the empirical characteristics of liberal democracy since the 1970s (Grugel, 2002, p. 20).

On the other hand,maximalist or substantive definition of democracy highlights the redistribution of economic and political power as a necessary condition for democratization.

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Tornquist (2013 [1990], pp. 172-3)defines substantive (or optimum) democracy as "the actual capacity of the adult citizens to exercise in various formsequal and effective rule over resources which they hold in common without undermining the absolutely necessary prerequisites for this rule".But using this definition, no country may be said to be truly democratic. These varying conceptions illustrate how, using Gallie's term, democracy remains an "essentially contested" concept (Gallie, 1956). More importantly, these contending definitions of democracy engendered contrasting theories of the democratization process.

In the Philippines, the literature on democratization have been dominated by works that utilized the elite democracy framework (Anderson 1988; Hutchcroft 1991; Sidel 1997; Putzel 1999; Hutchcroft & Rocamora 2003). But recent works have also emerged that challenged this framework and recognized the role of middle- and lower-class forces in democratization (Eaton 2003; Kimura 2003; Quimpo 2005a, 2005b, 2008; Rivera 2011).

On the other hand, explanations of the democratization process in Indonesia can be divided into three strands. There are scholars who claim that Indonesia is now moving steadily towards consolidation of democracy (Webber 2006; MacIntyre & Ramage; 2008; Abdulbaki 2008). There are also those who argue that predatory and oligarchic interests in the post-Suharto period remain, which undermine prospects for further deepening of democracy (Hadiz 2000, 2003, 2004; Hadiz & Heryanto 2005; Hadiz & Robison 2005). But some scholars took the middle ground, cognizant of the persistence of forces that undermines democratic consolidation but also recognizes the role played by pro-democracy forces from middle- and lower-class movements (Davidson 2009; Aspinall 2010, 2013; Mietzner 2012, 2013).

2.b. Change or continuity? Explaining democratization in the Philippines
The first strand of explanation, and arguably the most dominant narrative, of democratization in the Philippines consist of variations of the same framework – elite democracy. The post-Marcos political landscape has been described as the return of "cacique democracy" (Anderson, 1988); a "weak democracy" subject to the dominance of local "bosses" (Sidel, 1997; Putzel, 1999); and, a political system facing a "democratic deficit" (Hutchcroft & Rocamora, 2003).

The end of a dictatorship "is never a clean break" as there will always be discontinuities as well as continuities (David, 2013 [1996], p. 162). In the case of the Philippines, the transition period did not overcome much of the legacies of the authoritarian regime. Dominant social groups representing pre-Marcos and Marcos era interests reconstituted themselves during the redemocratization process.

Traditional politicians and technocrats, representing such entrenched interests, were able to hijack the policy-making in the absence of a clear program pushed from below. Thus, for David (2013 [1996], p. 163), as with Anderson (1988), the revolution ironically led to "elite restoration".Aside from the pre-Marcos-era oligarchs and Marcos-era cronies, local politicians were also able to recapture the bases of their political, and in most cases economic, power under the new democratic order(Sidel, 1997).

Building on this account, Putzel (1999, p. 216) argued that what emerged as democracy in the Philippines since 1986 remains shallow – a "weak democracy" – because of the pervasive mismatch between the formal institutions of democracy introduced during the American colonial rule and entrenched informal institutions of patronage politics that hinders further democratic deepening.Similarly, Hutchcroft and Rocamora (2003, p. 259) argued that the Philippines still retains a degree of "democratic deficit", which refers to "the enormous need for responding to

pent-up demands and pressures from below, as well as the incapacity of the country's democratic institutions to do so with any degree of effectiveness".

Another interpretation of democratization in the Philippines is that of the "contested democracy"framework(Quimpo, 2005a, p. 242). This framework is based on at least three interrelated assumptions. First, it combines elite democracy with "democracy from below". This framework recognizes the persistence of elite rule in Philippine politics but it also puts emphasis on the efforts by various non-state and non-elite forces for popular empowerment.

This framework also assumes that democracy in the country is minimal, where democratic institutions and processes are controlled by the elites (Quimpo, 2005a, p. 243). In this sense, democracy for the elites is mainly about elections and the formal contest for power without substantially changing the structures that allow them to perpetuate their dominance. On the other hand, for the lower and middle classes, democracy should also be about meaningful participation in the decision-making process and social and economic equality. And thus, this framework assumes that "the very meaning and content of democracy are contested" (Quimpo, 2008, p. 48).

Studies that challenged the elite democracy framework focused on how lower- and middle-class political parties, people's organizations (POs), non-government organizations (NGOs), and social movements have challenged ruling class dominance within the framework of formal democratic institutions.In an earlier article, Eaton (2003, p. 470) noted that the contrasting images of *trapo* and the NGO, which proliferated since the 1980s, show that the transition to democracy represented both the restoration of traditional political society and the transformation of civil society into a significant actor in the Philippines.

These simultaneous processes set the stage for eventual confrontations that shaped the consolidation of democracy in the country. Eaton (2003, p. 490) argued that traditional politicians continue to wield their political dominance to veto or weaken attempts to implement constitutional reforms.This means that civil society remains constrained to perform the roles necessary for further democratic consolidation(Eaton, 2003, p. 491).

What about the middle class*es*? Note that the term used is not in the singular "middle class", indicating the plurality of interests that define this stratum in contemporary Philippine society. Kimura (2003, p. 283) argued that their relatively small population and lack of cohesiveness limited their political influence in ordinary circumstances, which include the electoral process. The lack of cohesiveness was due to several factors: the middle classes are not organized on the bases of class consciousness or occupation and do not, as whole, adopt a specific political position (Kimura, 2003, p. 283). But because of their large mobilization capacity and geographical concentration in the nation's capital they can play an important role in time of crisis, such as in EDSA I and II (Kimura, 2003, p. 283).

The participation and leadership roles assumed by the middle class during these conjunctural struggles were nonetheless articulated and pursued via different political idioms and persuasions, which reflect the contradictory aspects of their social, economic, and political embeddedness (Rivera, 2011, p. 259). During EDSA II, the participation of the middle class was enhanced by the "decentralized nature of the mobilization process" that reflects the presence of many centers of political initiative (Rivera, 2011, p. 259).

One of the relatively uncharted areas in the literature on democratization in the Philippines is how the lower classes have struggled for more substantive democracy within formal democratic structures and processes. In particular, the link between the working class and democratization has not been fully articulated in the literature, except perhaps for the work of

Quimpo (2008). If democracy entails more participation and substantial degrees of egalitarianism, then the workingclass offers an alternative starting point for an interrogation of democratic consolidation.

2.c. Democracy vs. oligarchy: Explaining democratization in Indonesia
In the case of Indonesia, three strands of explanation emerged to explain the democratization process. The first strand argued that Indonesia is already consolidating its democracy, albeit facing challenges in the process.

The concept of democracy is as contested as the democratization process. The most crucial point in the debate is about the issue of whether democracy is a substantive way of life or a set of procedural rules (Abdulbaki, 2008, p. 152). As with Webber (2006), Abdulbaki (2008, p. 153) used a procedural definition of democracy since it is arguably more useful for empirical research.

The present political landscape in the country is characterized by frequent, free and fair elections, effective elected officials, separation of powers, inclusive suffrage, freedom of expression, the independence of the media and associational autonomy (Abdulbaki, 2008, p. 167). In the case of the military, MacIntyre and Ramage (2008, p. 15) noted that it has become marginal in key political debates. Indonesia has also made significant progress in developing a more democratic framework through reforms in the judicial system and efforts to curb corruption (MacIntyre & Ramage, 2008, p. 9).

Furthermore, patronage is still an observable pattern in Indonesian politics but it is more pronounced, if not limited, to the electoral process. The further deepening of democratic processes in the country is contingent upon the development of less patrimonial-oriented and more policy-driven electoral competition (Abdulbaki, 2008, p. 168).

The second strand of explanation was rather pessimistic about Indonesia's democratization. These scholars focus on the continuity of state-society relations from the authoritarian regime to the new democratic order.

According to Hadiz (2003, p. 607; 2004, p. 64), an illiberal form of democracy has now been entrenched in Indonesia founded on the logic of money politics and political violence, like in post-Soviet Russia, Thailand or the Philippines. Many of the beneficiaries of this system constitute the predatory interests which have now realigned themselves under the new political order (Hadiz, 2004, p. 64; Hadiz & Robison, 2005, p. 236; Heryanto & Hadiz, 2005, p. 267).

During the Suharto regime, a centralized state monopolized economic and political authority through military power and the establishment of corporatist institutions that undermined formal channels of political participation. All societal organizations were compartmentalized into these state-backed corporatist institutions for business, labor, youth, and the like (Hadiz & Robison, 2005, p. 237). With the concomitant depoliticization of civil society, the emerging urban middle class and bourgeoisie, who have also occupied privileged positions under the New Order, became increasingly conservative and hardly demanded substantial reforms (Hadiz & Robison, 2005, p. 237).

Thus, by the time of the *reformasi*, a consolidated predatory state and private oligarchies were already entrenched in Indonesian economic and political landscape. Political change in Indonesia is mainly a contest between elements of the elites that have reconstituted themselves in the post-Suharto era and middle-class reformers with varying degrees of association with the New Order (Hadiz, 2000, p. 28). Meanwhile, other social forces still suffer from relative political exclusion under Indonesia's new democratic order.

The student movement, which played a crucial role in toppling Suharto, was sidelined in the transition process (Hadiz, 2000, p. 28).The failures of the student movement during and after the *reformasi* period dovetailed with the continuing weakness of the labor movement in the country. This relative weakness is mainly the result of the legacies of the 1965/66 massacres and the demobilization and crushing of its militant sections at the onset of the New Order (Hadiz, 2000, p. 28; 2003, p. 605; Hadiz & Heryanto, 2005, p. 265). In addition, structural factors affected the capability of the labor movement to navigate the new political landscape.The capitalist crisis, and not capitalist development, that gave birth to a new democratic order in Indonesia resulted to massive unemployment and underemployment significantly reducing labor's bargaining power (Tornquist, 2004, p. 19; Heryanto & Hadiz, 2005, 265). The problem also lies with the unions themselves and their ambivalence towards political models of unionism (Ford, 2005, p. 202).

The case of the 2009 national elections, like in 1999 and 2004, have shown how labor unions have not made substantial gains with Indonesia's electoral process. The issue now is whether electoral engagement of unions will result to the creation of programmatic parties that tap into a working-class base (Caraway, Ford, & Nugroho, 2015, p. 1311). This formal reorganization of political power in Indonesia, along with the exclusion of other social forces, illustrates the striking continuity of New Order dynamics into the post-Suharto period.

Finally, there are scholars who are more circumspect and took the middle ground. After more than a decade, Indonesian democracy has considerably neutralized its main potential spoilers, which include the military, ethno-regional elites and militant Islamists (Aspinall, 2010, p. 22). The accommodation of the elites in the process as well as some of the spoilers of democracy was considerably the "price of success" (Aspinall, 2010, p. 32). But the relatively peaceful turnover after the breakthrough in 1998 have made "[t]he trade-off between democratic success and democratic quality [was] arguably worth it" (Aspinall, 2010, p. 32).

Similarly, Davidson (2009, p. 305) argued that elite cooperation was crucial in the creation of new democratic institutions during the transition period. But these very same state elites and officials have become less dependable in the enforcement of a democratic rule of law (Davidson, 2009, p. 305). According to Mietzner (2012, p. 223), "Indonesia is now in a stagnant balance between attempted democratic rollback and civil society resistance". This stagnation was not because of the declining societal support for democracy but rather, because of anti-reformist elites attempting to recapture their lost privileges in the new democratic order (Mietzner, 2012, p. 223).

Mietzner (2013, p. 45) also criticized earlier portrayals of post-Suharto Indonesia that highlight the ubiquity of patronage relations in politics. Activists – women's rights advocates, journalists, and union leaders – have played a significant role in the democratization process that warrants an analysis outside of the patronage paradigm (Mietzner, 2013, p. 46).

In contrast to the pessimism of some of the analysts of Indonesia's labor movement, Juliawan (2011, p. 367) argued that the persistence and regularity of protests by Indonesian workers suggest that collective actions have become an acceptable dimension of the country's politics (Juliawan, 2011, p. 367). But he argued that, given the empirical evidence available, it seems unlikely that organized labor would transform into political parties and interest groups and collective action is likely to remain as the main channel of engaging the state for years to come (Juliawan, 2011, p. 368).

The emphasis on entrenched oligarchic interests in contemporary Indonesia helped explain continuing patterns of domination in Indonesia's politics in the last two decades. But

there were also transformations that brought a wide array of social forces into contention (Aspinall, 2013, p. 15; Mietzner, 2013, p. 46). The focus on oligarchic interests is not enough as "the Indonesian masses and middle classes too are now starting to write their own history" and thus, there is a need to broaden the analytical focus accordingly (Aspinall, 2013, p. 15). Hence, the question that may be raised about Indonesia's democracy, as with the case of the Philippines, is: how do we explain the relationship between social and economic conditions and democratic consolidation? And more importantly, who are the actors and social forces that have the most at stake in the process? The next section discusses the issues and gaps in the literature on democratization in the said countries.

2.d. Beyond the "transition" paradigm
Initial studies on democratization in the 1960s adopted a process-oriented approach that highlight the mechanisms or paths that lead to democracy(Grugel, 2002, p. 3). As with the earlier works of modernization theorists like Lipset, these studies analyzed the relationship between structural factors,e.g. economic development, and democratization. By 1980s, democratization studies have been informed largely by the "transition paradigm" pioneered by O'Donnell, Schmitter, and Whitehead.

One of the assumptions of the transition paradigm is that the underlying structural features of transitional countries will not be major factors in either the onset or the outcome of the transition process (Carothers, 2002, p. 8). A country's chance of success at democratization depends primarily on the political intentions and actions of its political elites (Carothers, 2002, p. 8).As such, Webber (2006) and Abdulbaki (2008) remain optimistic about the prospects of democratic consolidation in Indonesia because of the presence of electoral competition and the absence of any meaningful alternative to democracy itself. Even more nuanced analysis took the view that the trade-off between democratic success and democracy quality in the process of transition was arguably worth it (Aspinall 2010). In the case of the Philippines, Putzel (1999) offers quite a similar analysis, that is, the absence of alternatives meant that the existing democratic framework, however formal, is the only arena where social groups outside the state can promote democratic norms and values.

As in the works of O'Donnell, Schmitter, and Whitehead (1986), Linz and Stepan (1996a, p. 15)favors a narrower definition of democratic consolidation: "a political regime in which democracy as a complex system of institutions, rules and patterned incentives and disincentives has become, in a phrase 'the only game in town'". These scholars argue that democracy is a *political* order and thus, one cannot expect that this would eliminate extreme forms of inequality arising out of a certain form of*economic* order. The quality of democracy should be differentiated from the quality of society such that there are problems specific to democratic institutions and political processes that allows one to differentiate them from the problems of society in general (Linz & Stepan, 1996a, p. 31).But this definition of democratic consolidation severs the crucial link between socio-economic conditions and political power. In particular,

> [t]he control by capital in economic life not only restricts the scope of democracy, it also undermines popular rule in the narrowly political sphere – as decisions are forced to conform to the dictates of capital and as the ideological power of capital shapes the entire environment of decision making (MacEwan, 1988, p. 118).

In other words, economic entitlements affect political entitlements(Grugel, 2002, p. 5). Developing countries manifest how the socio-economic conditions limits the functioning of

democratic institutions and processes. Lipset (1994, p. 17) argued that countries in the process of democratic consolidation should attain a certain level of efficacy in the economic arena to achieve political legitimacy. If these newly-democratized states pursue economic development more effectively, they are likely to deepen the process of democratization in their respective countries.

Structural conditions have been working its way back in, influencing and shaping political outcomes (Carothers, 2002, p. 16). According to Grugel (2002, p. 3), as democratization developed, it became evident that some countries were not able to transition successfully towards democracy. The outcome was a shift in focus from the factors that make new democracies endure to factors that result in their fragility or weakness (Grugel, 2002, p. 3). This entailed the analysis of how political culture, political economy, and institutions influence the outcomes of democratization (Grugel, 2002, p. 4).

These are highlighted in the varying accounts of democratization in the Philippines and Indonesia. These studies point to factors that include the legacies of authoritarian order (Sidel, 1997; Hadiz, 2000); the ubiquity of patronage and patrimonialism (Hutchcroft, 1991; Putzel, 1999; Hutchcroft & Rocamora, 2003; Webber, 2006); the restoration and consolidation of the elites (Anderson, 1988; Hadiz, 2003, 2004; Hadiz & Robison, 2005; Hadiz & Heryanto, 2005); and, the struggle of other social groups against marginalization in the democratization process (Eaton, 2003; Quimpo, 2005a, 2005b, 2008; Aspinall, 2010, 2013; Mietzner, 2012).

Another concern that emerged in the literature is about the agents of democratization. By highlighting the formal contest of power during democratization instead of the struggle for social and economic concerns, the analysis can now conveniently focus on the motives and interests of political actors who have access to democratic institutions and processes (MacEwan, 1988, p. 120). The inevitable result is that the elite dynamics are put in front and center in the analysis of democratization while ignoring the role of the lower- and middle-class forces. This has been pointed out by Quimpo (2005a, 2008) and by Mietzner (2013) and Aspinall (2013) in the Philippine and Indonesian experiences respectively.

Finally, no recent *comparative* study was conducted on the democratization experiences of the said countries that went beyond elite dynamics. Recent comparative studies on democratization in the Philippines and Indonesia compared authoritarian practices in the context of democratization(Boudreau, 2009) and elite dynamics during the transition(Fukuoka, 2015). A comparative study of the role of lower- and middle-class forces, specifically labor movements, amidst democratic consolidation in the Philippines and Indonesia remains largely unexplored.

The research questions that will be presented below seek to addressthese issues and gaps in the literature, recognizing the importance of context and the intentions and interests that propel political change. Thus, the following general question is proposed: how do we explain the similarities and differences of organized labor's engagement with democratic institutions and processes in the Philippines and Indonesia since the transition from authoritarian rule? To address this general inquiry, the following specific questions are proposed: (1) why did labor parties and organizations experience limited electoral success in the Philippines and Indonesia from 1986 to 2016? (2) how do labor parties and organizations perceive electoral participation and competition in their respective countries? And, (3) how do labor parties and organizations perceive democratic institutions and processes in their respective countries? The next section discusses the framework through which this problem can be explored.

3. Democratization, late capitalist development and the working class

3.a. Late capitalist development and democratic consolidation
Democratic consolidation has been the subject of contending perspectives. One of the sources of disagreements is on what kind of democracy is necessary to consider a country truly democratic. This debate over quality includes a range of scholars from those who favors a more procedural notion of democracy to those who incorporates the socio-cultural and economic contexts within which democracy is supposed to thrive. But as a process, this paper looks at democratic consolidation "along a continuum from a minimal to a maximalist position" (Grugel, 2002, p. 4).

This continuum includes at least three forms of democracy: formal, participatory and social democracy. Formal democracy is a political system that combines four features: regular free and fair elections, universal suffrage, state accountability, and protection of civil and political rights (Huber, Rueschemeyer, & Stephens, 1997, p. 323). But formal democracy is not an effective guarantee for equality in the decision-making process nor in the distribution of political power and economic resources. It is important to include two other dimensions: high levels of participation (regardless of social differences) and increasing equality in social and economic outcomes (Huber, Rueschemeyer, & Stephens, 1997, p. 324). Participatory democracy is the political system that meets the requirements of formal democracy along with the fifth dimension while social democracy meets the requirements in all six dimensions (Huber, Rueschemeyer, & Stephens, 1997, p. 324). Note that the term "social democracy" here is used differently than that of the political movement in Europe that bears the same name.[3]

This paper begins with the assumption that democracy is a matter of power and the nature of power relations(Huber, Rueschemeyer, & Stephens, 1993; 1997). There are three interrelated clusters of power that are relevant for democratic consolidation:

> (1) *the balance of class power* as the most important aspect of the balance of power in civil society; (2) *the nature of the state and state-society relations*, or the balance of power between state and civil society; and (3) *transnational structures of power*, or the international economy and system of states, as they shape the first two balances and constrain political decision-making(Huber, Rueschemeyer, & Stephens, 1993, pp. 73, emphasis original).

Earlier accounts of the relationship between economic development and democracy assume a direct relationship between these two phenomena. But these accounts do not provide a clear explanation of the manner of causality between development and democracy. Huber, Rueschemeyer and Stephens (1993, p. 85) noted that it is not mere economic development that bears the greatest significance for democracy but rather the changes in the class and social structures caused by industrialization and urbanization. The focus, then, should be on the changing nature and balance of class power while at the same time recognizing how this factor interacts with the other two abovementioned clusters of power.

Huber, Rueschemeyer and Stephens' account of the relationship between democratization and economic development utilized cases from Europe and Latin America, which have undergone early capitalist development. But in the Philippines and Indonesia, democratization unfolded in the context of late capitalist development.This mode of development generally characterizes the economic trajectories of Southeast (and Northeast) Asian countries during the

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[3] The political movement that is social democracy refers to the "prevalent manner of organization of workers under *democratic capitalism*" with the objective of institutionalizing reforms for the social protection of workers and the lower classes. (See Adam Przeworski. 1985. *Capitalism and social democracy*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, p. 1.)

post-World War II period. It is defined by an active participation of the state in national industrial transformation in the context of increasing mobility of capital on a global level.

Late capitalist development is typically associated with the structural weakness of labor because it is accompanied by industrialization in a context of such global capital mobility(Bellin, 2000, pp. 183-184). This situation produces considerable labor surplus and the late timing, which means importation of capital-intensive technology, further undermines labor's market position and bargaining power (Bellin, 2000, p. 184). Hence, another assumption of this paper, using Bellin's (2000)concept of "contingent democrats", is that class support for democracy varies in the context of late capitalist development. Bellin (2000, pp. 178-179 emphasis original) argues that capital and labor are much more ambivalent about democratization, that is, both are "*contingent* democrats" because they are "*consistent* defenders of their material interests".

Late capitalist development also engenders varying regime formations. In the case of Southeast Asia, this was associated with authoritarian regimes since the 1960s and democratic polities beginning in the late 1980s. In addition, the transition from authoritarian regimes did not spell the emergence of fully functioning democratic structures and processes.

The emergent political formations were later classified as "hybrid regimes", for instance, Case distinguished between "stable semi democracy" in Malaysia, "unconsolidated democracy" in Thailand, and "low-quality democracy" in the Philippines while Levitsky and Way classified Singapore as a "façade electoral regime" (Jayasuriya & Rodan, 2007, p. 776). But using the concept of "hybrid regimes" to describe democratic consolidation risks a tautological explanation. In addition, what this concept offers is a claim that these political regimes are deficient in relation to certain *a priori* institutional benchmarks of liberal democracy without identifying the causes of such institutional dysfunction or deficit (Jayasuriya & Rodan, 2007, p. 775). Finally, this concept depends on a problematic assumption that institutions associated with hybrid regimes are external to broader power structures (Jayasuriya & Rodan, 2007, p. 775).

Jayasuriya and Rodan (2007) argues that these hybrid regimes must be taken in their own light as having their own political dynamics that could effectively hinder the process of deepening democracy. More importantly, political regimes need to be considered in terms of the organization of conflict through various modes of political participation (Jayasuriya & Rodan, 2007, p. 773). In the context of late capitalist development, the structuring of conflict is largely shaped by the changing nature of power relations among capital and labor, the state, and the prevailing transnational structures of power.

3.b. Democratic consolidation and organized labor
Organized labor consists ofworkers' parties and labor groups, such as trade unions and labor federations. In this paper, organized labor is considered as the channel through which the working class achieves its material interests, such as higher wages and better working conditions, as well as its broader political and social goals, such as economic and social equality (See Neureiter, 2013).

How do we explain organized labor's varying modes of political participation amidst democratic consolidation and late capitalist development? First, the paper describes labor's structural position in society using two variables: state dependence and labor's aristocratic position (Bellin, 2000, p. 183). This position refers to labor's level of organization and strengthrelative to capital and the state.

State dependence refers to "the degree to which organized labor depends on state support for its organizational viability, vitality, and clout" (Bellin, 2000, p. 183). In the context of late
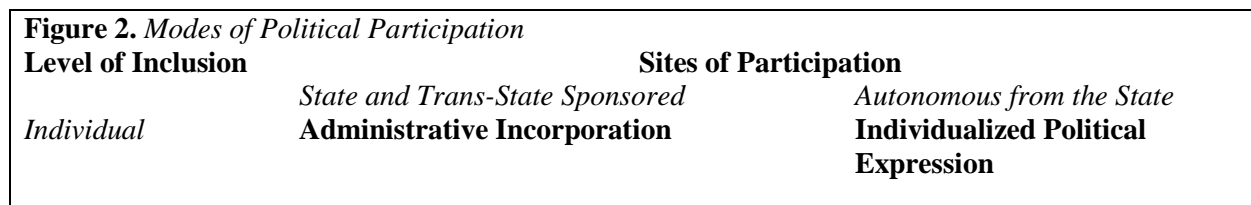
development, the state has become implicated in the process of national industrial transformation. In the process, it adopts certain strategies to manage, and to some extent, discipline, the labor market. The adoption of corporatist strategies, along with material support, have the effect of deepening labor's reliance on the state and could undermine labor's organizational vitality and capacity for collective action. On the contrary, autonomy from the state and its structures have the effect of strengthening labor's support for widening political participation and increasing equality in social and economic outcomes.

Labor's aristocratic position is defined as "the degree to which organized labor is economically privileged vis-à-vis the general population" (Bellin, 2000, p. 183). Where labor occupies a "privileged" position, that is, a better economic position, than the other sectors of the population, it is less likely to engage in collective actions to support democratic deepening along with these sectors. Bellin (2000, p. 183) describes this as "dissolidarity", and where such economic position is a product of state intervention rather than a reflection of market power, labor is less likely to support institutions that make the state accountable to mass interests, that is, democracy. These variables and its relationship to labor's views and attitudes toward democracy are illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1. *Organized Labor: Champion of Democracy?*

		State Dependence	
		High	*Low*
	High	**Antidemocracy**	**Leaning Democratic**
Aristocratic Position	*Low*	**Ambivalent**	**Prodemocracy**

Source: Adapted from "Contingent Democrats: Industrialists, Labor and Democratization in Late-Developing Countries," by E.Bellin, 2000, *World Politics*, 52, No. 2, p. 185.

Organized labor's views and attitudes toward democracy engender varying modes of political participation. Jayasuriya and Rodan (2007, pp. 773-774) defines mode of participation as "the institutional structures and ideologies that shape the inclusion and exclusion of individuals and groups in the political process." This political process occurs within the state and through civil society.

In Southeast Asia, a paradoxical trend has unfolded in the last decade where increasing political participation has been accompanied by narrowing the channels for political contestation (Jayasuriya & Rodan, 2007, p. 774). It is argued that different political regimes engender different ways by which political institutions manage conflict among social forces. Conflict here is defined as "the struggle for access to and the distribution of political resources, authority, and legitimacy" (Jayasuriya & Rodan, 2007, p. 775). Paraphrasing Laswell, conflict can also be taken to mean "who gets what, when and how".Here, the concern is on the types of conflict that are institutionalized through various modes of political participation that could influence the deepening of democracy (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. *Modes of Political Participation*

Level of Inclusion		**Sites of Participation**	
		State and Trans-State Sponsored	*Autonomous from the State*
Individual		**Administrative Incorporation**	**Individualized Political Expression**

Collective	**Societal Incorporation**	**Civil Society Expression**

The vertical axis in Figure 2 distinguishes between institutional mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion based on whether participation involves individual or collective actors while the horizontal axis distinguishes between the sites of participation (Jayasuriya & Rodan, 2007, p. 782). In this study, only the institutional mechanisms of inclusion that involves collective actors will be used since the concern is on organized labor. In the case of state sponsorship (or autonomy from the state), Jayasuriya and Rodan (2007, p. 782) noted that matrix can be understood as a continuum exhibiting qualitative differences.

Societal incorporation refers to "modes of participation that involve collective representation within the state" (Jayasuriya & Rodan, 2007, p. 783). Hence, this is associated with organized labor's level of state dependence. This mode includes not only established forms of state corporatist institutions but also, more recent structures that allow for various forms of non-government organization (NGO) participation within state-sponsored institutions (Jayasuriya & Rodan, 2007, p. 783).

On the other hand, "civil society expression" refers to modes "that involve collective participation that are relatively autonomous from the state" (Jayasuriya & Rodan, 2007, p. 783). Although it can be argued that this could also be associated with the level of state dependence, this mode of political participation is linked to the economic position of labor vis-à-vis the rest of the general population. Here, "the boundaries of political space are much more flexible and primarily determined by the collective actors themselves" (Jayasuriya & Rodan, 2007, p. 785). Following Bellin (2000), where labor occupies a relatively similar economic position with the rest of the population, especially those in the informal and agricultural sectors, it is likely to exhibit solidarity with these groups and engage in other forms of political participation outside of state structures.

Thus, these frameworks could help explain how organized labor in the Philippines and Indonesia engage democratic structures and processes, e.g. electoral process and the political party system. This would also explain the variations in the views of labor parties and groups about democratic consolidation in the said countries.

4. Concluding remarks and agenda for future research
This study seeks to analyze the relationship of democracy and capitalist development and highlight the role of lower classes, especially the working class, in the process of democratic consolidation. According to Huber, Rueschemeyer and Stephens (1993, p. 71), there are two main research traditions that have tackled the relationship of social and economic conditions and democracy: cross-national studies and comparative historical work. They noted that these two different methods have adopted different theoretical positions, and more problematic, arrived at contradictory results (Huber, Rueschemeyer & Stephens, 1993, p. 71).

Cross-national studies were predominantly quantitative in nature utilizing sophisticated statistical analysis of standardized values concerning democracy and development. These values were generated from a narrow range of aggregate data on development and democracy for many countries (Huber, Rueschemeyer & Stephens, 1993, p. 71). On the other hand, comparative historical studies were predominantly qualitative in nature utilizing a range of methods to analyze a limited number of cases. These studies were informed by a conflict-oriented political

economy approach – an approach that highlights the relationship between economic and political power and views social change as driven by conflicting interests of social actors (Huber, Rueschemeyer & Stephens, 1993, p. 72).

The studies on democratization in the Philippines and Indonesia fall within the latter research tradition. Most of the studies reviewed above have utilized historical and institutional approaches to explain democratization in the said countries, especially the transition to democracy. A few studies have utilized a case study research design.

Furthermore, these studies have moved beyond the limiting assumptions of the "transition paradigm" and analyzed the influence of agential as well as structural factors, e.g. political economy, political culture and institutions, in the outcome of democratization.Nevertheless, most of those studies only focused on elite actions and dynamics.The foregoing discussion in this paper is an initial attempt to analyze the role of the lower classes, specifically the working class, as a mediating actor amidst democratic consolidation and (late) capitalist development.

Finally, this paper intends to develop a more comprehensive comparative study of the working classes amidst democracy and development in the Philippines and Indonesia. Despite a plethora of democratization studies about Southeast Asia, specifically concerning the said countries, no comparative study has explored this problem.

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