



When dynasties collide: the Marcos-Duterte dispute and the politics of elite continuity

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Panel on *Political dynasties in Southeast Asia: Old tradition or new innovation*

Japan Association of Asian Studies

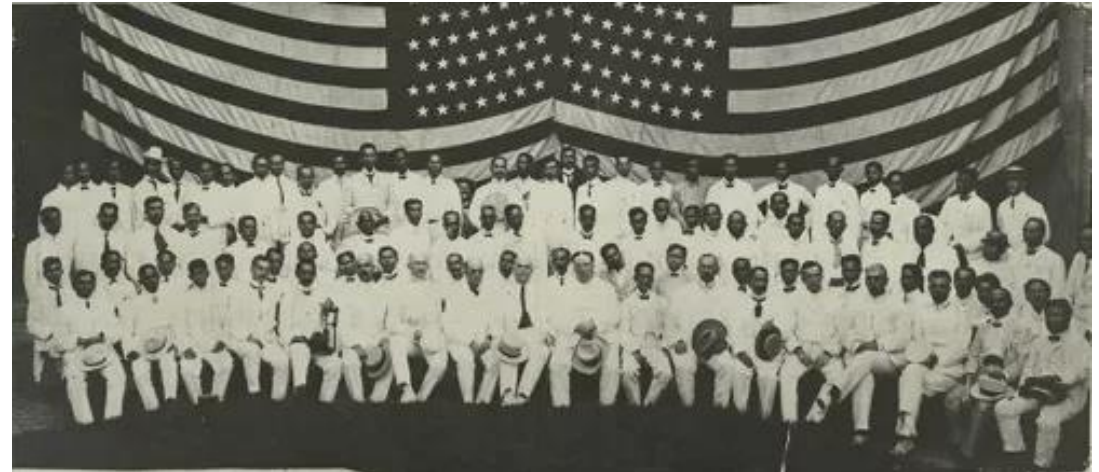
International Research Center for Japanese Studies, November 8, 2025

Introduction

- Philippine politics has always been dominated by local elites
- Persistent elite consensus on procedural democracy
- Consensus appears to be breaking down and may result to further autocratization after the 2028 elections

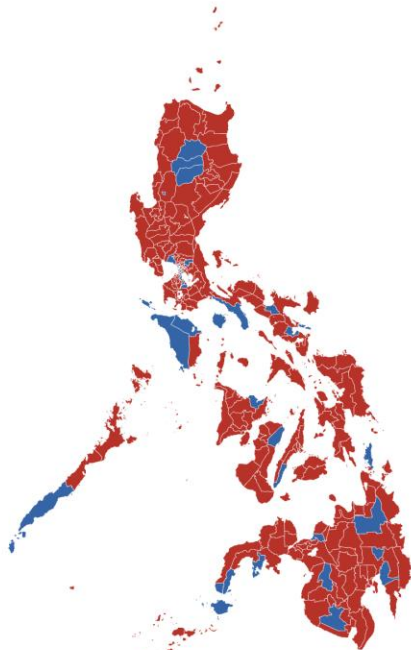
The root of elite dominance

- American colonization and the formation of the contemporary political elite
- Persistent elite consensus on procedural democracy until 1972
- Enforced consensus 1972-1986
- Electoral democracy 1986-2016
- Populism and nostalgia politics 2016-present



Thin-Fat-Obese Dynasties

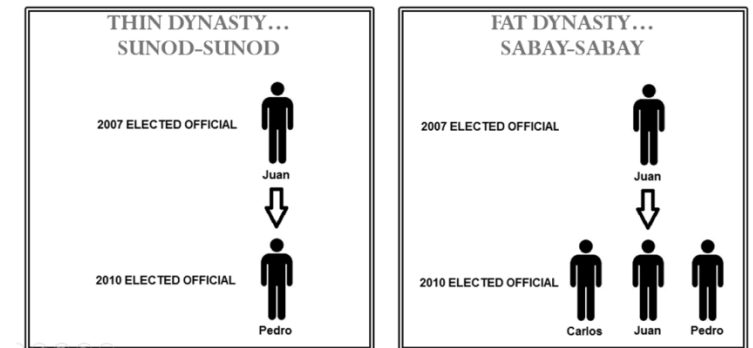
■ Dynast
■ Non-dynast



<https://peij.org/2025/06/30/most-district-representatives-still-from-political-dynasties-clans-control-multiple-districts/>



<https://mindanews.com/top-stories/2022/07/special-report-mindanao-2022-to-2025-fat-and-obese-dynasties-rule-3/>



<https://www.dlsu.edu.ph/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/15mendoza-51123.pdf>

Factors that sustain/expand dynastic control

Electoral system

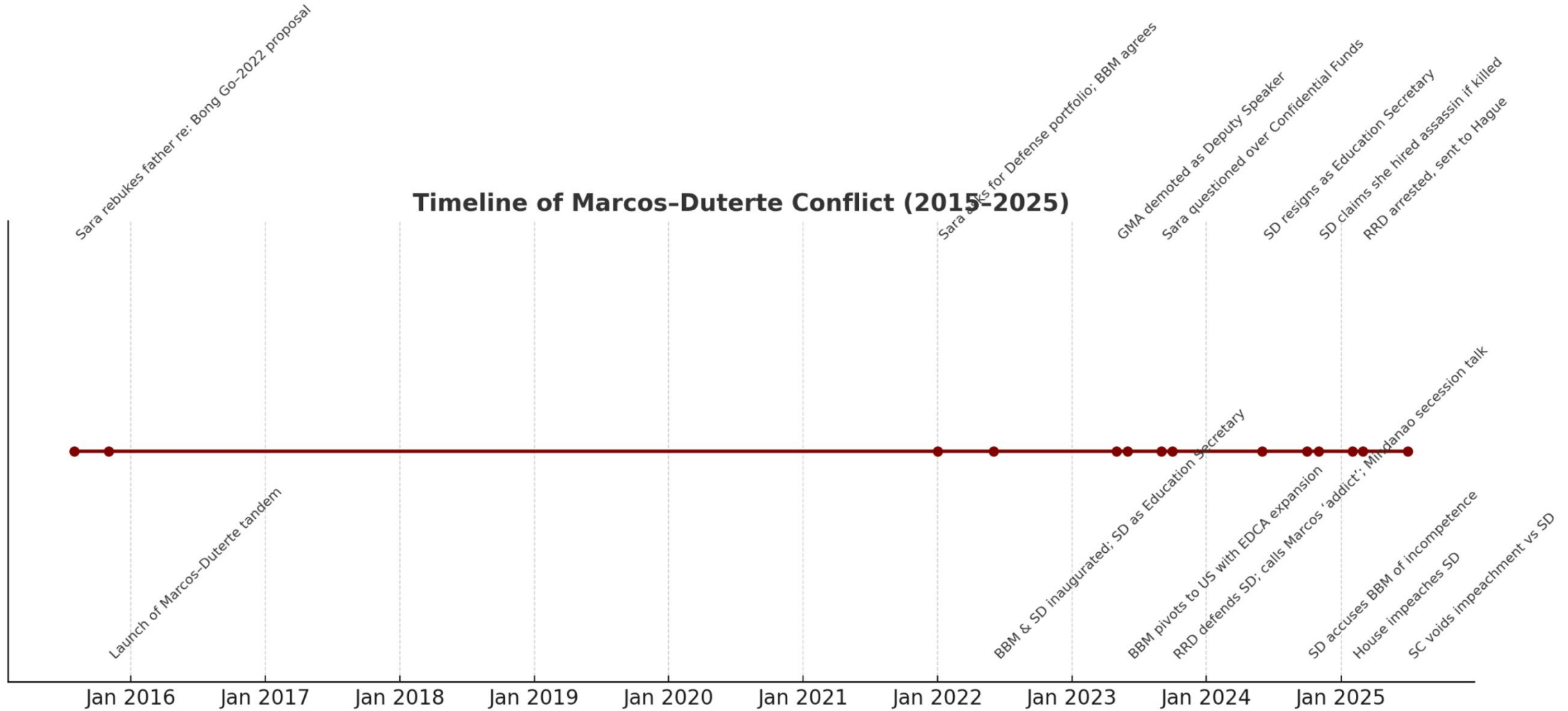
Feeble political parties

Persistent inequality

Myth

Mergers

The BBM-Sara Conflict



Spill-over effects of BBM- Duterte conflict

Hyper-partisan Congress

Declining public trust/approval of key
officials and institutions

Judicial capture

Competing narratives/”nostalgia”

Geographic “polarization”

More substantive consequences

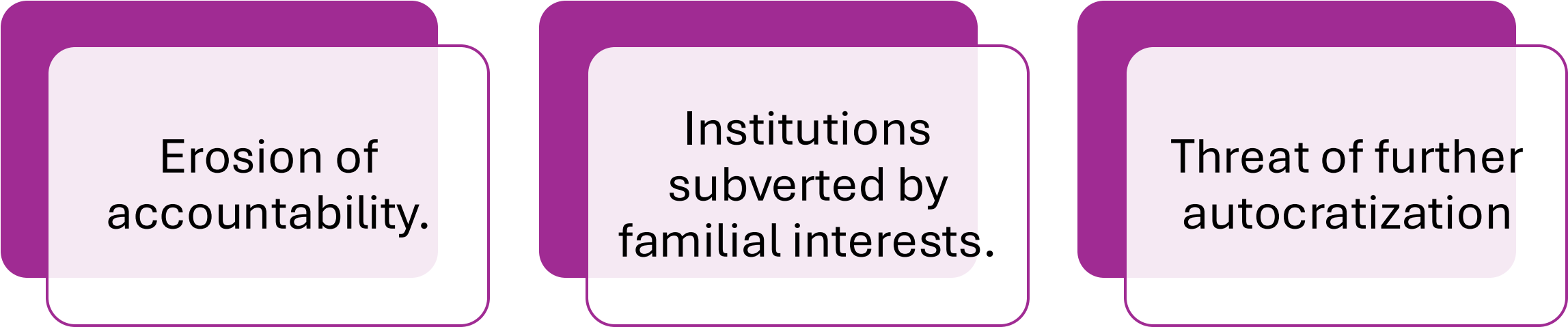
Dynastic politics
fails to improve
welfare.

Poverty and
underdevelopment
persist.

Patronage and
clientelism thrive.

Structural
inequality deepens.

Implications to feeble democratic order



Erosion of
accountability.

Institutions
subverted by
familial interests.

Threat of further
autocratization