



Saw Swee Hock
Southeast Asia Centre

Beyond Nostalgia: The Marcos Political Comeback in the Philippines

Julio Teehankee



Southeast Asia Working Paper Series

Paper no.7

July 2023



SOUTHEAST ASIA
Research at LSE ■

All views expressed in this paper are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the views of the Saw Swee Hock Southeast Asia Centre or LSE. The results presented in the paper are not peer-reviewed.

Published by

Saw Swee Hock Southeast Asia Centre
London School of Economics and Political Science
Houghton Street
London
WC2A 2AE
seac.admin@lse.ac.uk
www.lse.ac.uk/seac

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means without the prior permission in writing of the author(s) nor be issued to the public or circulated in any form other than that in which it is published. Requests for permission to reproduce any article or part of the Working Paper should be sent to the author(s) directly. The cover image by [Mara Rivera](#) on [Unsplash](#).

Beyond Nostalgia: The Marcos Political Comeback in the Philippines

Julio C. Teehankee

Department of International Studies

De La Salle University

Abstract

On 25 May 2022, Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos, Jr., son, and namesake of the late dictator, was proclaimed by Congress as the 17th president of the Republic of the Philippines. His landslide victory in the presidential election was astounding, coming 36 years after his family was ousted from the presidential palace in a military-backed people power uprising. He has also emerged as the first majority president in the post-Marcos period garnering a historic 31,629,783 (59%) votes, with a margin of almost 31% ahead of his closest rivals. His successful presidential campaign was built around the myth, propagated on social media, and actively embraced by a large segment of the public (both young and old) that the Marcos dictatorship was a “golden age” of peace and prosperity, as opposed to the long-held and well-documented accounts of a violent and corrupt rule that left the country poor. While it is possible to say that the rise of Rodrigo Duterte’s strongman populism in 2016 cleared the stage for the Marcos restoration in 2022, authoritarian nostalgia has been simmering in the public’s political preference since the mid-2000s. The inability to adequately address the legacies of authoritarianism has impacted the overall consolidation of democratic gains. This paper would like to address the following questions: First, what factors contributed to the erosion of the post-Marcos liberal reformist political order? Second, how did the Marcos dynasty succeed in staging a political comeback? Third, what are the prospects for Philippine democracy under a restored Marcos presidency?

Keywords

Authoritarian Nostalgia; Ferdinand Marcos Jr.; Disinformation; Political Dynasties; Philippines

Acknowledgements

This paper was completed under a Senior Visiting Fellowship at the Saw Swee Hock Southeast Asia Centre, the London School of Economics and Political Science. The author would like to thank the following for their invaluable support: Centre Director Prof Hyun Bang Shin for his encouragement and warm hospitality; Prof John Sidel, Sir Patrick Gillam Chair in International and Comparative Politics, for reading my early drafts and providing incisive comments; and Katie Boulton for her kind assistance in facilitating my visit to LSE.

Introduction

Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos, Jr. (popularly known as BBM), the late dictator’s son and namesake, was proclaimed the 17th president of the Republic of the Philippines on 25 May 2022. It was stunning that he won the presidency by such a large margin 36 years after his family was forced out of the palace by a military-backed people power uprising. He is also the first president to win a majority vote in the post-Marcos period. He won a record-breaking 31,629,783 votes (59%) and was almost 31% ahead of his closest rival, Maria “Leni” Robredo, who narrowly defeated him in the 2016 vice presidential election. Six years since his defeat, he has mounted a stunning political comeback.

Several explanations for this remarkable restoration attribute his successful presidential campaign to the myth, propagated on social media and actively embraced by a large segment of the public (both young and old), that the Marcos dictatorship was a “golden age” of peace and prosperity, as opposed to the long-held and well-documented accounts of a violent and corrupt regime that left the country impoverished. Other accounts point to the persistence of patronage and the consolidation of political dynasties around Marcos Jr. and his vice-presidential running mate, Davao City Mayor Sara Duterte. The unity between their northern and southern bailiwicks, supported by the major political parties and patronage networks, constituted the winning coalition that led to their victory.

While these explanations are all valid and plausible, they are somehow incomplete. The analyses offered either robs social actors of agency or credit much agential power to Marcos Jr. and his supporters. Sheila Coronel (2022a, 63), professor of investigative journalism at Columbia University, writes, “It’s as if we are all passive receptacles of Marcos propaganda or social media manipulation. We’ve either been conned or seduced by the Marcoses. Or we’re pawns of a history not of our own making.” Meanwhile, historian Rommel Curaming (2022) counsels liberal progressives to “abandon the fantasy that BBM won just because of cheating, fake news, trolls and the savvy use social media, and the well-oiled machinery for vote buying.”¹

¹ Curaming and other scholars have advocated for a “nuanced” historical account of the martial law years that goes beyond the pro- or anti-Marcos narratives. Together with other academics, he organized an international conference “Toward a Nuanced history of Marcos Era: Approaches, Evidence, and Contestations” on February 28 and March 1, 2023. The conference claimed to take an “unflinching look at the pains, joys, and fantasies of this era. Only by staring at the devil in the eye, we can hope to extinguish our fear and regain our freedom to chart our future.”

This paper seeks to address this puzzle within a broader discursive institutional context of the Philippine presidency.² It seeks to address the following questions: First, how did the Marcos dynasty succeed in staging a political comeback? Second, what factors contributed to the erosion of the post-Marcos liberal reformist political order? Third, what are the prospects for Philippine democracy under a restored Marcos presidency? It adopts a discursive institutional approach in explicating the power of narratives in mobilizing a winning coalition of interests within the context of a weak state. It is an attempt to evaluate the Marcos restoration not just in terms of the personal and persuasive qualities of Marcos Jr. but also based on the historical place of his presidency within the sequence of political regimes in the Philippines. Lastly, it would like to restore agency to the Filipino public in analyzing the outcome of the 2022 presidential election.

This paper is organized in five parts. First, it will discuss the various explanations offered by political analysts to understand Marcos Jr.'s 2022 victory. Second, it will delineate his political comeback within the context of authoritarian nostalgia – when citizens compare current weak democratic performance with past (real or imagined) successes of developmental dictatorships. Third, it raises the question as to how this nostalgia has been produced through persistent mythmaking targeted at the majority of voters who are too young to have experienced the Marcos years themselves. Fourth, it situates the second Marcos presidency within the cycles of development and decay that have shaped and been shaped by the Philippine presidency through political time. Finally, the paper will conclude with a summary that highlights how the paper moved from some proximate enabling political conditions to an in-depth historicization of the Marcos political comeback.

Marcos Victory: A Parallax View

The following sections will discuss the major explanations proffered by pundits and academics in accounting for the result of the 2022 presidential election. It will critically review the emerging literature on the Marcos political comeback. Each section will demonstrate how the multifaceted explanations of the Marcos victory constitute a “parallax view” of the same political phenomenon.

² Discursive Institutionalism emphasizes the explanatory role of ideas and discourse in understanding institutional continuity and change (Schmidt 2010).

Bailiwicks

Among the first explanations offered for the Marcos-Duterte victory is ethnolinguistic affiliation. The ethnolinguistic vote is the most secure source of votes for national candidates (Landé 1996). This variable has consistently predicted voting behavior since 1946 (Ando 1969; Montinola 1999). Specifically, the bailiwicks (*baluarte*) or a candidate's natural area of influence is indicated by ethnolinguistic, regional, or provincial ties. These affiliations can be spontaneously generated and imagined through political marketing or harvested and delivered as “command votes” through traditional networks such as political machines (Teehankee 2010; 2018).³ The linguistic variable is one of the most significant traditional and particularistic linkages between voters and candidates.⁴

The power of the ethnolinguistic vote was sustained in the post-authoritarian period, with the restoration of free elections beginning in 1987. In the 1992 presidential election, the slim margin between the votes of election winner Fidel V. Ramos and runner-up Miriam Defensor Santiago served to underscore the important role of ethnolinguistic bailiwicks in a tight election contest. About ten percent of Ramos’s total votes came from his native Pangasinan, while most of Santiago’s votes came from the Ilonggo-speaking provinces (Landé 1996; Teehankee 2010). Ethno-linguistic bailiwicks were also a major factor in the come-from-behind victory of Rodrigo Duterte in 2016 (Holmes 2016). He won big in Mindanao and the Cebuano-speaking provinces of the Visayas, defeating his closest rival, Manuel Roxas III, who carried the Ilongo-speaking provinces of the Visayas (Teehankee 2018).

A variation of this voting pattern can be observed in the 2022 presidential election, consolidating the ethnolinguistic bailiwicks of Marcos and Duterte to deliver the first combined majority electoral victory in the post-authoritarian period. A pre-election study based on the March 2022 face-to-face election survey conducted by Pulse Asia Research revealed that the candidates’ regional ties still served as the strongest predictor of voting intention. The Ilocanos, who make up the majority of the Marcos family's supporters, declared their intention to vote for Marcos with 81 percent of the vote. Voters in the Bicol region, where Marcos’ main rival, Vice President Leni Robredo, resides, are the most opposed. Only 9 percent of Bicolanos

³ There are two types of votes in the Philippines: 1) Command votes or votes that can be collected by gatekeepers and political machines (push factor); and 2) Market votes are votes that need to be attracted and courted by the candidate through media projection (pull factor) (Teehankee 2010).

⁴ Due to the lack of significant political or ideological cleavages, it is commonly believed that the Filipino politician relies on linguistic ties with the voters for electoral support. From north to south, the major linguistic groups are as follows: Ilocano, Pangasinense, Kapampangan, Tagalog, Bicolano, and Visayans (including Cebuano, Boholano, Hiligaynon/Ilonggo, and Waray). They roughly correspond to the country's geographical divisions (Ando 1969).

declared they would support Marcos in the election. However, Marcos did well with voters in Mindanao, the province where his running mate Sara Duterte hails from. Voters from Ilocos were nine times more inclined to support Marcos than those from Bicol (Dulay et al. 2022). An average of the survey results of five polling organizations at the end of the campaign period indicated an average preference of 58.2 percent for Marcos Jr. On election day, a record 82 percent or 53.3 million of the 65 million registered voters came out to vote, with 31 million (56 percent) choosing Marcos Jr, over 15 million (28 percent) choosing Robredo (Tiquia 2022b).

Thus far, the ethnolinguistic factor is the most straightforward and clear-cut explanation for the Marcos victory. But it fails to capture some of the complexities of current Philippine electoral politics. While bailiwicks have consistently delivered in the victory of all postwar presidents from 1946 to 1965 (Ando 1969), the same cannot be said for post-authoritarian presidents. Before Marcos victory in 2022, the ethnolinguistic vote was a major factor in the victory of Ramos in 1992, Gloria Macapagal Arroyo in 2004, and Duterte in 2016. The main driver for the victory of Joseph Estrada in 1998 and Benigno Aquino in 2010 were “market votes,” or votes that must be identified, targeted, and attracted from various segments of the electorate; and measured by popularity in surveys (Teehankee 2010).

Moreover, Metro Manila, the Visayas, and the Visayan-speaking parts of Mindanao have long been considered anti-Marcos bailiwicks since the 1980s (Thompson 1996). In 2016, all three regional bailiwicks delivered to the victory of Robredo for vice president. Comparing 2016 to 2022, or six years later, Robredo's support grew by only 581,183 voters. In an exit poll by Publicus Asia, Marcos Jr. received 58% of the vote, while Sara Duterte received 67%. This exit poll included 30,000 voters from the largest voting locations in the top 20 vote-rich provinces and the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) (Tiquia 2022b). The vote delivery strength of their respective bailiwicks – Regions 1 and 2 for Marcos Jr. together with Region 11 of the Dutertes against Regions 5 and 6 for Robredo – translated into an immediate 1.8 million advantage for Marcos Jr. over Robredo (Rivera and Tuazon 2022). What factors contributed to the exodus of regional bailiwicks from Robredo to Marcos? How did the Marcos-Duterte tandem consolidate their regional bailiwicks? The persistence of clientelistic ties in the Philippines can further explain these questions.

Dynasties

In the Philippines, “clans, not parties, have been the building blocks of politics” (Teehankee 2018, 87). Political dynasties are predominantly composed of “a family and its extended relations or network (clan), whose members have controlled for an extended period ... formal

elective posts in a locality or political subdivision” (Gutierrez et al., 1992: 8). Political clans frequently carry out a vast array of economic, social, and political functions (McCoy, 1994). They are typically regarded as a subset of Philippine society's elites. The results of the 2022 elections reinforced dynastic dominance in the country. A total of 77.8% of provincial governors and 73.1% of representatives who were elected are members of “fat dynasties” where many family members simultaneously occupy elective positions (Mendoza et al. forthcoming).⁵

The Marcos-Duterte “UniTeam” in 2022 is said to be “a perfect political marriage of some of the most entrenched, formidable, and notorious political bosses and families” (Arguelles 2022, par. 6). Because they controlled two bailiwicks, Ilocos and Leyte, the Marcos family has always been formidable. By marrying Imelda Romualdez of Leyte, Ferdinand Sr. of Batac forged a durable North-South alliance. But the current North-South alliance only emerged when Gloria Macapagal Arroyo brokered the political marriage of Marcos Jr. and Sara Duterte (Claudio 2022). Marcos Jr. first started negotiating with Sara Duterte before the 2022 presidential elections. He seized the opportunity to declare his candidacy when she decided not to run. Sara Duterte subsequently consented to run as his vice-presidential contender upon the prodding of Macapagal Arroyo (Heydarian 2022; Quezon 2022a; Teehankee 2022). Soon after, a larger alliance was formed among the country’s dominant political dynasties: Arroyo, Duterte, Estrada, Marcos, Romualdez, and Villar (Arguelles 2022).

According to political scientist and pollster Ronald Holmes (2022), the alliance between the Dutertes and the Marcoses could also be credited for their subsequent electoral landslide. After their alliance was formed, support for Marcos Jr. climbed dramatically in all subnational areas, but the highest gain was in Mindanao, the largest island considered Duterte country. In September 2021, 8 percent of Mindanawon voters supported him, according to a survey conducted by Holmes’ firm Pulse Asia. By December 2021, that number increased to 64 percent. Marcos Jr.’s alliance with Sara was immensely advantageous, as he maintained support throughout Mindanao until election day and even in the Bisayan-speaking Central Visayas region, where Duterte’s name continues to garner strong support (Holmes 2022).

For political strategist Malou Tiquia (2022b), a generation of local leaders started their political careers during the Marcos regime. This instant connection is what Marcos Jr. brought into the frame, securing the support of mayors and governors, particularly in the 40 provinces

⁵ As opposed to “thin dynasties” where only one family member occupies an elective position over time (Mendoza et al. forthcoming).

where a majority of voters are concentrated. In the 2016 national elections, 38.3 million voters were in the top 40 vote-rich provinces. Of the 44 million actual voters, around 31 million resided in these provinces. In 2022, the majority of governors from vote-rich provinces endorsed the Marcos-Duterte tandem. Based on surveys run by Tiquia's firm Publicus Asia, governors believed that the value of endorsing Marcos Jr. outweighed the value of not endorsing him. The surveys also revealed that the endorsement power of local government officials for Marcos Jr. stood at 52.3 percent, which was slightly behind the endorsement of Rodrigo Duterte at 57.2 percent, and that of Sara Duterte at 55.4 percent.

Elections are primarily a moment for most people to decide which patronage network they connect with, especially at the local level, where politics is much more heated. The patronage networks are a local support system established at the top by dominant political families, economic blocs, and the entire spectrum of private enterprises (both legal and criminal) and public institutions they control. Money may be presented and accepted, not as a bribe, but as a sign of a deeper relationship. This image, which can, in fact, be supported by a variety of rationalizations, is more palatable to the conscience (David 2022a). Hence, the UniTeam became the focal point for consolidating political clans and dynasties masquerading as political parties (Yang and Mendoza 2021). Many of the incumbent members of political clans, including 73 of the country's 81 provincial governors, supported Marcos Jr (Abarro 2022). For Arguelles (2023), the 2022 elections signaled the shift from "anarchy to unity of families."

Dynastic bailiwicks provide a plausible, albeit incomplete, explanation for the Marcos-Duterte victory. Since the 1960s, as political scientist John Sidel observed, such accounts "appeared to be culpably uncritical and culturally essentialist in its – 'blame the victim' – account of ordinary Filipino voters' putative acquiescence and active role in producing and reproducing 'clientelist politics'" (Sidel 2018, 30). Even with the shift in focus in the 1990s to the "weak state" and political dynasties, the literature emphasized a "top-down, [élite-centered] account of local politics in which peasants and [laborers], voters and citizens appeared as effectively disenfranchised or devoid of agency, importance, and thus blame" (Ibid.). So, it begs the question, if not purely dynastic bailiwicks and machine politics, what drove millions to vote for Marcos Jr.? Many commentaries point toward massive disinformation on the part of the Marcos campaign.

Disinformation

Disinformation has become the most popular explanation for the Marcos victory (Coronel 2022b; Mendoza 2019; Moss 2022; Salazar 2022). It didn't help that Marcos Jr. was caught on camera, half-jokingly admitting to using a "troll army" in his campaign. In a video posted on YouTube shortly after his election victory, Marcos Jr. addressed his campaign staff and social media supporters and said:

This really started in 2016. We couldn't get time from ABS, Channel 7, Inquirer, Philstar, we were being hit by Rappler. So, I said the only option that we have is social media, so we concentrated on that. That's why I hired a troll army, thousands, and thousands [*libo-libo*]. Once in a while I contribute. That's what kept my political fortunes alive (as cited in Parry 2022 and Robles, A. 2022).

Marcos Jr has consistently denied using a troll army in previous media appearances (Villanueva 2021; Buan 2022; Mercado 2022).

Indeed, disinformation, especially using social media, has become a global phenomenon. The Philippines has been particularly vulnerable, with about 99 percent of its population online, and over half find it difficult to spot fake news. As social media giants like Facebook and Twitter play cat-and-mouse with keyboard warriors who spread false information, support their political clients, or smear their opponents, historical whitewashing is finding new homes (Cabato and Mahtani 2022). The increasing dependence of voters on social media allows propagandists to circumvent the conventional fact-checking function of the mainstream media. According to a poll conducted by Pulse Asia in September 2021, while traditional media, especially television, remains the primary source of political news, over half of Filipino adults, or 48%, acquire their political news via the internet. According to the same poll, Facebook and YouTube were the most popular social media platforms among internet users (Salazar 2022).

The Marcos dynasty benefited from an early investment in massive online disinformation machinery. Pro-Marcos disinformation campaigns have dominated Facebook and YouTube. The Marcos disinformation machine targeted young voters in TikTok. These TikTok disinformation tactics portrayed the Marcos family as authentic, hip, and relatable political celebrities while downplaying the family's corruption and human rights violations (Arguelles 2022). Rodrigo Duterte was the first to mobilize a keyboard army and online hate in his successful 2016 presidential campaign, forever changing the country's digital landscape (Cabato and Mahtani 2022).

Aside from disinformation, “historical revisionism” was seen by pundits and analysts as the main misinformation narrative of the 2022 election cycle (Salazar 2022). Although, historian Ambeth Ocampo prefers the term “historical distortion.” He asserts, “historical revision means correcting what is wrong, erroneous, or false. The pro-Marcos narrative continually foisted on us, especially in social media, is nothing but barefaced lies and half-truths. This is not historical revisionism” (Ocampo 2020, par. 8). Indeed, the Marcos dynasty has patiently and persistently embarked on changing the dominant political narrative to their favor. Marcos Jr. was an early adopter of social media with his Friendster (a precursor of Facebook) account in 2004 (Kasarinlan 2012-2013). In 2012, two years after he was successfully elected to the Senate, a glossy short video entitled “Ninoy + People Power: Hidden Truths the Media is not Telling Us!” was uploaded on YouTube. According to the video, Marcos Sr. was the true hero of EDSA because he allegedly safeguarded the people by refusing to open fire on the assembled crowd. The video alleged that while Corazon Aquino hid in Cebu, the people’s lives were endangered (Lingao 2012).

Initially, the internet was used for election campaigns as an extension of political advertisement and traditional propaganda by parties and candidates in the 2010 presidential and 2013 midterm elections. Much of the contents at that time were benign and harmless. Since political advertising has become prohibitively expensive for most politicians, the internet and social media have become more cost-effective alternatives. Duterte was the first candidate in 2016 to exploit social media for electoral success. He was also successful in mobilizing his online supporters (colloquially called the “Duterte Diehard Supporters” or DDS)⁶ to attack his detractors and defend his administration (Teehankee and Kasuya 2020). Marcos Jr. set up a more sophisticated and multi-tiered operation. He played the long digital disinformation game and reaped the big pay-off in the 2022 elections. Since his first election to the Senate, Marcos Jr. established a well-funded, full-service media-information-fantasy complex capable of producing diverse content over time. Melodramatic narratives asserting that the Marcos family are the “true victims” of the EDSA Revolution’s liberal elites, which were originally articulated via crude Twitter memes, have gone mainstream on broadcast channels and high-budget films that have garnered greater polish, reach, and validity (Ong et al. 2022).

⁶ The acronym “DDS” also evokes the dreaded “Davao Death Squad” – the vigilante group allegedly mobilized by then mayor Rodrigo Duterte to combat communist insurgents and local criminals in Davao City. The DDS is said to have committed a number of extrajudicial killings that would later be replicated nationally as Duterte’s bloody “war on drugs.”

An extensive ecosystem of websites, Facebook pages and groups, YouTube channels, and social media influencers appear to be part of the concerted effort to rehabilitate the Marcoses' reputation by producing and amplifying massive volumes of propaganda and targeted niche digital content. It comprises a network of Marcos and Duterte fan sites and organizations, meme and viral content pages, pages propagating purported "hidden facts" in Philippine history, and pages targeting and discrediting mainstream media. It was noted that the participating pages and groups shared and amplified each other's messages and content from prominent pro-Duterte and pro-Marcos social media influencers (Mendoza 2019). Marcos's supporters went from creating disinformation memes that harassed experts and questioned historical facts to developing a cohesive, consolidated story that repudiated the EDSA narrative (Ong et al. 2022).

The emergence of parallel public spheres or two distinct information ecosystems connected with highly polarized political identities. Legacy media's function as gatekeepers of the national political center has diminished as citizens engage with political news, punditry, and entertainment. Divisive electoral contests are socially regarded as an all-out political war, triggering friendship breakups, family quarrels, and social media brigading and canceling culture campaigns (Ong et al. 2022). The toxic online partisanship has even migrated to mainstream broadcast media with Fox-like television programming from religious-backed television networks such as SMNI and NET25 (Soriano and Gaw 2022).⁷

Evidently, a large part of the Marcos victory can be attributed to his social media machinery. However, just like clientelistic explanations, disinformation tends to portray social actors as unthinking "zombies" or ignorant voters ("*bobotante*") prone to manipulations and false information.⁸ This critique has opened disinformation scholars and fact-checkers to attacks by pro-Marcos supporters. As former communist operative and journalist turned staunch Marcos-Duterte defender Rigoberto Tiglao (2022, par. 5-6) asserted, "It is ridiculous ... to claim that Filipinos have been so gullible to believe fake news in social media, especially Facebook, that favored Marcos ... What social media does is to amplify or expound views people hold but which they haven't been able to articulate or to get more arguments and information for..." The credibility of fact-checkers and fact-checking has also been questioned (Tiquia 2022a). Although well-intentioned, fact-checking and blacklisting do not address the

⁷ Sonshine Media Network International (SMNI) is owned by megachurch televangelist Pastor Apollo Quiboloy, while NET25 is owned and operated by politically influential Iglesia ni Cristo (INC).

⁸ As Ong (2022, par. 5) argues "many analysts have unfairly caricatured the so-called "surprise" electoral victories of populist leaders as the result of uneducated voters brainwashed by disinformation. But this is reductive."

root sources of disinformation. Fact-checking mechanisms may easily backfire when people question the credibility of those who fact-check (Ong and Cabañes 2018).

Critical disinformation scholars have acknowledged this critique and have since shifted their focus from disinformation and fact-checking to an investigation of “influence operations” – “a more expansive frame that captures campaign strategies that may not be illegal or deceitful but are exploitative of the many gray areas of campaign finance regulation, platform policies, and journalistic norms, as well as latent anxieties and skepticism of citizens” (Ong et al. 2022, 10). Surely, not all the 31 million who voted for Marcos Jr. were misinformed. So, what factors may have drawn a demographic cross-section of Philippine society to support Marcos Jr.? Another set of explanations points to nostalgia for an imagined past amidst an uncertain present.

Authoritarian Nostalgia

Great effort was exerted during Marcos Jr.’s presidential inauguration to evoke the memory of Marcos Sr. From its venue (the Old Congress Building where the young Marcos Jr. used to pick up his congressman father) to the pomp and pageantry of a military parade and the inaugural speech delivered with the familiar tone and cadence of a booming baritone voice. Indeed, compared to his failed run for the vice presidency in 2016, Marcos Jr.’s 2022 presidential campaign heavily borrowed from his father’s political playbook and imagery – from the way he dressed to the promises he made (Rivas 2022). He promised unity, yet instead of selling any programmatic vision to realize this, he instead wrapped himself with the cloak of nostalgia.

More than thirty years after the ouster of the Marcos dictatorship, the specter of authoritarian nostalgia threatens to undo the limited gains of democratization in the Philippines. Reflective of the democratic rollback in the region and given the resilience of authoritarianism in Southeast Asia, dictatorship remains an attractive alternative for the Filipino elite and middle-class longing to shortcut the country’s economic development. The victory in May 2016 of Rodrigo “Digong” Duterte as the 16th president of the Philippines reinforced this shift in the political mood of the electorate towards a return to a semblance of “strong man” rule. While it can be argued that Duterte’s authoritarian populism in 2016 paved the way for the Marcos restoration in 2022, authoritarian nostalgia has been silently simmering in the public’s political preference since the mid-2000s. Several Asian democracies have been struggling with

a cloud of nostalgia for authoritarianism as voters compare life under democracy to either the growth-oriented authoritarianism of the recent past or to their rich nondemocratic neighbors in the present (Chang et al. 2007).

As early as 2005, the Asian Barometer Survey reported that 41.5 percent, or a little less than most respondents, agreed with the strongman rule. A majority, 61.5 percent, agreed to some form of authoritarian rule. This sentiment contrasts with the high numbers for questions on democratic legitimacy in the same survey: 50.6 percent preferability, 70.8 percent desirability, 56.6 percent suitability, and 55.9 percent efficacy. However, only 26.4 percent of respondents considered democracy as equal to or more important than economic development in terms of priority. Since then, pockets of support for authoritarianism have grown instead of diminishing. Looking at the results of the four waves of the Asian Barometer Survey (2002, 2005, 2010, and 2014), regardless of the percentage of satisfaction with the way democracy works, large majorities of “committed democrats” outnumber the minority of “conditional authoritarians” (Mangahas 2018). However, the March 2016 Social Weather Stations (SWS) survey reported that only 44 percent of respondents agreed that there was oppression during the Marcos regime. Alternately, 19 percent of the respondents were undecided, while 11 percent somewhat disagreed, and 19 percent said they strongly disagreed that there was much oppression under Marcos (Viray 2016).

Based on the survey data, the Philippines has “a large number of equivocal and confused citizens whose inconsistent political orientations burden their democracies with a fragile foundation of legitimacy” (Chang et al. 2007, 73). Garrido (2022) observed several Filipinos conditionally support democracy and are open to some authoritarian form of governance on the grounds of “disciplining democracy.” This relates to what Webb (2022) identified as democratic ambivalence in Filipino middle-class politics, such that democratic preference is coupled with the belief that “there can be too much democracy” that needs to be disciplined by “strongman” rule. The inability to adequately address the legacies of authoritarianism has impacted the overall consolidation of democratic gains. The Philippines’ need for more discipline and a strong leader indicates “authoritarian nostalgia.” This indicates that the experience of the Marcos regime has not been completely delegitimized (Webb 2017).

History can be perceived as selective remembering or selective forgetting (Norizan 2019). Scholars have attributed the growth of widespread revisionist notions about the Marcos regime to the absence of meaningful martial law and human rights education in the country (Abuso 2019). This Marcos nostalgia can also be attributed to Duterte’s “disrupting, devaluing, and delegitimizing the rituals of EDSA” (Arguelles 2017, 269). This was reinforced by

Duterte's decision to allow the late strongman's burial in the National Heroes' Cemetery.⁹ In effect, Duterte played John the Baptist to the second coming of the Marcoses.

While there have undoubtedly been pernicious attempts to reconstruct national memory, the popular framing of authoritarian nostalgia because of continuing conflicts between the truth of history and its erasure is only part of the story. In the end, nostalgia has never worked on the truth register. Since its origin as a seventeenth-century term for the ailment of homesickness, the object of nostalgia has been interpreted not just as a time and place that had been lost but also as one that may never have existed (Benedicto 2021). The next section will discuss the *longue durée* of Marcos mythmaking.

Marcos Mythmaking

Mythmaking has always been at the heart of the Marcos narrative. Truth and the Marcoses have always had a problematic relationship. At present, Marcosian disinformation that normalizes the excesses of the older Marcos and martial law confronts the nation through social media, textbooks, or movies. But the seeds of lies, exaggerations, and misrepresentations were planted long ago and have taken deep roots (Ariate et al. 2022; Claudio 2022; Coronel 2022a). Mythmaking was the key to the success of the Marcos political comeback. The myths that two generations of the Marcoses created provided the ideational cement that bound their bailiwick, clientelistic networks, online disinformation, and generated authoritarian nostalgia (See Figure 1).

From the beginning, Marcos Sr. had a deep interest in history and his role in it (Curaming 2020). In his diary in 1971, he wrote, "History should not be left to historians ... Make history, and then write it" (cited in Rempel 1993, xiv). And rewrite history he did. From his exaggerated guerrilla exploits during the second world war to his astute use of his biography and cinema in pursuit of his "destiny" to an actual attempt to rewrite the nation's history in his image – he was *Malakas*¹⁰ of the Filipino creation mythology (Coronel 2022a; Curaming 2020; Rafael 1990).

⁹ Consequently, the Supreme Court decision that affirmed Duterte's action, effectively created a "memory law" that affirmed the Marcos revisionist view of history (Jereza 2020).

¹⁰ According to Rafael (1990, 282), "As *Malakas* and *Maganda*, Ferdinand and Imelda imaged themselves not only as the "Father and Mother" of an extended Filipino family; they could also conceive of their privileged position as allowing them to cross and redraw all boundaries, social, political, and cultural.

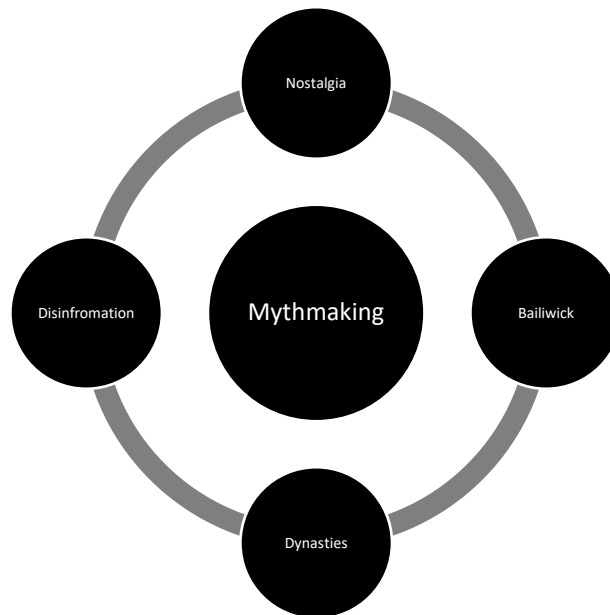


Figure 1. Marcos mythmaking illustration

Indeed, the Marcos dynasty was able to weave a powerful political narrative that resonated among its core constituency of “Loyalists” and the public through social media. The narrative can be broken down into three basic elements: first, their defense of the Marcos legacy and wealth; second, taking offense at their ouster and Marcos Jr.’s vice presidential defeat, they have launched their counter-offense. A third element, redemption, emerged after Marcos Jr.’s victory, in which he was poised to fulfill his father’s destiny of making the nation great (See Figure 2). The following will delineate the rise and fall of the first Marcos presidency. Then each element of the current Marcos narrative: defense, offense, and redemption shall be discussed.

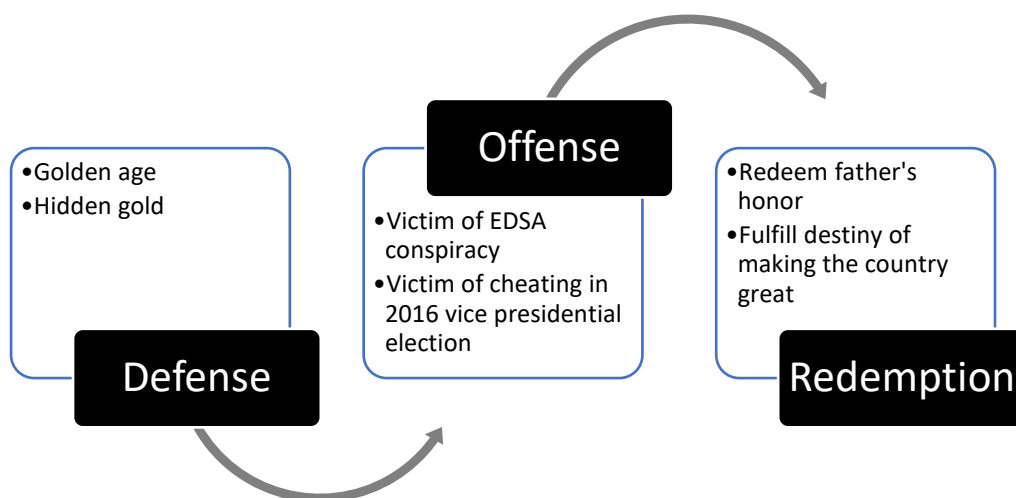


Figure 2. The Marcos Narrative

Sins of the Father

For some Filipinos, Ferdinand E. Marcos may have been the greatest politician the Philippines has ever produced. A firm believer in destiny and greatness, he has carefully interwoven his rise to power with the destiny and greatness of the Filipino nation. When he first ran for a seat in Congress in 1949, he promised, “elect me a congressman now, and I pledge you an Ilocano President in twenty years” (Spence 1964, 208). He commissioned an American author to write his biography melodramatically titled “For Every Tear a Victory.” “*Iginuhit ng Tadhana*” (Carved by Destiny) was the title of his biographical movie shown during the 1965 presidential campaign, where he promised “this nation can be great again” (Celoza 1997, 24). But Marcos also represented the “original sin” of postwar Philippine politics – patronage politics inherited from the American colonizers coupled with the warlordism generated by the violence of the Japanese occupation during the Second World War. Marcos “played dirty from the beginning, but his victories had been spectacular, and that was what counted for voters, who prized courage and cunning above all qualities” (Burton 1989, 37). In the end, he repudiated the very same postwar political regime that spawned him and established a dictatorial regime in pursuit of his destiny.

The early years of Marcos Sr. were complicated by widespread misinformation, contradictory “facts,” and deliberate disinformation (Bonner 1987). Marcos was a brilliant law student at the University of the Philippines when he was arrested and tried for the murder of his father’s political rival in Ilocos Norte. Julio Nalundasan, who defeated Ferdinand’s father Mariano in the 1935 congressional, was assassinated by a sniper’s bullet. The recovered rifle from the UP armory was traced to the young Marcos. He reviewed and topped the Bar Examination while in prison, and he eloquently defended himself and received an acquittal from the Supreme Court. In the aftermath of the 1983 assassination of Marcos Sr.’s arch-political rival Benigno “Ninoy” Aquino Jr., journalist Sandra Burton (1989, 37) noted, “It was a central fact of Marcos’s political legend that it begun, as it would end in murder.”

The Nalundasan case catapulted the young Marcos Sr. into the national stage. This episode was largely responsible for the subsequent mystique surrounding Marcos Sr. To his adversaries, he would always be a person who was not only capable of planning a murder but also of constructing a slick legal defense of his innocence (Burton 1989). To further his political ambitions, Marcos Sr. also cultivated the myth of being “the most decorated Filipino soldier of World War II” who commanded Filipino guerillas under a unit he organized as “Ang

Maharlika.”¹¹ Maharlika and the World War II medals are at the core of the “Marcos Big Lie,” the narrative that helped elect him to Congress and eventually to the presidency (Coronel 2022a).¹²

Unlike other highly decorated officers, Marcos Sr. obtained the bulk of his medals by lobbying for them after the war ended when he was already serving in public office (Coronel 2022a). He claimed to have received between twenty-seven to thirty-three medals (the number varies in his accounts) for his exploits as a guerilla fighter against the Japanese invaders, including the Distinguished Service Cross for valor in battle far beyond the call of duty (Spence 1964; Bonner 1987).¹³ In truth, only one medal was awarded him in the army (Burton 1989; National Historical Commission of the Philippines 2016). The thirty or so medals upon which he built his image were based on affidavits submitted after the fact that were either unverified or contested by others. While most citations for acts of bravery in combat are presented within weeks after the battle, over half of Marcos’ medals were bestowed two decades later, in 1963, by former President Diosdado Macapagal. According to an aide, the president did so to convince Senator Marcos not to contest his nomination for a second term (Bonner 1987; Burton 1989; Seagrave 1988).

In 1949, Marcos Sr. ran and won in his father’s old congressional seat in Ilocos Norte.¹⁴ He served three terms in the House of Representatives, where he honed his skills in patronage and money politics.¹⁵ In 1959, he won a landslide victory for a Senate seat and became Senate president (Bonner 1987; Seagrave 1988; Burton 1989). He was on his way to the presidency when his party mate in the Liberal Party, the incumbent President Macapagal, reneged on their

¹¹ Maharlika which refers to the pre-colonial nobility would become a recurring leitmotif in the Marcos myth. He would rename public buildings, infrastructures, and even the state broadcasting network with it. There was even a proposal to have it replace the country’s name. Early in the administration of Ferdinand Marcos Jr., a proposed sovereign wealth fund named “Maharlika Wealth Fund” was introduced by his cousin Speaker Martin Romualdez and son Representative Sandro Marcos.

¹² Marcos Sr.’s biographer Hartzell Spence was responsible for the highly exaggerated tales about Marcos’ life and deeds in his biography “For Every Tear A Victory.” He propagated the myth that Marcos singlehandedly delayed the fall of Bataan by three months and that Gen. Omar Bradley saluted Marcos in Washington upon seeing his six rows of ribbons headed by 22 valor medals including the Distinguished Service Cross. There were no records of him receiving the Distinguished Service Cross (Doyo 2016).

¹³ Five of the medals were “given” in the early 1950s, while Marcos Sr. was serving as a key member of the House Defense Committee. And eighteen years after the war ended, in 1963, Marcos Sr. received a remarkable 10 medals, nine of which were awarded on a single December day: two Distinguished Conduct Stars, two Distinguished Service Stars, two Gold Cross Medals, and three Wounded Personnel Medals. He was the chair of the chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee at that time (Bonner 1987).

¹⁴ He was elected the youngest member of the House of Representatives at that time at the age of thirty-two (Bonner 1987).

¹⁵ It was reported that Marcos Sr.’s corrupt activities while he was a congressman and head of the Import Control Board, which allowed him to gather large bribes in return for approving import licenses. He became a millionaire largely based on his 10 percent cut from government deals (Chaikin and Sharman 2009).

agreement not to seek a second term. He switched parties to the rival Nacionalista Party, contested, and won its presidential nominating convention. It took Marcos only sixteen years, less than twenty, to deliver his promise to his province mates (Bonner 1987).

Marcos Sr., elected president in 1965 and again in 1969, took advantage of the social turmoil in 1972 to declare martial law and undermine the formal institutions of democracy. Marcos Sr. defended the imposition of an authoritarian regime as a “revolution from the center” against the forces of the far-right, represented by oligarchs, and the far-left, represented by radicals and communists (Velasco 1997). He justified the declaration of martial law to “constitutionalize” the extension of his stay in power and to legitimize and institutionalize his dictatorship. The framework that legitimized Marcos Sr.’s regime was “constitutional authoritarianism.”¹⁶

Using his martial law powers under the 1935 Constitution, he forced Citizens’ Assemblies to ratify the 1973 Constitution and endowed himself with extraordinary powers. Thus, he built a Bonapartist state in which he personally controlled and directed all elements of governmental authority (Velasco 1997). Marcos Sr. wasted little time undermining his regime’s actual and future opponents. He muzzled the news media, disbanded Congress, and stacked the Supreme Court with his appointees. The suspension of civil freedoms led to thousands of critics and dissenters arrested and detained. As military officers were assigned to important government positions, the military became a personal enforcer of Marcos Sr.’s oppressive deeds. Against communist rebels and Muslim secessionists, autocratic measures were implemented (Hernandez 1985; Arugay 2023).

Marcos Sr., a lawyer, shrewdly legitimized his decisions and deeds. This was crucial for retaining the armed forces’ loyalty, rooted in constitutional authority. So long as they saw the head of state as legitimate, they were loyal. The military planned and implemented martial law. He politicized the military by promoting loyal officers rapidly. By making the military a partner in martial law, he gave them a stake in his regime’s success and development ambitions (Brillantes 1987; Doronila 1992). During a decade of martial law, Marcos Sr. imprisoned thousands of political foes (Robles, R. 2016), repressed the most active media in Southeast Asia, and amassed wealth for himself and a small group of cronies by seizing control of the nation’s most lucrative industries (Manapat 1991). What distinguished Marcos Sr., what made him historically significant at home and internationally, was the political savvy he repeatedly

¹⁶ Marcos Sr. had started to create a design for an autocratic system of government when he was still in law school. He euphemistically referred to it as “constitutional authoritarianism.” Marcos Sr. was a student of Napoleon, de Gaulle, and the Filipino temperament (Burton 1989).

exhibited in justifying his transgressions. He was able to steal billions of dollars systematically yet posed himself as the compassionate spokesperson of an impoverished people. At least temporarily, he convinced freedom-loving individuals that he had established martial law for their own good. (Reaves 1989).

Marcos Sr. had a keen eye on history and his place in it. An entry he made in his diary dated October 8, 1970, states:

I often wonder what I will be remembered in history for. Scholar? Military hero? Builder? The new constitution? Reorganization of [the] government? Uniter of the variant and antagonistic elements of our people? He brought light to a dark country? Strong rallying point or a weak tyrant? (as cited in Rempel 1993, xiii; Curaming 2020, 51).

He blended history and myth. First, in his private diaries. Second, by commissioning a group of historians to rewrite it as a reflection of his destiny. *Tadhana* (Destiny) was a project sponsored by Marcos Sr. to ghostwrite a multi-volume historical account of the nation from prehistoric times to the Marcos years in the 1970s.¹⁷ It sought to portray the declaration of martial law and the emergence of Marcos's "New Society" as the logical end to the historical evolution of the Filipino nation (Curaming 2008, 2018, 2020). The project recruited some of the best historians and scholars from the University of the Philippines at that time.¹⁸

Golden Age and Hidden Gold

In recent years, social media has become the venue for netizens who look back at the Marcos years with nostalgia, a "golden age" for the Philippines, while the academic literature generally depicts the regime's excesses, failures, and brutalities (Talamayan 2021). This narrative of the Marcos "golden age" was meant to evoke nostalgia for what was "lost" both to the Marcos dynasty and the country (Arugay and Baquisal 2022). Far from being a "golden age," the Marcos era was characterized by debt-driven growth from 1970 to 1983, marked by heavy foreign debt borrowings that proved unproductive and unsustainable since the funds were not utilized productively. This period was followed by stagnation and a deep economic crisis from

¹⁷ From the originally planned 21 volumes, the project managed to publish four volumes and a brief outline (Curaming 2020).

¹⁸ They include Serafin Quiason, a historian who obtained a PhD at the University of Pennsylvania; Zeus Salazar, a historian/area studies specialist who earned a PhD (Ethnology) from the University of Paris Sorbonne; Samuel Tan, a historian who got a PhD from Syracuse University; Rodolfo Paras-Perez, an established artist who had obtained a PhD in Art History from Harvard; Cesar Hidalgo, who acquired a PhD in Linguistics at Georgetown University; Reynaldo Ileteo, who got a PhD in History from Cornell; and Ben Austria who attained a PhD in Geology from Harvard (Curaming 2018).

1983 to 1986, triggered by a series of political and economic events, including Marcos Sr.'s failing health and the assassination of Ninoy Aquino (Balisacan 2003). Rigoberto Tiglao (1988, 27) described that period,

While partly representing Marcos's obsession to keep his hold on the Philippine presidency, the dictatorship would also represent the social project of the dominant sections of the Philippine ruling elite to break the dead end it faced in the early 1970s. Only towards ... the late 1970s would the elite realize the Frankenstein monster it had helped create which threatened to eat them up one by one and to drive the entire nation into an economic and political holocaust.

Marcos Sr. plundered at least \$10 billion, which expanded through criminal investments. The Marcos regime shows how authoritarian presidents may ruin their countries. Theft of foreign and military aid and crony capitalism were common under the rapacious regime. Ferdinand Marcos Sr., his family, relatives, and cronies engaged in widespread money laundering. Marcos' money laundering procedures were so sophisticated that the Philippine government retrieved fewer than 10% of his illicit assets after his fall (Chaikin and Sharman 2009). As Punongbayan (2023, 12) argues, "by hammering home this 'golden age' myth today – in whatever form – the Marcoses want today's youth to cherish and remember the legacy of Ferdinand Marcos as a Utopian age, whitewashing the regime's atrocities and cultivating what may be called 'false nostalgia.'"

For the Marcos loyalists,¹⁹ "yellow propaganda" was unleashed to depose Marcos Sr. and destroy the "New Society" he created. They attribute the country's social and economic collapse to the *dilawans* (*dilawan* or "yellow" refers to political personalities and oligarchs associated with the past Aquino governments, the Liberal Party, and its supporters). Some firmly accept the Marcoses' innocence, disregarding supreme court decisions ordering the Marcoses to return portions of their ill-gotten wealth (Talamayan 2021). In short, the Marcos loyalists propagated a "narrative of denial" (Aguilar 2019; 2022). Through narrativization and fantasizing, the loyalists are shielded from the trauma of the Marcos ouster (Bautista 2022). According to Fernan Talamayan (2021, 300), "nostalgic narratives promoted by the Marcoses and their supporters follow a tripartite light- darkness-light view of history."²⁰ The framing of the Marcos authoritarian regime as the country's golden age and the post-Marcos regimes as a

¹⁹ "Marcos loyalist" is the name given to the collective of staunch and ardent supporters of the late dictator. The term was first popularized during the 1986 snap presidential election.

²⁰ The light- darkness-light view of history was popularized by Reynaldo Ileto in his influential book, "Pasyon and Revolution: Popular Movements in the Philippines, 1840-1910.

period of political chaos and economic decline aids Marcos propaganda in evoking a desire to return to the glorious mythic past.”

Part of the Marcos narrative is the fantastical defense of their mind-boggling wealth and how they accumulated it. Marcos Sr., and his wife, Imelda, have long peddled the legend of Yamashita’s gold²¹ as the source of his vast wealth. Even before becoming president, Marcos Sr. often answered casual inquiries about his wealth by saying he had found Yamashita’s Gold (Seagrave 1988). While the legend of Yamashita’s gold was somehow based on history, the latest version of the “hidden gold” trope peddled by Marcos loyalists online is the so-called “Tallano gold” myth. In this version of the narrative, Marcos Sr. supposedly accumulated his vast wealth (in tons of gold) as legal fees from the (fictitious) “Tallano clan” – a family that allegedly descended from royalty of the (again fictitious) pre-Hispanic kingdom of “Maharlika” in the Philippines. This gold, according to the loyalists, was kept at the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) Security Plant Complex along East Avenue, Quezon City, and grossly exceeds the estimate of 171,300 tons of gold currently in global circulation (Bautista 2018). Social media posts on the “Tallano gold” went viral from less than a thousand posts pre-2018 to nearly 14,000 posts by 2021. Five main communities led by “Marcos legacy groups and pages” on social media cross-posted and generated contents about the putative Tallano gold (Arugay and Baquisal 2022).

Victimhood

After the dictator's death, his family members gradually returned to the Philippines to reestablish themselves in society and politics. They were treated like celebrities in the elite circles and allowed to contest elections. Imelda ran for the presidency in 1992 and lost. After serving one term in the House of Representatives from 1992 to 1995, Marcos Jr. ran for a seat in the Senate and lost. Apparently, the EDSA narrative was still strong then, and people still remembered the excesses of authoritarian rule. The Marcos-Romualdez clan decided to retreat to their respective bailiwicks in Ilocos Norte in the north and Leyte in the south. In 1993, President Fidel Ramos allowed the return of the remains of the late dictator, denied the request for the body to be buried in the National Heroes’ Cemetery, and instructed for it to be flown directly to Ilocos Norte. The body was flown directly to Batac, but instead of being buried, Imelda encased it in a refrigerated glass tomb, where it remained for over two decades until

²¹ General Tomoyuki Yamashita, known as “The Tiger of Malaya,” was the commander of the Japanese Imperial Army in the Philippines. It has been said that he hid the war booty he stole from several Southeast Asian countries in different parts of the Philippines. Several treasure hunters have searched for the lost gold in the past decades.

President Rodrigo Duterte finally approved its burial at the National Heroes' Cemetery in 2016 (Benedicto 2021).

The rise of Duterte signaled the pendulum swing in public sentiment towards authoritarian nostalgia. Initially dismissed as a spent force in the post-EDSA era after their series of national electoral defeats, the Marcos brand has become viable again, amplified by massive propaganda on social media (Benedicto 2021). The Marcos "memory project" (Arguelles 2017) rested upon the claim that they were the victims at EDSA by the Americans, the Oligarchs, the Roman Catholic Church, and the enemies of the state. This retelling of history from the point of view of the Marcoses was not lacking in intellectual heft. According to Marcos researcher Miguel Paolo P. Reyes (cited in Berdos 2020, par. 2, 4), "The Marcoses, their loyalists, and other allies have been producing and reproducing propaganda all these years, with the intended effect of conferring a patina of well-researched scholarship to Marcos . . . They let their sanctioned book and disinformation mingle with often more crude falsities online, which lets them keep and grow their loyal base." Among academics, public intellectuals, and journalists commonly cited as sources by the Marcos Loyalists, three names and their works stand out: Remigio Agpalo, Cecilio Arillo, and Rigoberto Tiglao.

Remigio Agpalo was one of the pioneers of contemporary Philippine political science.²² Agpalo (1992, 132-133) has long advocated what he called a "*pangulo*" regime. In this "organic-hierarchical" view of Philippine society, the president serves as "*pinakaulo*" (one who serves as the head), with the people being the body and limbs of the body politic.²³ He differentiated the "pangulo regime" from the English parliamentary and American presidential regimes because it functions based on executive dominance and places a premium on the importance of "*pagdamay*" (sharing with and caring for fellow persons).²⁴

In Agpalo's view, Marcos Sr. was the exemplar of a strongman president. He adds that Marcos Sr. thought that the nation's oligarchical system had harmed Philippine society, and he was thus resolved to employ all bureaucratic authority to change the Philippines into a new society (Thompson 2014). Agpalo may have disregarded Marcos Sr.'s many personal defects and the fact that, as a lawyer-politician, he was not on a mission to develop his nation into an

²² Remigio Agpalo was chair of the Political Science Department of the University of the Philippines when he was elected charter president of the Philippine Political Science Association (PPSA) in 1962.

²³ Agpalo (1992, 132-133) viewed Philippine society as "an organism with a head, body, arms, legs, hands, feet, fingers and toes [that] grows through the ingestion and absorption of an external element that can be incorporated." According to him, "*pangulo*" is an apt metaphor, such that "*ang sakit ng kalinkingan ay damdam ng buong katawan*" (the pain of the little finger is felt by the entire body).

²⁴ He linked his "pangulo regime" concept to Philippine political history, namely the works of anticolonial stalwarts Jose Rizal, Andres Bonifacio, and Emilio Jacinto. Agpalo (1992) thought his "pangulo regime" was established in Emilio Aguinaldo's first Republic. For an extended critique of Agpalo's work, see Abinales (2017).

industrial power à la South Korea's Park Chung-hee. However, he still considered Marcos the most developmentalist president the Philippines has ever had (Hutchcroft 2011). Even after the fall of Marcos Sr., Agpalo continued to believe that the disgraced dictator was the embodiment of his “pangulo regime.” He considered Corazon Aquino as the exact opposite of Marcos Sr., lacking the essential traits of a “pangulo” and questioned the legitimacy of her post-EDSA government (Agpalo 1992). His last book, entitled *Ferdinand E. Marcos: A Hero in History*, was published by the Marcos Presidential Center in 2007, the year before he died. His works were not well known outside the academic circle. It took another public intellectual to plant the seeds of a counter-narrative to challenge the dominant EDSA regime narrative at that time.

Cecilio T. Arillo is a newspaper columnist, formerly a defense reporter who also served as an aide to Marcos Sr.’s Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile.²⁵ In 1986, he published *Breakaway: The Inside Story of the Four-Day Revolution in the Philippines, February 22-25, 1986*, which detailed the events of the EDSA uprising from the perspective of Enrile and the renegade Reform the Armed Forces of the Philippines (RAM). The events of February were described as a military operation, with Defense Minister Enrile as the hero and Fidel Ramos and reformist officers in second place. The book also downplayed the role of Cory Aquino, insisting that she was physically absent in EDSA and was hiding in Cebu (Lallana 1986).²⁶ Arillo has consistently taken a highly critical and contrarian view towards the Aquinos and the EDSA narrative in his regular column for a leading business newspaper. In 2000, Arillo published *Greed & Betrayal: The Sequel to the 1986 EDSA Revolution*, reiterating his assertion that Enrile and the military were responsible for EDSA and that Cory Aquino and her yellow cabal hijacked the revolution. In 2001, he published *Power Grab! The Story behind the Jan. 20, 2001 EDSA People Power 2 Conspiracy that Swept Vice President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo to Power* which criticized the second EDSA people power uprising that ousted President Joseph Estrada.

In 2011, he released *A Country Imperiled: Tragic Lessons of a Distorted History* which sought to “demystify” Ninoy and Cory Aquino and then newly elected president Benigno

²⁵ According to columnist Ramon Tulfo, Arillo was a defense reporter for the Times Journal, a newspaper then owned and controlled by Benjamin Romualdez, younger brother of Imelda Romualdez Marcos. In 1987, the Washington Post reported that Arillo was arrested in a safehouse where fugitive coup leader Col. Gregorio “Gringo” Honasan was hiding. Honasan, Enrile’s military aide and leading figure in the EDSA Revolution launched a bloody coup attempt against the government of Cory Aquino in August 1987. The owner of the safehouse was also a former Enrile aide. In 1990, the United Press International reported that Arillo was implicated in the December 1989 coup that was again led by Honasan.

²⁶ This is both written and illustrated in the book. Half of the 75 images in the book are of the military. Marcos has more pictures in the book than Cory Aquino. Only one picture shows Aquino listening to Enrile speak; Marcos has six. See Lallana (1986).

“Noynoy” Aquino III and reveal the “bold and factual perspective on the presidency of deposed President Ferdinand Marcos, his wife Imelda Romualdez Marcos” (Arillo 2011). The book’s objective on the Amazon website is “to set the record straight for the new generation of Filipinos who may have to rely on historical accounts to appreciate the characters of the nation’s previous leaders. Arillo’s deconstruction of events is an interesting guide for legal researchers as well as students out to write in a factual recollection of the country’s historical events.”

In 2012, Arillo published a hagiography crudely titled *Imelda: Mothering and Her Poetic and Creative Ideas in a Troubled World*,²⁷ which painted the controversial former First Lady as a victim of her hateful and vengeful tormentors who had to endure “persecution, discriminatory investigations, court trials, sadness, betrayal, and relentless public humiliation” (Arillo 2012, i).²⁸ In 2018, he published *The Marcos Legacy: Clear, Intense and Objective Narration and Exposition of Events*, formally consolidating his counter-EDSA narrative. The book summarizes the main thesis of his previous publications: the Marcoses were victims of yellow vindictiveness under the incompetent and immoral Aquino administrations. His arguments would later compliment another journalist’s work, who previously identified with the anti-Marcos movement, then gradually shifted to the Marcos camp, becoming one of its leading “debunkers.”

Rigoberto D. Tiglao is a far better writer and sophisticated thinker than Arillo. This trait can be attributed to Tiglao’s activist and academic background. He was a former high-ranking communist operative, caught and detained by Marcos Sr.’s military, and after his release continued his studies at the University of the Philippines and joined the progressive Third World Studies Center.²⁹ He wrote a series of ground-breaking essays on the Philippine political economy using dependency theory as a counterfoil to the orthodox Maoist analysis of the Communist Party of the Philippines. Later, he would apply Marx’s “ground rent” theory to investigate the coconut industry under Martial Law (Abinales 2017). After the EDSA Revolution that ousted Marcos, he contributed a chapter detailing how Marcos consolidated his dictatorship in the 1988 compendium *Dictatorship and Revolution: Roots of People’s*

²⁷ According to Miguel Paolo P. Reyes several parts of Arillo’s 2012 book were lifted verbatim from the 1995 book “Circle of Life” authored by Imelda Marcos. However, it is more likely that the 1995 book was ghost-written by Arillo for Imelda. See Berdos (2020).

²⁸ Arillo’s book on Imelda was clearly meant as a reply to Carmen Pedrosa’s critical biography, “The Untold Story of Imelda Marcos” published in 1969. Ironically, Pedrosa would later become a staunch defender of Marcos ally Rodrigo Duterte.

²⁹ Tiglao (2018) rose from the ground up in the local communist hierarchy. He started as the head of the regional Youth and Students Bureau of the communist movement in the early 1970s. Then he became the head of the Communist Party’s Manila-Rizal Regional Committee in 1972, which also gave him a seat in the party’s Central Committee.

Power. Soon after, he pursued a career in journalism, serving as a reporter for *Business Day* from 1981-1986; as business editor for the *Manila Chronicle* from 1986 to 1989; and as Manila correspondent and bureau chief of the Hong Kong-based *Far Eastern Economic Review* from 1989-2000. He was awarded a Nieman Fellowship at Harvard University, where he drafted a concept paper that led to the formation of the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ) in 1989 (Tiglao 2018).

He became a key player in the administration of Gloria Macapagal Arroyo after the second people power uprising at EDSA in 2001. He held several positions such as Presidential Spokesman, Press Secretary, Presidential Chief of Staff, Presidential Management Staff Head, and Philippine Ambassador to Greece and Cyprus. According to Macapagal Arroyo (2021, 74), Tiglao “knew me well enough to second guess me, became my spokesman and chief of staff.” She first met him through Renato “Rene” Velasco, Tiglao’s comrade, who recruited her into the communist activist movement in the 1970s.³⁰ Tiglao became Macapagal Arroyo’s de facto ideologue after he wrote a *Manifesto for a Strong Republic* during a brief fellowship at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University, in 2002. Macapagal Arroyo unveiled her administration’s agenda of building a “strong republic” during her State of the Nation Address (SONA) on July 22, 2002, which aimed to free a “weak state” from dominant elite interests.

Tiglao became a vociferous critic of the EDSA narrative and the Aquino regime after his political ally and benefactor, Macapagal Arroyo, was prosecuted (he claims “persecuted”) by President Benigno “Noynoy” Aquino III for plunder. In his words, the election of Noynoy in 2010 “ushered in a vindictive kind of politics not seen since 1986” (Tiglao 2018, 13). He was invited to write a column for the pro-Aquino *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, where he regularly attacked the second Aquino presidency. He later transferred to the more critical, *The Manila Times*, the country’s oldest newspaper by then owned by Macapagal Arroyo’s former publicist Dante Ang Sr. He explains, “I have also uncovered through the research for my columns a view of the Marcos era radically different from that I myself had embraced in my younger years and disseminated by the Aquino clan’s “Yellow” political cult” (Tiglao 2018, 8).

³⁰ Gloria Macapagal Arroyo claims that she joined the communist activist movement in the 1970s, through the Association of Philippine-China Understanding (APCU) where Velasco was an active member. APCU sponsored her early visits to China and exposed her to Mao Zedong Thought. She eventually abandoned activism in the 1980s but maintained close ties with her activist comrades. Most of whom, including Tiglao, were recruited in her presidential administration. On April 4, 2020, Velasco would be among the first to succumb to the dreaded COVID-19 virus during an APCU-sponsored meeting in China. See Macapagal Arroyo 2022.

He published the book *Debunked: Uncovering Hard Truths about EDSA, Martial Law, Marcos, Aquino, with a Special Section on the Duterte Presidency* in 2018, a collection of his opinion columns, and the paper he wrote in Kyoto. The first half of his compendium consists of articles debunking the then mainstream accounts of the EDSA revolution and the presidencies of Cory Aquino and Fidel Ramos. He then turns his most acerbic attacks on his former comrades in the communist movement and on the presidency of Noynoy Aquino. His intense attacks are matched only by the same intensity he defends Ferdinand Marcos Sr., Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, and Rodrigo Duterte. He consistently portrays Marcos and Macapagal Arroyo as “victims” of the Aquino’s so-called “Yellow cult.” He praises Duterte as an “iconoclastic president” who was brave enough to demolish long-held national political and cultural dogmas and myths.

Much of his assertions echo Arillo's, albeit couched in more theoretically sophisticated and empirically rich tomes. Taking off from his “strong republic” project, he calls for “a people’s nationalism — the dominant view actually in Asian countries — or the realization that in this era of humanity’s evolution, the nation is the most important organization for a human being to be a member of, which he has a moral imperative to help develop.” His view is consistent with the resurgent nationalism under the Duterte presidency – a strongman’s nationalism (Teehankee 2016b). This view also explains his initial support for and subsequent snipes on President Bongbong Marcos, whom he bemoans as not strong enough. Tiglao has become more critical midway into Marcos Jr.’s term.

Redemptive Arc

A scan of the pro-Marcos narratives on social media would reveal the influence of the works of these three public intellectuals. However, Antonio Contreras (2022, par. 3), another contrarian public intellectual sympathetic to Marcos Jr., laments, “the anti-Marcos forces occupy the upper hand in the intellectual platforms in academia and in civil society, and in mainstream media.” But he also decries “those in the pro-Marcos base who actively peddle half-truths and historical fiction, like that of the tall tale of the Tallano gold, and who take advantage of their internet reach to mislead” (Contreras 2022, par 6). For Contreras, victimhood is only one part of the Marcos narrative. The more powerful part is redemption. He explains, “There are two powerful forces that propel the Marcos narrative . . . These are the twin forces of redemption and revenge. While those in the elite bubbles see him as a child of a dictator who victimized people, those living outside it see him as a victim of election fraud,

and furthermore, one being bullied by the elites who likewise also bully them (Contreras 2021, par. 10).” He adds,

Demonized and imaged as the heir apparent of a plundering dynasty, personally trashed even by then incumbent president Rodrigo Duterte, and being accused of being a cheater of academic degrees and a convicted tax evader, Ferdinand Marcos Jr. prevailed with a landslide victory in the May 2022 elections. He is the only post-EDSA president who obtained a majority vote, thereby receiving an undeniable mandate from a people deeply polarized between his supporters and critics . . . Marcos' ascension to the presidency has for all intents and purposes redeemed his family's name.

For historian and political pundit Manuel “Manolo” Quezon III, “election is absolution for someone who is facing a controversy . . . the Marcoses can claim vindication resulting in a restoration” (ABS-CBN 2022, par. 20-21). The former Communications Undersecretary of President Noyon Aquino asserts, “there’s the simple fact that this is a remarkable mandate at a time of remarkable challenge because we’re emerging from a pandemic that has basically left the government with a gigantic debt and very few resources” (cited in Manahan 2022). But this author considers Marcos Jr.’s victory a “pardon” rather than an “absolution.” “You might be given a pardon but not necessarily forgiven because there has been no admission of whatever sins or crimes have been committed in the first place,” this author told the ABS-CBN News Channel (2022, par. 2). For other observers, redemption was the only platform presented to the electorate by Marcos Jr. Like his father in 1935, the son sought to redeem the family’s honor and avenge his family’s fall. Just like his father, he is revising history and “propagating the myth of his electoral invincibility and the inevitability of his presidency” (Coronel 2022a).

The road toward the Marcos restoration was long and arduous. He accompanied his father and family members in exile abroad after they were ousted in the first people power uprising in 1986. He returned from exile in 1991 and, together with his sister, Imee Marcos Manotoc, began rebuilding their family’s political influence. In running for the vice presidency, Marcos has refused to acknowledge the human rights abuses and plunder committed under his father’s dictatorial regime. He even endorsed the historical revisionist view (propagated in social media and popular among young millennials) that the Marcos years were the most progressive in the country’s history. He opted to run for the vice presidency despite silently

preparing for the presidency since he was elected senator in 2010. His ultimate goal of redemption is within his reach if he avoids his father's mistakes.

To respected University of the Philippines sociologist Randy David (2022b, par. 10), "Marcos Jr. sought the presidency on the basis of his self-projection as a unifying figure who would restore the nation to its former glory. Without explicitly acknowledging the mistakes and abuses committed under his father's rule, he swore to govern differently and pleaded to be judged by his own actions." Jayeel Cornelio (cited in Rivas 2022, par. 13-14), a sociologist of religion at the Ateneo de Manila University, opines, "[m]any Christians are drawn to Marcos not because they don't see his lies. Many are drawn because they see that he is the one who will reclaim our greatness ... In a theological perspective, Christianity in the middle of it, it's a mark of redemption. And it matters that he is the son of a dead father, a moment resurrection,"

However, Marcos Jr. admitted at the World Economic Summit in Davos, Switzerland, that his family's survival was his primary motivation for his participation in Philippine politics. He said,

After we came back from the United States, after exile, when we were first allowed to come back, the political issue was Marcos . . . And for us, we, for us to defend ourselves politically, somebody had to enter politics and be in the political arena. So that at least, not only the legacy of my father but even our own survival required that somebody go into politics (cited in Galvez 2023a).

On the Marcos family's return to the presidential palace, Senator Maria Imelda Josefa Remedios "Imee" Romualdez Marcos asserted,

We have been there; the truth is our return to the palace is not that important. What is most important to us is our name, the family name that has become so controversial and so difficult at times to bear. The legacy of my father is what we hope will be clarified at last (cited in Lagman 2023).

Indeed, the resurgence of the Marcos myths and its conversion into an overwhelming electoral mandate underscores the continuing potency of narratives in Philippine presidential politics. The next section shall situate the Marcos narrative within the cycle of presidential regimes in political time.

The Marcos Narrative In Political Time

In the Philippines, a presidency can serve as either a prequel or a sequel to an ongoing political narrative. Due to the absence of ideological competition and programmatic political parties in the country, political narratives are referred to as “stories presidents tell” (Thompson 2010, 2014; Teehankee 2016b). These narratives serve to garner support from the most powerful strategic interest groups, whose support can make or break a presidential campaign.³¹ Thus, a “strong” Philippine president acting as “patron-in-chief” can dominate a “weak” state due to limited horizontal accountability to other branches of government and a lack of strong vertical accountability due to weak parties. But the relative autonomy of the state’s strategic groups, especially the military, may ultimately limit the president’s ability to exert control over the state apparatus itself (Teehankee 2016a; Thompson 2018).

The cycles of political development and decay have shaped and been shaped by the Philippine presidency, which functions as both an agent and a structure of government. This cycle has been articulated through “regime narratives” or the governing “script” that unites a coalition of interests within a specific institutional context or regime (Teehankee 2016b; Thompson 2014). Political time “is the medium through which presidents encounter received commitments of ideology and interest and claim authority to intervene in their development.”³² Thus, presidential leadership is defined by a president’s position in political time instead of his or her personal style or character when confronting various challenges. Presidents face various obstacles to leadership based on their relationship to existing “regimes” that may be the same or distinct from those of their predecessors and successors (Teehankee 2016a).³³ A sitting president’s political identity is either aligned with or opposed to the prevailing regime. Furthermore, the political opportunity available to the incumbent president (i.e., the success or

³¹ According to Thompson (2014, 446), strategic groups, in “the Philippine context, four extra-electoral strategic groups have played critical roles in presidential politics during and after the Marcos regime: big business, the Catholic Church, civil society activists, and the military. Except for the military, these groups are officially outside of government, although they all have close ties to the state, with representatives of big business and civil society groups often taking high-ranking positions in presidential cabinets.”

³² “Political time” and “secular time” can be distinguished. The regular, historical, and sequential ordering of presidential administrations is referred to as secular time. In contrast, political time is the succession of presidents within a pattern of regime continuity and change. While political time is the historical medium through which power structures have recurrent, secular time is the historical medium through which they have evolved (Skowronek 1997, 30).

³³ Stephen Skowronek (1997) introduced the concept of cyclically occurring “political time” in his path-breaking study of presidential leadership *Politics Presidents Make*. Mark R. Thompson (2014) and Julio C. Teehankee (2016) were the first scholars to apply political time to the study of the Philippine presidency. See the recent review of the political time literature by Curt Nichols (2022).

failure of presidential leadership) depends on whether the current regime is resilient or vulnerable.³⁴

The Narrative Trap

Narratives are accounts that meaningfully interweave ideas and events. A president must tell a compelling tale from the national campaign trail to the inaugural address. Thus, in the context of Philippine politics, presidential regimes consist of quasi-programmatic, emotionally charged narratives in election campaigns and a governance script that binds together a coalition of strategic interests within a specific institutional context. Presidents are also embedded in a political order against which their political narratives are evaluated for plausibility. A “narrative trap” occurs when a governing script’s “stories” diverge too drastically from political reality, resulting in the loss of support or even severe hostility from the country’s critical strategic groups.

After two decades in power, Ferdinand Marcos’ iron grip was gradually undermined by the sight of a sick and impotent husk of a strongman who failed to “make this country great again” and instead looted the country. Joseph Estrada, the country’s first populist president, closely identified with the poor (“*Erap para sa mahirap*” or Erap for the Poor) but failed to win the support of the most critical strategic groups, traditional big business, and the Catholic Church, and lost the support of the military and key civil society groups after a series of corruption scandals. Both were overthrown by people power.

Allegations of electoral fraud and massive corruption undercut Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo’s “Strong Republic” narrative. In popular teleserye (television series) terms, she was the “*kontrabida*” of Philippine politics, the villain full of pride and greed. She survived her turbulent period in office because of patronage, economic management, and crisis management (Velasco and Saludo 2010). Noynoy Aquino, her former student, and successor, initially seemed infallible. Noynoy pledged to clean up corruption on a “straight path” (“*matuwid na daan*”) and end poverty (“*kung walang corrupt, walang mahirap*”). However, his use of clientelistic tactics like pork-barrel politics to promote his anti-corruption agenda has exposed

³⁴ Skowronek (1997, 34-44) cross-tabulates these general considerations of political identity and opportunity to yield a typology of four structures of political authority namely (a) politics of reconstruction—when the president emerges from the opposition at a time when the prevailing regime is ripe for repudiation, (b) politics of disjunction—when a president is affiliated with a regime that has been put into question as failed or irrelevant to the problems of the day, (c) politics of articulation—when a president is affiliated with a resilient regime, and (d) politics of preemption—when an opposed president ascends to power within a resilient regime.

the limitations of the liberal reformist system built by his mother, Cory Aquino, after the 1986 EDSA people power uprising.

Twilight of the EDSA Narrative

The peaceful military-supported people power uprising on Epifanio de los Santos Avenue (EDSA) led to the establishment of the Fifth Philippine Republic (1986 to the present). Corazon Aquino, who was installed as president following the overthrow of Ferdinand Marcos, presided over the initial phase of the democratic transition to a "liberal reformist regime," which focused on dismantling the centralized authoritarian power structure and restoring the formal democratic institutions from before martial law. However, the Philippines have not implemented transitional and restorative justice (Teehankee 2022).³⁵ The fledgling Aquino government just allowed the Marcoses to go into exile abroad, where Marcos Sr. died in 1989.

The Aquinos and their “yellow” crowd elite supporters claim legitimacy based on a divinely sanctioned people power uprising against an “evil” dictator that re-established a righteous democracy. Thus, the “miracle of EDSA” became the “foundationalist” narrative of the post-Marcos liberal reformist regime inaugurated by Cory Aquino and continued by her son Benigno “Noynoy” S. Aquino III. Cory and the anti-Marcos political elite framed this narrative in quasi-religious terms and immortalized it in the EDSA Shrine, a Roman Catholic church in the middle of Epifanio de los Santos Avenue. The church is distinguished by the colossal statue of the Virgin Mary atop its dome and the combination of religious and political symbols inside, celebrating the so-called “miracle” of popular sovereignty (Claudio 2013). Ironically, this miracle will be repeated in the form of a divisive elitist discourse that justified the elite-led overthrow of populist President Joseph Estrada in 2001, termed “EDSA dos” or “people power II” (Kusaka 2017).

The resurgence of the Marcos narrative emerged when the dominant EDSA regime narrative was weakened, first by the legitimization crisis under Gloria Macapagal Arroyo and the nationalist-populist challenge of Rodrigo Duterte. The presidency of Noynoy Aquino was first seen to be that of an “orthodox innovator” or someone who would somehow bring back balance to the EDSA narrative. But after a series of scandals and controversies under the second

³⁵ Restorative justice is an alternative kind of justice that aims to reconcile offenders and victims. Like restorative justice, transitional justice strives to promote reconciliation between offenders and disadvantaged groups at the community and national levels. The concepts of "truth, accountability, reparation, reconciliation, conflict resolution, and democratic participation" are central to both restorative and transitional justice, which aim to encourage understanding and healing in the aftermath of war, colonialism, and other violent conflicts (Doak and O'Mahoney 2012).

Aquino administration, the narrative has irreparably damaged and diminished. In Skrownekian terms, Noynoy became a “disjunctive” president – coming to power when the dominant narrative had already faltered.

The rise of Duterte’s populism amidst the weakening of the EDSA narrative provided the perfect storm for the return of the Marcos narrative – as mythic nostalgia of an imagined “golden era” of the dictatorship. Duterte’s assault on the EDSA narrative was the perfect launching pad for the Marcos “memory project.” Not a few pundits predicted the demise of the EDSA regime and potentially the rise of a new regime narrative under the Marcos presidency.³⁶ However, while there have been efforts by the president’s sister, Senator Imee Marcos, to wage a “history war” through a series of incendiary movies that present her family’s perspective on the anti-Marcos struggle and the EDSA people power revolution, Marcos Jr. has taken a more benign approach to EDSA.³⁷

Regime Interregnum

This paper demonstrated how a variety (or “parallax”) of perspectives have provided necessary, yet insufficient explanations for the Marcos political comeback in the Philippines. While dynastic bailiwicks and social media driven disinformation may have contributed to Marcos Jr.’s victory, the question why fake and misleading news was willingly accepted by a large cross-section of the electorate remains. The phenomenon of authoritarian nostalgia underscores the long-standing democratic ambivalence of the Filipino people. Yet, it also falls short of accounting for the strong support for liberal reformist governments in the past. This paper emphasized the discursive power of Marcos mythmaking. The propagation of myths has been at the heart of the Marcos narrative. The resurgence of the Marcos narrative emerged at the time when the dominant EDSA regime narrative was weakened by the illiberal populism of Rodrigo Duterte. It remains to be seen whether the second Marcos presidency will signal the end of the Fifth Republic established under the EDSA regime.

³⁶ For example, see the commentary by Manuel Quezon III (2022b) entitled “The Marcos Restoration: 30 Years in The Making: Rewriting Family History” published in The Asia Sentinel.

³⁷ Imee Marcos, who used to head the Experimental Cinema of the Philippines (ECP) during the Marcos years, supported the production of two movies “Maid in Malacañang” and “Martyr or Murderer.” The first two films in a planned trilogy that purportedly present their version of history.

Marcos passively recognized the first official commemoration of the EDSA revolution under his presidency by declaring February 24 a national holiday. “As we look back to a time in our history that divided the Filipino people, I am one with the nation in remembering those times of tribulation and how we came out of them united and stronger as a nation” (cited in Galvez 2023b, par. 4), he said in his official statement. He reiterated his offer to extend his “hand of reconciliation to those with different political persuasions to come together as one in forging a better society — one that will pursue progress and peace and a better life for all Filipinos” (cited in Galvez 2023b, par. 5).

More significantly, Marcos Jr. has so far resisted the persistent calls from his political allies to finally change the 1987 Constitution drafted under the first Aquino presidency. Past administrations (particularly Ramos, Arroyo, and Duterte) have attempted to amend or totally overhaul the so-called “EDSA Constitution” (La Viña et al. 2012; Gatmaytan 2019). Most political observers anticipated that replacing the EDSA Constitution would be a top priority for the second Marcos administration. In fact, a resolution was passed with an overwhelming majority of 301 to 7 with no abstentions by the House of Representatives calling for convening a Constitutional Convention to amend the 1987 Constitution (Gatmaytan 2019). In the Senate, Senator Robinhood Padilla convened several hearings on the proposal to amend the economic provisions of the Constitution but failed to get the support of most of the senators (Pinlac 2023).

Ultimately, Marcos Jr. himself declared that amending the 1987 Constitution was not a priority of his administration. He said, “It’s not a priority for me because ... there are so many different, there are so many other things that we need to do first” (cited in Cordero 2023). He emphasized that his administration's goals can be realized under the present constitution. Time will tell whether he turns out to be an “orthodox innovator” rather than a “great repudiator.” It will add another layer of historical irony if he remains true to his words – a Marcos who defended the EDSA Constitution.

References

- ABS-CBN. 2022. "Marcos' Victory Might be 'Pardon' by Filipinos but not 'Full Absolution,' says Analyst." *ABS-CBN News*, May 26, 2022. <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/05/26/22/marcoses-victory-not-yet-full-absolution-of-past-issues-analyst>
- Abarro, Michael. 2022. "The Marcos Connection: Political Clans Backing Bongbong's Malacañang Bid." *ABS-CBN News*, May 7, 2022. <https://news.abs-cbn.com/spotlight/05/07/22/the-marcos-connection-political-clans-backing-bbm>.
- Abinales, Patricio N. 2017. "Political Science and the Marcos Dictatorship." *Social Transformations: Journal of the Global South* 5(1): 55-57.
- Abuso, Maria Rhea Gretchen A. 2019. "Narrating Human Rights in the Philippines: Collective Memories of the Filipino Youth on the Marcos Regime." *Journal of Southeast Asian Human Rights* 3(1): 7-38.
- Agpalo, Remigio 1992. *Adventures in Political Science*. Quezon City: University of the Philippine Press.
- _____. 2007. *Ferdinand E. Marcos: A Hero in History*. Batac, Ilocos Norte: Ferdinand E. Marcos Presidential Center.
- Aguilar, Filomeno V. Jr. 2019. "Political Conjuncture and Scholarly Disjunctures: Reflections on Studies of the Philippine State under Marcos." *Philippine Studies: Historical and Ethnographic Viewpoints*. 67(1): 3-30.
- _____. 2022. "Studies of the Marcos State and the Imperative to Negotiate History and Fantasy. *The Marcos Era: A Reader*, edited by Leia Castañeda Anastacio and Patricio N. Abinales, 28-51. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press.
- Ando, Hirofumi. 1969. "A Study of Voting Patterns in the Philippine Presidential and Senatorial Elections, 1946-1965." *Midwest Journal of Political Science* 13(4): 567-586.
- Arguelles, Cleve. 2017. "Duterte's Other War: The Battle for EDSA People Power's Memory." *A Duterte Reader: Critical Essays on Rodrigo Duterte's Early Presidency*, edited by Nicole Curato, 263-282. Quezon City: Bughaw/Ateneo de Manila University Press.

- _____. 2022. "The Triumph of the Marcos-Duterte Leviathan." *Medium*, May 10, 2022. <https://medium.com/@clevearguelles/the-triumph-of-the-marcos-duterte-leviathan-f8b8165b9759>.
- _____. 2023. "From Anarchy to Unity of Families in the 2022 Philippine Elections: A Marcos-Duterte Leviathan State?" *Asian Studies: Journal of Critical Perspectives on Asia* (Early View, December 2022): 1–19.
- Ariate, Joel F., Miguel Paolo P. Reyes, and Larah Vinda del Mundo. 2022. *Marcos Lies*. Quezon City: Third World Studies Center, University of the Philippines.
- Arillo, Cecilio T., 1986. *Breakaway: The inside story of the four-day revolution in the Philippines, February 22-25, 1986*. Greenhills, Mandaluyong, Metro Manila, Philippines: CTA.
- _____. 2001. *Power Grab: The Story Behind the Jan. 20, 2001: EDSA People Power 2 Conspiracy that Swept Vice President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo to Power*. Las Piñas City: CTA Research.
- _____. 2000. *Greed & Betrayal: The Sequel to the 1986 EDSA Revolution*. Las Piñas City: CTA Research.
- _____. 2011 *A Country Imperiled: Tragic Lessons of a Distorted History*. Makati City, Philippines: IAME Books.
- _____. 2012. *Imelda: Mothering and Her Poetic and Creative Ideas in a Troubled World*. Makati City, Philippines: IAME Books.
- Arugay, Aries. 2023. "Militarizing Governance: Informal Civil–Military Relations and Democratic Erosion in the Philippines." *Asian Military Evolutions*, edited by Alan Chong and Nicole Jenne, 68-89. Bristol: Bristol University Press.
- Arugay, Aries, and Justin Keith A. Baguisal. 2022. "Mobilized and Polarized: Social media and Disinformation Narratives in the 2022 Philippine Elections." *Pacific Affairs*. 95(3): 549-573.
- Balisacan, Arsenio M., and Hal Hill. 2003. "An Introduction to the Key Issues." *The Philippine Economy: Development, Policies, and Challenges*, edited by Arsenio M. Balisacan and Hal Hill, 3-44. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bautista, Felipe Victor. 2018. "The Pervert's Guide to Historical Revisionism Traversing the Marcos Fantasy." *Philippine Studies: Historical and Ethnographic Viewpoints* 66(3): 273-300.

- Benedicto, Bobby. 2021. "The Place of the Dead, the Time of Dictatorship: Nostalgia, Sovereignty, and the Corpse of Ferdinand Marcos." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 39(4): 722-739.
- Berdos, Enrico. 2020. "Propaganda Web: Pro-Marcos Literature, Sites, and Online Disinformation Linked." *ABS CBN News*, December 12, 2020. <https://news.abs-cbn.com/spotlight/12/12/20/propaganda-web-pro-marcos-literature-sites-and-online-disinformation-linked>.
- Bonner, Raymond. 1987. *Waltzing with a Dictator: The Marcoses and the Making of American Policy*. New York, NY: Times Books.
- Brillantes, Alexander B. 1987. *Dictatorship and Martial Law: Philippine Authoritarianism in 1972*. Quezon City: Great Books Publishers.
- Buan, Lian. 2022. "Marcos Insists he has no Trolls, says Fake News 'Dangerous.'" *Rappler*, February 7, 2022. <https://www.rappler.com/nation/elections/ferdinand-bongbong-marcos-jr-claims-has-no-trolls-fake-news-dangerous/>.
- Burton, Sandra. 1989. *Impossible Dream: The Marcoses, the Aquinos, and the Unfinished Revolution*. New York, NY: Warner Books.
- Celoza, Albert Francisco. 1987. "The Rise of an Authoritarian Regime in the Philippines." Ph.D. diss. Claremont Graduate School.
- Cabato, Regine and Shibani Mahtani. 2022. "How the Philippines' Brutal History is Being Whitewashed for Voters," *The Washington Post*, April 12, 2022. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/04/12/philippines-marcos-memory-election/>. Chang et al. 2007.
- Chaikin, David, and Jason C. Sharman. 2009. "The Marcos Kleptocracy." *Corruption and Money Laundering: A Symbiotic Relationship*, 153-186. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Chang, Yu-tzung, Yun-han Chu, and Chong-Min Park. 2007. "The Democracy Barometers (Part I): Authoritarian Nostalgia in Asia." *Journal of Democracy* 18(3): 66-80.
- Claudio, Lisandro. 2022. "Partida: Why odds were stacked against Kakampinks, and what we achieved." *Rappler*, May 15, 2022. <https://www.rappler.com/voices/thought-leaders/opinion-why-odds-stacked-against-kakampinks/>.
- Contreras, Antonio. 2021. "Why Bongbong Appears to be Winnable." *The Manila Times*, November 6, 2021. <https://www.manilatimes.net/2021/11/06/opinion/columns/why-bongbong-marcos-appears-to-be-winnable/1821147>.

- _____. 2022. "Nuanced History." *The Manila Times*, November 3, 2022.
<https://www.manilatimes.net/2022/11/03/opinion/columns/nuanced-history/1864826>.
- Coronel, Sheila S. 2022. "Marcos, Martial Law and Memory: The Past in our Future in the Philippines." *Pacific Journalism Review* 28(1&2): 54-66.
- _____. 2022. "The Triumph of Marcos Dynasty Disinformation Is a Warning to the U.S." *The New Yorker*, May 17, 2022.
<https://www.newyorker.com/news/dispatch/the-triumph-of-marcos-dynasty-disinformation-is-a-warning-to-the-us>.
- Cordero, Ted. 2023. "Marcos: Cha-cha not my Priority." *GMA News Online*, February 13, 2023. <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/topstories/nation/860583/marcos-chacha-not-my-priority/story/>.
- Curaming, Rommel A. 2008. "Contextual Factors in the Analysis of State-Historian Relations in Indonesia and the Philippines." *Philippine Studies* 56(2): 123-150.
- _____. 2018. "Official History Reconsidered: The Tadhana Project in the Philippines." *The Palgrave Handbook of State-Sponsored History After 1945*, edited by Berber Bevernage and Nico Wouters, 237-253. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- _____. 2020. *Power and Knowledge in Southeast Asia: State and Scholars in Indonesia and the Philippines*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.
- _____. 2022. "Election Results: A Wake-Up Call to Reinvent Liberal-Progressive Politics in the Philippines." *Southeast Asia: Analytics, Politics, and Ethics of Scholarship* (blog), May 13, 2022.
<https://diasporicminds.blogspot.com/2022/05/elections-results-wake-up-call-to.html>.
- David, Randy. 2022. David, Randy. 2022a. "Why Filipinos Vote the Way They Do." *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, May 1, 2022. <https://opinion.inquirer.net/152534/why-filipinos-vote-the-way-they-do>.
- _____. 2022. "Marcos Jr.'s Bid for Legitimacy." *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, May 29, 2022. <https://opinion.inquirer.net/153397/marcos-jr-s-bid-for-legitimacy>.
- Doak, Jonathan, and David O'Mahony. 2012. "Editorial Transitional Justice and Restorative Justice." *International Criminal Law Review* 12: 305-311
- Doyo, Maria Ceres P. 2016. "Marcos 'War Medals' Exposed, Questioned (1)." *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, August 18, 2016. <https://opinion.inquirer.net/96588/marcos-war-medals-exposed-questioned-1>.
- Doronila, Amando. 1992. *The State, Economic Transformation and Political Change in the Philippines: 1946-1972*. Singapore: Oxford University Press.

- Dulay, Dean, Allen Hicken, Ronald Holmes, and Anil Menon. 2022. "Who's Voting for 'Bongbong' Marcos to be the Next Filipino President?" *The Washington Post*, May 6, 2022. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/05/06/Bongbong-marcos-duterte-philippines-election-may9/>.
- Galvez, Daphne. 2023. "Bongbong Marcos says family's 'survival' prompted entry into politics; their exile, 'dark days' for PH." *Inquirer.net*, January 19, 2023. <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1718506/bbm-says-familys-survival-prompted-entry-into-politics-their-exile-dark-days-for-ph>.
- _____. 2023. "Bongbong Marcos 'offers hand of reconciliation' on 37th anniversary of Edsa revolt." *Inquirer.net*, February 25, 2023. <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1735007/bongbong-marcos-offers-hand-of-reconciliation-on-37th-anniversary-of-edsa-revolt>.
- Garrido, Marco. 2022. "The Ground for the Illiberal Turn in the Philippines." *Democratization* 29(4): 673-691.
- Gatmaytan, Dante. 2019. "Constitutional Change as Suspect Projects: The Philippines." *Journal of Comparative Law* 14: 139
- Hernandez, Carolina G. 1985. "The Philippine Military and Civilian Control: Under Marcos and Beyond." *Third World Quarterly* 7(4): 907-923.
- Heydarian, Richard Javad. 2022. "The Return of the Marcos Dynasty." *Journal of Democracy* 33(3): 62-76.
- Holmes, Ronald. 2016. "The Dark Side of Electoralism: Opinion Polls and Voting in the 2016 Philippine Presidential Election." *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs*, 35(3): 15-38.
- _____. 2022. "Despite Huge Victory, Bongbong Underwhelms." *East Asia Forum*, May 13, 2022. <https://www.eastasiaforum.org/2022/05/15/despite-huge-victory-bongbong-underwhelms/>.
- Hutchcroft, Paul D. 2011. "Chapter Nineteen. Reflections on a Reverse Image: South Korea under Park Chung Hee and the Philippines under Ferdinand Marcos." *The Park Chung Hee Era*, edited by Byung-Kook Kim and Ezra F. Vogel, 542-572. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- _____. 2014. "Linking Capital and Countryside: Patronage and Clientelism in Japan, Thailand, and the Philippines." *Clientelism, Social Policy, and the Quality of Democracy*, edited by Diego Abente Brun and Larry Diamond, 174-203. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

- Ileto, Reynaldo C. 1979. *Pasyon and Revolution: Popular movements in the Philippines, 1840-1910*. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press.
- Jereza, Veronica Louise B. 2020. “‘Burying’ National Trauma”: Memory Laws and the Memory of the Marcos Regime.” *Philippine Law Journal* 93: 410-445.
- Kasarinlan. 2012-2013. “Appendix 3.2: Popularizing Political Rehabilitation: Bongbong Marcos’s Friendster.” *Kasarinlan* 27-28 (1-2): 432-435.
- Kerkvliet, Benedict J. 1995. “Toward a More Comprehensive Analysis of Philippine Politics: Beyond the Patron-Client Factional Framework.” *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 26(2): 401-419.
- La Viña, Antonio G., Joy G. Acheron, Edgar S. Bonto, and Benedict G. Nisperos. 2012. *The 1987 Constitution: To Change or Not to Change*. Mandaluyong City: Ateneo School of Government/Anvil.
- Lallana, Emmanuel. 1986. “Interpreting the Interpretations of February.” *Philippine Journal of Public Administration* 30(3): 235-249.
- Landé, Carl. 1996. *Post-Marcos Politics: A Geographical and Statistical Analysis of the 1992 Presidential Election*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.
- Lingao, Ed. 2012. “A Different EDSA Story.” *Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism*, February 24, 2012. <https://pcij.org/article/2641/a-different-edsa-story>.
- Macapagal Arroyo, Gloria. 2021. *Deus Ex Machina: A Memoir by Gloria Macapagal Arroyo*. Manila: Manila Bulletin Publishing Corporation.
- Manahan, Job. 2022. “Carve New Image or Get Even? Historian Cites Challenges of New Marcos Admin.” *ABS-CBN News*, May 25, 2022. <https://news.abs-cbn.com/spotlight/05/25/22/historian-cites-challenges-of-new-marcos-admin>.
- Manapat, Ricardo. 1991. *Some are Smarter than Others: The History of Marcos’ Crony Capitalism*. New York: Aletheia Publications
- Mangahas, Mahar. 2018. *Survey Indicators of the State of Democracy*. Quezon City: Social Weather Stations.
- Mendoza, Gemma B. 2019. “Networked Propaganda: How the Marcosses are Using Social Media to Reclaim Malacanang.” *Rappler*, November 20, 2019. <https://www.rappler.com/newsbreak/investigative/245290-marcos-networked-propaganda-social-media/>.
- Mendoza, Ronald, Gabrielle Ann S. Mendoza, Julio C. Teehankee, Philip Arnold P. Tuaño, and Jurel Yap. Forthcoming. “Interrogating the Links Between Dynasties and Development in the Philippines.” *Asian Journal of Comparative Political Science*.

- Mercado, Neil Arwin. 2022. "Trolls? 'Show me one, they don't exist' – Marcos Jr." *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, April 27, 2022.
<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1588374/marcos-camp-has-online-trolls-show-me-one-they-dont-exist-says-bongbong>.
- Montinola, Gabriella R. 1999. "Politicians, Parties, and the Persistence of Weak States: Lessons from the Philippines." *Development and Change* 30(4): 739-774.
- Moss, Daniel. 2022. "The Powerful Machine That Brought Bongbong to Victory." Bloomberg, May 14, 2022. <https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2022-05-14/Philippines-election-a-powerful-machine-brought-bongbong-marcos-to-victory>.
- National Historical Commission of the Philippines. 2016. *Why Ferdinand Marcos Should Not be Buried at the Lagingan ng mga Bayani*. Manila: National Historical Commission of the Philippines.
- Nichols, Curt. 2022. "The 'Second Wave' of Political Time Scholarship. and, Beyond!" *USAbroad – Journal of American History and Politics* 5: 29-42.
- Norizan, Kadir. 2019. "Remembering and Forgetting the Memories of Violence: The Filipino Protest Over Hero's Interment for Marcos, 2016-2017." *Jebat: Malaysian Journal of History, Politics & Strategy* 46(1): 1-36.
- Ocampo, Ambeth. 2022. "Lies are not Historical Revisionism." *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, September 9, 2020. <https://opinion.inquirer.net/133424/lies-are-not-historical-revisionism>.
- Ong, Jonathan Corpus, and Jason Vincent A. Cabañes. 2018. *Architects of Networked Disinformation: Behind the Scenes of Troll Accounts and Fake News Production in the Philippines*. <https://newtontechfordev.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/ARCHITECTS-OF-NETWORKED-DISINFORMATION-FULL-REPORT.pdf>.
- Ong, Jonathan Corpus, Rossine Fallorina, Jose Mari Lanuza, Ferdinand Sanchez II, Nicole Curato. 2022. *Parallel Public Spheres: Influence Operations in the 2022 Elections*. <https://mediamanipulation.org/sites/default/files/media-files/Parallel-Public-Spheres.pdf>.
- Parry, Richard Lloyd. 2022. "My troll army won Philippines presidency for me, admits dictator's son Bongbong Marcos." *The Times*, June 14, 2022.
<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/my-troll-army-won-philippines-presidency-for-me-admits-dictators-son-bongbong-marcos-0mrnlkgjl>.

- Pinlac, Beatrice. 2023. "I'll try again: Padilla not backing down on Cha-cha push in Senate." *Inquirer.net*, March 31, 2023. <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1750839/ill-try-again-padilla-not-backing-down-on-cha-cha-push-in-senate>.
- Punongbayan, JC. *False Nostalgia: The Marcos "Golden Age" Myths and How to Debunk Them*. Quezon City: Bughaw/Ateneo de Manila University Press.
- Quezon, Manuel III. 2022. "Restoration." *Inquirer.net*, May 11, 2022. <https://opinion.inquirer.net/152823/restoration>.
- _____. 2022. "The Marcos Restoration: 30 Years In The Making." *Asia Sentinell*, May 15, 2022. <https://www.asiasentinel.com/p/marcos-restoration-30-years-making>.
- Rafael, Vicente L. 1990. "Patronage and Pornography: Ideology and Spectatorship in the Early Marcos Years." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 32(2): 282-304.
- Reaves, Joseph A. 1989. "Marcos was More than just Another Dictator." *Chicago Tribune*, September 29, 1989. <https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/ct-xpm-1989-09-29-8901180123-story.html>.
- Rempel, William C. 1993. *Delusions of a Dictator: The Mind of Marcos as Revealed in his Secret Diaries*. New York: Little, Brown & Company.
- Rivas, Ralf. 2022. "Marcos Jr. Resurrects Father's Symbols, or his Strongman Illusions might Crumble." *Rappler*, February 12, 2022. <https://www.rappler.com/nation/elections/marcos-jr-resurrects-father-symbols-strongman-illusions-might-crumble/>.
- Rivera, Temario C., and Bobby M. Tuazon. Eds. 2022. *The Marcos Restoration: The CenPEG Papers on Election 2022*. Quezon City: Center for People Empowerment in Governance (CenPEG).
- Robles, Alan. 2022. "Marcos' 'Confessions': Philippine President-elect Admits to 'Trolls,' Needing Guidance – and Doing it for his Parents." *South China Morning Post*, June 14, 2022. <https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/politics/article/3181416/marcos-confessions-philippines-president-elect-admits-trolls>.
- Robles, Raissa. 2016. *Marcos Martial Law: Never Again: A Brief History of Torture and Atrocity under the New Society*. Quezon City: Filipinos for A Better Philippines, Inc.
- Salazar, Cherry. 2022. "Marcos Leads Presidential Race Amid Massive Disinformation." *Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism*, May 8, 2022. <https://pcij.org/article/8368/marcos-presidential-elections-massive-disinformation>.

- Schmidt, Vivien A. 2010. "Taking Ideas and Discourse Seriously: Explaining Change Through Discursive Institutionalism as the Fourth 'New Institutionalism.'" *European Political Science Review* 2(1): 1-25.
- Seagrave, Sterling. 1988. *The Marcos Dynasty*. New York: Fawcett Columbine.
- Sidel, John T. 2022. "Patrons, Bosses, Dynasties, and Reformers in Local Politics." *Routledge Handbook of the Contemporary Philippines*, edited by Mark R. Thompson and Eric C. Batalla, 26-37. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.
- Skowronek, Stephen. 1997. *The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to Bill Clinton*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Harvard.
- Spence, Hartzell. 1964. *For Every Tear a Victory: The Story of Ferdinand E. Marcos*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Soriano, Cheryll Ruth R., and Marie Fatima Gaw. 2022. "Broadcasting Anti-Media Populism in the Philippines: YouTube Influencers, Networked Political Brokerage, and Implications for Governance." *Policy & Internet* 14(3): 508-524.
- Talamayan, Fernan. 2021. "The Politics of Nostalgia and the Marcos Golden Age in the Philippines." *Asia Review* 11(3): 273 - 304
- Teehankee, Julio C. 2010. "Image, Issues and Machinery: Presidential Campaigns in Post-1986 Philippines." *The Politics of Change in the Philippines*, edited by Yuko Kasuya and Nathan Gilbert Quimpo, 114-161. Manila: Anvil.
- _____. 2016. "Weak State, Strong Presidents: Situating the Duterte Presidency in Philippine Political Time." *Journal of Developing Societies* 32 (3): 293-321.
- _____. 2016. "Duterte's Resurgent Nationalism in the Philippines: A Discursive Institutional Analysis." *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs* 35 (3): 69-89.
- _____. 2018. "House of Clans: Political Dynasties in the Philippine Legislature." *Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Philippines*, edited by Mark R. Thompson and Eric C. Batalla, 85-96. London and New York: Routledge.
- _____. 2022. "Rethinking Patronage Politics in the Philippines." *Patronage Democracy in the Philippines: Clans, Clients, and Machines in Local Politics*, edited by Julio C. Teehankee and Cleo C. Calimbahin, A, 1-37. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press.
- _____. 2023. "The Legacy of the Kilusang Bagong Lipunan: Authoritarian Legacy in Philippine Party Politics." *Martial Law in the Philippines: Lessons & Legacies 1972-2022*, edited by Edilberto C. De Jesus and Ivyrose S. Baysic, 221-246. Quezon City: Bughaw/Ateneo de Manila University Press.

- Teehankee, Julio C., and Yuko Kasuya, Y. 2020. "The 2019 Midterm Elections in the Philippines: Party System Pathologies and Duterte's Populist Mobilization." *Asian Journal of Comparative Politics* 5 (1): 69-81.
- Thompson, Mark R. 1996. *The Anti-Marcos Struggle: Personalistic Rule and Democratic Transition in the Philippines*. Quezon City: New Day Publishers.
- _____. 2010. "Populism and the Revival of Reform: Competing Political Narratives in the Philippines." *Contemporary Southeast Asia: A Journal of International and Strategic Affairs*, 32(1):1-28.
- _____. 2014. "The Politics Philippine Presidents Make: Presidential-style, Patronage-based, or Regime Relational?" *Critical Asian Studies* 46(3):433-460.
- _____. 2018. "The Presidency: A Relational Approach." *Routledge Handbook of the Contemporary Philippines*, edited by Mark R. Thompson and Eric Vincent C. Batalla, 118-129. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.
- Tiglao, Rigoberto. 1988. "The Consolidation of the Dictatorship. *Dictatorship and Revolution: Roots of People's Power*, edited by Aurora J. de Dios, Petronilo B. Daroy, and Lorna Kalaw-Tirol, 26-69. Manila: Conspectus.
- _____. 2018. *Debunked: Uncovering Hard Truths about EDSA, Martial Law, Marcos, Aquino, with a special section on the Duterte Presidency: Selected Essays*. Republic of the Philippines: Akropolis Publishing.
- Tiquia, Malou. 2022. "Who Checks the Fact Checkers?" *The Manila Times*, April 5, 2022. <https://www.manilatimes.net/2022/04/05/opinion/columns/who-checks-the-fact-checkers/1838873>.
- _____. 2022. "Deconstructing E-day: The Duterte Halo Effect." *The Manila Times*, May 17, 2022. <https://www.manilatimes.net/2022/05/17/opinion/columns/deconstructing-e-day-the-duterte-halo-effect/1843933>.
- Tulfo, Ramon. 2012. "The Incident that Changed Enrile's Life." *Inquirer.net*, October 1, 2012. <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/280996/the-incident-that-changed-enriles-life>.
- Velasco, Renato. 1997. "Philippine Democracy: Promise and Performance." *Democratization in Southeast and East Asia*, edited by Anek Laothamatas, 77-110. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.
- Velasco, Renato S., and Ricardo Saludo. 2010. *Beating the Odds: The Philippines Stands Up to Terror, Drugs, Dreadful Disease, Coup d'etat, Economic Storms and Intractable Conflict at the Gates of the 21st Century*. Manila: Future Templates Enterprises.

- Villanueva, Ralph Edwin. 2021. "Topping Online Polls, Marcos Denies Employing Troll Farms." *Philstar.com*, October 23, 2021.
<https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2021/10/23/2136023/topping-online-polls-marcos-denies-employing-troll-farms>.
- Viray, Patricia Lourdes. 2016. "Survey: 44% of Filipinos Agree there was Oppression under Marcos." *Philstar.com*, March 20, 2016. Survey: 44% of Filipinos agree there was oppression under Marcos.
- Webb, Adele. 2017. "Why are the Middle Class Misbehaving?: Exploring Democratic Ambivalence and Authoritarian Nostalgia." *Philippine Sociological Review* 65: 77-102.
- _____. 2022. *Chasing Freedom: The Philippines' Long Journey to Democratic Ambivalence*. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press.
- Yang, Angelica and John Eric Mendoza. 2021. "4 Parties Form 'UniTeam' Alliance for Bongbong Marcos – Sara Duterte Tandem." *Inquirer.net*, November 25, 2021.
<https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1519777/4-parties-form-uniteam-alliance-for-bongbong-marcos-sara-duterte-tandem>.