THE HERMENEUTICS OF TYRANNY:
THE "OUST DUTERTE CALL" FROM THE VIEW OF ANSELM AND AQUINAS

Rodrigo Emil M. Carreon[1] and Clarita Rivera[1]
[1]Political and Legal Studies Area, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences,
Colegio de San Juan de Letran – Manila

Abstract

The reconciliation of high medieval philosophical theories and its praxis is expressed in this opus. The "oust Duterte" petition is a move not of an individual political being but rather of a political sphere upon which the individual is subjected to. The role of philosophy has always been subjected to the endeavor of continuously seeking the truth. The truth is categorized as logical and ontological, where it is hermeneutically subjected to the philosophical engagement proponents of ontology and logic, St. Anselm of Canterbury, and St. Thomas Aquinas respectively. The highlight of this paper is explicating the inviolability of the ruler – constituent relationship under the interpretation of ontology and logic. The contribution of this opus is its pure philosophical engagement into a situation which is material, as such that the latter is viewed by its antecedent vis a vis the evolution of the philosophical theories presented as modalities.

Keywords: Ontology, Logic, Political Philosophy, Hermeneutics

Introduction

The principle of political engagement provides that one cannot alienate the state from the ruler and vice versa. (Farrel, 2018). Therefore, the researcher attempts to analyze the relationship of the ruler to the state and ultimately to the constituents in a manner inclined on the notion of principle and predicaments. This paper attempts to interpret a phenomenon in the light of the theories of Anselm's ontology and the rule of reason versus Aquinas's logic and the rule of law.

The enhanced community quarantine promulgated under Republic Act 11469 or the Bayanihan to Heal as One Act has brought the concentration of lockdowns in the entire National Capital Region (Masangkay, 2020). The bureaucracy has found itself in an unprecedented situation thereby judged by the public to be unreliable and inefficient (Quintos, 2020). The Philippine government has committed actuations that have angered the public. In this light, one is the slow action of the Department of Health to combat increasing cases of the illness, implementing late border closure and imposing of travel bans (Tomacruz, 2020).

In such light, the danger of non-security of goods, funds and appropriations where individually voiced – out by the populace to the government. Based on the account of (Tomacruz and Hapal, 2020) all these events transpired to the circumstantial response of the citizenry to call on an "oust Duterte" petition explicit in almost all social media fronts especially in Twitter garnering 500,000 tweets. This clamor would then mirror the dissatisfaction of the people with the actions of the government calling it to be irresponsible, abused, and misused.

The intention is to explicate the foundations of philosophical ideologies rooting from the ancient and medieval prime philosophers of the age, i.e., St. Anselm of Canterbury and St. Thomas Aquinas. The researcher places the entire idea of political relations considering the events that transpire during this era that may be under the consideration of potency, non-potency, competency, and non-competency.

The threshold question in this paper is to determine *will ruler - constituent relationship become accidental factors to the state such that the latter cannot be displaced, and its essence may not be affected?* To further aid this study in ascertaining the answer that shall suffice the main objective of this paper, sub questions are also exhibited, as: (1) *How does the philosophical approach of Anselm and Aquinas differ when it comes to the tyranny phenomena?* (2) *How can philosophy delve into predicaments of the Duterte leadership and draw the boundary for theory versus practicality?*

Literature review

Anselm, who exemplifies ontology and Aquinas, who helms logic, both influenced modern political thinkers. However, there is a dearth of literature regarding how modern theories built up on the theories of Anselm and Aquinas, simply because they are ancient and medieval philosophers (Wynn, 2020; Akinwale, 2020) Thus, this literature review determines the philosophical literatures created as their antecedents.

Ontology of the Identical and the Ideal

Wilhelm Gottfried Leibniz's reasoning manifests indiscernibility of the identical, (Law, 2007; Look, 2020). Therefore, how does one delineate something that has the different properties and judge them to be true? Anselm provides that it is of what is ideal (Gorman, 2003; Duzi, 2011). Therefore, Leibniz directs the problem on finding the ideal, it is of judgement whether identical or not (Lodge, 2016; Silvestre, 2018). Thus, the tyranny phenomenon is subjected to Leibniz's ontological conception whether it is aggression to the state or state preservation.

The use of force falls under aggression and state preservation (Frowe, 2015; Dagger, 1977); however, the ideal must be dissected. In Leibniz's ontological theory, one may have to find the ideal in an "oust call campaign". The idea possesses both aggression and protection, and one common factor is force.

Therefore, is force aggression or protection? Leibniz asserts that what is ideal in this act is the soul of the act itself, that not out of displeasure but rather out of obligation and that is what is ideal (Baker, 2013; Edmundson, 2004).

Cartesian Certitude and the Cogito Argument

Descartes says "I think therefore, I am", so to find out what was unreasonable and eliminate it, the only remaining premises where the valid ones (McDonough, 2021; Nelson, 1997). Descartes theorizes the question what is certain? When that is identified, then that must be the truth (Smith, 2018). The contextualization of this argument in a state – ruler relationship, with the interjection of tyranny is then tested to a question, is the law nonexistent if it is already in the tyrannical rule? The existence of the law does not vary on the ruler, rather on the people from which the law is made for (Moore, 2019).

If so, do the people have the right to enforce the law on a tyrannical leader? The answer is yes, the right remains but it is unreasonable, because a tyrant already is lawless. Therefore, the claim must protrude a premise that consent is the basis of political legitimacy, when the people/citizens consent political legitimacy, then it is true (Fossen, 2021). Therefore, the disintegrated leader - now tyrant is in fear of revolution not of populace aggression to the state but aggression to the tyrant in the name of the state; the people consent aggression for reformations, (Delmas and Brownlee, 2021).

The General Will as a causality of the Social Contract

Jean Jacques Rousseau exemplifies that the general will must always prevail (Law, 2007; D' Agostino, Gaus, and Thrasher, 2019). The social contract in this circumstance defines that the general will is the ultimate happiness that the populace may obtain from its existence in the state (William and Farr, 2015). It is the exercise of caprices and rights that the political being is currently enjoying and is classified as an impediment to the general will (Clarke, Capes, and Swenson, 2017). The latter is the will towards common good (Bertram, 2017; Brooke, 2015).

In logical interpretation, the state imposes this social agreement, for the common good which will constitute egalitarian freedom (Hardwick, 2011; Beller, 2013). However, given the previous premises, a contention is raised when the welfare of the state is not congruent with the general will. The leader then becomes a tyrant. (Darnell and Rohatyn, 1993; Quong, 2018). The tyrant becomes a usurper of sovereign power. The latter possesses a dual nature, both of being the disintegrated leader and the obstructive entity to the common good (Finnis, 2020)

The Workmanship theory blundered by the Eichmann Problem

The reasoning by logic observed by John Locke praises Aquinas on his work on the definition of natural law vis a vis the divine law (Brezik, 1981; Gordon – Roth, 2020). Locke's theory of workmanship was damaged by the

philosophical predicament of the Eichmann problem (Arendt, 1964). The Eichmann problem derived from Adolf Eichmann, lieutenant colonel of the Nazi army that transported Jews to concentration camps (Barenbaum, 2014).

Although, Eichmann did not play an active role on the extermination of Jews, he was passive enough to ignore the moral detriments of his actions by being a transport officer in doing his day-to-day tasks (Bhat, N/D). Even in the absence of the activeness, he was an accomplice, thereby losing control of moral autonomy (Garbaum, 1996; Shapiro, 2020). In the Lockean view of the natural law, the divine law is interpreted to man. Therefore, the divine is the supreme being, the one whom people regard as creator and workman of the entire arche (Uzgalis, 2018; Hassan, 2014; Tuckness, 2020).

In that light, the Eichmann problem is a phenomenal detriment to morality and a blunder to the preservation of the state. Eichmann is already against natural law since he consented the doing of the Nazi ideology. In the Lockean philosophy, should an individual disrupt the natural law, it is the moral obligation of the citizenry to preserve what the workman – the supreme being has given as sovereign (Huhne, 2012; Rogers, 2020; Rickless, 2020).

Theoretical framework

The opus subjects the phenomenon into the two – fold truth argument (Yadlin – Gadot, 2017). Therefore, the phenomenon will be viewed in this paper as the truth and the latter is hermeneutically explicated through: (a) pure ontology, (b) pure logic, and (c) truth as a synthesis of ontology and logic. The philosophers who this researcher inquests are St. Anselm of Canterbury and St. Thomas Aquinas, for the specific reason that both philosophers are prolific proponents of ontology and logic respectively (Law, 2007). Thus, ontology is the conformity of the real to the ideal; while logic is the conformity of the ideal to the real (Goodin, 2011; Nunes, 2012).

Methods

Study Design

Methodological hermeneutics allows the proponent to ascertain and challenge the presented philosophy at hand (McCaffrey, Rafflin – Bouchal, and Moules, 2012). Furthermore, the method permits the researcher to derive the philosophical inquest based on the development of philosophical modalities (Addeo, 2013). The latter projects a grounded philosophy, as in the case of this research, these are ontology and logic.

The hypothetico – anti positivist approach is employed, following the interpretation of ontological and logical theories formed by its proponent philosophers and contoured by developing philosophies. This approach aids the researcher to bring about the logical deduction of contouring the

phenomenon with the philosophy and thereby, ascertains their comparison and contrast (Seamon, 2017; Tariq, 2015).

Figure 1: Theoretical Framework of the study
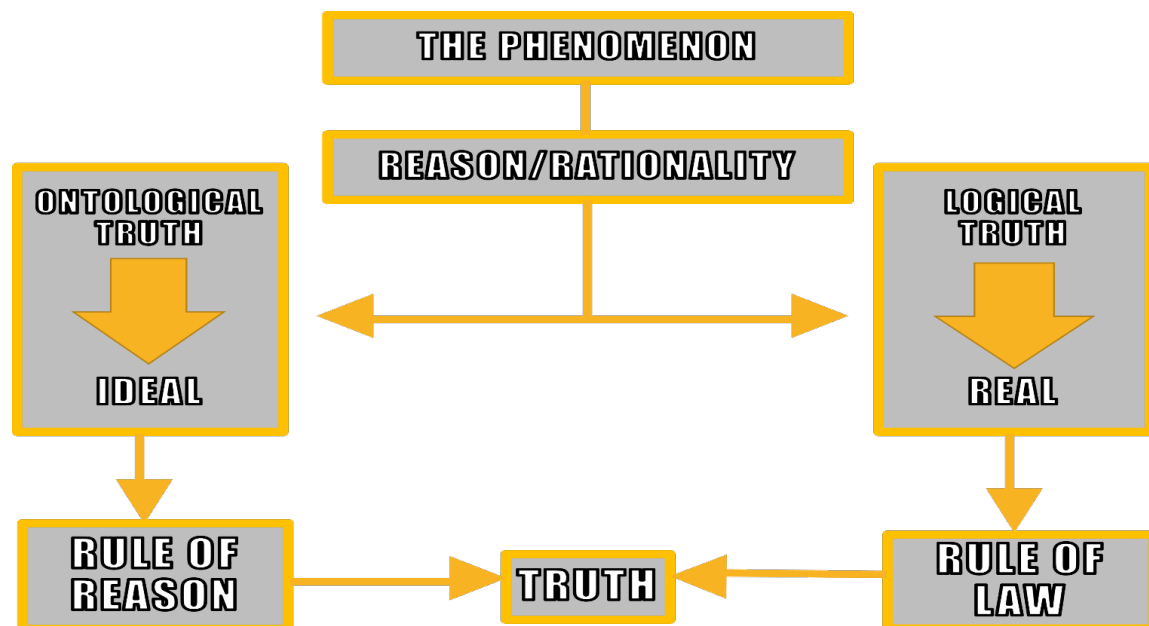
Data Selection and Validation

The paper will employ a profound philosophical qualitative approach and will consist of two modalities taken from two distinct medieval philosophers namely, St. Anselm of Canterbury and St. Thomas Aquinas, who have engaged in the principles and predicaments of law, existentialism, and reasoning (Shapiro, 2020; Mercado, 2006; Law, 2007; Salgado, 2016). This academic pursuit utilized data from the primary works in the fields of ontology and logic namely Anselm's Proslogion and Aquinas's Summa Theologiae respectively.

Truth, as the ultimate end of philosophy, is the conformity of the intellect and the situation, concept, principle, circumstance, or even the material itself (Glanzberg, 2018; David, 2020). However, truth is also two-fold, first is logical, the apparent truth is thereby expressed as the knowledge of the intellect conforming to the reality, whereas the other fold is ontological defining as the reality conforming to the intellect (Salgado, 2016; Veitch, 2020).

Data Analysis

The usage of the methodological hermeneutics in this opus follows a two-pronged assertion. The first prong is internal analysis, where the predicament in which a situated circumstance is stated that a certain principle is valid by virtue of reasoning that pertains to something which man perceives as logical

(Pellauer and Dauenhauer, 2021). The next one would be through external analysis, where the argument, is applied in a - posteriori situation, meaning knowledge through transpiring events of political life (George, 2021).

Logical truth means what we perceive is as is, and ontological truth means what we think it should or must be then it is the truth (Salgado, 2016; Law, 2007). In this study, the researcher compared the ontology of St. Anselm's reasoning on law, state, and ruler vis a vis the logical concept of Aquinas. In that light, this paper exhibits commentaries, proposals, refusals, and conformity of modern and postmodern philosophers with respect to the principles of Anselm and Aquinas, who are both considered modalities of principle and arche of truth seeking (Sweeny, 2019; Goris and Aertsen, 2019).

Findings and discussions

Anselm's Rule of Reason

St. Anselm of Canterbury circumnavigates through the principles of law and state through pure reasoning alone that is a concept that interprets not the technicality, whether precedence or antecedence of law rather the essence and soul of the ideology (Salgado, 2016; Pontifex, 1965). It is in the interpretation of Ontology that truth is perceived as the ideal while logical truth is real (Baker, 2013; Anstey, 1961; Hofweber, 2021).

The ontological argument in the relationship of ruler and state, in the public demand of the constituency to remove a sitting leader may not even be an action directed towards activism and displeasure but rather an action of the human person that is necessary and a right expressed. It is not in the notion of displeasure but in the notion that a certain idea must be corrected (Epstein, 2021; Inwagen, 2021). It is not in fact displeasure that drives the public to call on a petition to remove the one in power but rather the desire to place the powers in their own doings.

This is the very same principle of ontology, conceiving the ideal to be projected in the circumstantial real (Oppy, 2021). It is in the reason of every individual on how to ideally mechanize and move in accordance to ruling and procedure (Simons, 2015). This concept manifests the unconscious driving force to uphold the petition to remove a leader not because the people hate the actions of the latter but because the people ideally know on how it should be done.

It is in that sense that Anselm used ontology as his primary weapon of reasoning simply because he ascertained to delineate his idea from that of Metaphysics which was the Platonic means of dealing with political theories (Kemp, 2021; Salgado, 2016; Stroll and Matinich, 2021). In the latter, Plato and Aristotle beseeched the truth by Metaphysics, and condemned the concept of justice for the people of the ruling class simply because metaphysically speaking, justice is a congruence of concept derived from what is due to everyone (Cammack, 2015).

Therefore, justice would not be called justice if it is exhibited only for a few as it becomes injustice (Dahl, 2021; Blumenthal and Armstrong, 2020). How then is it called justice if there is one? The said question was agreed upon by Anselm however, detaching ontology from metaphysics (Simons, 2020; Verzi, 2011).

Contextualizing the Argument of Justice

Let this opus question the soul of the concept of removing a leader. It is only due to the certain misgiving of an act, or a blunder made due to the situation. However, the populace remains with a stand that the leader did not express the petition when circumstances were in their own favor. In analogy, the way to ontologize this argument is to first review the argument of justice, how will justice be perceived as justice when perception of justice is subjective? (Llano, 2001; Dahl, 2021)

This paper provides an ontological premise by using reason according to Anselm. It is justice because what is external and experienced is confirmed through the intellect (Grafstein, 1985). Although many may have different concepts of justice, the term justice alone is enough to convince reason that the action of justice may not just to serve equality amongst the populace but rather to serve what is just as a whole or in general (Rosenthal, 2019).

The "oust Duterte call" is an intrinsic obligation of man as it is an inherent ability and duty to protect the state. Anselm argues the proof of the existence of the Supreme Being may be likened to that of the soul of the said petition or movement (Nnaeme, 2015). Thus, the philosopher protrudes that the endless or eternal is enough to prove the existence of the Supreme Being (Himma, 2021; Whittemore, 2021; McLaughlin, N/D). Therefore, the soul of the petition, points to a primacy that the people eventually derive to look for an ideal circumstance.

The Ontological Position and the Phenomenon

The soul of the petition is the call for action not by the people to the government but rather by the people to themselves. Thus, giving emphasis to their action not as result of displeasure but as result to transpire what is ideal. This hermeneutically places the ontological reasoning of Anselm as an explication that deciphers the relationship of the ruler and state, something that is an intellectual acknowledgement of pure reasoning for it to exist (Matassa, 2013; Mercado, 2006; Risse, 2020).

Therefore, the researcher hypothesizes that either the state or the ruler cannot exist without the other (Nunes, 2012). However, what makes it ontological is that when the populace interprets that the state's co – existence with the ruler now depends on the public. In that light, ontology manifests, that the essence of the state and the ruler become legitimate and true when the people examine it to be ideal (Goodin, 2011).

It is ontological due to the fact of temporariness claims (Kinsella and West – Pavlov, 2018). The said claim protrudes that the populace does not call for a removal of a ruler when everything is favorable or ideal, removal is called because of the opposite. Therefore, an occurrence of a reconciliation of what I think is ideal to what is real, then that is the truth (Salgado, 2017; Raatkainen, 2016). The experience of an unideal situation brings about an action obliged consciously or unconsciously to restore it to what is ideal. Thus, being the truth in all its sensibilities (Shapiro, 2020; David, 2020).

Aquinas's Logical Argument

Aquinas's argument is to attain the truth by which the principle of law governs the ruler and state relationship (Glenn, 1960; Finnis, 2021; Swartz, 2010). This logical principle, manifests that when everything that is impossible will be eliminated, and whatever remains however improbable must be the truth (Chenu, 2021; Salgado, 2016). In ontology, pure reasoning and conformity of the intellect is enough to prove a claim (Rosenthal, 2019; Himma, 2021). However, logic concentrates on what transpires as it may not be ideal but real (Hofweber, 2021; Hintika, 2019).

Therefore, all laws must be in accordance with the natural law as it is the natural flow of human existence thereby, it is only logical that what may not be natural is against the law (Del Prado, 1911; Salgado, 2017). Aquinas projected a concept of a tyrant, that one which differs in the natural law by which all mankind is entrusted to observe (Glenn, 1960; Law, 2007). It is even an inseparable concept that when scholars come to analyze Aquinas, they cannot but define law as an ordinance of reason promulgated by authority and for the common good (Murphy, 2019).

In the logical tradition, it is the real transpiration of events that refers to social order and for the benefit of the common good. In ontological terms, the "oust Duterte campaign" is a result not of displeasure but rather of a superior idea that is thought to be ideal in concept (Goodin, 2011). However, Aquinas's logical reasoning directs that it is the outcome of populace displeasure.

In Defense of the Tyrant and Qualifying Tyranny

Aquinas qualified tyranny as not necessarily the utilization of authority that begets abuse of power (Kilcullen and Robinson, 2019). Aquinas preinitialized that all philosophical notions and concepts are anchored to law, therefore, the function of such as classificatory to a tyrant is also anchored to law (Swartz, 2010). The latter is under Aquinas' concept of Salus Republicae Suprema Lex, which may be interpreted as the safety of the state is the supreme law (Baur, 2012; Glenn, 1960).

In a logical manner, the ruler no longer becomes a ruler when he fails to put into principle, the safety of the state, because according to Aquinas, one who does not act on the safety of the state violates the common good (Mercado,

2006). Thus, if a ruler is considered a law breaker as such as failing to act in accordance with the common good which is the safety of the state, whether explicit or implied, he is already an enemy of the state (Silar, 2008; Meehan and Molden, 2015).

Human law is derived from the natural law, the natural law is the actual law by which the Supreme Being bestows upon the ruler therefore the interpretation of the natural law falls into the hands of the ruler (McCarthy, 2017; Rahman, 2019). However, this is not absolute, the interpretation of law by the ruler may be placed into a deficiency in such aspect, that if the interpreter of the law (ruler) was able to obtain the position through means of immoral acts.

Aquinas stated that if the presence of a leader becomes tyrannical, then the latter must be eliminated (Marmor, 2021; Swartz, 2010; Finnis, 2021) The action of the people performed and manifested in the "oust Duterte campaign" may be seen in a logical manner. Therefore, it is real and concrete, and what people perceive in conformity is true. The populace act is an exhibition of displeasure with the many actions done insufficiently to combat the said pandemic.

In the event the "oust Duterte campaign" reaches its prime is it then lawful to do the campaign without the category that the leader is a tyrant and only conformed in the displeasure of the popular subjectivity? Aquinas' logic would answer no and not even if the leader has already committed tyranny that is tolerable to the state. Aquinas argued that, on the one hand the people's displeasure is passion therefore appetitive and not based on sole reasoning (Silar, 2008; Baur, 2012).

Axiology of the Rule of Law

If the leader becomes a tyrant that is tolerable by reason, Aquinas defined them as mild tyrant, the people should be more eager to perform virtuous daily tasks and not to eliminate the tyrant (Enloe, 2008; Swartz, 2010; Glenn, 1960). If tyranny is an intrinsic evil act (Zimmerman and Bradley, 2019), how do we qualify such as tolerable by reason? Aquinas provided an answer, if the displeasure is sprouting only from the subjection of man, then ousting a tyrant who has committed tolerable tyranny will only cause fiasco, discomfort, and division of the state (Swartz, 2010; Critchley, 2013; Johnson, 2014).

The end goal of every pertinent individual is the happiness of life (Law, 2007; Baur, 2012). The concept cannot be achieved if there is resistance due only to displeasure. Thus, let this opus examine what is so tyrannical about President Rodrigo Duterte that he deserves to be ousted? The answer is simple, the leader did not keep the safety of the state, therefore, whoever does not promulgate the safety of the state is in no position to be a ruler (Enloe, 2008; McCarthy, 2017).

The theory on resistance that the powers given by the Supreme Being to mankind is then emanated from the populace and thereby given as sovereign to the leader (Kilcullen and Robinson, 2019). Thus, responsibility of the populace to overthrow the ruler is deemed necessary. Justifiable resistance is an act of the general and not by the individual (Leiter and Sevel, 2016). Therefore, it is no longer a fleeting passion of displeasure but rather a moral obligation to share in the principle of safeguarding the state (Blythe, 1986; Mercado, 2006; Hamilton – Bleakley, 2020).

In the principle of the defense of the state, then moral agency must be the obligation of the citizenry and not as a right only. (Breidenbach and McCormick, 2014). This said right cannot be waived for the logical purpose (Leiter and Sevel, 2016; Hintika, 2019). If the right to protect the state is waived, then waived as well as one's existence to the state, therefore one is already an enemy of the state.

Conclusion

The modalities agree with each other, though highlighted in the difference of interpretation, principle, and approach, both are elements to achieve the truth by which the political philosophy is anchored unto. In this likeness, the "oust Duterte campaign" has taken a position both examined through ontology and logic which are the two properties of truth. One may not contradict another because they are parcels of a certain notion or concept but may contradict each other in the light of reasoning and attempting to seek the antecedence and precedence of the reasoning for the given phenomenon.

If in all these concepts, theories, and principles, does an average citizen need to know such principles for them to enact their obligation? The answer is no, the citizen need not to have knowledge of these principles, this is because a citizen is obliged not by law alone but by moral agency (Gardbaum, 1996; Kilcullen and Robinson, 2019). Therefore, it is only human nature that men are created good, and that the duality of man is in the principle to always do good, as interpreted by both Anselm and Aquinas.

The moral duty of men is egalitarian therefore equilateral to one another (Gorman, 2003). The duty of the ruler to safeguard the state is not alienated to that of a normal citizen from whom power emanated from. In such light, it is only natural that the goal of men in their ultimate telos is happiness. If then interpreted hermeneutically, happiness means the satisfaction of the common good.

In a final remark for both Anselm and Aquinas, the essential principle of state governance is the rule of law, whether by ontology or logic and law is the express language of truth. (Salgado, 2017; Sweeny, 2109; Leiter and Sevel, 2016). Thus, the truth by virtue of the principal *vis coactiva* meaning the rule of reason states that the action of a ruler must be that of governance for them to enact the necessary properties to safeguard the state, if they ever fail to do so, they become enemy of the state, thereby making them tyrant.

Then, there is *vis directivam* meaning rule of law which limits the ruler to a place where they should abide by the law to protect not their own, but the entire political system ultimately for the welfare of the people, because the people are where their powers come from. If leaders fail to do so, they are tyrant in that predicament. Therefore, based on these analyses whether the ontological framework of *vis coactiva* or the logical reasoning of *vis directivam,* Duterte is a tyrant.

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