

# THE SECOND MARCOS PRESIDENCY AND THE POLITICS OF REDEMPTION

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**Abstract:** In his second State of the Nation address, Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. proudly trumpeted the dawn of Bagong Pilipinas (New Philippines). For those old enough to remember, the new government slogan eerily evokes memories of Ferdinand Marcos Sr.'s Bagong Lipunan (New Society). His vision of the New Society was anchored in strengthening the economic, finance and trade agencies, opening the economy to foreign investment and introducing agricultural development. Ultimately, his regime was saddled by structural deficiencies, external shocks and crony capitalism. Just like his father before him, Marcos Jr. promises to deliver “a comfortable, resilient, and tranquil life for every Filipino.” Most of the 31 million voters who elected him to the presidency expect him to fulfill this promise. Pundits and political analysts frame this expectation within the context of authoritarian nostalgia – when citizens compare current weak democratic performance with past (real or imagined) successes of developmental dictatorships. Mythmaking has always been at the heart of the Marcos narrative. This narrative of the Marcos “golden age” was meant to evoke nostalgia for what was “lost” both to the Marcos dynasty and the country. Far from being a “golden age,” the Marcos era economy was characterized by debt-driven growth from 1970 to 1983, followed by stagnation and a deep economic crisis from 1983 to 1986, triggered by a series of political and economic crises. The Marcos narrative claims they were victims of the 1986 People Power uprising. But victimhood is only one part of the Marcos narrative. The more powerful part is redemption. For most observers, redemption was the only platform Marcos Jr. presented to the electorate in 2022. The son seeks to redeem the family’s honor and redress his family’s fall. Marcos Jr.’s ultimate goal of redemption is within his reach if he avoids his father’s mistakes.

**Dr. Julio C. Teehankee** is a Professor of Political Science and International Studies at De La Salle University, where he served as Chair of the Political Science Department (1994-2007); Chair of the International Studies Department (2008-2013); and Dean of the College of Liberal Arts (2013-2017). He also served as President of the Philippine Political Science Association (2017-2019) and the Asian Political and International Studies Association (2009-2011). He was the Philippine representative to the Council of the International Political Science Association (2019-2023). He has held several visiting appointments, including Kyoto University, Australian National University, City University of Hong Kong, Osaka University, University of Tokyo, Waseda University, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, and the London School of Economics and Political Science. His research is on issues of popular participation, governance, democratization, and contested institutions in East and Southeast Asia. He has published extensively on the topics of elections, party politics, and political dynasties. He appears regularly as a political analyst for local and international media outlets and his YouTube channel – “Talk Politics with Julio Teehankee.”



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**Room 6-213**

**6/F, Lau Ming Wai Academic Building  
City University of Hong Kong**

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Via zoom  
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