
URBANIZATION AND POLITICAL OPPOSITION: THE PHILIPPINES AND JAPAN

NOBUTAKA IKE

ONE OF THE FUNDAMENTAL ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT POLITICS IS THAT industrialization and urbanization often bring about profound changes in the nature of politics. The literature on village politics, especially in Asian countries, rather consistently shows that rural communities try to avoid overt partisan confrontations and strive instead to arrive at some kind of "consensus." It is understandable that this should be so. In rural villages where people are not mobile, where everyone knows everyone else, and where both individual and group survival places a premium on cooperation, open partisanship that pits individuals and families against each other and thereby reduces the potential for cooperative endeavors is bound to be avoided.

As a country begins to urbanize and industrialize, however, preference for politics through consensus becomes much less pronounced. Face-to-face relationships that characterized village life give way to some extent to anonymity. The growth of a working class and its eventual unionization sharpens economic conflict between labor and management. Moreover, specialization produced by city life greatly expands the range of human needs, which, in turn, raises the level of political demands. Finally the presence of the mass communications media especially affects the political outlook of urban dwellers. Richard Fagen has succinctly summarized these changes in a communications model of political change:

- (1) socio-economic changes with important communications concomitants in channels, content, style, opportunities, etc. lead to
- (2) new ways of perceiving the self and the world which in turn lead to
- (3) behavior, which, when aggregated, are of consequence to the functioning of the political system.¹

Where modernization proceeds without fairly rigorous totalitarian controls, usually one of the consequences is polarization in politics. This happens when different groups of political activists band together to try to put their leaders into political office. As a result, overt conflict between and among organized political parties rather than the pursuit of consensus comes to characterize the political scene. Robert Dahl in his study of political

¹ Richard Fagen, *Politics and Communication*, (Boston: 1966), pp. 108-9.

oppositions in Western democracies has suggested the following typology of opposition. He speaks of

- (1) non-structural opposition characterized by "office seeking parties;"
- (2) limited structural opposition, where the object is political reforms; and
- (3) major structural opposition aimed at comprehensive political-structural reform.²

With this typology in mind, we may now turn to a consideration of structural opposition and its relationship to urbanization in two countries in Asia, namely Japan and the Philippines.

As is well known, Japan is the most industrialized country in Asia today and appears to be on the way to achieving the status of a "super power." While it is true that Japan's industrialization got its start in the latter part of the 19th century, the foundations for the industrial edifice were laid long before the opening of the country to large scale Western influences in the Meiji period. Already in the Tokugawa period (1603-1868) the country was becoming sufficiently urbanized so that by the 1700's Edo (present-day Tokyo) was probably larger than London was at that time. There were other cities, notably Osaka, the great commercial city which even boasted such sophisticated institutions as commodity exchanges, and, of course, Kyoto, the traditional capital and cultural center. In the Tokugawa period, Japanese industrial organization had not yet reached the stage where production took place in factories, but in certain lines such as textiles, small scale entrepreneurs organized production on the basis of the "putting out" system. Thus the evidence suggests that Japan had gotten a head start over her Asian neighbors in moving down the path of urbanization and industrialization.

Similarly in the political field, modern organizations and institutions appeared relatively early when compared to developments in other sections of Asia. For example, political parties were first established in the early 1880's, and by 1901 a small group of socialistically inclined middle class intellectuals had become sufficiently critical of the existing political system to feel compelled to form the first Social Democratic Party. In their manifesto the organizers of this party called for such political reforms as the enactment of universal suffrage, and such economic measures as the nationalization of the means of production. The government in power, apparently frightened by this program, banned the Social Democratic Party the very same day that it was organized. A more lasting attempt to introduce socialism in the form of an organized political movement came in the period after World War I. In the early 1920's a Communist Party was organized, but it was unable to obtain legal stature. Socialist parties, however, were allowed to operate openly. The Left-wing parties generally bene-

² Robert Dahl, *Political Oppositions in Western Democracies*, (New Haven: 1966), p. 342.

fited from the enactment of the universal manhood suffrage law which became effective in the 1928 general elections, but were unable to win widespread popular support partly because of the rise of ultranationalism that came on the heels of Japan's invasion of Manchuria in 1931.

Japan's defeat and the Allied Occupation that followed in 1945 substantially changed the political environment. Although the conservatives still remained in control, the Left-wing parties, including the Communist Party, which were legalized, no longer suffered legal and other forms of repression, with the result that the Socialists became the leading opposition party holding more than one third of the seats in the National Diet.

When we look into the sources of support for the Japanese Left, it is clear that it enjoys much more electoral support in the urban areas than it does in the rural communities. A detailed study of six elections for the House of Representatives held between 1947 and 1958 showed that there was a statistically significant difference in the percentage of votes cast for Socialist and Communist candidates among four types of electoral districts, namely, metropolitan, urban, semi-rural, and rural. In other words, the Socialist and Communist vote was directly correlated with the degree of urbanization.³

However, one might note in passing that there are some indications that support for socialism has been declining. According to one study, the percentage of socialist voters in those districts where the number of registered voters has increased the most (i.e., the large cities) between the 1958 and the 1967 elections declined from 38.51 per cent to 27.19 per cent in 1967, while in the districts where the number of registered voters declined the most (i.e., the rural districts) the percentage of vote increased from 23.22 in 1958 to 25.17 in 1967.⁴ This trend, if it continues, may confirm the hypothesis put forward by Daniel Bell that after modernization attains a high level, political polarization decreases and ideological differences become less and less important.⁵ Perhaps Japan, too, is approaching the "end of ideology," and, if so, it would signify that structural opposition is waning.

The picture in the Philippines is somewhat different. Urbanization and industrialization began much later, and large scale industrialization still lies in the future. It is revealing, too, to compare the chronological sequences in political development. Whereas in Japan the first stirrings of an organized Left appeared as early as 1901, in the Philippines the Socialist Party was not formed until 1929, and the Communist Party followed in 1930. The latter, however, was declared illegal by the courts in 1931, with the result

³ Junichi Kyogoku and Nobutaka Ike, *Urban-Rural Differences in Voting Behavior in Postwar Japan*, Proceedings of the Department of Social Sciences, College of Education, University of Tokyo, 1959.

⁴ *So-Senkyo no Kenkyu*. Published by Heiwa Keizai Keikaku Kaigi, (Tokyo: 1967), p. 11.

⁵ Daniel Bell, *The End of Ideology*, (Glencoe, 1960).

that the Communists joined forces with some of the Socialists. Then in the 1930's, the Left became linked to radical peasant reform movements in Central Luzon. During the Japanese occupation the communists organized the *Hukbo ng Bayan Laban Sa Hapon* (People's Anti-Japanese Army), abbreviated Hukbalahap or "Huks." After the end of the war, some of the Communist leaders ran for office under the Democratic Alliance label and six candidates managed to win election to the House of Representatives, only to be denied their seats. Unlike the situation in Japan where Communist and Socialist members actually sit in the parliament, since the Democratic Alliance episode, no representatives of the Left parties have obtained seats in the Philippines Congress. In general the political atmosphere in the Philippines is one where conservative groups and forces are overwhelmingly in control and even the moderate Left is forced to operate under constraints. Under the circumstances, the spectacle of a Socialist Party forming the chief opposition, as is the case in Japan, is virtually inconceivable in the Philippines at present.

The political party competition, therefore, takes place between two dominant conservative organizations, the Nacionalista and Liberal Parties. It is virtually impossible to differentiate between these two parties either in terms of doctrine or social basis. "At first glance," writes Jean Grossholtz, "the Philippines appears to have a two-party system that is national in character. But the closer look reveals that the two are not parties but coalitions of factions put together largely for electoral purposes and characterized by constantly shifting loyalties to men, not issues."⁶ Given the nature of Philippines parties, it is not surprising that politicians should often shift from one party to another. Sometimes even presidential candidates are "imported" from the opposition party.

The failure of the party system to provide the electorate with meaningful choices in terms of doctrine and issues, coupled with governmental inefficiency and corruption which have plagued almost every administration regardless of which party was in control, has naturally led to a certain amount of frustration, particularly on the part of more educated sectors of the voting public. This sense of frustration has found expression in so-called "third force" movements which have appeared from time to time. O. D. Corpuz has characterized these third force movements in these terms: "In strategy the third force movement aimed at an appeal directly to the people and independently of the two leading parties. It was therefore partly a disillusionment with idealistic sentiments and crusading personalities."⁷

The most recent of these third force movements was the attempt on the part of Senator Raul Manglapus to win the presidency in 1965 under the Party for Philippines Progress (PPP) banner. Senator Manglapus cam-

⁶ Jean Grossholtz, *Politics in the Philippines*, (Boston, 1964), p. 136.

⁷ Onofre D. Corpuz, *The Philippines*, (Englewood Cliffs: 1965), p. 112.

paigned on a kind of Christian Socialist platform, advocating, among other things, social justice, and agrarian and tax reforms. In terms of Dahl's typology, the movement represented by the Party for Philippines Progress might be characterized as a form of "limited structural opposition."

Senator Manglapus' campaign met the fate which has consistently befallen third force movements in the Philippines. He ran a poor third to Ferdinand Marcos, the winning candidate, and Diosdado Macapagal, the incumbent. A tabulation of the vote for Manglapus shows, however, that he won about 10 per cent of the total in the cities and about 4 per cent in the provinces. Quite clearly he ran much stronger in the cities, and among cities he obtained in general more support in those where the degree of urbanization was higher.

But before we proceed to analyze the Manglapus vote in various cities, some preliminary remarks are in order. First of all, Karl Deutsch has suggested that modernization expands human needs, which, in turn, lead to increased demands for governmental services to meet these needs. If the government is unable to meet these demands because of increasing burdens put upon it, more and more of the population will become alienated and frustrated.⁸ Certain inferences may be drawn from this model. Modernization proceeds faster in the cities than in the countryside so the demands would be greater in the cities, leading to a higher frustration level. Moreover, because of better communications the sense of frustration is mutually enforced. For instance, an individual is frustrated by a badly run postal system and his sense of frustration and outrage is aggravated when he reads letters to the editor or irate newspaper columnists complaining about the post office. If the inferences drawn from this model are correct, then we could predict that the city vote would be more inclined to some sort of structural opposition. In the particular case at hand, it would mean a higher percentage of vote for Senator Manglapus, since in the Philippines political context, he virtually had no chance to achieve victory, and hence a vote cast for the Senator was essentially a protest vote. Our hypothesis then would be that the percentage of vote cast for Senator Manglapus in the cities would vary directly with the degree of urbanization.

To test our hypothesis, we first had to rank Philippines cities according to some criteria of urbanization. Fortunately this had already been attempted by Isao Fujimoto, who believes that Philippines cities are undergoing a process of differentiation which is cumulative and unidimensional. For him cities are systems which transmit information of all kinds, and, he says, "communities differ in the amount of information they possess and how they process it."⁹ He argues that the presence of certain institutions,

⁸ Karl Deutsch, "Social Mobilization and Political Development," reprinted in Eckstein, Harry and David Apter (eds.), *Comparative Politics*, (New York: 1963), pp. 582-603.

⁹ Isao Fujimoto, "The Social Complexity of the Philippine Towns and Cities," *Solidarity*, Vol. III, No. 5 (May 1968), p. 78.

for example, high schools, drug stores, dry cleaning establishments, etc., indicates complexity and the ability to maintain certain kinds of social information. "Thus, vis-a-vis the community as an information processing device, items can be found that will tap different levels of differentiations (or information complexity). Guttman scales line up the cities of the Philippines along this general dimension of complexity."¹⁰ One of the scales he has devised is the "public articulation" scale for 39 Philippines cities.¹¹ It is based on the existence (or lack thereof) of such items as high schools, streets with names, college or university, long distance telephones, fire hydrants, Philippines News Service coverage, local newspapers, directories, traffic lights, TV stations, foreign embassies, daily newspapers, and foreign news services. He states that the public articulation scale "includes items which reveal much more directly the communication handling capabilities of a city."¹²

The next step in testing our hypothesis involved the calculation of the percentage vote cast for Senator Manglapus in the 1965 presidential elections. Here there is a problem, but I know of no way to cope with it. Under the law, only the two major parties are allowed election inspectors. Senator Manglapus has publicly stated that when he campaigned people came up to him whether he had election inspectors, and, he relates, "we would, of course, answer 'No' knowing that we had just lost more votes from electors who did not care to cast ballots that would not be counted." He goes on to state that after the election a certain person told him, "We are fifteen in our household. We all voted for you in one precinct. The final count gave you only three votes. What happened?"¹³ Since there is no way to estimate the number of votes that were cast but not counted, I have had to take the official returns at face value in making the calculations.

The procedure followed was to calculate the percentage of vote cast for Senator Manglapus out of the total cast for the top three candidates, namely, Marcos, Macapagal, and Manglapus. Each city was then ranked according to the Manglapus vote. The highest turned out to be Cagayan de Oro with 27.38 per cent, and the lowest was Tres Martires with 0 per cent. This then gave us two rankings for Philippines cities based on the degree of urbanization according to the Fujimoto scale and the percentage of vote for Manglapus. The two variables were then tabulated as in the following 2 x 2 table (Table 1).

If we summarize Table 1 for the purpose of making a chi-square test, we get the results summarized in Table 2.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 88.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 79.

¹³ *A Christian Social Movement*, (Manila: 1968), p. 3.

TABLE 1
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MANGLAPUS VOTE AND PUBLIC ARTICULATION SCALE
Public Articulation Scale

		High: 9-14	Low: 1-8	
High: 7.00— 28.00%	Cagayan de Oro	27.38	Gingoog 21.96	
	Quezon City	14.90	Ozamiz 16.56	
	Bacolod	14.06	Cavite 13.06	
	Lucena	13.26	Cotabato 9.69	
	Naga	13.24	Basilan 7.86	
	Manila	13.12	Lipa 7.20	
	Zamboanga	11.98		
	Baguio	10.12		
	Cebu	9.75		
	Dumaguete	9.37		
	Caloocan	8.83		
	San Pablo	8.77		
	Iloilo	7.27		
	Vote for Manglapus	Iligan	6.76	Legaspi 6.29
		Davao	6.58	Silay 6.26
Cabanatuan		4.08	Toledo 5.01	
Dagupan		3.19	Lapu Lapu 5.00	
Low: 0-6.99%		Butuan	2.87	Dapitan 4.83
		Angeles	1.99	Ormoc 3.05
				Roxas 2.91
				Tacloban 2.13
				San Carlos 1.64
				Marawi 1.25
				Danao 0.78
			Tagaytay 0.70	
			Calbayog 0.52	
		Trece Martires 0.00		

(Amount after city equals percentage vote for Manglapus). Source: Republic of the Philippines, *Report of the Commission on Elections to the President of the Philippines and the Congress*. (Manila: 1967).

TABLE 2
SUMMARY OF TABLE 1

		<i>Public Articulation Scale</i>	
		High	Low
Vote for Manglapus	High	13	6
	Low	6	14
		19	20
		n=39	

p about .025

The chi-square test indicates that the probability of such an association occurring by chance is about two and one-half per cent, well under the conventional 5 per cent level. Thus we can say that there is a statistically significant correlation between the vote for Senator Manglapus, here interpreted as an indication of limited structural opposition, and urbanization as measured by Fujimoto's public articulation scale.

Certain implications may be drawn from our analysis. First of all, the proper functioning of democracy, at least in the Anglo-American model from which the Philippines political system is derived, appears to necessitate the existence of two major political parties that will compete for the control of the government. Moreover, as the late V. O. Key has suggested in his study of southern politics in the United States, it is assumed that a political party will be based on sectional, class, or group interests, and that differences in these interests will produce differentiation in the policies that political parties will seek to put into practice through their control of the government.¹⁴ As we have suggested, the two major parties in the Philippines do not represent different sectional, class, or group interests, with the result that the interests of certain groups, for example, labor, tenant farmers, cultural minorities are hardly represented by either one of the two major parties.

There no doubt exists dissatisfaction with the present party set up. Moreover, as our data suggests, the dissatisfaction is not randomly distributed throughout the Philippines but tends to be distributed roughly according to the degree of urbanization. If we can assume that what has occurred in Japan and many other parts of the world will also take place in the Philippines, then the 1965 vote for Senator Manglapus would appear to be a harbinger of things to come. As industrialization and urbanization gain momentum in the Philippines, the present political party system based on identical parties is likely to give way to one where opposition means more than mere office seeking. A realignment of parties, when it occurs, will get its impetus from the cities, and will most probably result in the emergence of structural opposition.

¹⁴ V. O. Key, *Southern Politics*, (New York, 1949), (Vintage Books Edition), p. 15.