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## **Metaphorizing Martial Law: Constitutional Authoritarianism in Marcos's Rhetoric (1972–1985)**

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# Metaphorizing Martial Law Constitutional Authoritarianism in Marcos's Rhetoric (1972–1985)

This article discusses the metaphorical constructions of martial law that emerge from selected speeches and publications of Ferdinand Marcos from 1972 to 1985. Using a sociocognitive perspective informed by conceptual metaphor studies, the author surfaces conceptualizations that constitute a schema in which constitutional authoritarianism is central to national life and Marcos as an authoritarian is rendered a democrat. This schema had been sustained throughout Marcos's authoritarian rule and has become so embedded in Philippine political discourse that it gets to be invoked by political rhetors long after the fall of the Marcos dictatorship.

**KEYWORDS: FERDINAND MARCOS · MARTIAL LAW · RHETORIC ·  
CONCEPTUAL METAPHOR · POLITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS**

**N**otwithstanding the horrific stories that have surfaced due to the imposition of martial law in the Philippines in the 1970s, not a few Filipinos have expressed an ambivalent attitude toward its necessity as a tool for national progress. Some have found it particularly justifiable and in fact have welcomed the idea of its full implementation in order to preserve the country's democratic society (see, e.g., Torres-Tupas 2017). This view can be traced to the way martial law was metaphorized or framed (cf. Lakoff and Johnson 1980; Lakoff 2008) in Ferdinand Marcos's presidential rhetoric as realized in his writings and speeches from the time he imposed martial law in 1972 until his final year in office.<sup>1</sup> I specifically surface and explain the conceptual metaphors (Lakoff and Johnson 1980; Charteris-Black 2007) that undergirded Marcos's rhetoric, which remained salient even after Marcos's fall and which compelled subsequent national leaders to deal with them.

Examined in this article are the following official documents: (1) *The Democratic Revolution of the Philippines* (Marcos 1977), which articulates the rationale for Marcos's imposition of martial law; (2) his other monographs, specifically, *Progress and Martial Law* (Marcos 1981b) and *Toward a New Partnership: The Filipino Ideology* (Marcos 1983); and (3) selected national addresses from 1972 to 1981, when the country was officially under martial law, and during the so-called period of "normalization" from 1981 to 1985, particularly (a) his first address to the nation under martial law on 23 September 1972, (b) his State of the Nation address (SONA) in 1975 as representative of a national address during martial law, (c) his speech titled "A New Age" delivered before the Batasang Pambansa (National Assembly) after martial law was lifted in 1981, (d) his address at the inaugural session of the Batasang Pambansa in 1984, (e) his national address in July 1985 delivered months before he was ousted from the presidency via People Power in February 1986. These political texts, which expressed and circulated the Marcosian rendering of martial law in a way that appealed to and significantly influenced the public mind, are important "nexus points where popular discourses are amplified, reworked, redirected and deployed to produce concentrated collective action or change" (Condit 2009, 23). These selected texts represent different temporal points during Marcos's authoritarian leadership. That the notion of martial law and its various conceptualizations surface in these texts demonstrates the intertextuality of Marcos's speeches and publications, showing how ideas launched in the

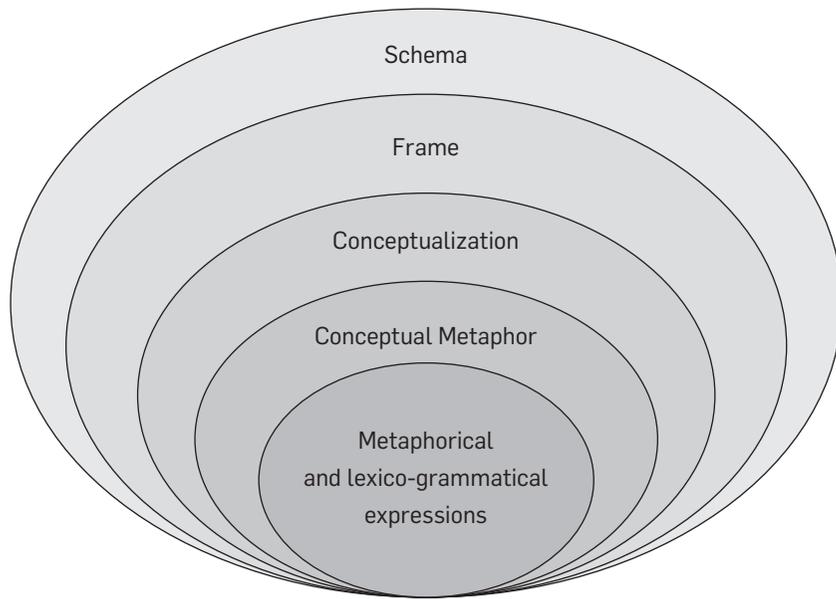
early years gained traction, got sustained, and were perpetuated despite the evolving sociopolitical and historical milieu.

In the sections that follow I briefly explain the analytical tools used in this study to surface the conceptualizations and specific metaphorizations from the selected texts. I then discuss Marcos's rationale for the imposition of martial law in order to contextualize the said conceptualizations. I then review the perspectives on constitutional authoritarianism to establish the academic context and conversation to which this article responds. Analyzing the selected texts cited above, I then unpack the Marcos schema and conceptualizations.

### **The Schema Theoretic Framework**

In examining the selected texts, I adopt a schema theoretic framework (Navera 2012) that is informed by scholarship on conceptual metaphors (Charteris-Black 2004, 2005, 2007; Lakoff 2004, 2008; Lakoff and the Rockridge Institute 2006; Lakoff and Johnson 1980). I view the schema as a narrative constituting a mental model (van Dijk 1998, 2002) that mediates our sense-making processes. The schema makes it possible for us to establish the link between linguistic expressions and sociopolitical context. It undergirds what we communicate in political talk and texts; at the same time, it organizes our complex and evolving sociopolitical context and enables us to express it in various modalities and platforms. Frames or broad conceptualizations that are made up of more specific conceptualizations, including conceptual metaphors, constitute the schema (see fig. on p. 420). Conceptual metaphors suggest a perspective or specific way of viewing a target domain or an abstract concept; they underlie metaphorical and lexico-grammatical expressions (words and phrases) found in political speeches and other forms of texts. I mobilize these analytical concepts in identifying, describing, and interpreting the various representations—ways of framing, conceptualizing, and metaphorizing—of martial law in the selected publications and speeches of Marcos.

The focus on schema foregrounds how discourse potentially shapes social cognition; in this case, it allows us to explain how the notion of martial law explicated and featured prominently in Marcos's speeches and publications has seeped into the Filipino public mind and has become attractive and acceptable. As the schema is reconstituted through speeches and other texts, it also serves to mediate between the speaker and his audience. The audience's understanding of what the speaker says depends largely on the



Levels of analysis

mediating power of the schema. The more familiar the schema is, the easier it is for the audience to understand the ideas that it mediates. The schema becomes familiar over time through rhetorical iterations—a series of interrelated speeches that repeat, rework, or recontextualize ideas that speakers or rhetors wish to advance or be accepted by the public.

Although current trends in rhetorical analysis go beyond the text by emphasizing the visual, emotive, and performative aspects of rhetoric (e.g., Finnegan 2014; Bennet and Morris 2016), oratorical texts or speeches remain important objects of analysis to contemporary rhetorical critics. David Zarefsky (2009, 442) notes that the emphasis on “the multiplication of objects of study” has not supplanted the study of oratory. In fact, some recent studies on presidential rhetoric consider presidential texts as their primary data (Navera 2018; Terrill 2015; Vaughn and Mercieca 2014) because speeches given off by people in power are constantly subjected to media mileage and public attention to the extent that they get circulated quickly or are transformed into various contexts, authoritative or otherwise.

## Constitutional Authoritarianism: The Theory of Democratic Revolution

In justifying the imposition of martial law, Marcos invoked his theory of “democratic revolution,” which he also referred to as the “revolution from the center” or “constitutional revolution.” He would later justify the consolidated powers of his executive leadership seen during the period of martial law by stating that it was a form of “constitutional authoritarianism.”

Two Marcos (1971, 1973) publications articulate his rationale for implementing martial law: *Today’s Revolution: Democracy (TRD)* published in 1971, during which time Marcos suspended the writ of habeas corpus,<sup>2</sup> and *Notes on the New Society of the Philippines (NNSP)*, published a year after he declared martial law. In 1974 he published *The Democratic Revolution in the Philippines (DRP)*, which put together the two earlier publications. The manuscript, originally published by Prentice-Hall, was reprinted in the Philippines a couple of times; I used the 1977 edition.

In *TRD* Marcos (1971, 12) talked of a “revolution from the center,” which he explained as a democratic government’s expression of its obligation to “make itself the faithful instrument of the people’s revolutionary aspirations.” It is supposed to mediate “between the majority of the poor masses and the minority of the landed, industrial, business and commercial elites” (Rebullida 2006, 158). The “revolution from the center” warns of and rejects the totalitarianism of both right and left. It is a “democratic revolution”—a supposedly peaceful means of addressing sociopolitical problems and “engaging in deep and far-ranging changes in the country” (ibid.).

Marcos reasoned that his call for a “democratic revolution” was sanctioned by the 1935 Constitution. Moreover, this “revolution” was intended to bring about the New Society (*Bagong Lipunan*), which would replace the old one that, according to Marcos (1977, 319), had “reached such a condition that a powerful few, the nation’s oligarchy, held in their hands the lives and fates of millions of other citizens.” This condition of extreme inequity purportedly fueled the rising social activism and leftist rebellion in the late 1960s and early 1970s—during the second presidential term of Marcos—which the “revolution from the center” aimed to quell.

Building on *TRD*, *NNSP* accounts for the rise of the communist rebellion against the Philippine republic (Marcos 1973). In this book Marcos discloses documents that reveal activities of the extremists from the left and the right

of the political spectrum, “plots to assassinate him, shipment of firearms and ammunition, infiltration by subversives of government programs, and bombings in different areas” (Rebullida 2006, 158).

Marcos rationalized martial law by warning the people of the dangers of communism and the rightist conspiracy. Maria Lourdes Rebullida (*ibid.*, 159) notes that, “In [Marcos’s] rhetoric, martial law and the New Society would target the major threats to the republic, namely, communist revolutionaries, rightist conspiracy, Muslim secession, private armies and political warlords, rampant corruption, criminal elements, oligarchy, social injustice, foreign interventions.” These “threats” to the republic, it must be noted, both included existing and long-standing problems (i.e., private armies and political warlords, rampant corruption, criminal elements, oligarchy, social injustice, foreign interventions) as well as imminent ones (i.e., communist revolutionaries, rightist conspiracy, Muslim secession).

In his preface to the second edition of *DRP*, Marcos (1977, 8) expounded on what the New Society entailed:

The New Society in which Filipinos live today may be described as their emancipation from an old society whose hallmark was injustice, the supreme injustice in which equality of opportunity was withheld from them by an oligarchy that appropriated for itself all power and bounty. The New Society is in fact a revolution of the poor. By means of it, Filipinos today are attempting, through disciplined vision, to make the rewards of their labors and the fruits of their resources available to all. By means of it, they are walking out of a stupor filled with Walter Mitty fantasies, the opium of the oppressed and underprivileged. To share together in real life is the heart of democracy. Accordingly, the New Society is democratizing the wealth of the nation, striving to move democracy from cloud to hovel.

Marcos found an ally in Carlos P. Romulo, a diplomat who had served as president of the UN General Assembly (1949–1950) and the UN Security Council (1957) and who was the country’s foreign minister under three presidencies, including under Marcos (1968–1984). In his foreword to *DRP* Romulo (1977, 20) wrote:

For all the radical rhetoric reverberating in the political forums, [Marcos] knew that the noisiest voices were those who were actually against social change: radical rhetoric was employed merely to catapult the power-seekers to power. This sort of thing could, perhaps, be tolerated in a stable developed society. But in Philippine society this rhetoric could only foster a revolution that was bloody and catastrophic—in Marcos’s words, a Jacobin not a liberal revolution.

Marcos’s explication of the New Society and Romulo’s foreword, which buttressed Marcos’s position, rendered martial law a means to social change (“emancipation from the old society,” “revolution of the poor,” “democratizing the wealth of the nation”) and to preserve society from a bloody revolution that would be instigated by extremists of the right and left.

### **Perspectives on Marcos’s Constitutional Authoritarianism**

To appreciate this study’s analysis using a schema-theoretic perspective, we need to discuss three perspectives found in the literature on constitutional authoritarianism as (1) anti-left; (2) an alternative to Western liberal democracy; and (3) Marcos’s way of asserting his legitimacy.

Marcos (1977, 139) asserted that the right and left were one in targeting his central authority as president, saying:

Both the reactionary Right and the radical Left found a common focal point and symbol for their plans: Ferdinand E. Marcos. By concentrating on the singular person of the president, the conspirators on the one hand, and the revolutionaries on the other, were able to concretize for their propaganda purposes the complexities of social unrest and the justification of their aims. This is the standard technique of propaganda warfare; the creation of a scapegoat, a sacrificial lamb.

Alexander B. Brillantes (1987), however, noted several fundamental inconsistencies between Marcos’s official explanation of martial law and Presidential Proclamation (PP) 1081, a legal document declaring the implementation of martial rule in the Philippines. One inconsistency worth mentioning is that, while Marcos claimed that martial law was in response to

the purported rightist and leftist conspiracies to overthrow his government, in PP 1081 he made no mention of the rightist plot. Brillantes (ibid., 131) pointed out that “everything is attributed to the left.” If one reexamines PP 1081, one can easily infer that it is a well-documented account of the activities of the radical left—the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its armed group, the New People’s Army (NPA)—at the time. It certainly notes the increase in the number of armed rebels as shown, for instance, by one of the following “facts” cited to establish the difficulty in containing “the present rebellion and lawlessness in the country”:

The New People’s Army, the most active and the most violent and ruthless military arm of the radical left, has increased its total strength from an estimated 6,500 (composed of 560 regulars, 1,500 combat support and 4,400 service support) as of January 1, 1972 to about 7,900 (composed of 1,028 regulars, 1,800 combat support and 5,025 service support) as of July 31, 1972, showing a marked increase in its regular troops of over 100% in such a short period of six months. (Marcos 1972a)

The same document also asserts that “the rebellion and armed action undertaken by these lawless elements of the communist and other armed aggruppations organized to overthrow the Republic of the Philippines by armed violence and force have assumed the magnitude of an actual state of war against our people and the Republic of the Philippines” (ibid.).

Essayist Conrado de Quiros observed that the practice of “bloating the size of communists” dated back to the first Philippine presidential administration after the end of the Second World War. In *Dead Aim: How Marcos Ambushed Philippine Democracy*, De Quiros (1997, 281) wrote:

Marcos did not start the practice of bloating the size of the communists. The practice dated all the way back to [Manuel] Roxas’s time and the early years of Independence. Each time government submitted its budget to Congress, it grossly inflated the strength of the communists and imminence of its threat. The size of the Huks grew in direct proportion to the size of the budget: The bigger the budget, the bigger the Huks. Eventually, the communists being used in this way got to be called the “Budgetary Huks.”

This was so especially from the second half of the 1950s when the Huks rapidly disappeared from the scene. What prevented their complete disappearance was less the cunning of their leaders than the shrewdness of their enemy. The trick, as the *Free Press* wrote in an editorial on September 18, 1971, was to show not only that the communist remained strong, or even menacing, but that the government was also mightily pushing them back. “On the one hand, the military authorities must exaggerate the Huk threat to the government, and on the other, they must claim, to justify the money they have been getting, that they are winning, if they have not already won, the war against the Huks.”

Indeed, Marcos merely recontextualized a practice carried over from his predecessors, only that when he was the one in power he had a rather elaborate theory and the necessary legal weapons, as it were, to warrant his claims.

Lester Ruiz (1993, 293–99) lucidly articulates the political philosophy behind Marcos’s constitutional authoritarianism by describing and explaining its prominent features: the recognition of the necessity of revolution in order to transform society but one waged by the “duly constituted government”; a democratization of wealth by redistributing it from the oligarchic few to the majority; the necessity of a strong state fully committed to the welfare of the majority; and a conception of liberty, freedom, and rights that deviates from the Western liberal democratic tradition. That conception is rooted in concern for the common *tao* (person), unlike political liberty as conceptualized in the liberal democratic tradition; instead of individual liberty, it is a conception committed to equality and the promotion of common welfare and the well-being of all citizens (ibid., 298–99). Ruiz (ibid., 302) proceeds by suggesting that “order” takes primacy and serves as the operative foundation of Marcos’s constitutional authoritarianism so much so that “what was regulative became constitutive.” In such a framework, the creation of public order constrained people’s participation and, as Ruiz (ibid.) points out, reduced it to assent.

Ruiz argues that Marcos’s constitutional authoritarianism was doomed to fail: while it purported to offer an alternative to Western liberal democracy, it failed to do so in practice. Ruiz (ibid., 307) also emphasizes that Marcos’s constitutional authoritarianism was itself a product of liberal democracy. The

political, economic, and cultural legacy of the Marcos government belies the promise of constitutional authoritarianism, a point that Ruiz (*ibid.*, 306) stresses: “the foreign debt, a practically non-existent domestic infrastructure for production and distribution, a highly politicized and fractious military, to mention only a few, underscores not only [Marcos’s government’s] vision of a democratic revolution as nothing but an illusion, but the bankruptcy of the state to carry forward the agenda for change.” Ruiz (*ibid.*, 307) explains the failure of constitutional authoritarianism: it left out participation of the peoples of the Philippines, it cleared away the pluralistic character of civil and political society through a narrowly construed understanding of the law, and it uncritically identified law with the state.

While the authors above highlight the adoption of constitutional authoritarianism as Marcos’s way to assert his anti-leftist position and to offer a Filipino alternative to Western liberal democracy, Mark Turner (1990) views it as Marcos’s way of asserting his legitimacy. Turner points out that Marcos relied on a combination of legality and constitutionality, performance through a promise of economic development and an end to corruption, and myth making by seizing control of the production and circulation of semiotic resources in various media platforms. Marcos also had to maintain close ties with external allies like the US, which sanctioned authoritarian regimes in order to silence “a violent opposition” and facilitate the entry of American investment in the Philippines (*ibid.*, 359). Turner notes that by prefixing “constitutional” to the label “authoritarian,” Marcos “appropriated a highly regarded symbol and utilized it to justify the ‘obedience-worthiness’ of the political order which foreign commentators and domestic left-wing opposition generally referred to as dictatorship” (*ibid.*, 352). Like other authors who have studied Marcos’s authoritarianism, Turner acknowledges that factors such as lack of consultation, absence of accountability, and emergence of competing ideologies eroded Marcos’s legitimacy.

However, it is important to ask why, despite its failure, Marcos’s constitutional authoritarianism has persistently gripped a fragment of the Filipino public mind. This grip appears quite formidable in that some Filipinos, including those who experienced martial law and those who did not, remain convinced that it is what the country needs to transform Philippine society. It is easy to dismiss them as being blinded by loyalty or as uninformed of the atrocities committed during Marcos’s dictatorial rule. But how is it that even some members of the educated class and influential national leaders, whose

opinions get wide circulation in social media and other public platforms, are convinced that Marcos’s declaration of martial law was justified? I share the view with the abovementioned authors that constitutional authoritarianism and its manifestation through the imposition of martial law had been repudiated by the evidence of failure to fulfill its promise of democratic revolution. But I wish to point out that its rhetoricity has endured. This rhetoricity, if not contested and examined critically, offers the possibility of resurgence and recontextualization in contemporary times.

Hence, it is important to rearticulate and reaffirm some of the important features and principles of the rhetoric of constitutional authoritarianism through a sociocognitive perspective that is informed by conceptual metaphor studies. I contend that, notwithstanding well-established claims on Marcos’s horrific sociopolitical, cultural, and economic legacy, how martial law was communicated over time—its rhetorical and metaphorical construction through an intertextuality of Marcos speeches and publications—may have contributed to its enduring seductive power. I now turn to an analysis of the official rhetoric on martial law.<sup>3</sup>

### **Metaphorical Constructions in the Marcos Rhetoric (1972–1981)**

In *DRP* Marcos’s (1977, 259) official rationalization for declaring martial law established that “[all] indications that the country was fast slipping into irretrievable chaos were present, so large and persistent,” making PP 1081 absolutely necessary. He repeatedly cited the seven sources of “imminent danger” to the nation: leftist revolutionaries; rightists; Moro secessionists; private armies and political warlords; criminal elements; oligarchs; and foreign interventionists (*ibid.*, 156–57, 259). He referred to them as “perils, [which, when] allowed to go unchecked, would in time have been sufficient by itself to endanger the peace and stability of society” (*ibid.*, 259). The conceptualization that *MARTIAL LAW IS A DEMOCRATIC INSTRUMENT TO PRESERVE SOCIETY* was advanced by underscoring the supposedly grave danger that confronted the nation as a result of which the government was constitutionally sanctioned to use martial law to save the nation and to restore civil order, thus ensuring the country’s constitutional survival. Martial law was metaphorically expressed as a “preservation of the Republic” (*ibid.*, 189) and “an instrument of defense for democratic government” (*ibid.*, 317).

The following extract elaborates on Marcos's (ibid., 221–22) conceptualization of the “democratic revolution”:

We had to restore civil order as the bedrock of any constitutional survival. Civil order is merely the rationale of all societies: enforcement of and obedience to the law. When I placed the entire country under martial law, my first concern was to secure the Republic against any uprising, politically motivated or otherwise, and to secure the entire citizenry from the criminal elements, private armies bred by local politics, and the outlaw bands in the countryside, who might either take advantage of the temporary panic or undermine our efforts to assert the authority of our police forces. It was imperative that we dismantle the apparatus of the insurgency movement and the whole system of violence and criminality that had virtually imprisoned our society in fear and anarchy.

The extract begins with a general statement on the necessity to restore “civil order,” which, in being metaphorically expressed as a “bedrock” of constitutional survival, suggests its primary significance to the Philippine polity. This statement is followed by a substantiation of such metaphorization, that is, civil order is “the rationale of all societies.” These statements prefigure the need for martial law, which in the succeeding statements is positioned as a preconditioning object of the state (“When I placed the entire country under martial law”)—an instrument as it were—in order for the president to “secure the Republic against any uprising” and “secure the entire citizenry from the criminal elements.” The final statement reiterates the preceding statements. That the acts of dismantling an “apparatus” and a “whole system” and of securing the republic and the citizenry should follow after the implementation of martial rule in 1972 renders martial law an instrument, a counterapparatus, or a countersystem that is supposed to restore civil order in the embattled society.

As a democratic agency of change, martial law was expressed as revolutionizing society. Marcos (ibid.) metaphorized it as an instrument of “reconstruction,” a producer of “radical reforms” and a “catalyst,” suggesting even its transformative capacity as the following extracts show:

On the basis of necessary choice I understood the declaration of martial law to mean not only the preservation of the Republic but also the thorough reconstruction of society. (ibid., 189)

Our martial law . . . is unique in that it does not seek to maintain the status quo but has instead brought about radical reforms. (ibid., 212)

The record shows that martial law was the catalyst that brought into fruition all our efforts at revitalizing the economy. (ibid., 234)

Marcos's speeches and publications from 1972 to 1985 substantiated and sustained these conceptualizations. In his first address to the nation under martial law delivered on 23 September 1972 on radio and television, Marcos (1972b) emphasized the two conceptualizations. That *MARTIAL LAW IS A DEMOCRATIC INSTRUMENT TO PRESERVE SOCIETY* was realized in expressions such as “We will eliminate the threat of a violent overthrow of our Republic,” “we must start with the elimination of anarchy and maintenance of peace and order,” and “I have to use this constitutional power in order that we may not completely lose the civil rights and freedom we cherish” (ibid., 139). These expressions articulated the preservation of society in terms of the elimination of what was considered undesirable (“threat of a violent overthrow of our Republic” or “anarchy”), the maintenance of what was deemed desirable (“peace and order”), and the reassurance that the constitutional rights (“civil rights and freedom”) would not be completely lost (ibid.).

The last expression was especially curious in presupposing that constitutional rights such as “civil rights and freedom” were compromised but “not completely” lost with the employment of martial law or the “use of this constitutional power” (ibid.). On the contrary, it justified the use of martial law as the guarantee for the continuous enjoyment of constitutional rights and that without it there was the possibility that the people might lose these rights “completely.” In other words, the expression positioned Marcos's decision to impose martial law not only as a constitutionally sanctioned act, but also as prodemocratic and pro-people.

That *MARTIAL LAW IS A DEMOCRATIC AGENCY OF CHANGE* was indicated by the imperative to “reform social, economic, and political institutions of our country” (ibid.). That this imperative for reform was highlighted as an

“objective” of the imposition of martial law articulated the conceptualization. Martial law as a democratic agency was signaled by expressions that foregrounded the proclamation of martial law as “constitutional” or “vested by the Constitution” (ibid.). The conceptualization was also cued by the expression “general program for a new and better Philippines,” which prefigured the “New Society” that Marcos would later substantiate in his official rhetoric, including his presidential speeches (ibid.). Note that Marcos’s proposition of change or “reform” to create “a new and better Philippines” also entailed the “removal of the inequities of our society, the clean-up of government of its corrupt and sterile elements, the liquidation of criminal syndicates, the systematic development of our economy” (ibid.). These expressions suggested radical measures of decontaminating society (“removal of . . . inequities,” “liquidation of criminal syndicates,” “clean-up of government”), and their organization in a series indicated that the “systematic development” of the national economy logically followed after the implementation of these radical measures (ibid.).

Marcos’s national addresses in the following years articulated the success of constitutional authoritarianism or the imposition of martial law. In his rhetoric, he showed evidence of how his twin objectives of preserving and reforming society through the intervention of constitutional authoritarianism had been achieved. For instance, the President’s Report to the Nation delivered at the Quirino Grandstand on 19 September 1975, three years after Marcos imposed martial law, advanced realizations and expressions of the two central conceptualizations in the Marcos presidential rhetoric.

In sustaining the conceptualizations of martial law, Marcos employed more specific metaphorizations, which provided a multilevel or multilayered conceptualization of constitutional authoritarianism. To maintain the conceptualization *MARTIAL LAW IS A DEMOCRATIC INSTRUMENT TO PRESERVE SOCIETY*, Marcos metaphorized martial law as a *CURATIVE* and an *EFFECTIVE MEASURE TOWARD ORDER AND SECURITY*.

In his 1975 SONA Marcos (1975, 429) metaphorized the nation prior to September 1972 as a body in a state of paralysis (“the paralyzed nation”). That it was “no longer” the case in 1975 suggested that “the program” or martial law served to cure the national condition (ibid.). In the speech, the past was set in contrast to the then present to establish that martial law was an agency of order and security (“There is order where there used to be

none; anarchy is only the memory of the past”) (ibid., 430). Martial law as an agency of order and security was cued by the expression “intervention of constitutional authoritarianism,” rendered as instrumental in ensuring better security for individual rights and liberties (ibid.).

Martial law as a *DEMOCRATIC AGENCY OF CHANGE* was substantiated by metaphorizing martial law as an *ECONOMIC BOOSTER*, a *LIBERATING FORCE*, and an *AGENCY OF INTERNAL REVOLUTION*. As an *ECONOMIC BOOSTER*, constitutional authoritarianism was rendered as responsible for the “vigor and resiliency” of the economy (ibid., 430), as “the most significant factor in the acceleration of the economy” (ibid., 433), and as instrumental for the growth of foreign investments in “dramatic rates” (ibid., 434). These metaphorizations were significant in establishing that the national economy was functioning satisfactorily in the world economic order. Moreover, martial law as practiced in Marcos’s presidency was differentiated from how the colonizers had employed it (“martial law, the instrument of the colonizer to preserve the status quo, has brought true freedom to the countryside for the first time in centuries”) (ibid., 431). No longer meant as an oppressive tool, martial law was metaphorized as an instrument in securing freedom for the farmers—A *LIBERATING FORCE*. The speech also articulated martial law as an *AGENCY OF INTERNAL REVOLUTION*. Using lofty rhetoric, Marcos suggested that internal revolution might be forged through “change within us” or “change in our hearts, in our minds, and in our souls” (ibid., 435). This “internal revolution” could be associated with the goal of changing mindsets or inculcating an ideology that would not only embrace the necessity of martial law but also render as acceptable the broader context that warranted the imposition of military rule (ibid.).

The twin conceptualizations of martial law as a *DEMOCRATIC INSTRUMENT TO PRESERVE SOCIETY* and as a *DEMOCRATIC AGENCY OF CHANGE* were also further conceptualized in the following formulation: *MILITARY ARREST OF SUSPECTED CRIMINALS IS A DECONTAMINATION OF THE BODY POLITIC*. On the one hand, *DECONTAMINATION OF THE BODY POLITIC* was seen as a way to purge the society of its diseases, thus implying the restoration of the national health or preservation of society; on the other hand, it suggested the necessity for further reform or change in the way the body politic was working three years after martial law had been implemented.

Marcos recognized constitutional authoritarianism as an *ENHANCER OF THE BUREAUCRACY* (“The establishment of constitutional authoritarianism, which enabled this government to seize the reins of national directions, has

resulted in the growth of bureaucracy as a massive machinery that affects every aspect of our national life”), which provided another layer to the conceptualization of martial law as *A DEMOCRATIC AGENCY OF CHANGE* (ibid., 436). At the same time, he pointed out the “rise” in “massive opportunities for graft, corruption and the misuse of influence” (ibid.). This context provided impetus for Marcos to cast himself as a keen observer of the developments in the bureaucracy and to conceptualize the president as *A JUDGE AND DISCIPLINARIAN* (“It is my duty as President of the Republic of the Philippines to reward what is proper, dedicated and devoted service by a public servant, and by the same token, to punish for violation of the sacred trust of a public official”) (ibid., 437). Marcos then used the purported rise in massive opportunities for graft, corruption, and the misuse of influence in order to justify the use of military power in “purging” the body politic of crime and corruption, which he metaphorized in his speech as *DISEASES* as evinced by the expressions “contagion” and “infected parts” (“But the contagion continues . . . Now, it is time to cut off the infected parts of the society from active public life before they endanger the entire body politic”) (ibid., 441). This decontamination of society stated in terms such as “general clean up to [sic] the ranks of government,” “purged from the ranks of those who would participate in the fruits of the New Society,” and “to cut off the infected parts of society from active public life before they endanger the entire body politic” became a legitimating discourse for the arrest of suspected “criminals”—a term that included members of the political opposition, critics of the Marcos regime, and activists who steadfastly opposed martial law (ibid., 440–41).

Even in the speech that declared the lifting of martial law in 1981,<sup>4</sup> Marcos maintained his justification of constitutional authoritarianism by rendering the eight-year period under martial law as a crisis government that was necessary before normalization could take place. Marcos (1981a, 69) asserted that martial law “had succeeded in the attainment of its objectives” and pointed out both the restorative and reformatory character of martial law. In the speech martial law was metaphorized as a necessary *MECHANISM FOR SURVIVAL, RESTORATION, AND REVITALIZATION* (“the nation has surmounted the challenges to survival, the paralysis of will, and the decay of community that in 1972 had required the declaration of martial law”), which could all be subsumed under the broader conceptualization *MARTIAL LAW IS A DEMOCRATIC INSTRUMENT TO PRESERVE SOCIETY* (ibid., 72). Marcos also conveyed this

conceptualization when he extolled the restoration of national security and peace and order (“Order has returned to public life” as in extract) and the preservation of “supreme authority of government” (ibid., 73). Meanwhile, the conceptualization *MARTIAL LAW IS A DEMOCRATIC AGENCY OF CHANGE* was effected when Marcos underscored “a change in the heart and the spirit and the soul of the Filipino people”—a goal he also articulated in his speeches during the period martial law was in place (ibid.).

Also achieved in the 1981 speech of Marcos was the conceptualization *MARTIAL LAW IS A BOOSTER OF THE NATIONAL ECONOMY*, subsumed under the broader conceptualization *MARTIAL LAW IS A DEMOCRATIC AGENCY OF CHANGE*. Marcos implied that the outcome of implementing martial law had been favorable to the national economy. He characterized the national economy as “sound and full of vigor,” “resilient before crisis,” and one that “will continue to grow” (ibid.). He also implied that martial law had led to the “rise in the welfare” of the poor and had ushered “a beginning in tapping the social conscience of free enterprise” (ibid., 73–74), suggesting that indeed constitutional authoritarianism offered a viable alternative to the unbridled capitalism enabled by the Western liberal democratic tradition (Ruiz 1993, 298–99).

Marcos expressed confidence in the new period of normalization and liberalization because legal mechanisms established during the period of martial law consolidated the power of the president and ensured the legitimacy of his actions against those elements that, in his judgment, “imperilled” the life of the nation. How his conceptualizations of martial law were sustained during the period of normalization will be discussed more thoroughly in the succeeding section.

Table 1 summarizes the analysis thus far of Marcos rhetoric during the period of martial law from 1972 to 1981. It surfaces the twin conceptualizations of martial law as a restorative agent and as an agent of change; it also consolidates the conceptual metaphors that substantiate these conceptualizations. These twin conceptualizations point toward a broad frame—*MARTIAL LAW IS DEMOCRATIC*—which became a powerful justification for imposing military rule in a country ravaged by intractable economic problems, political divisions, and social crises. Interestingly, the conceptual metaphor *MILITARY ARREST OF SUSPECTED CRIMINALS IS A DECONTAMINATION OF THE BODY POLITIC* substantiates the twin conceptualizations. The military option to address not only legitimate criminal cases but also cases that in the state’s perspective are potentially criminal has persisted in the post-Marcos presidencies. Militarization, as the

analysis of Marcos’s rhetoric reveals, has served as Marcos’s enduring legacy. It is invoked both as a restorative and reformative agent.

### Conceptualizations during the Period of “Normalization” (1981–1985)

During the supposed period of normalization (1981–1985), Marcos relied on his constitutional powers to issue decrees and letters of instructions to pursue his presidential agenda. As he allayed fears of a return to martial law in the face of mounting threats from insurgents, he asserted that “even if the situation should deteriorate, we have adequate checks and responses in our system of government to cope with this, without having to repair to martial law” (Marcos 1984, 21).

Despite his rhetorical commitment to normalization, Marcos (1981b, iv) was adamant in extolling the virtues of martial law such that in February 1981, not long after he declared the lifting of martial law, he published the monograph *Progress and Martial Law*, which not only explained the alleged successes of constitutional authoritarianism but also addressed the question, “what might have happened if martial law had not been proclaimed?” Marcos (ibid., 22–34) offered three scenarios that could have taken place after 1972 had martial law not been proclaimed: a rightist coup that would have reinforced the established political and economic order; the election of the Liberal Party with Benigno Aquino Jr., opposition leader, as president, who Marcos believed would have also declared martial law and subsequently strengthened the oligarchic order; and a communist takeover that would have installed a totalitarian regime and dissipated individual freedoms. Marcos (ibid., iv) admitted that these scenarios were “necessarily speculative” but also insisted that they were “reasonable and intelligent assumptions” and that he had employed “objectivity” in composing such scenarios. These scenarios offered a useful backdrop to Marcos’s supposed heroic decision to declare martial law in 1972, casting martial law as the logical choice that saved the nation from the brink of “disastrous consequences” that could have been brought about by the alternatives. The scenarios also cast martial law as the best choice given Marcos’s (ibid., 34) insistence that “the political performance of the martial law government is superior to what might have been in the past.” This rendering of martial law was of course consistent with the twin conceptualizations of martial law as restorative and reformative under the frame *MARTIAL LAW IS DEMOCRATIC*.

**Table 1. Conceptualizations and conceptual metaphors during martial rule (1972–1981)**

CONCEPTUALIZATIONS	CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS
Martial law is a democratic means to preserve society.	Martial law is a curative. Martial law is an agency of order and security. Military arrest of suspected criminals is a decontamination of the body politic. Martial law is a mechanism for survival, restoration, and revitalization.
Martial law is a democratic agency of change.	Martial law is an economic booster. Martial law is a liberating force. Martial law is an agency of internal revolution. Military arrest of suspected criminals is a decontamination of the body politic. Constitutional authoritarianism is an enhancer of the bureaucracy.

The year 1983, however, proved crucial to this period of normalization. On 21 August of that year, Aquino was assassinated on the tarmac of the Manila International Airport upon arrival from a three-year exile to the United States. Aquino’s death galvanized long-standing protests against Marcos from various groups, including members of the militant left.

Although he no longer had martial law powers at his disposal, Marcos had consolidated powers through the revised constitution and had full control in the use of military forces to respond to the protesters and activists. He also advocated the process of dialogue within the *Batasang Pambansa*—a move that could be seen as delegitimizing the critical opposition beyond the parliament.

Even in the absence of martial law, Marcos justified the use of military power to address challenges posed by the mounting insurgency in the countryside, disruptive dissension in the labor sector, and street protests. The use of military power was defended through the conceptualization *PEACE AND SECURITY ARE PRECURSORS TO NATIONAL SUCCESS*, which took a significant place in Marcos’s rhetoric during the “normalization” period. In the following extracts from Marcos’s 1984 and 1985 national addresses, peace and security were conceptualized as a necessary and “imperative” element to “spur” socioeconomic growth:

As we take purposive action to spur the economy to recovery and growth, we need to ensure peace in our society and security of our Republic. (Marcos 1984, 21)

In pursuing these initiatives for the economy and society, peace and security are imperative to success. This administration has shown how much can be done to strengthen law and order in our social life, and to secure the Republic from every threat to overthrow it. (Marcos 1985, 16)

As in his justification for the imposition of martial law in 1972, Marcos employed the narrative of imminent threat from the communist insurgents in establishing that “uncompromising” utilization of military power was needed to ensure peace and security. The 1984 and 1985 national addresses characterized the communist insurgents as taking advantage of the national crisis (“willfully infiltrated and manipulated by subversives and provocateurs”) and as posing “threats” to the communities, respectively. They were described as sources of disruption, “provocateurs,” “infiltrators” (Marcos 1984, 21), and opportunists that had to be met with “proper response by the government and military forces” (Marcos 1985, 16). In the same vein, the rhetoric of the two Marcos speeches underscored the government’s “strategy” in response to the insurgency. On the one hand, it surfaced that the threat was real and warranted military action (Marcos 1984, 21). On the other hand, it reassured the recipients of the message that the threat was under control and the government had a systematic response (“dual strategy”) to such a national problem (Marcos 1985, 17).

It is important to note that the conceptualization PEACE AND SECURITY ARE PRECURSORS TO NATIONAL SUCCESS remained consistent with the twin conceptualizations of martial law as A DEMOCRATIC INSTRUMENT TO PRESERVE SOCIETY and A DEMOCRATIC AGENCY OF CHANGE. Peace and security—goals associated with the preservation of society—were pursued largely by employing military power, which Marcos continued to harness even after the lifting of martial law. In doing so, Marcos reenacted the formulation that militarist intervention was necessary in bringing about social change.

During the period of normalization, Marcos also rehearsed the conceptualization that DEMOCRACY IS AN IDEOLOGY THAT MUST BE NOURISHED AND DEFENDED AGAINST COMMUNISM AND SOCIALISM. This conceptualization,

of course, was rooted in his concept of “democratic revolution,” which in the early 1970s he offered as an alternative to the revolution waged by the communist insurgents. It was also a reaffirmation of Cold War rhetoric that saw the competing ideologies of the world’s superpowers pitted against each other (Beer and De Landtsheer 2004; Chilton 1996).

In his speech at the Batasang Pambansa on 22 July 1985, Marcos cast democracy as an ideology caught in a struggle against the competing ideologies of communism and socialism. He suggested that victory in the struggle could be attained by nurturing democracy (“renewing ourselves many times by an act of faith,” “by tapping anew the great resources of democratic ideology and tradition”), defending it against competing ideologies (“carry the struggle to the citadels of the enemy”), and discrediting these competing ideologies (“underscore the sour fruit of communist and socialist experience”) (Marcos 1985, 19). Interestingly, the specific expressions of nurturance and defense were themselves realizations of conceptual metaphors that made up the broader conceptualization of democracy as an ideology. These conceptual metaphors are: DEMOCRACY IS A RELIGION (“renewing ourselves many times by an act of faith”), DEMOCRATIC IDEOLOGY IS A RESOURCE (“by tapping anew the great resources of democratic ideology and tradition”), and COMMUNISM AND SOCIALISM ARE THE ANTITHESIS OF DEMOCRACY (“carry the struggle to the citadels of the enemy,” “underscore the sour fruit of communist and socialist experience”) (ibid.).

Significant to Marcos’s (ibid.) endorsement of a democratic ideology was the idea that it should be “rooted in [the Filipino] experience and needs.” He went on to assert that “it is not enough that we parrot the belief of others in democratic processes and institutions. We must understand their practical import in society and why they must be defended” (ibid.). These expressions alluded to the Filipino ideology that he articulated in a monograph published in 1983, *Toward a New Partnership: The Filipino Ideology*. The Filipino ideology was Marcos’s version of the democratic ideology, one that repudiated the communist and socialist ideologies, but at the same time served as an alternative to Western liberal democracy. It recontextualized the principles of constitutional authoritarianism in that it regarded the government as an “effective instrument of change” (Marcos 1983, 7), the impetus for political liberation, economic emancipation, and social concord between classes. However, although Marcos’s Filipino ideology purported to depart from Western liberal democracy, it was still

very much a product of liberal democracy and in practice did not offer a real alternative (Ruiz 1993, 307). And while it institutionalized people's participation by formalizing mechanisms for critical decision making, the government remained in full control of how such participation would be carried out. In other words, the Filipino ideology is consistent with Marcos's earlier pronouncements on the democratic revolution and constitutional authoritarianism, where order served "the ultimate ground for political life" at the expense of the pluralistic character of civil and political society and where law was identified with the state (ibid.). Two conceptual metaphors on the Filipino ideology can thus be inferred: *THE FILIPINO IDEOLOGY IS DEMOCRACY ROOTED IN FILIPINO NEEDS AND EXPERIENCE* and *THE FILIPINO IDEOLOGY IS A PRODUCT OF THE DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION*. These articulations, together with those on democracy and other competing ideas like communism and socialism, pointed to a broader conceptualization, that is, *IDEOLOGIES ARE COMPETING ENTITIES THAT REQUIRE NURTURANCE TO SURVIVE*.

It must be said that Marcos's insistence on a Filipino democratic ideology that was against the communist or socialist ideology should be understood within a broader context or discourse. During the Cold War, the Philippines under Marcos was regarded as the fortress or "citadel" of democracy in Asia, which enabled the US to maintain at that time the second-largest military bases outside its shores. This meant that the Philippines was strategically positioned to counter the spread of communism in Southeast Asia from the neighboring People's Republic of China and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. It also meant that the Philippines served to protect both the military and economic interests of the US (Brilliantes 1987; Diokno 1985). The democratic ideology that Marcos espoused was supposedly favorable to the implementation of liberalization policies and structural adjustment plans that Marcos had in his list of economic reform measures (IBON Foundation 1985; cf. Walsh 1973, 5). It was therefore imperative to constrain forms of dissent that challenged these reform measures and the presence of the US military within Philippine territory. It was necessary to discredit ideologies that repudiated measures initiated by global financial institutions and interventionist foreign policies.

In summary, the so-called period of normalization and democratization from 1981 to 1985 could be seen as a continuation of the period of the "crisis government" from 1972 to 1981, which saw the full implementation

**Table 2. Conceptualizations and conceptual metaphors after martial rule (1981–1985)**

CONCEPTUALIZATIONS	CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS
Peace and security are precursors to national success.	Communist insurgents are sources of national disruption and disturbance. Communist insurgents are dangerous elements in the communities. Utilization of military power is peace making.
Ideologies are competing entities that require nurturance to survive.	Democracy is an ideology that must be nourished and defended against communism and socialism. Democracy is a religion. Democratic ideology is a resource. Communism and socialism are the antithesis of democracy. The Filipino ideology is democracy rooted in Filipino needs and experience. The Filipino ideology is a product of the democratic revolution.

of martial law. However, the period of normalization was far from normal as it was characterized by mounting protests against the Marcos regime, eventuating in his ouster in February 1986.

Table 2 puts together the two conceptualizations that remain consistent with the twin conceptualizations of martial law. These conceptualizations revolve around peace and security and the democratic ideology. Both conceptualizations subsume metaphorizations that represent in various ways the communist insurgency, the military solution, and the competing ideologies against the backdrop of the Cold War.

### **The Marcos Schema of Presidential Leadership**

By examining the frames, conceptualizations, and conceptual metaphors of martial law, military power, and the democratic ideology as realized and expressed in the presidential rhetoric over the period of Marcos's authoritarian rule (1972–1985), we can infer how Marcos conceptualized national themes like democracy, the economy, peace and order, and the presidency that constitute the schema of presidential leadership (Navera 2012, 2014). The schema that emerges from these conceptualizations is one that acknowledges the centrality of constitutional authoritarianism in national life, which is regarded as a way to protect a democratic society from the threats of

communism and socialism. When exercised by the president, it becomes a means to protect and reform society. It is seen as a means to ensure peace and security, which are prerequisites to national stability and consequently to a robust national economy that is able to thrive in a global economy. Such a schema might have served as Marcos's way of managing the exigencies of the time, which included, among others, the dominant Cold War discourse and the external pressure to accommodate the neoliberal agenda. At the same time, this schema facilitated a way for Marcos to perpetuate himself in power.

In the schema, Marcos as a duly elected president cast himself as the leader that Philippine society *needed*—the savior of society as well as the instigator of change. In other words, Marcos himself made the frame *MARTIAL LAW IS DEMOCRATIC* possible, and he himself could bring about a democratic revolution. This rendered Marcos an indispensable leader, making the extension of his term justifiable and necessary. We can sense this conceptualization clearly in *DRP*, which explicitly cast Marcos (1977) as articulator and inducer of the democratic revolution, and in *TNP* (Marcos 1983), which suggested that Marcos's leadership remained indispensable as he was the main purveyor of the Filipino ideology.

In *DRP* the chapter "The Hour of Decision" offered an elaborate account of how Marcos reached the decision of declaring martial law. It suggested that Marcos (1977, 149) was an agent who was responding with good sense to the national scene that left him "no other alternative." Marcos (*ibid.*) is specifically made out to be a responsible agent ("I accept the sole and complete responsibility for my decision") whose decision was shaped by circumstances ("I cannot escape the sense that events, the thrust of history, and even the will of the people, somehow guided my hand to deed") and whose specific decision to impose martial law was well thought out and constitutional and therefore democratic ("I was left with no other alternative than to move on, with the counsel of my conscience, in the exercise of presidential power to its constitutional limits"). The account assumed an autobiographical turn by making Marcos the target domain of the metaphorization process. The expressions suggested that he was an agent whose choices were constrained by the scene but was able to control it (*MARCOS IS AN AGENT IN CONTROL OF THE SCENE*), that his decision to pursue authoritarianism was democratic (*MARCOS'S AUTHORITARIANISM IS A DEMOCRATIC EXERCISE*), and that he in fact was *the* democratic agent of restoration and change, an indispensable leader in times of crisis (*MARCOS IS A DEMOCRATIC AGENT OF RESTORATION AND CHANGE*).<sup>5</sup> A

conceptualization that can be derived from this cluster of metaphors (that are also representations of Marcos) is that *THE AUTHORITARIAN IS A DEMOCRAT*,<sup>6</sup> an oxymoronic expression that is Orwellian in character and legitimizes Marcos's authoritarian rule and, more importantly, makes him the driving force behind the schema.

Compared with *DRP*, *TNP* is indirect in its representation of Marcos as an indispensable element in the schema that upholds constitutional authoritarianism and justifies the imposition of martial law. The concluding words of the 1983 monograph suggested that the crisis had become more complex and that a new social order that could respond to this crisis was needed. It did not say explicitly that Marcos was what was needed to constitute and carry out this new social order. But this point can be inferred from expressions that called for an urgent and fitting response to "persisting challenge of staggering complexity": "actions in times of acute peril," "the need to create a new social order that shall embody the highest aspirations of our people and that shall reflect our determination to secure a better life for all" (Marcos 1983, 78). Note that the same pattern of discourse about national perils and challenges was established in Marcos's earlier rhetoric to justify his decision to implement martial law.<sup>7</sup> Marcos's experience during the period of crisis leadership and his capacity to articulate a Filipino ideology that purportedly served as an alternative to Western liberal democracy and Communist fascism rendered his leadership during normalization necessary. The lifting of martial law notwithstanding, Marcos had consolidated his presidential powers at this time, and therefore his articulations on the necessity of his leadership lent credence to the conceptualization *THE AUTHORITARIAN IS A DEMOCRAT*.<sup>8</sup>

### The Schema's Enduring Influence

Human rights groups and various sectors of Philippine society have not been remiss in resisting the insidiousness of the schema of Marcos's authoritarian rule. However, its power has remained daunting as this schema has circulated and pervaded the public mind through state rhetoric and its powerful tentacles of propaganda. Despite Marcos's ouster from power in 1986, the schema has continued to influence the postauthoritarian presidencies.<sup>9</sup> This influence may be gleaned from their conceptualizations of rebellion, the military solution, political stability, and even dissent or criticism of the incumbent leader.

In their respective SONAs, Joseph Estrada and Gloria Arroyo framed communist rebellion or insurgency as diseases and rebels or insurgents as pests or terrorists that needed to be expelled from communities and the national body at large while rendering the militarist solution as the much-needed antidote:

Hindi binebeybi ang rebelyon. Pinipisa. Kaya, huwag n'yo kaming hamunin! Gayon din ang masasabi ko tungkol sa krimen at mga salarin. Hindi nilalambing ang krimen. Dinudurog. Hindi kinukupkup ang kriminal. Pinaparusahan. (Estrada 1999)

Rebellion is not to be treated like a baby. It is squashed. So don't you dare challenge us! The same applies to crime and its perpetrators. A crime is not something to be coddled. It is crushed. A criminal is not somebody to be harbored. He is punished.

And we will end the long oppression of barangays by rebel terrorists who kill without qualms, even their own. Sa mga lalawigan sakop ng 7th Division, nakikibaka sa kalaban si Jovito Palparan. Hindi siya aatras hanggang makawala sa gabi ng kilabot ang mga pamayanan at maka-ahon sa bukas ng liwayway ng hustisiya at kalayaan [For those provinces covered by the 7th Division, Jovito Palparan is fighting against the enemy. He will not stop until you are freed from the dark night of fear and reach the dawn of justice and freedom.] (Arroyo 2006)<sup>10</sup>

Interestingly, both female presidents conflated rebellion with terrorism (see Arroyo's extract above), reminiscent of how Marcos thought of rebellion as a threat to the national order. In the technical report that accompanied her SONA in 1991, Corazon Aquino (1991, 8) stated:

Attempts to subvert this Government under the deceptive cloak of winning the hearts and minds of our people continue. As the CPP/NPA has realized that it has failed to reach its strategic stalemate stage this year, there are clearly signs of desperation, indicated by attempts to increase terroristic acts like bombings, a possible shift to the protracted people's war, and monitored plans to forge ideological leanings.

In representing the communist insurgents as terrorists, Aquino cast them as the party on the offensive—dangerous, aggressive, deceptive, and desperate. Meanwhile, Arroyo in her 2002 SONA equated criminal syndicates with terrorists as they were “direct threats to national security.” This statement served as Arroyo's major premise in order to conflate rebellion with terrorism. She criminalized rebellion in her discourse in order to render it terroristic: “Criminals are criminals, whether of the common kind or the kind that kills in the name of political advocacies. They will feel the full brunt of the arsenal of democracy.” In Arroyo's speech, the military (“the arsenal of democracy”) is rendered as the viable answer to the problem of “communist terrorism.”

Fidel Ramos, who was head of the Philippine Constabulary and later Chief of the Armed Forces of the Philippines during the Marcos dictatorship, emphasized political stability as a prerequisite to national development. Like Marcos, he stressed the need for peace and security, suggesting that economic take off depended heavily on them: “Ultimately, the pace of growth will depend on how solidly we build our platform for takeoff. That platform will be stable only if it is built on the rock of peace, civil order and social harmony” (Ramos 1995). Meanwhile, the second Aquino presidency, headed by Corazon's son, Benigno Aquino III, was not bereft of the vestiges of Marcosian rhetoric either. It was particularly evident in his disdain for criticism as shown in his 2012 SONA: “There are still those who refuse to cease spreading negativity; they who keep their mouths pursed to good news, and have created an industry out of criticism” (Aquino 2012).<sup>11</sup> The post-Marcos presidents' penchant for emphasizing “peace, civil order, and social harmony” and general disdain for criticism reproduce the discourse that the country's political stability—a national situation freed from disruptive protests, labor strikes, and public dissent—is crucial in attracting foreign investment and bringing about economic development, something that Marcos himself adhered to when he was in power.

The Marcosian schema probably surfaced more prominently in the presidencies of Gloria Arroyo and Rodrigo Duterte. During her term, Arroyo declared a state of emergency to quell “a concerted and systematic conspiracy” by the political opposition together with members of the extreme left and extreme right, while Duterte declared martial law over the entire Mindanao after militants affiliated with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) sieged Marawi City. Arroyo's PP 1017 of 2006 echoed the Marcosian rhetoric of martial law. Constitutional law expert Florin Hilbay

(2009, 292) has noted the similarity between Arroyo's PP 1017 and Marcos's PP 1081, pointing out that Arroyo's proclamation, although short of declaring martial law, was arbitrarily used to prohibit the right of peaceful assembly, to selectively silence protesters, and to take over some mass media entities perceived by the state as providing information "inimical to a vague notion of national interest."

Among the post-Marcos presidencies, Duterte has made an outright reaffirmation of Marcos as a national leader. He has not balked at expressing his admiration for Marcos's declaration of martial law (e.g., Morallo 2017). Duterte's (2017a) PP 216, declaring martial law and suspending the writ of habeas corpus in Mindanao, was primarily crafted due to the series of terroristic activities committed by the ISIL-affiliated Maute group in Marawi City in Lanao del Sur province. The proclamation expresses the urgency to contain what it deems a destructive and flagrant rebellion. Martial law, the proclamation asserts, is meant to ensure public safety. This proclamation is reminiscent of Marcos's conceptualization of martial law as a democratic instrument to preserve society. More than PP 216, however, it is Duterte's outright dismissal of the critics of his proclamation that echoes Marcos's authoritarian rhetoric. Responding to critics of his proclamation, Duterte (2017b; cf. de Guzman 2017) emphasized the primacy of the military and the police in addressing the problem in Marawi while declaring that he would ignore congressional and judicial review of his policy:<sup>12</sup> "Until the Armed Forces and the police say that the Philippines is safe, this martial law will continue. I will not listen to anyone else, be it the Supreme Court, congressmen. They're not here." Meanwhile, reports of human rights violations have surfaced since martial law was imposed in Mindanao (e.g., Mateo 2017).

To sum up, the spirit of constitutional authoritarianism has been invoked over the years following Marcos's ouster, not necessarily by declaring martial law but by aggressively using state forces (the military and the police) against communist insurgents, Moro separatists, militant protesters, and dissenters from civil society. It has been invoked often when there is a perceived threat to democracy, where democracy is portrayed as an object of threat rather than a resource to restore, cultivate, and expand democratic space and values. Military forces have been mobilized in the countryside not only to contain insurgent elements, but also to maintain peace and order with the goal of boosting the touristic economy and inviting domestic and foreign

investment (e.g., Margold 1999, 65–67). The military solution has also been invoked to quell strikes and protests in industrial economic zones largely driven by foreign investment. It is safe to assume that the specter of Marcos's constitutional authoritarianism realized through martial law has persisted in the succeeding presidencies, and it has been conveniently invoked by his successors and the Filipino public whenever there is a perceived threat to democracy, when the peace and order of the status quo is troubled, or when the economy is perceived to suffer from dissent, protest, or criticism, even when the latter is principled and ideologically justified.

## Conclusion

By critically examining official documents, this article has surfaced and explained the conceptual metaphors that undergirded Marcos's rhetoric from the time he imposed martial law in 1972 to his last year in office. Marcos's rhetoric on martial law contained two seemingly contradictory but complementary conceptualizations: on the one hand, *MARTIAL LAW IS A DEMOCRATIC INSTRUMENT TO PRESERVE SOCIETY*; on the other hand, *MARTIAL LAW IS A DEMOCRATIC AGENCY OF CHANGE*. Both these conceptualizations appear to constitute the broader frame: *MARTIAL LAW IS DEMOCRATIC*. Emerging from the various conceptualizations manifest in the Marcosian rhetoric is the schema or super narrative that acknowledges the centrality of constitutional authoritarianism in the national life. Essential to this schema is the person of Marcos who casts himself as the agent of the Filipino democratic ideology and the savior of Philippine society in crises. Marcos's rendering of himself as an indispensable leader effectively suggests that *THE AUTHORITARIAN IS A DEMOCRAT*, an oxymoronic expression that legitimized Marcos's authoritarian rule. After Marcos formally lifted martial law in 1981, the twin conceptual metaphors found resonance in the conceptualizations *PEACE AND SECURITY ARE PRECURSORS TO NATIONAL SUCCESS* and *IDEOLOGIES ARE COMPETING ENTITIES THAT REQUIRE NURTURANCE TO SURVIVE*, in which the Filipino democratic ideology advanced by Marcos took precedence against the backdrop of the Cold War discourse.

Historical and political accounts of Marcos's authoritarian rule reveal that the official rhetoric on martial law and the use of military power had not gone unchallenged during the period of Marcos's presidency from 1972 until his ouster in 1986. Marcos's justification for martial law and the use of military power has also been countered by evidence that his authoritarian

regime contravened democratic values and institutions, committed human rights violations, and abused presidential power. Despite well-founded criticisms and various forms of resistance, the power of the Marcosian rhetoric has persisted. Marcos's schema on martial law or constitutional authoritarianism has been so embedded in Philippine political discourse that it has been invoked by political rhetors long after the Marcos dictatorship ended in 1986. It is part of the "remains of the dictatorship" that haunt the way postauthoritarian presidencies frame Philippine democracy.

The seeming lack of an alternative discourse or a powerful counter-narrative or counter-schema makes it easy for the specter of Marcosian rhetoric to flourish and get invoked. The ghost of constitutional authoritarianism—which has attached itself to the way we talk about democracy, peace and security, rebellion, the military solution, political stability, dissent, and criticism of the national leadership—needs to be fully expunged from Philippine political discourse. Whether intentionally or not, Philippine presidents since 1986 have continued the discourse spread by Marcos during the years when he rationalized "democracy from the center," implemented martial law, and called for "normalization" following its lifting. A critical awareness of the historical context and the conditions that have spawned this discourse may help us deal with its excesses.

## Abbreviations Used

<b>DRP</b>	<i>The Democratic Revolution in the Philippines</i>
<b>NNSP</b>	<i>Notes on the New Society of the Philippines</i>
<b>PP</b>	Presidential Proclamation
<b>SONA</b>	State of the Nation address
<b>TNP</b>	<i>Toward a New Partnership: The Filipino Ideology</i>
<b>TRD</b>	<i>Today's Revolution: Democracy</i>

## Notes

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- 1 Ferdinand Marcos's rhetoric here pertains to his speeches and publications produced and circulated from 1972 until his last year in office. It is important to note that Marcos did not solely formulate these speeches and publications himself. There is evidence to suggest that these speeches and publications were formulated by a think tank who helped the dictator conceptualize, develop, and refine the notion of constitutional authoritarianism and justify his imposition of martial rule. See, e.g., Walsh (1973, 3) and Mijares (2017, 752–53). Miguel Paolo Reyes (2018) provides evidence that Marcos is not the actual author of the books that carry his name. Nevertheless, the speeches and publications were written under the name of Ferdinand Marcos, a fact that makes the dictator rhetorically and ideologically committed and accountable for these ideas.
- 2 The writ of habeas corpus was suspended immediately after grenades exploded at a political campaign rally of the Liberal Party in Plaza Miranda on 21 August 1971, causing nine deaths and injuring the party's senatorial candidates. The suspension was lifted after six months. Brillantes (1987, 129) noted that the suspension of the writ was "the prelude to martial law."
- 3 I refer to *The Democratic Revolution of the Philippines* (1977) as constituting the official rhetoric on martial law.
- 4 Interestingly, Marcos (1981a) explained the lifting of martial law in 1981 as due to his belief that it was a "propitious" time for the country to embark on a new phase of governance: "As early as 1976, all the way to early last year, I had decided that the last year for martial law was to be 1980, and that the beginning of the decade of the 1980s was most propitious for our people and country for the termination of martial law."
- 5 Marcos's (1977, 129) resolute and firm stance as regard the importance of his leadership is expressed in the opening line of the chapter "The Hour of Decision": "I did not become President to preside over the death of the Philippine Republic."
- 6 I am grateful to one of the anonymous reviewers for helping me surface this frame, which is crucial to understanding Marcos's schema of political leadership and why it makes sense to his supporters.
- 7 In fact, the book rehearses this justification by reiterating martial law's role in preserving society from "symptoms of far deeper ailments" and "the spread of lawlessness" (Marcos 1983, 26) as well as in transforming society, citing changes in governmental administration and political order (*ibid.*, 22–23, 60) and the "speedy implementation" of land reform (*ibid.*, 73).
- 8 As suggested by one of the anonymous reviewers, the Marcos schema that renders martial law and the authoritarian as democratic resonates with Jacques Derrida's notions of "autoimmunity" and "democracy to come." Derrida conceptualizes democracy as autoimmunitary in that it threatens itself and is "one that welcomes the possibility of being contested, of contesting itself, of criticizing and indefinitely improving itself" (Borradori 2003, 121). Marcos's attempts to justify martial law as a means to enact a democratic revolution may be loosely linked to this notion of the autoimmunitary process of democracy. By insisting through his rhetoric that constitutional authoritarianism decontaminates the body politic, Marcos offered the possibility of democracy to improve or "revolutionize" itself after martial law, that is, from one that was "populist, personalist, individualist" (Marcos 1977, 55) to one that was collective, nationalist, and humanist (Marcos 1983, 23). On another level, Marcos as an autocrat elected supposedly through a democratic process demonstrates further how democracy's autoimmunitary process works. In other words, he, an

elected leader, had become himself a threat to democracy. How democracy has been variously conceptualized by Philippine national leaders and how they contribute to existing conversations on democracy as a concept, a process, and a system could very well be discussed in a separate paper.

- 9 How the Marcos rhetoric permeated into the post-Marcos rhetoric is discussed extensively in the author's doctoral dissertation (Navera 2012).
- 10 Jovito Palparan was a high-ranking military official in the Arroyo administration and is regarded by militant leftist groups as responsible for extrajudicial killings during that administration. On 17 September 2018, Palparan was convicted of kidnapping and serious illegal detention over the enforced disappearances in 2006 of Sherlyn Cadapan and Karen Empeño, student activists from the University of the Philippines. He was sentenced to life imprisonment.
- 11 How postdictatorship presidencies, particularly that of Benigno Aquino III, have reproduced and circulated the Marcosian legacy and at the same time subverted and departed from it is discussed in Navera 2018.
- 12 Congress affirmed PP 216 in a resolution dated 31 May 2017. It also ruled in favor of President Duterte in extending PP 216 beyond sixty days, the maximum number of days of extension without congressional approval. The first extension ran until 31 December 2017. A second extension until 31 December 2018 was also approved by Congress. On 5 December 2017, the Supreme Court upheld the implementation of martial law in Mindanao. A third extension was approved by Congress on 12 December 2018.

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