

## Why Marcos *Pa Rin!*

ABSTRACT. This introduction explains how the Third World Studies Center (TWSC) of the College of Social Sciences and Philosophy, University of the Philippines (UP) Diliman decided to hold the public forum series “Marcos *Pa Rin!* *Ang mga Pamana at Sumpa ng Rehimeng Marcos* (Marcos Still! The Legacy and the Curse of the Marcos Regime),” thereafter introducing the contents of this issue that were drawn from or linked to that series.

KEYWORDS. Ferdinand Marcos · dictatorship · martial law · Marcos loyalists · propaganda

### INTRODUCTION

Who shouts “Marcos *Pa Rin!* (Marcos Still!)”?

An obvious answer is: the Marcos loyalists. But who are they? Among today’s loyalists, we can identify two probable extremes: (1) those who literally worship former president Ferdinand E. Marcos as a divine entity (absolute loyalty), and (2) those who at least appear loyal to him for electoral purposes (contingent loyalty). Regarding the former, a retired colonel, Bernabe Abella, once claimed responsibility for founding the Golden Eagles Marcos cult in Pangasinan in 1969 to attract “peasants away from the fledgling Marxist movement” (AP 1993). As reported, Abella said that “the scheme worked so well that after Marcos declared martial law in 1972, he and other officers presented the president with a secret plan to use mysticism against both the Communists and Muslim rebels in the South”; afterwards, “his fellow officers competed with one another to see who could build the biggest following” (AP 1993). Regarding the contingent loyalists, there are at least two Philippine partylist groups that are explicitly pro-Marcos: Friends of Imelda Romualdez-Marcos or FIRM-24K and Bantay, or The True Marcos Loyalist (For God, Country, and People) Association of the Philippines, Inc. From a political perspective, Bantay is the more successful of the two, since it was able to win a seat—occupied by “communist butcher” retired major general Jovito

Palparan—in the Fourteenth Congress (2007–2010); FIRM-24K has yet to win sufficient votes to enter the House of Representatives.

Another partylist group associated with Marcos is the anticommunist Alliance for Nationalism and Democracy (ANAD). ANAD had one seat in the Fifteenth Congress (2010–2013). Ilocanos and Marcos loyalists also famously overlap (see Aquino 2000), as do many Warays, especially those from Leyte, the home province of Imelda Romualdez Marcos. Both ethnolinguistic groups have partylists, too: in 2010, Agbiag! Timpuyog Ilocano, Inc., won one seat in the House, while An Waray won two. Members of the Iglesia ni Cristo sect are also (in)famously pro-Marcos. Their partylist, Alagad, won one congressional seat in 2010. We should also take cognizance of what remains of Marcos catch-all (dissidents?) party Kilusang Bagong Lipunan (New Society Movement). None of their national-level candidates won in 2010, but one of their senatorial candidates, singer Imelda Papin, received over 1,970,000 votes; the party’s candidates for senator received well over of 4,100,000 votes that year, while their candidate for vice president, former broadcaster Jay Sonza, and their (eventually disqualified) candidate for president, the unknown Vetellano Acosta, received over 64,000 and nearly 182,000 votes, respectively.<sup>1</sup>

Aquino (2000) says that as soon as Marcos settled into exile in Hawaii after the 1986 People Power Revolution, a group called “Friends of Marcos” was organized by one Jose “Joe” Lazo, “a travel agent and radio commentator who originally came from Ilocos Sur,” who made himself the unofficial spokesperson of Marcos in exile. Aquino (2000) described many of the Marcos loyalists in Hawaii as first-generation immigrants, though she also profiled loyalists who “tended to be younger, more educated and from a relatively middle-class background [who, due to their occupations,] had to ‘play ball’ or ‘dance with the music,’” i.e., of their pro-Marcos clients. Further back, we can trace other loyalist groups through a book published in 1980 titled *The Nation Builder*, authored by Victor B. Lomingkit. The “about the author” back cover describes Lomingkit as “a Research Officer of the Loyalists for Marcos (LFM).” It has a foreword by Victor G. Nituda, who was identified as “Presidential Assistant and National Chairman, Loyalists for Marcos.” Nituda is also the author of a book titled *The*

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1. The number of votes mentioned here came from a dataset downloadable from the Open Data Philippines website ([data.gov.ph](http://data.gov.ph)) for the senatorial votes and Congress of the Philippines (2010) for the votes of Acosta and Sonza.

*Young Marcos* (1979), which argues that Ferdinand Marcos was destined for the presidency partly by accident of his early twentieth century Ilocano milieu, his parentage, and, of course, his (alleged) innate genius. Nituda's back-flap profile in his 1979 debut describes him as someone whose "professional relationship [with Marcos] dates back to 1951, when he first joined the staff of the then Congressman Marcos as a stenographer."

It thus seems safe to say that Marcos loyalists existed at least as early as the start of Ferdinand Marcos's political career in 1949. After all, he had to win hearts and minds (with [fake] stories of his guerilla exploits) to win an election (Ariate and Reyes 2016a, 2016b, 2016c). But apparently, they—excluding the abovementioned cults—only became officially organized in the 1980s. Before that, there had been many vociferous Marcos loyalists, disorganized though they may have been, such as Alfonso Santos, whose pro-Marcos books of poetry include *Onward to Greatness*, *Reform for Greatness*, *Produce for Greatness*,<sup>2</sup> and *Marcos: Man of the Hour!*, all of which were published during Ferdinand Marcos's first term (1966-1969). The opening strains of "He Is Good," one of the poems in *Man of the Hour!*, exemplifies the charming simplicity (charitably speaking) of Santos's verses:

Marcos is good!  
 He is not evil,  
 He is not mean,  
 And he is not heartless! (1969, 8)

Marcos may strike one as a tragic hero—Oedipus, perhaps, who won his crown through a storied feat, ruled well until a plague overcame his people, then, after realizing that he was the plague's proximate cause, stepped down from his throne, dying in exile. Marcos may also partly resemble Odysseus—a master of deception, a "man of many wiles," whose downfall started when, following a major victory, he led his men to steal from a certain people, thereafter they were forcibly ejected; diminished, he went through various trials, but he stayed adamant about returning to the land he had ruled over. There is even evidence that Marcos would have done what Odysseus did—violently kill all "usurpers"—had he successfully returned to his island-nation homeland.

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2. This list comes from the preface of Santos (1969, viii).

Discourse on Ferdinand Marcos is often punctuated with such mythic reduction, which we can partly credit to the undeniable success of the Marcosian mythmaking machine. For decades, Marcos has defied a sober summation, with the pro-Marcos camps regurgitating the myths peddled by Marcos's propagandists and manufacturing their own glowing constructs of the "Greatest President Ever," and the anti-Marcos camps struggling to counter these myths with unadorned statements of fact, sometimes even made more clunky by historical research. Canonical evangelists and heretical writers of apocrypha alike have occluded the historical Marcos, highlighting instead Marcos as the center of a discursive binary opposition.

We, at the UP TWSC, were aware of all of these in 2010, when Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. won a seat in the Philippine Senate, the first Marcos to occupy a national-level position since the older Ferdinand Marcos was ousted in 1986. This victory may have emboldened Marcos loyalists to become more aggressive about their cause. In 2011, 212 members of the House—including all of the representatives of the abovementioned winning partylist groups—coauthored House Resolution No. 1135, s. 2011, "Urging the Administration of President Benigno C. Aquino III to Allow the Burial of the Remains of Former President Ferdinand Edralin Marcos at the Libingan ng mga Bayani."<sup>3</sup> Such number, 212 representatives, was equivalent to over 74 percent of the entire Fifteenth Congress. When then representative Bongbong Marcos, less than a month after the opening of the Ninth Congress's first session, filed a similar resolution in 1992 (House Resolution No. 80), only 104 representatives out of 220—less than half—officially joined his call.<sup>4</sup>

Seeing as how Pres. Benigno Simeon "Noynoy" Aquino III did not heed such calls, we admittedly remained complacent about the Marcos "resurgence." The TWSC instead focused on critically engaging the Aquino administration, conducting a public forum series entitled

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3. The list of all the legislators who coauthored the resolution can be accessed via the Legislative Information System (LEGIS) of the House of Representatives website ([www.congress.gov.ph/legis](http://www.congress.gov.ph/legis)).
  4. The full title of the resolution is "Resolution Entreating the Executive Department of the Government to Allow the Return of the Remains of the Late President Ferdinand E. Marcos to the Philippines to Lie in State at the Malacañang Palace and to be Accorded a State Funeral with All the Courtesies Befitting a Former President of the Republic of the Philippines within Ten (10) Days from Arrival." The list of coauthors can be accessed via LEGIS.

“The B.S. Aquino Administration: Possible Perversities, Perverted Possibilities” from June to September 2011. The series tackled church-state relations, the state of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, media-state relations and Aquino’s image-building strategies, and local governance two decades after the enactment of the Local Government Code.<sup>5</sup> The implications of the Marcoses’ increasing political influence were not considered sufficiently “forum-worthy” at the time.

But the Marcoses will not simply settle for votes from an adoring crowd that catapulted them to public office. As is true of autocrats, they want state-sanctioned and state-induced glorification of their dear departed patriarch’s brutal and kleptocratic regime. This objective they have already realized for years in their fiefdom of Ilocos Norte, what with annual festivities extolling the greatness of Ferdinand Marcos. But in 2013, forces tied to the rapacious dynasty from the north cast a permanent shadow in the supposed bastion of antidictatorial forces in the nation’s capital, the University of the Philippines.

## HERE WE HONOR DICTATORS AND THEIR ILKS

What eventually caught the Center’s attention was a development close to home. On 13 April 2013, the Board of Regents of the University of the Philippines approved the request of the College of Business Administration (CBA) to change the name of the college—not just the building but the entirety of its academic program—to the Cesar E.A. Virata School of Business. Our Center—and many others inside UP—were shocked upon learning the news. It was appalling to us that the College of Business Administration would so honor a key member of the martial law regime of former president Marcos. Mr. Virata had been a key economic planner—a technocrat—in the regime and had even served as prime minister in the last years of that administration. It seemed as if there was an alarming case of historical amnesia wherein the ills of the Marcos martial law years were forgotten—or worse, condoned. Had people in the university forgotten the corruption, the cronyism, the human rights violations, the censorship, the lack of checks and balances in those years of dictatorship? What did this show about the university that had been a bastion of opposition and activism during those turbulent, suppressive years? Was this not historical

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5. Details of the forum series can be seen at [www.uptwsc.blogspot.com/2011/05/twsc-launches-its-2011-public-forum.html](http://www.uptwsc.blogspot.com/2011/05/twsc-launches-its-2011-public-forum.html).

revisionism by memorialization and an attempt to whitewash that era? If the CBA seemed to have forgotten about the dictatorship and the role Mr. Virata played in it, what more the students, who had not experienced the years of martial law?

The TWSC was established in the heyday of the dictatorship, in 1977. It had kept alive the spirit of activism and freedom of thought, being a center for free and critical discussion when such freedom was muzzled by the government. With this background, we felt that we had to do something to bring to the fore discussions on the issue of renaming the CBA specifically and, on a broader bent, the whole issue of what the martial law experience was like and the mixed legacies it left. We wanted to bring out not just the political and economic issues of the Marcos years, but also a wider perspective, including the legal framework, culture and the arts, media, and memory.

Thus, the subject of the martial law experience, its legacy and how it was remembered, became the focus of the Center's public forum series for 2013. This broad subject was given sharp and critical articulations by known academics, public intellectuals, civil society leaders, and journalists: Judy M. Taguiwalo, Nelson A. Navarro, Eduardo C. Tadem, Amado Mendoza Jr., Rodrigo C. Domingo, Fe Buenaventura-Mangahas, Rita Melecio, Meynardo P. Mendoza, Roberto Diciembre, Karen Gomez-Dumpit, Ferdinand C. Llanes, Gerardo Eusebio, Butch Hernandez, Froilan Bacungan, Raul Pangalangan, Marites Dañguilan-Vitug, Rene A.V. Saguisag, Teresita G. Maceda, Frank Cimatu, and Raissa Robles.

The level of analysis that they have presented during the forum, drawn either from their own personal experiences during the martial law years or from their years of scholarly research or both, generated lively and perceptive exchanges with the audience that led to articulations of novel and critical views on the accursed legacy of the Marcos regime.

The first forum in the series was held on 03 July 2013. Entitled "*Marcos Pa Rin! Ang mga Isyu at Interes sa Pagpapangalan sa College of Business Administration na Cesar E.A. Virata School of Business*" (Marcos Still! The Issues and Interests in Renaming the College of Business Administration Cesar E.A. Virata School of Business), the forum's speakers included faculty members of the university who had actively participated in the fight against the dictatorship and had been tortured for it. We tried to invite Mr. Virata to air his side, but he declined. Similarly, members of the CBA were invited but they too declined to participate. This was the only organized event in the

university wherein the issues surrounding the renaming of the college were discussed openly and in depth, and Caesar Saloma, then UP Diliman chancellor gave it his full support.

Since the renaming of the CBA was just one of several other developments indicating that the years of the Marcos dictatorship were either being forgotten or deliberately sanitized, the Center planned a series of four separate forums, with specially chosen speakers from the academe, the media, the government, and the civil society, among others, to discuss different aspects of the period. The rest of the forums were conducted from November 2013 to February 2014, the last timed to coincide with the anniversary of the 1986 People Power Revolution. All were held in the Faculty Center Conference Room (Pulungang Claro M. Recto), itself a historic venue for dialogue and debate in the university. The series also became a part of the activities commemorating the thirtieth anniversary of the College of Social Sciences and Philosophy.

Starting with the second forum, the forum titles were designed to appeal to a broad audience, referencing popular culture—two were based on the titles of soap operas (one each from the two major television networks), one on the slogan of an energy drink, and one on a popular comedy sketch. It was also decided that the concept papers be in Filipino, again to broaden their appeal. As for the forum panelists, we strived to achieve balance. We attempted to invite relevant pro-Marcos voices in each forum, but most of them declined our invitations.

The second forum, after that on the renaming of the CBA, focused on the payment of reparations to martial law victims, and the quest for justice and accountability for the abuses of the Marcos regime. Held on 20 September 2013 and entitled “*Pangako Sa ‘Yo: Kompensasyon sa mga Biktima ng Batas Militar*” (My Promise to You: Compensation to the Victims of Martial Law), the forum featured academic, legal, and personal aspects of the compensation that the human rights victims should have received from the confiscated ill-gotten wealth of the Marcoses.

The third forum in the series, “*Bonggang Bonggang Bongbong: Ang Rehabilitasyong Pulitikal ng mga Marcos*” (The Extremely Fabulous Bongbong: The Political Rehabilitation of the Marcoses), was held on 28 November 2013. It examined the remarkable if not alarming return to political power of the Marcos family, without their admitting to any guilt or responsibility for the excesses of the years of one-man rule.

Historical revisionism or distortion through publications, the media, and especially over the internet, was shown, contrasting with personal reminiscences of the cruelties of the Marcos regime.

The fourth forum tackled the legal framework of the years of dictatorship. Despite UP's activist stance during those years, lawyers and professors from the UP College of Law had a hand in ensuring the legality—at least on paper—of the authoritarian administration. “*Pag Meron Ka Nito, Wala Kang Talò! Ang mga Abugado, ang Hudikatura, at ang Arkitekturang Legal ng Awtoritaryanismong Marcos*” (Have This and Be Invincible! The Lawyers, the Judiciary, and the Legal Architecture of the Marcos Authoritarianism), held on 15 January 2014, had high profile lawyers and a journalist giving their side on the underpinnings that ensured the legal stability of the dictatorship.

The last forum, “*My Husband's Lovers: Ang Pag-ibig at Pagkamuhi Kina FM at Meldy Magmula sa mga Martial Law Babies Hanggang sa Kasalukuyang Henerasyon*” (My Husband's Lovers: Love and Loathing for FM and Meldy from the Martial Law Babies until the Present Generation), took place on 4 February 2014. This differed from the previous forums because the theme was on how the younger generation perceived those controversial years: how they were taught, formally in school or informally through their parents and social media. The cultural aspects of opposition to Marcos, the experience and treatment of martial law by the mainstream and alternative press were highlighted.

Providing continuity through the symposia were Prof. Ma. Luisa T. Camagay from the UP Diliman Department of History (she moderated the first, third, fourth, and fifth forums) and Prof. Perlita Frago from the UP Diliman Department of Political Science (she moderated the second forum). Open to the public, the forums were well attended by students, martial law survivors, and members of the media, among others. The discussions that followed the formal presentations were lively and supplemented the talks by the panelists. The series as a whole brought out much new information, and was recorded. We thereafter made the videos available online through the TWSC YouTube channel ([www.youtube.com/2009twsc](http://www.youtube.com/2009twsc)).

## A COUNTER-ARCHIVE

We cannot afford to let a sanitized view of the Marcos regime to further dominate the discourse on the Marcoses. To do so would be to abandon the very principle that led to the founding of the TWSC and



guided its existence—that the academe must always be a space for freedom and unfettered critical inquiry. Hence, this issue, which contains the annotated proceedings of the “*Marcos Pa Rin!*” series. Over the course of planning how this issue should be structured, we saw that the proceedings provided an excellent opening for building an archive of primary sources that can counter the whitewashing of the dictatorship. Thus, appended to the forum series proceedings is a volume of documents—ranging from legal texts to extracts from the diary of Ferdinand Marcos—that hopefully, would allow readers to form a more historically accurate perspective on the Marcos regime and its legacies.

The majority of the documents here, though obscure when considered alongside secondary sources, are from online public access archives. Some, such as the materials from the files in the custody of the Presidential Commission on Good Government, have not been uploaded to any public access repository as of this writing, but many of them—especially those that are not currently involved in legal proceedings—can be accessed by researchers.

Obviously, the selection of documents here was determined by the contents of the transcripts of the “*Marcos Pa Rin!*” forum series—they are appendices first and foremost.

The set of appendices for the first forum contains documents that give further details on how the decision to rename the UP Diliman CBA came to pass, including the names of prominent UP alumni who endorsed the decision; as well as various documents that show whether Virata truly deserved to have a school of business named after him, and at the state’s premier university at that. A number of the documents included also show connections between the Marcoses and UP that may have been forgotten.

The appendices for the second forum detail many Marcos-era human rights violations—some familiar to many, others less well-known—and should allow the reader to better understand how Marcos was connected to these abuses. Also included are legal documents such as the full text of Republic Act (RA) 10368, the Human Rights Victims Reparation and Recognition Act of 2013, which show precisely what Marcos-era human rights violation victims are or should be entitled to.

The documents related to the third forum show certain details about Bongbong Marcos’s involvements in his father’s regime that he did not fully acknowledge when he was running for senator, and how he obscured those details. We also included documents that can lead

to a closer scrutiny of his accomplishments, many of which have been highlighted in his 2010 senate campaign over his parentage.

Forum four has the most appendices, the bulk of which are the full versions of the diary entries discussed by Marites Dañguilan-Vitug. Others detail how Marcos (ab)used his vast legislative powers and the relationships Marcos had with the members of the legal profession during his presidency.

Lastly, the appendices for the fifth forum include documents that can help shatter the major myths about the Marcoses and the Marcos dictatorship—from the claim that they did not hide their wealth to the fantasy that there was rice self-sufficiency throughout Marcos’s tenure. Our selections in that set also show how such myths were peddled across time, up to our information age.

## THE TRUTH HE TOLD AND THE LIES WE BELIEVE IN

Given the selection constraint, some materials, although fascinating, had to be excluded. Many were omitted because they were under strict copyright or were audiovisual in format.<sup>6</sup> Among these are materials that show how Marcos himself, through his statements, belie some deeply-held beliefs of the Marcos loyalists, which until now are very much part of the public discourse and are even being passed on as historical truth to a miseducated generation of Filipinos.

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6. If one is inclined to do further research, one can start with the publicly accessible online repositories, such as the Access to Archival Databases of the National Archives and Records Administration, the Central Intelligence Agency Freedom of Information Reading Room, the HathiTrust Digital Library, the Internet Archive, the University of Minnesota Human Rights Library, the “United States and its Territories” site of the University of Michigan Library, online newspaper archives such as the (discontinued but still accessible) Google News Archive, the websites of the Supreme Court of the Philippines, the Court of Appeals of the Philippines, the Philippine Laws and Jurisprudence Databank of the Arellano University College of Law, the Chan Robles Virtual Law Library, the website of the Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines (Gov.ph), the websites of regional and global financial institutions such as the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank, and the websites of human rights groups such as Amnesty International. Then one can go to major publicly accessible libraries for non-digitized sources, or possibly for access to for-pay digital archives such as the Digital National Security Archive, Newspapers.com, or NewspaperArchive.com.

*Marcos and the Kilusang Bagong Lipunan, always won their mandate fairly, having never cheated during elections. Connected to this, Marcos was the legitimate winner of the 1986 snap presidential poll.*

At least twice, Marcos stated that there was cheating committed by “both sides.” In a 1978 article from Associated Press writer William Mann, Marcos was quoted as saying that both the administration party and the opposition cheated, “but on a small scale and certainly not on a scale to affect the election.” In the interview of Ferdinand and Imelda conducted by *Playboy*, Marcos said that “There was fraud on both sides [during the 1986 snap elections, but] *mine* was not massive” (Marcos and Marcos 1987). One wonders how many loyalists have adopted this notion of acceptable electoral fraud.

*Marcos was ultimately a pacifist, as can be seen when he refused to fire on the protesters during the People Power Revolution.*

Yes, there was that televised show of restraint wherein Marcos repeatedly shot down suggestions by Gen. Fabian Ver, chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), to fire on the people gathered on Epifanio de los Santos Avenue in February 1986—“My order is to disperse the crowd without shooting them” were his exact words.<sup>7</sup> However, that statement meant that the AFP was authorized to use truncheons, rattan sticks, water cannons, lachrymators—their entire non-lethal, but certainly not non-violent, arsenal. Moreover, Marcos was taped as saying in 1987 that he planned to return to the Philippines from exile with a massive invasion force, ready to eliminate whatever human hindrance he would face; “if they oppose the landing, that is when we start the battle” (in Committee on Foreign Affairs 1987, 91). Also in 1987, as per a declassified Federal Bureau of Investigation communication, international arms dealer Sarkis Soghanalian “played a critical role in an attempt to transport former president Ferdinand Marcos from Honolulu, Hawaii to the Philippines in a possible coup attempt” (FBI 1988). Connected to this plot, Imelda Marcos was reported as making “\$2,000 worth of purchases from a [Hawaiian] army surplus store” in January 1987 (Times Wire Services 1987).

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7. Excerpts of the Marcos-Ver exchange can be viewed at GovPH (2016).

*Marcos always had a clear vision of what he wanted for the country, or at least had a clearly defined economic program.*

According to a declassified diplomatic cable that can be accessed through the Digital National Security Archive, in a campaign speech he delivered on 5 May 1965, then senator Ferdinand Marcos criticized “The Gargantuan borrowing of the government and its agencies from the Central Bank, the Philippine National Bank and private banks,” and swore that if elected president, he would “pare government spending to the very bone, in defiance of all [pressures, which will] permit expansion of forces in the private sector” (United States Department of State 1965). We need not reiterate here how debt-driven and monopolistic Marcos’s eventual economic policies were (though anyone needing a refresher can start with the transcript of the first “Marcos *Pa Rin!*” forum).

“But the regional and global economic conditions changed significantly between 1965 until the Marcos regime contracted its first (onerous) loan,” some loyalists might say. There is no room here to dispute that. Let us instead briefly look at Marcos’s alleged consistent adherence to a “balanced agro-industrial economy,” which he mentioned in one form or another in a number of issuances/addresses (e.g., Letters of Instruction No. 462 [Marcos 1976] and No. 1033 [Marcos 1980]; his 1983 and 1984 state-of-the-nation addresses [Marcos 1983; 1984b]). Despite such rhetoric (which he may have “borrowed” from President Carlos P. Garcia),<sup>8</sup> in Marcos’s address before farmers on Farmers’ Day, 15 May 1981, Marcos (1981a) made remarks that suggested his partiality toward agricultural production—that, or he was toying with his audience’s expectations:

*Madali namang mapatunayan na mabuway ang kalagayan ng ilan sa mga tinataguriang mauunlad o industrialisadong bansa: kailangan lang nating tanungin sa kanila kung ‘yang bang langis ay makapapawi sa pagka-uhaw? ‘Yan bang asero o bakal ay maaaring ulamin? ‘Yan mga kemikal o plastic ba’y maaaring gawing panawid-gutom kung hindi ipagpapalit sa pagkain? Maliwanag na hindi. At darating din ang panahon, na tila’y unti-unting napapa-lapit, na muling kikilalanin ang tunay na kahalagahan ng agrikultura sa ekonomiya ng daigdig.*

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8. In his inaugural address, Garcia said, “In the light of our experience it has been dramatically pointed out that a well-balanced agro-industrial economy is the best for the country” (1957).

We can easily prove the unstable conditions of some of the so-called developed or industrialized countries: we only need to ask them, can oil slake their thirst? Can steel or iron be eaten? Can chemicals or plastic line one's stomach or serve as food? Clearly, no. And there will come a time, which already seems to be at hand, when the true value of agriculture in the global economy will again be recognized. (Our translation.)

Lastly, let us look at one instance wherein Marcos clearly shoots himself in the foot. In 1984, in his address during the ceremonial first run of the Taft-Rizal Light Rail Transit system (LRT), Marcos (1984a) stated that "A proposal for a similar transport system had been broached as early as the first half of the 1960s, but due to the insistent lobbying of certain commercial interests and the vacillations of some policy-makers at that time, the proposal was rejected, much to our disadvantage. We have thus had to undertake the construction of the LRT burdened by the added cost of that early indecision." He conveniently omitted that it was during his first term when he enacted RA 4652, which gave the Philippine Monorail Transit System, Incorporated a franchise to build and run a monorail system "in the City of Manila and Suburbs and Cebu City and Province."<sup>9</sup>

*Marcos could not have ordered the assassination of Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr. because the former thought of the latter as his best successor.*

In his 3 January 1970 diary entry, Ferdinand Marcos called Aquino "a congenital liar, a braggart and a compulsive chatterbox." In his 3 April 1971 diary entry, Marcos called Aquino "irresponsible" (Marcos, n.d.). A decade later, in the book *Progress and Martial Law*, Marcos described a counterfactual scenario wherein he did not declare martial law in 1972 and Aquino became president in 1973. Marcos therein stated that,

It is doubtful whether the Liberal Party or ex-Senator Aquino would have gone beyond restoring order and asserting the government's authority. Certainly, the use of martial law to

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9. The full title of RA 4652: An Act Granting the Philippine Monorail Transit System, Incorporated a Franchise to Establish, Maintain and Operate a Monorail Transportation Service in the City of Manila and Suburbs and Cebu City and Province.

build a new society was not even contemplated. The principal objective beyond restoring public order would have been rehabilitation of the old political order, or at least, a slightly modified version of it. (Marcos 1981b, 26)

Lastly, when *Playboy* asked him what he would have done had Aquino not been assassinated, this was Marcos's response: "Bring him back to prison! Because he already had a death sentence over him, there was no need to assassinate him. All you had to do was bring him back to prison and let the execution take place" (Marcos and Marcos 1987). It is difficult to extract "Ninoy Aquino is my best successor" from any of these statements.

*Marcos was staunchly for pressing the country's claim to Sabah; it was Ninoy Aquino who wanted to give up the country's claim.*

In *Revolution from the Center: How the Philippines Is Using Martial Law to Build a New Society*, published in 1978, Ferdinand Marcos (or more accurately, his ghostwriter[s])<sup>10</sup> states that on the Second Summit Conference of ASEAN Heads of Government in Kuala Lumpur, held on 4-5 August 1977, he "announced [the Philippines's] intention to withdraw the Philippine claim to parts of North Borneo, so ending one of the most divisive issues in our regional relations" (Marcos 1978b, 84). His exact words uttered in August 1977 were, "I wish to announce that the Government of the Republic of the Philippines is therefore taking definite steps to eliminate one of the burdens of ASEAN, the claim of the Philippine Republic on Sabah" (in Flores et al. 1982, 78). There is no indication that Marcos changed his stance on Sabah between 1977 and 1986.

*Marcos cannot be blamed for the human rights violations that were committed during his regime; only his subordinates should be blamed.*

As discussed by Atty. Rodrigo Domingo in the second "Marcos Pa Rin!" forum, the passage of RA 10368 meant that the Republic of the

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10. A publisher's note in the "popular edition" of the book (the version cited here) states that the book is made up of "material" from three previous books supposedly by Marcos: *Today's Revolution: Democracy, Notes on the New Society of the Philippines*, and *Five Years of the New Society*. Former minister of information Francisco Tatad revealed (e.g., in 2007) that the ghostwriter of the first two was Marcos spokesperson/brain trust member Adrian Cristobal.

Philippines officially recognized that various human rights violations were committed during the Marcos regime. In effect, RA 10368 also *directly* identifies Marcos as a human rights violator. Section 3(b)(1) of the law conclusively states that “any arrest, detention or deprivation of liberty carried out [from 21 September 1972 to 25 February 1986] . . . on the basis of an ‘Arrest, Search and Seizure Order (ASSO)’, a ‘Presidential Commitment Order (PCO)’, or a ‘Preventive Detention Action (PDA)’ and such other similar executive issuances as defined by decrees of former president Ferdinand E. Marcos” was a human rights violation. Marcos’s Letter of Instruction No. 772 (Marcos 1978a) plainly states that “No arrest, search and seizure order (ASSO) shall be issued under the emergency powers without prior clearance of the President/Prime Minister [i.e., Marcos].”

We can track down numerous statements by Marcos on killing with little more than a presumption of guilt. In his radio-television address after the promulgation of martial law in 1972, Marcos stated that, “the carrying of firearms outside residences even if such firearms are covered by licenses but without the permission of the Armed Forces of the Philippines is punishable by death” (Marcos 1972). In one extemporaneous speech delivered on 26 September 1972, which was included in a 1974 collection, Marcos told his soldiers, “if you meet insurgents in the street, urban guerrillas, or insurgents in the mountains, the rural guerrillas, you can utilize any [weapon; in fact, you] can utilize all the weapons of war” (Marcos 1974, 223). Besides rebels (or those being merely suspected of being such), Marcos, through his deployment of “secret marshals” in 1982 and 1984, allowed the deaths of dozens of criminals without the benefit of trial (Branigin 1984, *St. Petersburg Times* 1984). Marcos was quoted as modifying his order from “shoot-to-kill” to “shoot-to-disable” in 1984 (*St. Petersburg Times*), but he defended his marshals, saying that people, especially students, “want them to stay” or were “gratified” (Branigin 1984). However, “a student group strongly denied this, calling the reactivation of the marshals ‘a barbaric act and concrete manifestation of the fascist character of the Marcos regime’” (Branigin 1984).

Some Marcos loyalists might say that most of the above may be considered as a strategic deception, that he lied for a beneficial purpose, or for the sake of national integrity or regional peace. Can we say the same of other lies from our chief executives? Should we let executive prerogatives determine the limits of transparency and accountability? Should dead dictators draw the line between propaganda and truth?

Countering a Marcos lie repeated as often as a loyalist can shout “Marcos *pa rin!* (Marcos still!)” is a painstaking effort that is always collective in nature. This special issue of *Kasarinlan* offers an assurance that however disingenuous and unyielding the Marcoses are in crafting their propaganda, there will always be a countervailing force that can be relied on to unbury the truth.✿

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The idea for a “Marcos *Pa Rin!*” public forum series came up during TWSC’s initial discussions with UP professors Amado “Bong” Mendoza Jr. and Eduardo “Ed” C. Tadem. From these discussions, the TWSC research staff wrote the forum’s concept papers and guide questions for the speakers. To realize the series, the Office of the UP Diliman Chancellor and the College of Social Sciences and Philosophy extended needed logistical support. The arduous task of transcribing the forums was done by Leny Leonor (forum 1), Jenny Ann Palacpac (forum 2), Princess Carla Nicolas (forum 3), Farida Bianca Velicaria (forum 4), and Jonathan Victor Baldoza (forum 5). Access to the digitized copy of the Presidential Commission on Good Government files were facilitated by the National Historical Commission of the Philippines and Meynardo “Roy” P. Mendoza. Judith Camille Rosette assisted in the retrieval of the digital files. They all greatly helped the Center in putting together the appendices to this volume. The National Historical Commission of the Philippines also provided funding for printing of this issue.

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