



Department of Political Science
College of Social Sciences and Philosophy

When Populists Perform Foreign Policy

The South China Sea Dispute & the Philippines under Duterte

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Performative Duterte

“

I will ride a jet ski
while bringing the
Philippine flag.”

Rodrigo Duterte



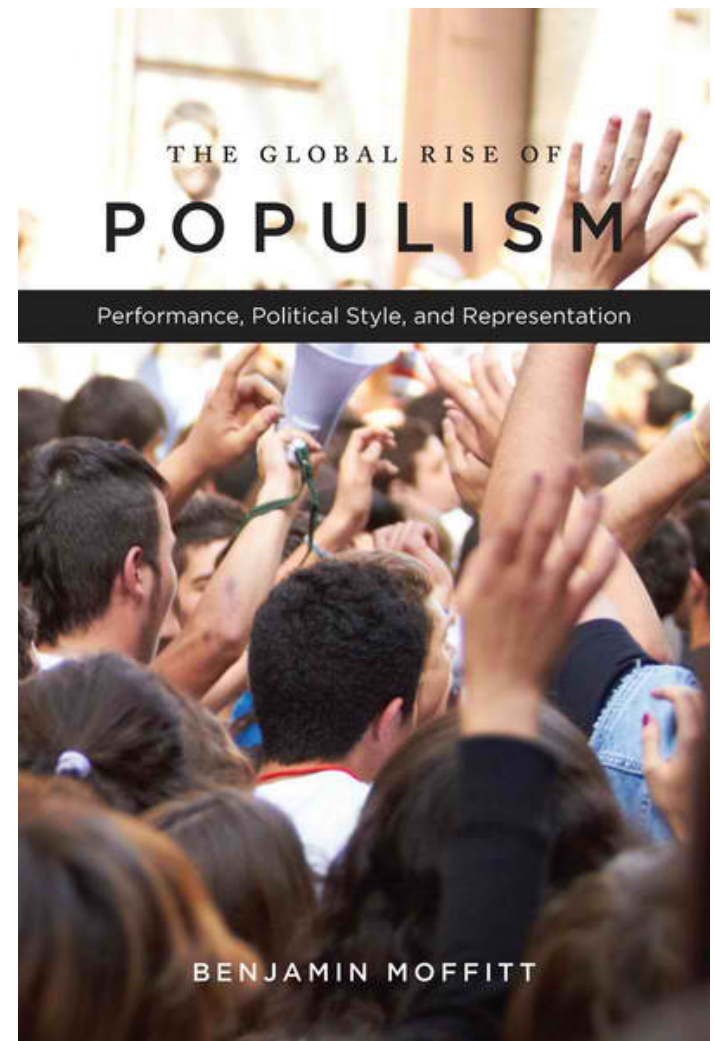
Main Points

- Duterte's shift has domestic and populist roots.
- Performative populists have different audiences and constituencies
- Foreign policy and performative populism can lead to inconsistent, unsustainable, and risky outcomes



Populism as a Political Style

- Appeal to the people
- “Bad” manners
- Crisis, breakdown, and threat



Foreign Policy as a Populist Performance

ABS-CBN NEWS

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Duterte reminded against use of 'gutter language'

Trishia Billones, ABS-CBN News

Posted at Aug 16 2016 12:30 PM | Updated as of Aug 16 2016 05:43 PM



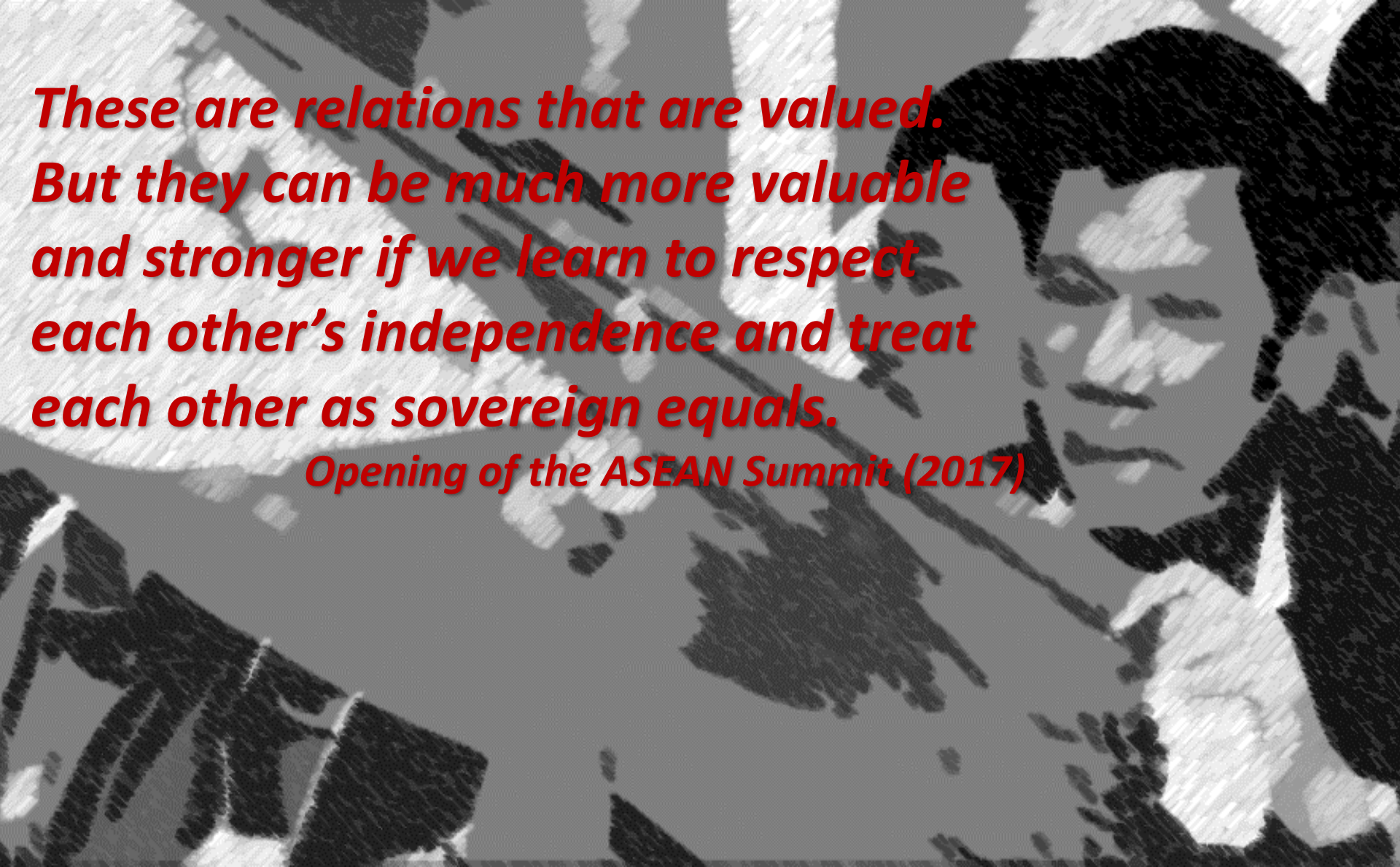
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An Independent Philippine Foreign Policy?

*These are relations that are valued.
But they can be much more valuable
and stronger if we learn to respect
each other's independence and treat
each other as sovereign equals.*

Opening of the ASEAN Summit (2017)



Duterte: The Pragmatic Nationalist (?)

- Duterte: Not the usual Filipino Head of State
 - From conflict-ridden Mindanao
- Has a different world view from the political class
- Wanted to restore relations with China
- Deep anti-US sentiment
- Admires and grateful to Japan

- Incompetent stooge or Brilliant strategist?



Duterte's Pivot to China



SCS Strategy

- Non-confrontational: Shelving the arbitral award temporarily
- Plural: Diplomatic relations beyond SCS
- Mixed: Bilateral and Multilateral initiatives
- Multi-faceted: Several security issues
- Serendipitous: ASEAN chairmanship
- “Bandwagoning”
- Short-sighted
- Risky



Is the Philippines “Hedging”?

- Duterte’s strategic playbook
- Rhetoric as a veneer
- Pushback by institutional veto players: military
- Competence of his foreign policy team
- Domestic audience costs (performativity)
- Credible commitment deficit



Performative Populism

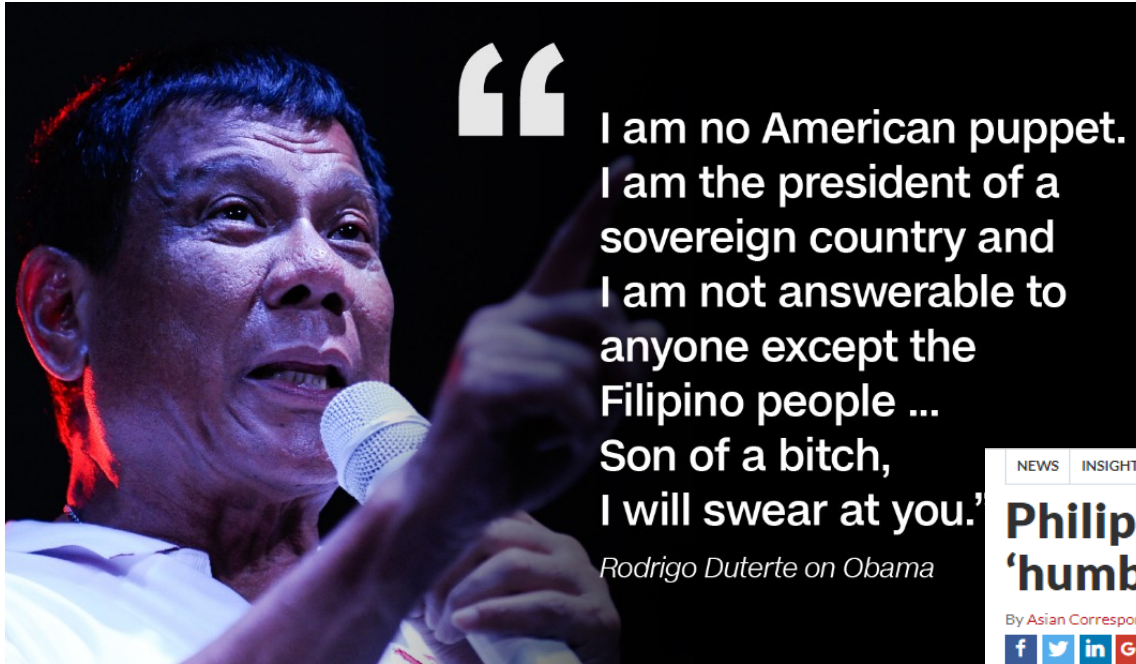
Audience

- US
- China
- ASEAN
- Domestic political elites
- Other International actors
- Media
- Oligarchs
- Foreign policy elites

Constituency

- Duterte mass base
- Middle classes
- Security Sector (military and the police)
- Overseas Filipinos
- China?





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Philippines: Duterte calls himself US' 'humble friend' in Southeast Asia

By Asian Correspondent Staff | 8th August 2017 | @ascorrespondent



Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte shakes hands with visiting U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson during a meeting at the presidential palace in Manila, Philippines




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Trump hails 'great relationship' with Philippines' Duterte

US president offers no public rebuke of Rodrigo Duterte's brutal drugs crackdown as he nears end of 12-day Asia tour



 Trump boasts of 'great relationship' with Duterte at ASEAN summit - video



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NEWS

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CODE OF CONDUCT NEEDED

Duterte to tell Xi: ASEAN countries wary of militarization in South China Sea

Published November 9, 2017 10:01pm

By JOSEPH MORONG, GMA News

President Rodrigo Duterte on Thursday said that he would raise the supposed militarization in the South China Sea when he sits down with Chinese President Xi Jinping in bilateral talks in Vietnam over the weekend.

In a press conference held after he met the Filipino community in Pulchra Resort in Da nang, Vietnam, the President said he would press China to come up with a code of conduct to govern countries with competing claims to the South China Sea.

Duterte added that as the chairman of this year's ASEAN Summit, he would tell Xi that the Southeast Asian nations were "wary and worried," about the militarization in the disputed waters.

"In the bilaterals, I would insist that we hurry up. I do not want to lose the friendship of China. China is a good friend. China was there when we needed most their help," Duterte said. "I have to tell the truth that every body is worried," he added.

Duterte said he would not ask China to dismantle the arms installations in some islands in the South China Sea but added that he would like to know if navigation would remain unimpeded in the area.

"Those are not decorations," Duterte said.

Duterte confirmed that his bilateral meeting with Xi will be on Saturday.




ASEAN, China agree to start talks on South China Sea code

By Camille Diola (philstar.com) | Updated November 14, 2017 - 10:48am

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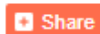
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Chinese Premier Li Keqiang and Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte at the ASEAN-China Summit on Monday, Nov. 13, 2017 at the Philippine International Convention Center in Pasay City, Philippines.
Composite pool photo

ASEAN-China adopts declaration on marine environment protection

By Joyce Ann L. Rocamora, Philippine News Agency on November 17, 2017



MANILA — The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and China have moved forward towards the implementation of the 2002 Declaration of Conduct after it adopted on November 13 a document declaring 2017-2027 as a decade for the protection of coastal and marine environment in the South China Sea.

In the chairman's statement of the 20th ASEAN-China summit, the Leaders' Declaration on a Decade of Coastal and Marine Environmental Protection in the South China Sea was described "reflective" of ASEAN member states and China's "shared

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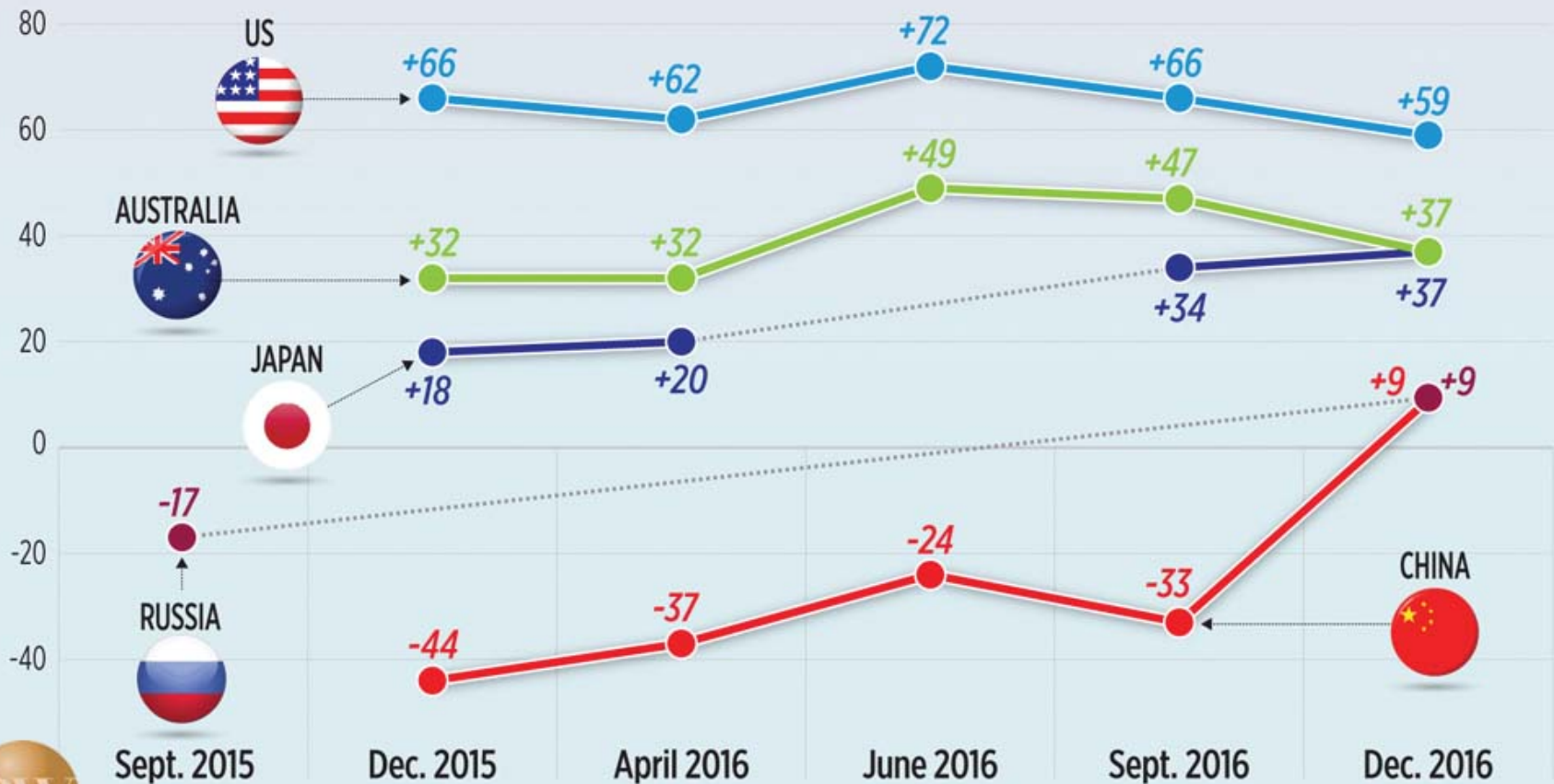
Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte at the Malacanang Presidential Palace in Manila, Philippines, Aug. 16, 2017.

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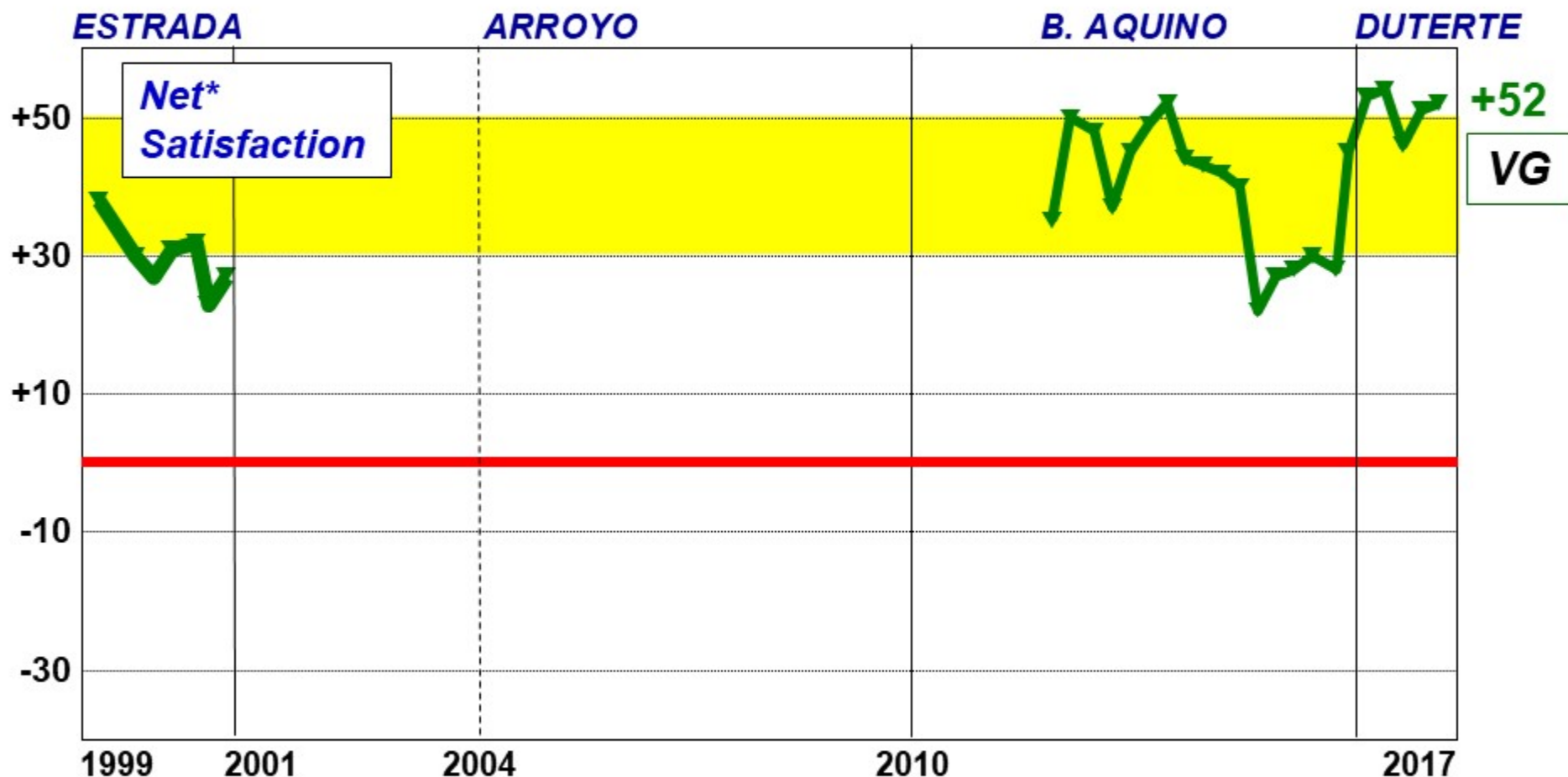
BUSINESSWORLD GRAPHICS: BONG R. FORTIN



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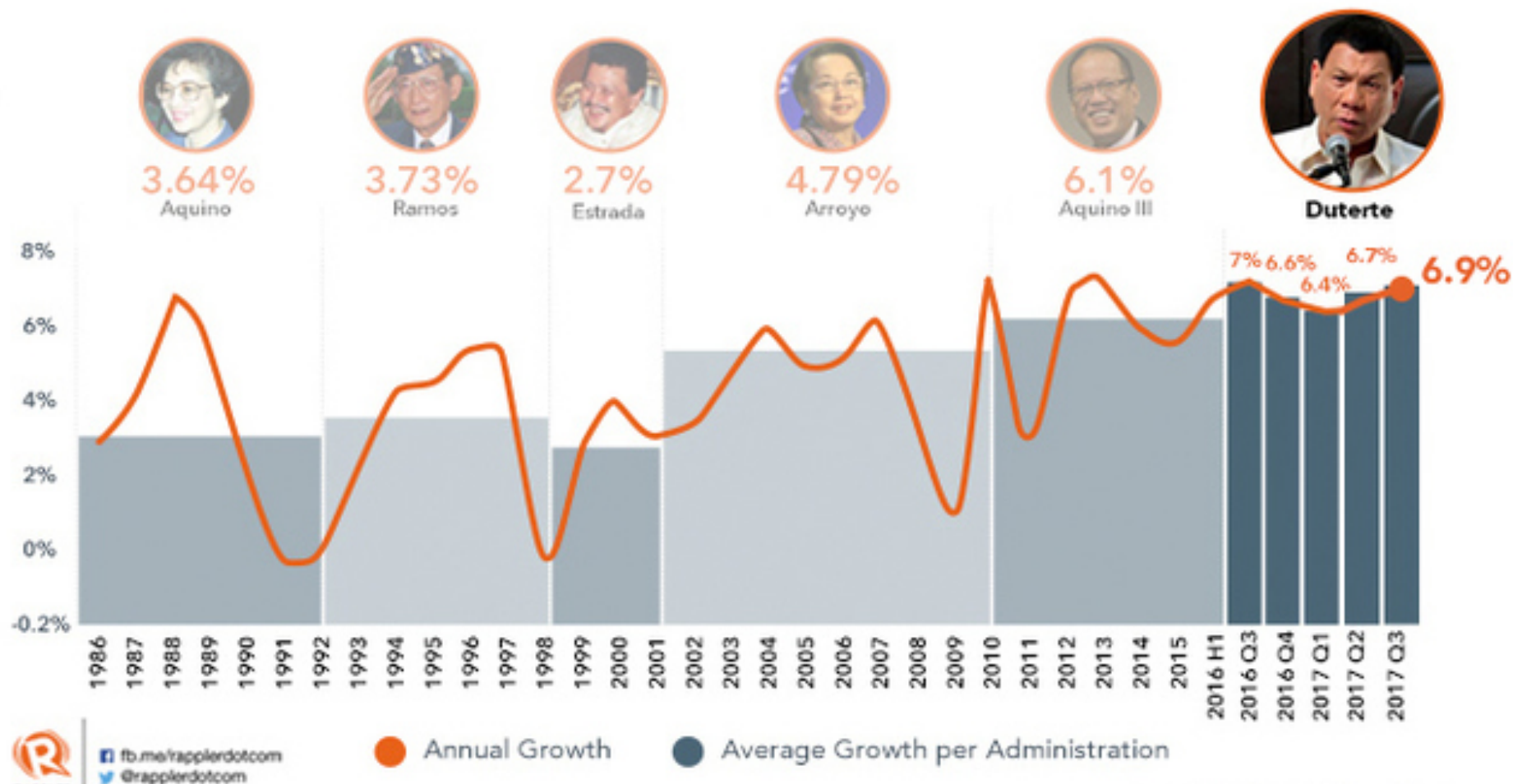
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* Net figures (% Satisfied minus % Dissatisfied) correctly rounded.

Economic Performance is critical.

CAN DUTERTE SUSTAIN THE **PHILIPPINE** GROWTH MOMENTUM?



Conclusions

- Domestic roots of Duterte's populist foreign policy
- Danger of pernicious polarization: Duterte's hubris vs. the Opposition's impatience
- Shared Strategic playbook: Foreign policy bureaucracy
- Highly risky strategy: credibility costs



newsroom.

'Pernicious polarisation' risk in Duterte's Philippines

Rodrigo Duterte's first year in office has included hidden successes, but there may be pitfalls ahead for the populist president.



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