

UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI
DI PADOVA

Università degli Studi di Padova
Dipartimento di Scienze Storiche, Geografiche e dell'Antichità

Corso di Laurea Magistrale in Scienze Storiche

Who takes the wheel in a dictatorship? Mobile Visions
and Transport Planning in Metro Manila, Philippines
during Martial Law, 1972-1986

Relatore:

Prof.ssa Chiara Rabbiosi

Co-relatore:

Prof. Massimo Moraglio (Technische Universität Berlin, Germania)

Laureando:

John Axl A. Palisoc

Matricola: 2070777

Anno Accademico 2023/24

Table of Contents

<i>Section</i>	<i>page/s</i>
Acknowledgment	ii
Abstract	iii-iv
Extended summary	v-vii
List of Images and Tables	viii
Chapter 1	1-9
Chapter 2	10-28
Chapter 3	29-49
Chapter 4	50-68
Chapter 5	69-71
References	72-80

Acknowledgment

My almost two year-stay in Padova had been a roller coaster of sorts, and if I had to do it again, I would definitely do it with the same people.

To my supervisor **Prof.ssa Chiara Rabbiosi**, thank you for your guidance, compassion and patience. I consider myself fortunate to be under your tutelage. You are the type of academic I wish to emulate: kind, down-to-earth, and always curious. Looking forward to working with you again in the future.

To **Prof. Massimo Moraglio** whose insights and comments on my research have proven to be invaluable. Thank you!

To the **staff of the Third World Studies Center** and the **National Transportation Studies Center** of the University of the Philippines Diliman, thank you for allowing me to access the documents and texts which are crucial for the conduct of this research.

To my fellow mobility students, **Kosar, Ningyi, Soumik, Burak, and Redar**. Our bond proves that misery indeed loves company. I am lucky to have shared my academic journey with you all. Wishing the best to each one of you.

To my newfound friends and *kababayan*: **Macy, Cheska, Jason, Rocio, May, Inna, and Tita Alou**. *Salamat sa mga kuwento at pagkain na pinagsaluban natin*. To **Rasheed**, thank you for being my Valentin Ventura and for the experience of becoming a brother and a parent. *Lagi kang mag-iingat*.

To **Eduardo, Mauricio, and William**, thank you for the moments of (in)sanity in your own homes or in Anima. To **Juan Carlos**, thank you for the stories, the food, the drama and the laughs. Hope we can meet again soon.

To **Mama, Papa, Denise, and Ate** for being supportive and understanding when I told you of my plans to pursue further studies abroad.

To **Mark**, for the love and support that knows no boundaries.

To **Kiel** and your generation, so that the lessons of our nation's complicated past be always remembered.

And to **Mommy Babes**, thank you for the stories on martial law which made a lasting imprint on my appreciation of Philippine history. This work is dedicated to you.

Abstract

The Martial Law period (1972-1981) which installed the dictatorship of Ferdinand E. Marcos is one of, if not, the most contested era of Philippine contemporary history. Aimed towards the establishment of a modern and developed Filipino society where citizens are free to reach their fullest potentials, the declaration of Martial Law was anchored on Marcos' ideology called *Bagong Lipunan* (New Society). Despite the presence of an overwhelming amount of literature on the subject, there were few to no studies dealing with the mobility aspect of the said time period. In this regard, I have decided to look into Martial Law through a mobility lens with the specific aim of understanding Marcos and his technocrats/cronies' rhetoric and imagination of mobility, particularly transport, in relation to the idea of *Bagong Lipunan*. In addition, this study is premised on the general question: “*How did authoritarian regimes (i.e. Marcos and his cronies/technocrats) utilize their own imaginations of mobilities (in this case, transport planning) to consolidate social consensus and ensure their legitimacy?*”

In answering these questions, I used Metro Manila as a specific case study which at that time was consolidated into Metropolitan Manila following the regional development approach of the Marcos administration and the vision of the region as the City of Man popularized by the First Lady and Governor Imelda R. Marcos. I conducted archival research in three sites, namely the National Center for Transportation Studies (NCTS), the Third World Studies Center (TWCS) both in University of the Philippines Diliman, and the Rizal Library in the Ateneo de Manila University from April to May 2024. From there, I gained access to the three transport studies commissioned by the Marcos Sr. government starting in 1973 until 1983. Aside from these, I also accessed key documents pertaining to the New Society and the City of Man produced by the Philippine government.

Using discourse analysis as my research methodology, I examined the “multiple ways of seeing mobilities” (Jensen, 2011) in relation to the framing of transport issues and solutions in the Metropolitan Manila region. I then proceeded to analyze the “constellations of mobilities” by untangling the representations, practices and movements associated to the LRT-1. From this, I looked at the mobility regime espoused by the authoritarian government of Marcos Sr.

Finally, I ended my research with the acknowledgment that further aspects such as transport outside the National Capital Region and the overall national transport must be examined to have a more holistic understanding of the transport situation in the Philippines during specific historical moments.

Also, a comparison with the case of Jakarta, Indonesia during the rule of Suharto can be equally important to understand authoritarian regimes and their mobility visions in Southeast Asia.

Extended Summary (*Italiano*)

Il periodo della Legge Marziale (1972-1986), che instaurò la dittatura di Ferdinand E. Marcos, è uno dei periodi più contestati, se non il più contestato, della storia contemporanea delle Filippine. Mirato all'instaurazione di una società filippina moderna e sviluppata, dove i cittadini sono liberi di raggiungere il loro pieno potenziale, la dichiarazione della Legge Marziale si basava sull'ideologia di Marcos chiamata *Bagong Lipunan* (Nuova Società).

Nel realizzare questo, il suo regime invocò una «rivoluzione dal centro» chiedendo il supporto dei filippini, portando infine a molti cambiamenti in vari aspetti della società filippina. Questa «rivoluzione» non fu guidata solo dal dittatore stesso, ma fu anche assistita dai suoi tecnocrati, amici e dalla First Lady, che, ciascuno a modo proprio, avevano interessi diversi e talvolta contrastanti. Infatti, il regime marziale di Marcos è tipicamente descritto come una «dittatura coniugale» (Mijares, 1976), «capitalismo delle cricche» (Manapat, 1991), e/o la «nascita della tecnocrazia filippina» (Tadem, 2014).

Queste categorie derivano da un'analisi approfondita del regime di Marcos, che si è concentrata principalmente sui suoi effetti socio-politici. Tuttavia, ci sono stati pochi, se non nessuno, studi che trattano l'aspetto della mobilità del periodo in questione.

A questo proposito, ho deciso di esaminare la Legge Marziale attraverso una lente di mobilità con l'obiettivo specifico di comprendere la retorica e l'immaginario di Marcos e dei suoi tecnocrati/amici sulla mobilità, in particolare il trasporto, in relazione all'idea di *Bagong Lipunan*.

Inoltre, questo studio si basa sulla domanda generale: «Come hanno utilizzato i regimi autoritari (cioè Marcos e i suoi amici/tecnocrati) la loro immaginazione delle mobilità (in questo caso, la pianificazione del trasporto) per consolidare il consenso sociale e garantire la loro legittimità?»

In corollario, intendo rispondere alle seguenti domande:

- (a) Quali erano i discorsi prevalenti sul trasporto durante la Legge Marziale?
 - (i) Come il regime inquadrava i problemi e le questioni relative al trasporto del suo tempo?
 - (ii) Quale ruolo aveva il trasporto nella costruzione della Nuova Società?
- (b) Che tipo di regime di mobilità è stato promosso dal dittatore e dai suoi tecnocrati (e amici)?
 - (i) Quali erano le soluzioni proposte per i problemi che avevano identificato?
 - (ii) Sotto la Nuova Società, chi poteva muoversi, quando e perché?
- (c) Come sono stati conciliati e negoziati gli immaginari mobili differenti (ad esempio, tecnocratico, politico-economico) da parte degli attori chiave di un regime autoritario (cioè dittatore, funzionari locali, pianificatori dei trasporti, amici, ecc.)?

Nel rispondere a queste domande, ho utilizzato Metro Manila come caso di studio specifico, che in quel periodo fu consolidato nella Regione della Capitale Nazionale seguendo l'approccio di sviluppo regionale dell'amministrazione Marcos. Questa area geografica è stata selezionata specificamente considerando l'attenzione massima data alla regione metropolitana come sede del potere politico ed economico della nazione. Questa tendenza è stata osservata anche in altre capitali del sud-est asiatico durante quel periodo.

Il caso di Metro Manila è stato esaminato in due parti. In primo luogo, ho analizzato gli immaginari mobili complessivi del regime di Marcos attraverso i piani di sviluppo nazionale formulati durante la Legge Marziale. Ho messo a confronto questi piani di sviluppo nazionale con l'ideologia di *Bagong Lipunan* attraverso i testi chiave sulla Legge Marziale nelle Filippine. Successivamente, questi sono stati collegati con l'idea di Metropolitan Manila come la «Città dell'Uomo», popolarizzata dall'allora First Lady e Governatrice di Metro Manila Imelda R. Marcos, e i tre studi sui trasporti commissionati dal governo nazionale.

Guardando a queste due concettualizzazioni ideali (sebbene intrecciate) del trasporto nazionale e regionale/metropolitano, il mio obiettivo è comprendere gli immaginari mobili generali del regime di Marcos non solo sulla base delle sue ideologie, ma anche attraverso i meccanismi con cui consente di accomodare e/o rinegoziare gli interessi dei detentori del potere del regime (ad esempio, l'expertise tecnica dei pianificatori dei trasporti, altri esperti contro gli interessi di altri blocchi di potere [ad esempio amici, altri gruppi di élite, famiglie influenti, politici locali, funzionari pubblici]).

La seconda parte si concentrerà sui risultati degli studi commissionati, in particolare sulla loro traduzione in piani concreti per la costruzione della Linea 1 della Light Railway Transit (LRT-1). L'LRT-1 è stato trattato come un artefatto che può essere dissezionato per rivelare le «costellazioni di mobilità» (Cresswell, 2010) e i «regimi di mobilità» (Schiller e Salazar, 2013) di quel periodo storico specifico.

Ho impiegato una metodologia qualitativa in questa ricerca, in particolare l'analisi del discorso, al fine di catturare i diversi significati, idee e immaginari relativi al trasporto del regime e dei suoi attori chiave. I seguenti documenti/testi, consultati attraverso la biblioteca del National Center for Transportation Studies (NCTS), del Third World Studies Center, entrambi presso l'Università delle Filippine Diliman, e la Rizal Library dell'Ateneo de Manila University, sono stati esaminati: (1) Piani di Sviluppo delle Filippine (1972-1986); (2) Urban Transport Study in Manila Metropolitan Area (UTSMA); (3) Metro Manila Transport, Land Use, and Development Planning Project (MMETROPLAN); (4) Metro Manila Urban Transportation Strategy Planning Project (MMUTSTRAP); (5) Testi chiave sulla Nuova Società e sulla Città dell'Uomo.

Lo studio inizia contestualizzando la legge marziale nelle Filippine, concentrandosi sulle giustificazioni di Marcos Sr. e sulla sua visione per una *Bagong Lipunan* (Nuova Società), in cui mirava a creare una società filippina moderna e sviluppata. Questa visione implicava la riconfigurazione delle Filippine in diverse regioni, con Metro Manila come obiettivo centrale. Imelda

Marcos, come prima governatrice di Metro Manila, promosse il concetto di Città dell'Uomo, che era legato al suo ruolo di ministra degli Insediamenti Umani e al suo approccio umanistico allo sviluppo delle comunità. Parte di questo approccio includeva affrontare i bisogni umani fondamentali, tra cui la mobilità, che si rifletteva nei progetti di trasporto del governo Marcos, come la creazione della Manila Transit Corporation e della Light Rail Transit (LRT). Questi progetti di trasporto erano guidati da consulenti stranieri e miravano a modernizzare Metro Manila per adattarla all'immagine di una capitale disciplinata e moderna sotto la Nuova Società.

Lo studio evidenzia anche il progetto della LRT-1 come un caso di corruzione e manovre politiche durante la legge marziale. La LRT-1, pur presentata come essenziale per il progresso nazionale, fu segnata da costi gonfiati e dal cronyismo, in particolare tramite il coinvolgimento di Rodolfo Cuenca, un stretto alleato di Marcos Sr. La Banca Mondiale espresse preoccupazioni sulla viabilità finanziaria del progetto, ma questo andò comunque avanti, sottolineando come i progetti infrastrutturali venissero usati per promuovere una visione moderna e disciplinata della mobilità. Il progetto della LRT-1 esemplificò la visione paternalistica di Marcos Sr. della mobilità, offrendola come un dono al popolo, ma usandola anche come uno strumento di controllo, illustrando ulteriormente la complessa intersezione tra ideali tecnocratici, cronyismo e strategia politica durante la legge marziale.

List of Images and Tables

List of Images

No.	Description	page
1	Bongbong Marcos with Ferdinand Marcos Sr. in the backdrop	4
2	Marcos Sr. as he was discussing the declaration of a nationwide Martial Law on television	17
3	Metropolitan Manila and its location in the Philippines	30
4	Imelda Romualdez Marcos	33
5-7	Action photos of Marcos Sr. in actual construction sites of roads and bridges juxtaposed with a photo of ‘modern’ access roads in the South Superhighway	53
8	The LRT-1 Stations	56
9	The MMETROPLAN development framework for Metro Manila	56
10	Metrorail as a component of the First Lady’s City of Man	60
11	<i>Babay kubo</i> -inspired LRT-1 station	61
12	President Marcos taking the driver’s seat of an LRT train car	63
13	The Marcos marker at the Old Zigzag Road, Atimonan, Quezon	66

List of Tables

No.	Description	page/s
1	Summary of the UTSSMA proposed transport system for Metropolitan Manila area	39-40
2	Summary of the two-stage proposal by MMETROPLAN	42
3	Summary of recommendations in the MMUSTRAP	44-45

Chapter 1

Introduction: Why study the Marcos Dictatorship *again and again*? Or, what is there to gain in studying Martial Law with a mobility lens?

"History is not through with me yet!"
-Ferdinand E. Marcos Sr., Dictator¹

"Why has there been a rehabilitation of the Marcos brand? Because the Marcos family is very resilient and with the resources that they still have at hand they invested in trying to tell their side of the story, their narrative, their interpretation of history."
-Carmelo Crisanto, HRVVMC Director²

"Judge me not by my ancestors, but my actions."
-Ferdinand "Bongbong" R. Marcos Jr., President and son of a dictator

The Martial Law period (1972-1986) which installed the dictatorship of Ferdinand E. Marcos Sr. is one of, if not, the most contested era of Philippine contemporary history. To be fair, imposing Martial Law is never intrinsically wrong or evil. In fact, it is a constitutionally approved measure given to the president, as commander-in-chief of the armed forces, to maintain peace and order in times of emergencies. Yet, among the several instances of Martial Law in the Philippines³, the experience under Marcos Sr. left an indelible mark in the collective memory of Filipinos to the extent that Martial Law has become synonymous with Marcos.

Scholars and laypersons alike might argue that there is no need for *another* study of Marcos' authoritarian regime. They will, for sure, provide a long list of the documentaries, personal stories, survivors' and perpetrators' testimonies, court cases, news clippings, and a variety of other materials concerning that era. Be that as it may, I would like to insist that despite the copious number of studies on Philippine Martial Law, there remains aspects that are yet to be understood, lending more credence to the title of this chapter: why study Marcos Dictatorship again and again? For me, the answer to that

¹ Taken from Ambeth Ocampo's September 2022 column article *Marcos: 'History is not through with me yet!'*. See References for bibliographical details.

² The interview with Commissioner Crisanto can be accessed here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hQrLs49_mco; The Human Rights Violations Victims' Memorial Commission (HRVVMC) was created through Republic Act No. 10368 "to establish, restore, preserve, and conserve Memorial, Museum, Library, and Compendium in honor of the human rights violations victims during the Marcos regime". More information can be read here: <https://hrvvmemcom.gov.ph/about-us/>

³ The first Martial Law declaration was during the early years of the first Philippine Republic in the 1890s by Emilio Aguinaldo. This is followed by Jose P. Laurel's declaration in wartime Philippines in the 1940s. The most recent declarations were done by Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, and Rodrigo Duterte in 2009 and 2017, respectively.

question is numerous and I would like to begin by borrowing the words of the English poet Elizabeth Barrett Browning: “Let me count the ways”⁴.

First Reason: The way to understanding mobilities in the Global South

In the editorial *Seeking a (new) ontology for transport history* by Massimo Moraglio (2017), he observed how transport history continues to be constricted within the “North Atlantic model” (p. 3) which means that inquiries in this field are mostly within the United Kingdom, continental Europe, and the United States. To remedy this, he proposed that transport historians start by “engaging scholars in all the continents, exploring non-dominant mobility regimes... **cover a variety of countries and regions, investigating how various actors have shaped transport systems**, creating models of mobility that differ along a number of dimensions such as gender, ownership (public vs. private), operation (individual vs. collective), technical mode (motorised vs. non-motorised), availability (affluence vs. scarcity), and hegemony (dominant vs. subaltern)” (pp. 6-7; emphasis mine).

For obvious reasons, the national and regional contexts surrounding this research are in direct response to Moraglio’s concerns. For one, it answers the need to look into geographical locations other than the North Atlantic model as the Philippines is situated in the Global South⁵ where “peripheral mobilities” (Moraglio, 2018) can be best examined.

Moreover, another vital layer in this study is its timeline. It is important to remember that Marcos Sr. declared Martial Law in September 1972 which coincided with critical moments of the Cold War in Southeast Asia. The Philippines, as a post-colonial ally of the United States, had a crucial role in curbing the rising “communist threat” in the region which could have implications in its national affairs.

⁴ Taken from Barrett Browning’s poem *Sonnet 43* or popularly known as *How do I love thee? Let me count the ways* published along with other poems as a book entitled *Sonnets from the Portuguese* (1850). Full poem can be accessed here: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/43742/sonnets-from-the-portuguese-43-how-do-i-love-thee-let-me-count-the-ways>

⁵ Cognizant of the issues associated with this term, I would like to clarify that my use of this term does not reflect my adherence to its outdated generalized meanings, but rather due to the lack of an alternative. See Prys-Hansen, 2023 for further reading.

By examining the mobility aspects of a dictatorial regime in the Global South at the height of the Cold War pushes not only the historiographical but also the methodological and ontological limits of transport history. It could also be an opportunity to dissect Marcos' *Bagong Lipunan* (New Society) as his propaganda tool and the many ways it has influenced his regime's transport imaginations. Aside from looking into the *Bagong Lipunan* as a temporal aspect of Philippine history, it is also crucial to understand it as a social space constructed by the dictator. In this way, it provides a deeper appreciation of the concrete manifestations of the regime's transport imaginations (i.e. transport plans, infrastructure).

Second Reason: The way towards a mobile historiography of the Philippine Martial Law

In the compendium *The Marcos Era: A Reader* (2022), Filipino historian Filomeno V. Aguilar Jr. lamented how the (Filipino) academic community (in the Philippines) failed to offer a more cogent analysis of the Marcos regime especially after its collapse. In spite of the copious amounts of research available, he critically observed that “[w]hen it comes to the Marcos dictatorship, few of us in the Philippine social science community (myself included) have been concerned about its historiography. Few of us have bothered to unravel the regime's inner workings, despite the lifting of the repressive atmosphere under Marcos's reign and the availability of sources since the strongman's downfall” (p. 28). Indicating the presence of the so-called Marcos Papers⁶, which he likened to a “secret chamber”, he urged Filipino scholars to sift through those papers (and other related documents) to usher in a new historiography of Martial Law.

In a somewhat similar vein, another Filipino historian Michael D. Pante, decried the dearth of historical studies, this time, on mobilities in the Philippines. In his article *The History of Mobility in the Philippines: Defining a Discursive Space*, Pante (2016) outlined the limited scholarship on Philippine transport history both temporally and geographically. He explained that due to unavailability of resources, studies are typically focused in Metro Manila, if not only Luzon, during the late 19th up to the 20th centuries. He added that most of these studies are written for and by corporations which have the tendency to be more celebratory than critical.

⁶ This refers to the volumes of documents left behind by the Marcoses when they fled to Hawaii in 1986. These papers are jointly kept by the Philippine Presidential Commission for Good Government (PCGG) and the National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP).

Following these observations, it appears then, that there is value in examining other dimensions both of Martial Law and transport history in the Philippines. Like the proverbial stone that hits two birds at once, my research can be a way towards a mobile historiography of Philippine Martial Law. While not exhaustive, this can pave the way to understanding the mobile aspects of Marcos' authoritarian regime particularly in terms of transportation.

Third Reason: The way to fight historical distortion and disinformation

The third and final reason for this study is its present relevance in the ongoing rehabilitation of the Marcos family's image and place in Philippine history. The most recent Philippine presidential elections could be seen as a litmus test of how the Filipino society remembers its past. Coincidentally, fifty years since the declaration of Martial Law, another Marcos is elected new president of the republic. Garnering 31 million votes, Ferdinand 'Bongbong' Marcos Jr., son of the deceased dictator, won in an astounding landslide. It is said to be the first majority win of any Philippine president since 1986, when the elder Marcos, was overthrown by a popular uprising known as the People Power Revolution (Lema and Morales, 2022).



Experts believe that the eventual return of the Marcoses to national politics⁷ is a culmination of a decades-long attempt to rebrand the infamous family name. Armed by social media channels, Martial Law is re-portrayed as the “Golden Age” of the Philippines (Tuquero, 2022; Beltran, 2022; Coronel, 2022) by emphasizing the regime's numerous infrastructure projects, maintenance of peace and order, and a robust economy. Even in his presidential campaign, Bongbong Marcos capitalized on this “false nostalgia” (Punongbayan, 2023) as highlighted by his

Image 1. Bongbong Marcos with Ferdinand Marcos Sr. in the backdrop.
Source: Philippine Star/KJ Rosales, Wikimedia Commons, 2023

⁷ Imee Marcos, eldest daughter of the late dictator and sister of Bongbong, is a senator. Sandro, the oldest son of Bongbong, is a representative of their home province, Ilocos Norte. Other members of the Marcos clan are local politicians in their home province.

slogan “*Bayan Bangon Muli*” (Together we shall rise again) which also matches his rebranded initials BBM (short for Bongbong Marcos)⁸.

It is interesting, however, how the Marcoses have taken great lengths to distance themselves from their patriarch’s dark past. In the recent presidential polls, Marcos Jr., taking the lead, asked everyone through his spokesperson to “judge me not by my ancestors, but my actions” (Lema and Dela Cruz, 2022). By making this request, the young Marcos, true to the Filipino proverb “*Nabuhuli ang isda sa sarili nitong bibig*” (A fish is caught through its own mouth), was caught through his own words to be admitting to the excesses committed by his late father; a big contrast to the pronouncements⁹ made by the other surviving members of the Marcos dynasty.

Now that the Marcos dynasty has finally reclaimed its position in national politics, there is a growing concern on how Martial Law will be appreciated and remembered. Just recently, the Philippine Department of Education has plans to revise its *Araling Panlipunan* (Social Studies) curriculum where it replaces “*Diktadurang Marcos*” (Marcos Dictatorship) to just “*Diktadura*” (Dictatorship) arguing that no other president declared Martial Law and ruled as a dictator throughout the country’s history (Sarao, 2023; Abad, 2023). Not only is that historically inaccurate, critics have pointed out that this disassociates the Marcoses from the dark legacies of the dictatorship thus making them appear unaccountable.

Laying the land: Research questions and methodology

With these reasons in mind, I decided to examine Martial Law through a mobility lens with the specific aim of understanding Marcos Sr., his technocrats’ and cronies’ rhetoric and imagination of mobility, particularly transport, in relation to the idea of *Bagong Lipunan* (New Society). This study is premised on the general question: “*How did authoritarian regimes (i.e. Marcos, his cronies and technocrats) utilize their own imaginations of mobilities (in this case, transport planning) to consolidate social consensus and ensure their legitimacy?*”

⁸ Some believe that Marcos, Jr. deliberately chose ‘BBM’ to distance himself from his surname and his father’s harsh dictatorship (<https://www.sunstar.com.ph/cebu/opinion/cabaero-marcos-not-bbm>)

⁹ When asked if the Marcos family should ask for apology for the atrocities during Martial Law, Imee Marcos said she is not in the position to do so as she claims to be young when those things happened. She was 16 years old when Martial Law was declared in 1972. A few years later, she was appointed by his own father as the National Chairman of the *Kabataang Barangay*, a youth organization supportive of the dictatorship.

In connection to this, I intend to answer the following questions:

- (a) *What were the prevailing discourse/s on transport during Martial Law?*
 - (i) *How did the regime frame the transport problems and issues of their time?*
 - (ii) *What was the role of transport in building the New Society?*
- (b) *What type of mobility regime was promoted by the dictator, his technocrats and cronies?*
 - (i) *What were their proposed solutions to the problems they identified?*
 - (ii) *Under the New Society, who were allowed to move, where, when and why?*
- (c) *How were differing ways of seeing mobilities (e.g. technocratic, politico-economic) reconciled and negotiated by key actors in an authoritarian regime (i.e. dictator, local officials, transport planners, cronies, etc.)?*

In answering these questions, Metro Manila is used as a case study which at that time was consolidated into the National Capital Region¹⁰ following the regional development approach of the Marcos administration. This scalar scope is specifically selected considering the utmost attention given to the metropolitan region as the nation's seat of political and economic power¹¹. As I have already observed in an earlier thesis, Metro Manila has always been the archetype in transport planning in the Philippines (Palisoc, 2020). This trend has been observed even in other capital cities in the Southeast Asian region (Dick and Rimmer, 1986).

In this work, the case of Metro Manila is examined along two research avenues:

1. First, it is crucial to unpack the overall mobile imaginaries of the Marcos regime through the national development plans formulated during Martial Law. The national development plans are juxtaposed with the ideology of *Bagong Lipunan* through key texts on Martial Law in the Philippines. Then these are dovetailed with the idea of Metropolitan Manila as the “City of Man”, popularized by then First Lady and Metro Manila Governor Imelda R. Marcos, and the three subsequent transport studies commissioned by the national government¹². By looking at these two different (yet intertwined) and idealized conceptualizations of the national and regional/metropolitan transport, **I aim to understand the general mobile imaginaries of**

¹⁰ It consists of Manila, Quezon City, Caloocan, Pasay, Las Pinas, Makati, Malabon, Mandaluyong, Marikina, Muntinlupa, Navotas, Paranaque, Pasig, Pateros, San Juan, Taguig, and Valenzuela and was established based on Presidential Decree No. 824 along with an administrative authority called Metropolitan Manila Commission.

¹¹ Some would claim even cultural power

¹² Refers to the following commissioned studies: Urban Transport Study in Manila Metropolitan Area (1973); Metro Manila Transport, Land Use, and Development Planning Project (1977); and Metro Manila Urban Transport Improvement Project (1981)

the Marcos regime not only on the basis of its ideologies but also through mechanisms in which it allows for the accommodation and/or renegotiation of the regime's power holders' multiple interests (e.g. technical expertise of transport planners, other experts versus the interests of other power blocs [e.g. cronies, other elite groups, influential families, local politicians, government officials]).

2. The second part is concerned with the results of the commissioned studies, particularly its translation to concrete plans wherein the construction of the Light Railway Transit (LRT) and the LRT Authority is taken as a case study. **Considered as infrastructures, these projects are treated as artefacts which can be dissected to reveal the “constellations of mobility”** (Cresswell, 2010) **and “regimes of mobility”** (Schiller and Salazar, 2013) **of that specific historical period.** Moreover, the LRT-1 is considered reflective of the politics of mobility enshrined (or pursued) by the authoritarian government of Ferdinand E. Marcos Sr. On the one hand, the LRT-1 is not only a product of “multiple ways of seeing mobilities” (Jensen, 2011) which shaped the spatial arrangements of Metropolitan Manila. It is, on the other hand, an artifact of the Marcos Sr. regime reflective of its congealed technopolitical aspirations and meanings of transport infrastructure.

Needless to say, this research relied heavily in archival materials, primarily government documents related to transportation. There are instances, however, when some documents were accessed through academic institutions and/or private entities especially those related to the commissioned transport studies. Moreover, it is important to note that documents produced within the Martial Law timeline, that is from September 1972 until February 1986, are solely used for this research. This is an important consideration given the length of Marcos Sr.'s rule as president which ran for more than two decades. Despite officially lifting martial law in January 1981, the Marcos Sr. regime still held considerable power similar in the nine-year Martial Law era.

Despite dealing with historical (archival) printed materials, I deliberately employed critical discourse analysis (CDA) which according to Mayr (2015) “is concerned with exposing the often hidden ideologies that are reflected, reinforced, and constructed in everyday and institutional discourse” (p. 765). While the authoritarian government of Marcos Sr. as an institution was proudly (and blatantly) anchored in the ideology called *Bagong Lipunan* (New Society), the use of CDA is important in looking for the manifestations of the said ideology in terms of transport. In other words, CDA allowed me in

capturing the regime and its key actors' different transportation meanings, ideas, and imaginations based on the overall notion of the *Bagong Lipunan*.

To better guide the readers, the subsequent parts are divided into four chapters gradually directing to the main themes of this research. The next chapter deals with the contextualization of Martial Law both in national and regional scales in what I would like to call as *kaleidoscopic lens*. It is important to situate the Marcos dictatorship not only as a national historical moment but also as an event within the history of Cold War in the Southeast Asian region. The justifications used by the regime in declaring Martial Law is also given space in the next chapter followed by the dictator's ideology of *Bagong Lipunan*.

The third chapter then zooms in to the case of Metro Manila and its transport planning. It begins with a brief historical background on the formation of the National Capital Region and the project named "City of Man" of the then First Lady Imelda R. Marcos. The highlight of this chapter is the three commissioned studies for improving transport in the capital region, namely Urban Transport Study in Manila Metropolitan Area (1973); Metro Manila Transport, Land Use, and Development Planning Project (1977); Metro Manila Urban Transportation Strategy Planning Project (1983). Anne Jensen's notion of "multiplicities of seeing mobilities" is crucial in unpacking the multiple technocratic visions of transportation as evidenced in these studies along with the 'ways of seeing' of Imelda R. Marcos as the first governor of the newly formed metropolitan region.

Meanwhile, the fourth chapter looks into the nexus of an authoritarian regime and mobility regime. Again, Jensen's "multiplicities of seeing mobilities" is key in understanding the varied transport imaginaries in and of the regime. The concept 'mobility regime' is utilized here as defined by Nina Schiller and Noel Salazar referring to the mechanisms that facilitates and legitimizes some forms of movements over others. In the same manner, Tim Cresswell's 'politics of mobility' primarily his idea of 'constellations of mobility' is used to explore the intersections among movements, representations, and practices of Marcos Sr.'s regime.

Finally, this thesis ends with a chapter envisioning a mobilized Martial Law Studies in the Philippines. In this chapter, other possible topics for research are outlined such as the national transport imaginaries of the regime, the labor export policy, and the underground movements against the

dictatorship. Also, moving forward I will briefly outline a comparative study of Marcos's Martial Law mobility regime with that of its contemporaries such as Indonesia during the time of Suharto.

Chapter 2

Contextualizing the *Bagong Lipunan*: Marcos' dream of a 'New Society'

*"May bagong silang
May bago nang bubay
Bagong bansa, bagong galaw
Sa Bagong Lipunan!
Magbabago ang lahat, tungo sa pag-unlad
At ating itanghal: Bagong Lipunan!"*¹³

*"Some are great, and some are few
And others lie while some of us be telling the truth...
Some know it all while some act dumb...
And some of us will be finding our minds and be thinking...
'Cause every color and every hue is represented by me and you...
Take a look in the kaleidoscope
Spinnin' round make it twirl in this kaleidoscope world"*

-Bagong Pagsilang¹⁴ (1972), Felipe de Leon Sr.
Magalona¹⁵

-Kaleidoscope World (2000), Francis

A kaleidoscopic interpretation of Martial Law: New patterns, new interpretations

Writing history is already an arduous endeavor, and it becomes more so when we are tasked to narrate the events of a complicated past. By this, I meant histories that have caused protracted debates and, later on, would polarize both scholars and laypersons alike. Philippine history has a fair share of these controversies which until today remain to be unresolved. These range from disagreements on the exact date of the start of the Philippine revolution¹⁶ against Spain at the end of the 19th century up to gruesome events like the deaths (or assassinations) of famous personalities such as Andres Bonifacio¹⁷, Gen. Antonio Luna¹⁸, and Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr.¹⁹ in the subsequent years.

¹³ "There's a new birth, there's already a new life, new country, new movement in the New Society! All things will change towards progress and let us proclaim: New Society!"; this rough translation was done by the author

¹⁴ Also known as The March of the New Society. The title can be roughly translated to "New Birth". This song was written by National Artists Felipe De Leon Sr. and Levi Celerio upon the orders of the dictator.

¹⁵ Filipino songwriter and rapper

¹⁶ To quell this debate, there is a consensus among historians that the Philippine revolution led by the *Katipunan* (the Association) started sometime in the end of August 1896.

¹⁷ Andres Bonifacio (30 Nov. 1863-10 May 1897), also referred to as the *Supremo* (the Supreme Leader), was the founder of the anti-Spanish organization *Kataastaasan, Kagalang-galang na Katipunan ng mga Anak ng Bayan* (Highest and Noble Association of the Nation's Children) or KKK. His death is often attributed to Emilio Aguinaldo, the first president of the Philippines, after the former along with his brother Procopio were found guilty of sedition in a controversial trial.

¹⁸ Antonio Luna (29 Oct. 1866-5 June 1899) was a Filipino general during the Philippine-American War (1899-1914) and brother of painter Juan Luna. Although he was trained as a chemist, he led the nascent Philippine Army and was known for being strict and orderly. Because of this, many disliked him and referred to him as *Heneral Articulo Uno* (General Article One) as he always threatened stubborn soldiers to be put into firing squad. Eventually, a group of soldiers loyal to Pres. Aguinaldo plotted to assassinate him as they deemed him a threat to Aguinaldo's leadership.

¹⁹ Sen. Benigno Aquino, Jr. (27 Nov. 1932-21 Aug. 1983), popularly known as Ninoy, was known as one of the foremost critics of the Marcos regime. He was assassinated while on his way back to the Philippines after years of exile in the US. Although a fact-finding commission was established by then Pres. Marcos to resolve Aquino's murder, many are unconvinced of its findings and verdict.

However, all of these pales in comparison to what could be dubbed as the most polarizing topic in Philippine contemporary history: Ferdinand E. Marcos Sr.'s Martial Law. Much can be said on how divisive this topic is, but that could be a subject for another paper. Instead, this chapter is dedicated to the discussion of my *own interpretation* of Martial Law as well as the idea of *Bagong Lipunan*, much used by the dictator to justify Martial Law.

The use of the word “interpretation” here is deliberate as I subscribe to the idea that a historian’s duty is to make interpretations²⁰ of the historical facts available to them. This academic tradition, if not a conviction, is comprehensively discussed by British historian Edward Hallett Carr (1990) in his book *What is History?*²¹ Although a bit dated, I believe that his reflections on the theory of history and the role of the historian continue to be relevant today.

There are three important takeaways from his work which guided my interpretation of Martial Law. The first is the idea that “history means interpretation” (p. 23). By this, he meant that the task of the historian is not solely to be a collector of facts but to arrive, as I already mentioned, to their own interpretation(s). This task includes the evaluation of the facts they come across with, so that they are not merely recording what happened before. The keyword here is “evaluation” which implies that historians are required to make their own judgments of the historical details they encounter.

The historian’s role of assessing historical details brings us to the second takeaway which is Carr’s notion of “imaginative understanding”. He explained that historians in “achieve[ing] some kind of contact with the mind of those about whom he is [they are] writing” (p. 24) allows them to better understand what they are interpreting. By using this type of understanding, historians do not necessarily mean to be sympathizing but rather figuratively putting themselves in their subject’s shoes. In a sense, this requires them to be empathetic but critical at the same time.

The last one involves the acknowledgment that historians are a product of their own milieu. Simply put, they cannot disregard that their evaluations and, eventually, their interpretations of history are

²⁰ I acknowledge the danger that this practice can eventually pose. In fact, such an excuse in furthering certain harmful narratives under the veil of “respectable opinion” has been ongoing. As such, I stand in my belief that while each opinion should be given due respect, facts and the truth should take precedence, and should always be the parameters for judgment.

²¹ This book was based on Carr’s George Macaulay Trevelyan Lectures at the University of Cambridge in January to March 1961.

informed by the values and beliefs of their own society. Carr carefully cautioned historians that they “belong not to the past but to the present” (p. 25) emphasizing that their role²² is “to master and understand it [the past] as the key to the understanding of the present” (p. 26).

Taken all together these are crucial in producing my own interpretation of Martial Law amidst the many conflicting historical details surrounding it. It is always important to keep in mind that despite being a single historical event, *the Martial Law* transformed into different iterations, or what could be *various interpretations of Martial Law* through time. These interpretations differ in terms of timeline, motivations, and even nomenclature each depending on the values, interests, and beliefs of the researcher, or the storyteller: the power elite, workers, middle class, women, revolutionaries, scholars, student activists, the “subalterns” (Spivak, 1988) and so on.

Instead of narrating details of each of these interpretations, what I intend to do in this chapter is to put together all pre-existing interpretations of Martial Law to provide us with different angles and hence come up with what I propose as a *kaleidoscopic*²³ *interpretation of Martial Law*. I utilized kaleidoscope here as a metaphor to how seemingly incongruent pieces when put together at a certain angle would produce a specific pattern or image. In this case, multiple and, at times, ostensibly conflicting narratives of Martial Law can still produce a comprehensible, if not a complete, picture of its context and history.

Moreso, the unfixed nature of any historical interpretation is similar to when a kaleidoscope produces a new pattern or image when one turns the tube. I firmly believe that no matter how we want to create a monolithic narrative of Martial Law, many interpretations will arise with each new understanding of its context. Light is also an important element in the usefulness of a kaleidoscope. For without light, nothing can be seen when we peek through a kaleidoscope. And considering the classical symbolism of light as a source of knowledge, it is only through the shedding of a light, that is the discovery of new pieces of evidence, that novel interpretations of history can be seen.

²² This role emphasized by Carr is similar to the notion of “sociological imagination” by American sociologist C. Wright Mills. In Mill’s eponymous book, *The Sociological Imagination* (1959), he described it as a quality of mind wherein social scientists have the capacity to find the connections between the past and the present, along with the relations between a person and the society.

²³ At some point, I would like to change it into a *mosaic interpretation*. However, I believe that the metaphor of change is best captured by the imagery of a kaleidoscope compared to a mosaic which is immobile and fixed. The images or patterns produced by a kaleidoscope easily changes at the turn of the tube while the mosaic is held together by cement or glue which in order to be changed has to undergo a more tedious procedure.

This *kaleidoscopic interpretation of Martial Law* is discussed in three subsections: the pre-martial law years, the socio-political and legal justifications for Martial Law, and the *Bagong Lipunan* (New Society) propaganda. Each of them provides a better understanding of the contexts surrounding this intricate chapter in Philippine contemporary history.

A brief detour to the past: The pre-Martial Law years (1960s-1971)

The standard textbook discussions of Marcos Sr.'s Martial Law always begin with its declaration in September 1972. While there is nothing wrong with them, starting the Martial Law narrative only with its declaration, simply provides an ahistorical account of the Philippines' most important *historical* moment. It is as if Martial Law came into being just because Marcos Sr. decided to do so.

Notwithstanding the justifications, or threats, presented by the dictator, there still remains the need to further explain how these situations occurred. I guess what I would like to say is that these perceived threats of the dictator did not emerge out of nowhere, nor were these simply an unmeditated struggle waged by the 'enemies of the state' (i.e. communists and the Muslim separatists) against the Philippine government. If anything, the social phenomenon that was Martial Law could be traced from deeply-rooted issues which, if we look closely, were culmination of various factors. In a way, Martial Law as a historical moment was a result of its national, macro-regional, and international contexts.

Although this research only covers the years 1972 until 1981, I believe it is crucial to briefly revisit some few years prior to the imposition of Martial Law. At this point, we have to return to the situation in the Philippines and the southeast Asian region during the late 1960s. This will help us better understand what could have led to the communist insurgency and Muslim separatist movements which, in turn, were used by Marcos Sr. to justify his authoritarian regime.

The 1960s was a decade of unrest not only in the Philippines but most especially around the world. All over the globe, the youth was in the forefront of many struggles. It was the time of ideological debates, student demonstrations, and Cold War and its proxy wars. No region was spared in the latter's ideological battle. In southeast Asia, for example, Vietnam had been a literal battleground for more than two decades (1954-1975).

Moreover, the US supported, if not instigated, numerous coups against socialist governments everywhere and helped establish dictatorial regimes that were supportive of their socio-economic agenda (e.g. Indonesia in 1965). The southeast Asian region was caught in a tug-of-war between the communist bloc (i.e. China and the Soviet Union) and the capitalist bloc (i.e. US) with the former making sure that it had its upper hand in the Asia Pacific.

As its former colony, the US did not have any difficulty in soliciting its much-needed support from the Philippines. For the longest time, the Philippines had proven itself to be a reliable US ally, not to mention as a steady supplier of raw materials and a captured market for US products. In fact, the Philippines assisted the efforts of the US during the Vietnam War by sending the Philippine Civic Action Group (PhilCAG) in 1966. The PhilCAG consisted of medical personnel and engineers, and were eventually complemented by artillery and infantry security battalions (Bernad, 1968). Owing to the agreements (e.g. Bell Trade Act, Laurel-Langley Agreement, Military Bases Agreement) made after the ‘granting’ of independence by the US in 1946, the Philippines remained beholden to its former colonial master.

Eventually, the US-Philippine relations was criticized domestically as a result of rising nationalist sentiments among politicians and academicians in the Philippines. Nationalist politicians²⁴ began questioning the presence of US military bases in the country as well as the sending of the PhilCAG to Vietnam while also pushing forward for more protectionist economic policies. Meanwhile, in the academia, scholars such as Teodoro Agoncillo and Renato Constantino started rewriting Philippine history through nationalist lens. Many nationalist mass organizations had also emerged during this time such as the Movement for the Advancement of Nationalism (MAN), *Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan* (Democratic Association of the Youth), and *Kabataang Makabayan* (Nationalist Youth) among others.

At the same time when communist thought began spreading elsewhere in the world, the Philippines witnessed its communist resurgence with the establishment of a *new* Communist Party of the Philippines²⁵ (CPP) and its armed wing, *Bagong Hukbong Bayan* (New People’s Army) in 1968 and 1969,

²⁴ Notable nationalist politicians at that time were Lorenzo ‘Ka Tanny’ Tañada (1898-1992), Jose W. Diokno (1922-1987) and Jovito Salonga (1920-2016) who were critics of Marcos Sr.’s Martial Law.

²⁵ The CPP was a consequence of the so-called “First Great Rectification”, a criticism to the former *Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas* (PKP) formed in 1930. Jose Maria ‘Joma’ Sison (1939-2022) was the founding chairman of the CPP.

respectively. Guided by Marxism-Leninism-Maoism (MLM), the CPP had always been critical of what it deemed as the social ills of Philippine society: US imperialism, feudalism, and bureaucrat-capitalism. Their social critique was best encapsulated in their discourse on “US-Marcos regime” as the enemy of the Filipino masses. A people’s (armed) revolution was, and until today²⁶, their proposed solution to these problems.

Meanwhile, in the south of the Philippines, in the islands of Mindanao and Sulu, there was a growing unrest among the Filipino Muslims due to decades of neglect by the central government in Manila. Their discontent was made more urgent by two bloody events: the Jabidah Massacre²⁷ in 1968, when Moro army recruits were killed by members of the Philippine Armed Forces; and the Manili massacre in 1971 when 70 Filipino Muslims were murdered by the Philippine Constabulary in a mosque in Manili, Carmen, North Cotabato. This led to the creation of notable groups which advocated for secession such as Mindanao Independence Movement, and the more militant Moro National Liberation Front by Nur Misuari.

This was the domestic and international situation when Ferdinand E. Marcos Sr. won the presidency for a second term in 1969. Back then, the 1935 Philippine Constitution allowed a president to serve a maximum of two consecutive terms with four years each term. Just like his predecessors, Marcos Sr. also ran for a second term. But unlike them, he won in his re-election bid, making him the only Philippine president to win two consecutive terms.²⁸

Although marked with large-scale election fraud (de Quiros, 1997; Morallo, 2017), if we are to believe Marcos Sr.’s own words, his ‘overwhelming mandate’ was brought by the ‘achievements’ during his previous term. As such, he projected in his second inaugural address (1969) that:

“The next few years will lay the basis for a reformation—a revolutionary reformation of our international and domestic policies—of our political, social, legal and economic systems”

²⁶ The CPP-NPA-NDF is considered one of the world’s longest running communist ‘insurgency’, if not the world’s longest.

²⁷ A cover-up of a military operation to destabilize Sabah, then a disputed territory between the Philippines and Malaysia. Until today, there is no clear verdict on the matter. See Ortigas (2013) as well as Gloria and Vitug (2018) in the references for more details.

²⁸ So far, he would be the only one to be considered as such especially that in the 1986 Constitution which replaced the 1973 as well as 1935 Constitutions, a president can only serve for a six-year term and cannot be reelected.

But in only less than a month after his inauguration in 30 December 1969, his claim to confidence was put to the test. In 26 January 1970, while Marcos Sr. was giving his fifth State of the Nation Address (SONA) in the Legislative Building (now National Museum of the Philippines-Fine Arts) in Manila, groups of protesters were outside demanding for a non-partisan constitutional convention²⁹.

While the First Couple was on their way out of the building, these groups of protesters greeted them with insults, pebbles and a cardboard coffin to symbolize “the death of democracy” (Lacaba, 1982) in the previous elections. Ensuring the safety of the First Couple, security personnel quickly took them to their vehicle and closed the doors of the building to prevent the protesters from storming inside. A riot between the police and the protesters then ensued with the former ending up violently dispersing the latter.

Days later, the Battle of Mendiola happened near Malacañang Palace, the presidential residence, on 30 January 1970. It is considered one of the most violent events in Philippine history after World War II. Other protests and civil unrest would go on until March 1970 later to be collectively remembered as the First Quarter Storm (FQS).

The FQS is considered by many as the prelude to Marcos Sr.’s imposition of Martial Law. It was largely led by students and participated by other sectors such as laborers, farmers and the urban poor. This historical moment is well documented by Jose ‘Pete’ Lacaba in a series of articles which was later on compiled in the book *Days of Disquiet, Nights of Rage: The First Quarter Storm & Related Events* (1982).

As issues of corruption and the socio-economic conditions of the country worsened, more and more Filipinos became disillusioned with the Marcos administration. This paved the way for the opposing Liberal Party (LP) led by Sen. Benigno ‘Ninoy’ Aquino, considered the top contender in the upcoming 1973 presidential elections, to garner more support. In fact, the LP was able to secure five seats in the Senate during the 1971 midterm elections especially after the Plaza Miranda bombing³⁰ incident on 21 August 1971.

²⁹ At that time, plans were already in the way to amend the 1935 Constitution. But Marcos’ critics feared that the president would use that to further entrench himself in power.

³⁰ Yet another unresolved issue in Philippine contemporary history. Until now, there are competing attributions to this violent event which resulted to nine deaths and hundreds of injured during the Liberal Party’s election campaign rally. One camp accuses the dictator as the mastermind, while another camp insists that it was planned by Ninoy Aquino and the

This incident along with other ‘terroristic acts’³¹ attributed by the government to the communists would continue to shock Manila and its neighboring cities. In response to these, Marcos Sr. called on the armed forces to deploy multiple task forces in various ‘communist-infested’ areas in the country, and when they were not enough, he decided to suspend the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus on 21 August 1971 until 11 January 1972. Finally, when both of these measures were deemed useless by Marcos Sr., he used what was rumored and feared by his critics—the imposition of Martial Law.

“Do you remember, 21st night of September?”³² ...or was it the 23rd?

On the night of 23 September 1972³³, a calm yet serious Ferdinand E. Marcos Sr. appeared on television to give an important announcement to the public (Image 2). With the government taking control of all media outlets, there were nothing else to watch or to listen to on the radio except the president. For a few minutes, President Marcos announced³⁴ that he put the entire Philippines under Martial Law and read the key points of the antedated Proclamation No. 1081, the document that gave birth to his authoritarian rule, which he signed two days before his official public announcement.



Image 2. Marcos Sr. as he was discussing the declaration of a nationwide Martial Law on television. *Source:* World Socialist Website, 2023

communists. For a more detailed discussion, see the following in the references: Jones (1989), Scalice (2017), and Ocampo (2022a; 2022b).

³¹ See Proclamation No. 1081 s. 1972 for a detailed list of these atrocities.

³² Taken from the song “September” by Earth, Wind & Fire (1978) which, in any way, is not related to Marcos’ Martial Law. The song’s first line coincides with the supposed starting date of Martial Law, six years prior to the release of the song.

³³ Although the declaration of Martial Law is traditionally remembered every September 21, there were recent calls to officially recognize September 23 as its proper starting date. See articles by Pasion (2023) and Quezon (2018) for more details.

³⁴ The full transcript of his announcement can be accessed here: <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/1972/09/23/radio-tv-address-of-president-marcos/> while here is a link to a recording: <https://archive.org/details/declaration-of-martial-law-in-the-philippines-1972>

What happened next was unprecedented: a wave of arrests of critics, the opposition, and all those suspected of plotting the downfall of the government; all outbound flights and travel were cancelled; a curfew was imposed; the Congress was closed and literally padlocked; and the government controlled key industries and the media.

To better understand the inner workings of the dictator's justification of martial rule, it is best to dissect his Proclamation No. 1081³⁵ into two main components. First, the socio-political justifications he used to give a sense of urgency to his declaration. Second and most important, his legal basis in pursuing his specific course of action.

As described in the earlier section, the period before Martial Law was chaotic. The Philippine government was under attack by the newly reestablished communist party and the Moro separatists. Although, many believed that these uprisings could be managed without the imposition of Martial Law, Marcos Sr. was still capable in convincing the public that there was no other alternative in addressing these "equally serious disorders".

Although portrayed with the same intensity, Marcos Sr., in his proclamation, dedicated a much larger space in the discussion of the communist problem. As the opening statement of Proclamation No. 1081 stated:

“WHEREAS, on the basis of carefully evaluated and verified information, it is definitely established that lawless elements who are moved by a common or similar ideological conviction, design, strategy and goal and enjoying the active moral and material support of a foreign power and being guided and directed by intensely devoted, well trained, determined and ruthless groups of men and seeking refuge under the protection of our constitutional liberties to promote and attain their ends, have entered into a conspiracy and have in fact joined and banded their resources and forces together for the prime purpose of, and in fact they have been and are actually staging, undertaking and waging an armed insurrection and rebellion against the Government of the Republic of the Philippines in order to forcibly seize political and state

³⁵ For a full copy of this proclamation, see this link: <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/1972/09/21/proclamation-no-1081/>

power in this country, overthrow the duly constituted government, and supplant our existing political, social, economic and legal order with an entirely new one whose form of government, whose system of laws, whose conception of God and religion, whose notion of individual rights and family relations, and whose political, social, economic, legal and moral precepts are based on the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist teachings and beliefs”

This wordy opening salvo was supported by more explanations so much so that more than half of the entire document was simply dedicated to the communist insurgency. He revealed, based on alleged military intelligence, that the CPP-NPA already established numerous bailiwicks that were organized down to the *barrio*³⁶ level in many areas of Luzon and Visayas, and that they were ready to take over the government through the Regional Program of Action 1972.

This gave an impression on how alarming the situation was when, in fact, critics would argue that the armed forces still outnumbered the armed revolutionaries (Human Rights Violations Victims’ Memorial Commission, 2022). Although this might be true, the overdramatic portrayal of the dangers posed by the CPP-NPA was too captivating not to be easily dismissed by the public.

Meanwhile, to give a semblance of a national chaos which would further buttress his declaration of a nationwide martial rule, he painted an unfavorable situation of Mindanao, particularly Sulu and other regions that are predominantly Muslim. In the latter part of the proclamation, he mentioned that the conflict between private armies called Christian ‘Ilagas’ and the Muslim ‘Barracudas’ as well as government troops had escalated to disastrous levels. Consequently, he claimed that this strengthened the call for secession among Filipino Muslims in Mindanao (The New York Times, 1972; Magdalena, 1977; Noble, 1981).

Now that the imagination of a nation under threat was complete, Marcos Sr. emphasized the legal mechanisms at his disposal. But first he highlighted how he already utilized all the available measures to solve these problems but to his assessment had no significant results. With this, he referred to the

³⁶ A *barrio* is the smallest administrative unit in the Philippines which can be likened to a village. During Martial Law, Marcos Sr. would rename them as *barangay* in reference to the precolonial boats called *balangay* which were considered as the basis of early precolonial Filipino communities.

(1) ordering of the military to concentrate most of its efforts in combatting these problems by creating task forces; and when this was not enough, (2) the suspension of the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus from 21 August 1971 until 11 January 1972.

Again, going back to the proclamation, Marcos Sr. framed martial law as his only remaining recourse against forces that were threatening the stability of the republic. As he explained, “the rebellion and armed action undertaken by these lawless elements of the communist and other armed aggrupations (sic) 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” (Proclamation No. 1081, s. 1972). In other words, he was left with no choice but to impose martial rule to swiftly manage, if not totally solve, the socio-political crises he just described.

This is where his legal justification for Martial Law comes into play. To be fair, this was a relatively easy feat especially when we look into the primary legal basis utilized by the dictator—the 1935 Philippine Constitution. Under Article VII, Sec. 11 paragraph (2) of the said constitution, the chief executive as commander-in-chief of all armed forces of the Philippines whenever necessary, may:

“call out such armed forces to prevent or suppress lawless violence, invasion, insurrection, or rebellion, or imminent danger thereof, when the public safety requires it, he may suspend the privileges of the writ of habeas corpus, or **place the Philippines or any part thereof under martial law**” (emphasis mine)

Despite being challenged in the Philippine Supreme Court in many occasions, the presence of magistrates earlier handpicked by the dictator gave him an unfair advantage in making his regime legally (and constitutionally) acceptable (Anastacio, 2022). In addition, the closing of the Philippine Congress also worked to his advantage as this allowed him to issue decrees without the need for congressional approval.

As if these were not enough, he bribed his way through the formation of a constitutional convention which was tasked to replace then prevailing 1935 Constitution. To ratify the new constitution, later to

be known as the 1973 Constitution, citizen assemblies were held. While these assemblies appeared to be promising in theory, they were done through coercion and intimidation by the military.

As one anecdote recounts, voters were fooled into raising their hands by asking who among them wanted a sack of rice. When many raised their hands, they were photographed and this was used to show an ‘overwhelming’ support for the new constitution. Those who did not raise their hands were then threatened by the military. These citizen assemblies would continue in several occasions as a way for Marcos Sr. to prove to his critics that his mandate was sanctioned by the people.

With the newly ratified constitution, Marcos Sr. effectively consolidated for himself the powers vested in all three branches of the Philippine government (i.e. executive, legislative and judiciary). Not only that, he was able to entrench himself in power for a very long time. From then on, all that Marcos Sr. needed to do was to continuously embellish his “legal fiction” (Quezon, 2018) to become a full-fledged authoritarian.

Legitimizing authoritarianism through law and political ‘scholarship’

A review of existing literature would show that Philippine Martial Law bears many names. This includes *kudeta* (Filipinized term for coup d’état), “conjugal dictatorship” (Mijares, 1978), and “crony capitalism” (Manapat, 2020). Each of these terminologies reflect a certain perspective and, more or less, has its own version of the Martial Law narrative.

Among these, the term *kudeta* have stuck in the collective memory of Filipinos. This can be associated to Sen. Arturo Tolentino’s remark that the declaration of Martial Law was a coup (Quezon, 2018). Furthermore, many scholars would refer to it as a coup, specifically a self-coup where a person in power extends their rule often through extralegal means. This makes sense given that Marcos’ presidential term must have ended in 1973 and since there were no other legal recourse to stretch his role as president many are convinced that the declaration of Martial Law was just an excuse for him to stay in power.

On the other hand, “conjugal dictatorship” was popularized by Primitivo Mijares, a former Marcos communications manager, in his eponymous book published in 1978. He described Marcos’ rule not

only as a dictatorship by Marcos Sr. himself but a joint one together with his wife Imelda Romualdez Marcos. This was marked by the political roles conducted by the first lady, a post which was traditionally considered largely ceremonial. Imelda R. Marcos' influential position during Martial Law is discussed further in the subsequent chapter.

The term “crony capitalism”, on the one hand, refers mainly to the socio-economic conditions of that time. Attributed to Time Magazine editor George Taber, Safire (1998) claims that the first time Marcos' regime was tagged as such was in an article written by John DeMott in 1981. But it was not until a decade later when the most detailed discussion on the subject was done by Ricardo Manapat (1991).

Initially written as an illicitly-published pamphlet in 1979 nicknamed The Octopus, it was turned into a book with the title *Some are Smarter than Others: The History of Marcos' Crony Capitalism* in 1991. So far, this remains one of, if not, the standard books in Marcos's crony economic policies where it comprehensively historicized how Marcos Sr. organized a systemic robbery of the state coffers with the connivance of his close friends and relatives. This economic system is often put in contrast with the rule of technocrats which was also observed during Marcos Sr.'s regime.

But for Marcos Sr., these aforementioned nomenclatures did not fit well with his overall “legal fiction” (Quezon, 2018) of Martial Law. If anything, these names tarnished the supposedly good image of the authoritarian regime. In order to become acceptable at home and abroad, not to mention the realities of his regime, he needed a name that would appear benevolent yet strict; a regime characterized by legal rationality complemented by the iron fists of the law. And this was best encapsulated in his made-up term “constitutional authoritarianism”.

Constitutional authoritarianism is described as a form of rule wherein an individual holds and exercises consolidated powers in times of emergency, but with the legal blessing of the constitution or any other set of decrees. In the case of Marcos Sr.'s Martial Law, Marcos Sr. with the powers vested by the Constitution could exercise both executive and legislative powers as a response to the “threats” faced by the republic (Hernandez, 1985).

For the next years, he would remain a constitutional authoritarian despite the reinstatement of the Philippine Congress through *Batasang Pambansa* (National Assembly) in 1978. This time he invoked the blessing of the newly ratified (1973) constitution and the introduction of constitutional amendments, notably Amendment No. 6, which reads:

“Whenever in the judgment of the President (Prime Minister), there exists a grave emergency or a threat or imminence thereof, or whenever the *interim* Batasang Pambansa or the regular National Assembly fails or is unable to act adequately on any matter for any reason that in his judgment requires immediate action, he may, in order to meet the exigency, issue the necessary decrees, orders, or letters of instructions, which shall form part of the law of the land” (Philippine Constitution of 1973, Amendment No. 6, 1976)

Marcos Sr.’s manipulation of the Philippine legal system had now reached its completion. By then, no one could ever challenge him. He could do whatever he pleased, and whenever someone would question him, he would either issue from any of his many strings of decrees (i.e. presidential decrees, general orders, letters of instruction) or ultimately silence them through the military.

Not content with tampering the law, he would further flaunt his *intellectualism* by publishing numerous materials about his supposed theory of “democratic revolution from the center” and other political musings³⁷. The dictator proclaimed it as the theoretical foundation of his Martial Law. In his alleged book *The Democratic Revolution in the Philippines* (1974), Marcos Sr. described how revolutions could be a function of any democratic government “to make itself the faithful instrument of the people’s revolutionary aspirations” (p. 70).

The use of ‘revolution’ as a rhetorical device by Marcos Sr. was not coincidental with the rising revolutionary sentiments of the First Quarter Storm generation of Filipino youth (McCallus, 1989). By doing so, Marcos Sr. was sanitizing and repurposing (or appropriating) it in an attempt to convince people that he was aware of the social problems of Philippine society, and that his solution, that is, his

³⁷ Miguel Paolo P. Reyes (2018) in his article *Producing Ferdinand E. Marcos, Scholarly Author* contends that none of these books were written by the dictator but were either plagiarized or “padded with lengthy appendices” (p. 173).

form of revolution, was more viable, non-violent, and moral compared to the ‘bloody Jacobin revolution’ of the communists. To make it more appealing, he (or his ghost writers) tapped on the nationalist views of that time by tracing the roots of his democratic revolution from the ‘unfinished revolution of 1896’³⁸.

Moreover, this democratic revolution being ‘from the center’ also meant that it was not only different from the leftist type of politics (i.e. the communists) but also from those belonging from the right part of the political spectrum, the oligarchs. Identifying the left and the right as ‘threats’ to the republic as well as the people it represented, Marcos Sr. argued that it was only fitting that the government, being at the center, initiate this democratic revolution by implementing Martial Law as the antidote to the social ills of Philippine society. In the end, the dictator explained that the democratic revolution through the imposition of Martial Law was only a tool which would culminate in the establishment of his ultimate goal—the *Bagong Lipunan* or New Society.

What’s new with the New Society?

In 1932, English writer Aldous Huxley published *Brave New World*, a novel set in the distant future (year 2450) when a World State governs through a ‘scientific dictatorship’ and humans are genetically engineered to produce a stratified population of workers. Though not closely related to Ferdinand E. Marcos’ dictatorship, what I would like to illustrate here is the unimaginative use of the qualifier ‘new’ in any vision of the future.

The idea of rebirth or ‘dawn of a new age’ has always been part of any society’s historical narrative. In fact, no single person, or groups of people, can lay claim on the ‘original’ use of this metaphor, may

³⁸ This refers to the Philippine Revolution against Spain in 1896 from which Marcos Sr. would repeatedly invoke national heroes such as Jose P. Rizal, Gen. Antonio Luna and Apolinario Mabini as the source of his inspiration. Two months after the Martial Law declaration, Marcos Sr. launched *Mabuhay ang Pilipino* (Long Live the Filipino) Movement during which he again referred to the close affinities of the Martial Law with the 1896 Philippine revolution as well as other national liberation movements (i.e. Liberation from the Japanese during World War 2). In a speech during the inauguration, he referred to them in this manner: “[T]oday, in our time, a new cry summons into convocation all the strength of our resources—for the building of a new society. Today several scores removed from **the historic revolution launched by Bonifacio, and several decades from the days of Bataan, Corregidor and the underground**, we are asked to make a new covenant with another, not a covenant of sweat and honest toil. It was such a summons that brought us to that fateful decision two months ago that began the transformation of the face and soul of the nation” (Marcos, 1972a; emphasis mine).

they be a democrat, a despot, a philosopher, or a person of science. Our human obsession for anything ‘new’ has reached to such an extent that it is rendered not new anymore.

This can be gleaned from Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal, John F. Kennedy’s New Frontier, Lyndon B. Johnson’s Great Society, Suharto’s *Orde Baru* (New Order) and Antonio de Oliveira Salazar’s *Estado Novo* (New State). Even today, Pres. Bongbong Marcos is using the same rhetoric as his deposed father did when he introduced *Bagong Pilipinas* (New Philippines) as his administration’s slogan (Aurelio & Corrales, 2023; Memorandum Circular No. 24, 2023).

Whether these past iterations of new societies influenced Marcos Sr.’s *Bagong Lipunan* is yet to be studied. But right now, what is important is how the dictator would take pride in the uniqueness of his Martial Law implementation, and consequently his vision of the New Society. This is evident in the preface of *The Democratic Revolution in the Philippines* (1974), published two years after the declaration of Martial Law, where he wrote “I endeavor to explain what I believe is the novel idea of a new society under a ‘crisis government’. Actually this is a reform government under martial law” (p. 2). This would continue in the succeeding years, especially during the State of the Nation Address, until the lifting of Martial Law in 1981.

But what was it about the *old* society which made Marcos Sr. so passionate in bringing in the new society? In other words, what was wrong with the Philippine society at that time? In Marcos Sr.’s assessment, at least based on his alleged political writings, he described the Philippine society as an oligarchic society. By this he meant, “that the economic gap between the rich and the poor provides the wealthy few the opportunity of exercising undue influence on the political authority” (Marcos, 1974, p. 90).

Despite this observation, he was careful enough to mention that not all oligarchs were bad as he clarified that by oligarch “I refer to the few who would promote their selfish interests through indirect or irresponsible exercise of public and private power” (Marcos, 1974, p. 90). For him, this was the root cause of all other social problems of their times: the communist insurgency, and somehow, the Muslim secessionism. He would go on in historicizing this and traced its origin to the country’s colonial past, but cautioned that “[I]he fact that we were colonized can no longer excuse us. This society that we live in is of our own making” (Marcos, 1974, p. 90).

In all fairness, his critique of the oligarchic nature of Philippine society of his time had its merits. If we are to review the social analysis offered by the CPP at the same time, they interestingly shared the same diagnosis of the country's problem. Knowing this fully well, the dictator would conveniently reiterate that while the communists were correct their solution, however, was undemocratic hence, immoral. And that as the "duly elected president of the republic" he was in a better position to speak on behalf of the people, particularly in proffering the solution for these crises, which was, needless to say, the Martial Law³⁹.

But Martial Law was only considered an antidote by the dictator for the country's socio-economic and political backwardness; it was only a means to an end. He repeatedly explained that imposing military rule would be the swiftest way to usher in the country to a rebirth, a rediscovery of its lost, if not untapped, potentials. And for him, this was best exemplified by the *Bagong Lipunan*, the type of society he deemed the Filipinos deserved and should strive for. Again, referring to *The Democratic Revolution in the Philippines* (1974), he wrote that the *Bagong Lipunan* is a society where "equality of opportunity is not a fraud but a fact" and "a few should not be born 'with everything' while the many start (sic) life with nothing" (p. 105).

In a way, it could be said that the *Bagong Lipunan* was the dictatorial regime's vision of a modern Philippines, of a *new society* totally different from the old, oligarchic one. In his State of the Nation Address a year after declaring Martial Law, he described how the country was slowly moving towards progress and modernization, emphasizing how "[M]any of the advances we can list down are but the logical consequences of **the decisive rapture from an old and stricken society. As soon as the moral and political decision was made, the rebirth followed**" (Marcos, 1973; emphasis mine). In his subsequent speeches and even in the decrees he issued, he would incessantly use this modernist rhetoric of old versus new, progress versus backwardness, from which he based his articulations of a modernized⁴⁰ country characterized as "*marangya, matiwasa'y at makatarungan*" (Marcos, 1972b; translation: grandiose, calm, just).

³⁹ In a public address one month after the declaration of Martial Law, Marcos Sr. again mentioned the legality and morality behind his authoritarian rule. For him, "[I]t is one of the basic and significant developments in our country during the emergency, that we have instituted a rule by martial law that is **humane** and **constitutional**. It is martial law which, while revolutionary, is also **legal**, which radical in the pursuit of change, is **non-violent**." (Marcos, 1972b; emphasis mine).

⁴⁰ Although it is interesting to discuss further on a modernist reading of Marcos Sr.'s propaganda of *Bagong Lipunan*, I decided to pursue it for another time since it would consume a lot of time and space in this manuscript. In the meantime,

Now how did the authoritarian regime of Marcos Sr. intend to usher the Philippines towards the modern *New Society*? Since he identified the oligarchy as the source of all social problems, then the obvious solution was the dismantling of institutions that supported it and replacing them with reformed ones. In this case, his government must do the following: (1) create a new political structure; (2) stimulate economic growth; (3) improve internal security; and (4) explore new directions in foreign policy (Central Intelligence Agency, 1974).

Exactly how Marcos Sr. and his economic planners envisioned these is best seen in the national development plans⁴¹ they produced. Looking at the Five-year Philippine Development Plan for 1978-1982 prepared by the newly constituted National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), Marcos Sr. wrote “In the New Society, development does not only imply economic advance[ment]. It also means the improvement in the well-being of the broad masses of our people”. Further adding that “[I]t means getting down and reaching the poorest segments of our population: the urban and rural poor, the unemployed, the underemployed, the homeless dweller, the out-of-school youth, the landless worker, the *sacada*⁴², and the sustenance fisherman”.

To complement these development plans, Marcos Sr., now having the sole legislative power, started issuing decrees to kickstart his dream of a *Bagong Lipunan*. These covered various aspects such as government reorganization, the enforcement of security measures by the military as well as the proclamation of the entire Philippines as a land reform area. But if there is anything more groundbreaking or totally new in the New Society, it was the regime’s adoption of regional development as its new framework.

With this new approach, the Marcos administration was sending a message not only to the Filipinos but also to the international community that it was serious in reforming the Philippine society. It was a clear break from the previous administrations’ highly centralized socio-economic planning.

I would like to direct my readers to Agnes Heller’s article *The Three Logics of Modernity and the Double Bind of the Modern Imagination* (2005) which informed my appreciation of the *Bagong Lipunan* as a modernist project of the dictator.

⁴¹ For this research, I only consulted three development plans of the Marcos administration: (1) Five-Year Development Program for the Philippines, Fiscal Years 1970-74; (2) Five-Year Philippine Development Plan, 1978-1982 (including the Ten-Year Development Plan, 1978-87); and (3) Five-Year Development Plan (updated for 1981 and 1982). Of these three, the latter two are crucial in understanding Marcos Sr.’s vision of *Bagong Lipunan* given the time they were produced.

⁴² In the Philippines, this refers to migrant agricultural workers in rural areas.

Furthermore, it was the dictatorship's attempt to close the wide socio-economic gap observed in the old oligarchic society and to make the national government more accessible to the people.

Nevertheless, this regional framework was not merely an abstract idea, it was implemented by reconfiguring a physical space, that is the Philippine territory. Following Henri Lefebvre's Theory of Production of Space, it is more useful to study the implications of Marcos Sr.'s *Bagong Lipunan* by referring to "a space which it refers" (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 44). In other words, understanding the New Society not simply as a propaganda tool (or an ideology) advanced by the dictator and his supporters but also as a (social) space, or a "conceived space" in Lefebvrian jargon, is a helpful exercise particularly in the subsequent parts of this thesis. For Lefebvre, a conceived space refers to the spatial knowledge, or a notion of space, emanating from ruling powers (Wise, 2019; Biagi, 2020).

As such, with the adoption of the regional development framework, the dictator and his economic managers through Presidential Decree No.1, or the Integrated Reorganization Plan, reorganized the entire country based on a *conceived space* of eleven administrative regions. These regions were used to devolve what was then an over-centralized socio-economic development planning.

Further extending Lefebvre's notion of conceived space, the regionalization of the Philippines can also be read as the dictatorial regime's "geographical imagination" (Gregory, 1993). This concept refers to cartographic acts resulting to visual representations that are based from "particular forms of spatial organization such as colonialism, or under the rubric of metanarratives such as modernism or postmodernism" (...). In this regard, it can be said that the reorganization of the entire Philippines under the notion of a modern *New Society* was the Marcos Sr. regime's way of geographically imagining the country. Each of these regions would eventually be known not only as centers of specific industries but also by its designated numerical name, except for one—the Metropolitan Manila, the Philippines' national capital region and prime metropolis.

Chapter 3

Transport planning as visions of mobility for the ‘City of Man’

“...these memories are somehow accretions, accumulated layers of various people and events that interacted or occurred on the physical thoroughfares. Each manifested Road is the aggregate of all those things, with an evolving system of variously originated personality traits held together by a dominant persona that is most associated with the street.”

-Dean Francis Alfar⁴³, *A Field Guide to the Roads of Manila and other stories* (2015)

“Metro Manila is traumatic in two senses: it is a traumatic experience, and it is the product of the historical trauma of Martial Law.”

-Neferti X. M. Tadiar⁴⁴, *Things fall away: Philippine historical experience and the makings of globalization* (2009)

In this chapter, I will be providing a brief historical context on how Metropolitan Manila, the Philippines’ national capital region came to be as a result of the regional development framework of the Marcos Sr. regime. As Filipino critical scholar Neferti Tadiar (2009) mentioned in the quotation above, the Metro Manila region is a product of Martial Law but in order to better understand what she meant it is crucial to return to how the Marcos regime, particularly the First Lady made the region their own.

As we will see later on in the subsections, Mrs. Imelda Marcos would serve as the inaugural governor of Metro Manila and eventually as Human Settlements Minister. In both posts, she would play a pivotal role in crafting policies that would reshape not only the institutions but also the physical layout of the region. Reimagining the region as the ‘City of Man’, her governance employed a humanistic urban development approach wherein the eleven basic needs should be met.

One of these basic needs is mobility. Given this, I have examined how the Marcos Sr. regime dealt with mobility particularly transportation. To do this, I have examined three transport studies commissioned by the Philippine government to foreign planning firms beginning in 1973. The review of these commissioned studies is crucial to better appreciate what informed the Marcos Sr. regime in identifying the transport issues of Metro Manila and in resolving them.

⁴³ Filipino writer, playwright and writer of speculative fiction

⁴⁴ Filipina critical scholar and a professor of women’s, gender and sexuality studies in Barnard College in New York.

The materials I examined here were based on archival research done in two university libraries and a research institution in Metro Manila, Philippines. The libraries I visited were the Rizal Library of the Ateneo de Manila University, and the National Center for Transportation Studies (NCTS) of the University of the Philippines Diliman. From there, I was able to access pertinent documents such as special journals and books about the Marcos Sr. administration. From the latter, I accessed copies of the transport studies I have reviewed in this chapter.

Meanwhile, I also visited the Third World Studies Center (TWSC) of the University of the Philippines Diliman (UPD). It is a research institution attached to the College of Social Sciences and Philosophy of UPD that owns a large collection of materials related to the Marcos Sr. dictatorship. It is from there where I was able to access documents and publications related to the New Society and the City of Man. I visited all of these institutions from the latter part of April until the early weeks of May, 2024.

The Metropolitan Manila during Martial Law

On 27 and 28 February 1975, a national referendum was held to dispel criticisms against the legitimacy of President Marcos Sr.'s martial law government and to solicit approval for its proposed administrative reforms (Noble, 1976). For residents of the Greater Manila Area (GMA), they were specifically asked if they were in favor of the president to restructure their local governments into “an integrated system like a Manager or Commission form” (United States Congress, 1975, 416).

Out of the more than 3 million votes cast, the Philippine Commission on Elections declared that almost 2 million voters from the GMA expressed approval of an integrated government system (United States Congress, 1975). Given this support, nine months after the referendum, Pres. Marcos Sr. signed Presidential Decree no. 824 in 7 November 1975 establishing the Metropolitan Manila region.

The region was the same composition as the GMA in the earlier referendum. It consisted of Manila, Quezon City, Pasay City, and Caloocan City with the municipalities carved out from the neighboring provinces of Rizal and Bulacan. These municipalities are Makati, Mandaluyong, San Juan, Las Piñas, Malabon, Navotas, Pasig, Pateros, Parañaque, Marikina, Muntinlupa, Taguig and Valenzuela (Image 3).

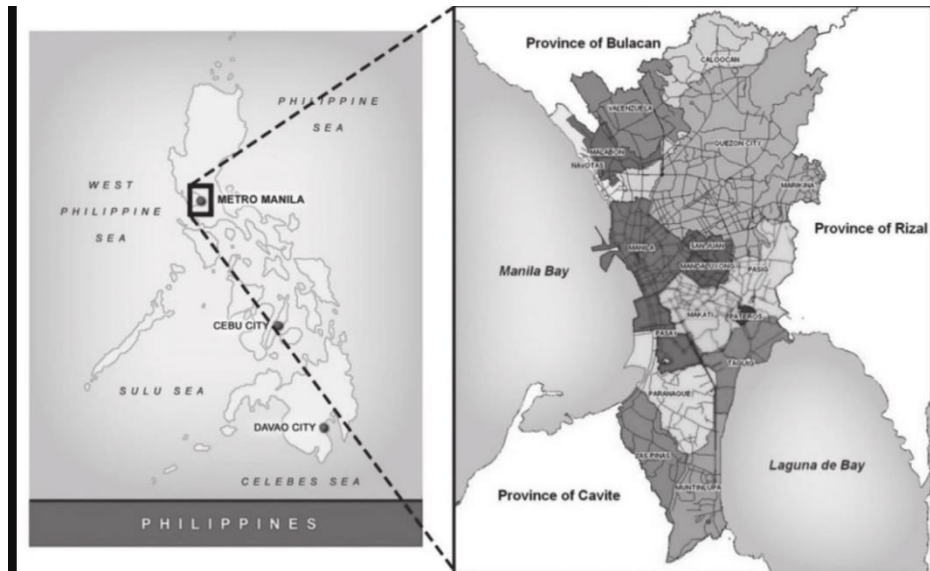


Image 3. Metropolitan Manila and its location in the Philippines. *Source:* Tomeldan, Antonio, Arcenas, et al. (2014)

Aside from the referendum and the urgent need to resolve the common issues of the metropolitan area, the creation of the new region was justified by President Marcos Sr. as “part of reform measures under Martial Law” towards the “eradication of social and economic ills that fan the flames of discontent and rebellion” (Presidential Decree no. 824, 1975).

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Manila and its surrounding areas experienced numerous terroristic acts such as bombing attributed by the government to the communists in connivance with the oligarchs. In a way, the creation of a single authority managing the Greater Manila Area, now the Metropolitan Manila, allowed Marcos Sr. to effectively control and consolidate power over the country’s prime metropolitan region (Ruland, 1985).

Moreover, as Manuel Caoili (1985) observed, the reforms in Metropolitan Manila was part of a larger national economic planning instituted by the Marcos Sr. regime to achieve its dream of a New Society. He explained that choosing Metro Manila to institute politico-economic reforms was a way for Marcos Sr. and his technocrats to reinforce the important role of Manila as the country’s political, economic, and cultural center. By reorganizing the administration of Manila and its surrounding areas, it ensured the efficient delivery of socio-economic services not only for its residents but also for would-be economic, preferably foreign, investors.

The Metropolitan Manila Commission (MMC) was established to manage the newly constituted region. It was composed of a governor, a vice governor and three commissioners for planning, finance and operations who were all to be appointed by the president. Due to popular demand⁴⁵, President Marcos Sr. appointed the First Lady Imelda R. Marcos as the inaugural governor of Metropolitan Manila (Butterfield, 1976).

The appointment of Mrs. Marcos as governor was received ambiguously by Marcos Sr.'s supporters and the opposition. This extension of the traditional role of the first ladyship⁴⁶ was celebrated on the one hand, and was a cause for concern, on the other (Butterfield, 1976). Being the president's wife, Gov. Imelda R. Marcos enjoyed the privileges that came with her intersected positionality. As described by Caoili (1985), Governor Marcos' "prestige and political influence...has enabled her to function effectively...providing coordination between national departments, MMC operations and local government functions" (p. 11).

In her first four years as governor, Mrs. Marcos was assisted by her hand-picked Action Officers, who also held executive posts in other national government agencies, in lieu of the vacancies in the commissioner posts. Meanwhile, the local chief executives of the incorporated cities and municipalities were retained until 1976 who were then either reappointed or replaced by the president.

In theory, certain policies from the regional down to the local units should have been made through local consultative councils, that is, the *Sanggunian ng Kalakhang Maynila* (Metropolitan Manila Council) and *Sangguniang Bayan* (City/Municipal Council), respectively. With the suspension of elections until 1981, however, policy making only occurred at the regional level. At first it was almost exclusively in the hands of the governor up until the organization of a policy board composed of the vice governor and the commissioners in 1979.

⁴⁵ See page 24 of Caoili's (1985) article where he listed a few news clips indicating the popularity of the First Lady

⁴⁶ Prior to her appointment as Metro Manila governor, Mrs. Marcos also conducted state visits in behalf of the president with the capacity to perform diplomatic duties. This led some political observers to assume that she was being trained to potentially succeed her husband. Some even call her the 'de facto vice president' (Butterfield, 1976). For a more detailed discussion on this, see *The possibilities and limitations of First-Lady Diplomacy: Imelda Marcos and the Nixon Administration* by Dean J. Kotlowski (2015); *Imelda Marcos' Diplomacy: The transformation of the role of a First Lady* (Unpublished undergraduate research, Ateneo de Davao University, Philippines, 2016) by Kristine E. Corpuz, Yasmine B. Stones and Alexandra Cates Erika B. Suyoy; and *Stealing the Butterfly: The Imperial Constructions of Imelda Marcos, 1966-1990* (Unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Hawaii Manoa, 2018) by Eriza Ong Bareng.

Despite this somewhat participative approach in the MMC, the president had ultimate control over the administration of the newly constituted region. The MMC was not only directly reporting to the president but also any of their policies may be revoked or superseded as deemed appropriate by the president. This can be best seen with the issuance of Presidential Decree no. 1396 in 1978, two years after the creation of the MMC. The Marcos Sr. regime included the improvement of human settlements as part of the national socio-economic agenda to achieve the New Society. To accomplish this, the Department (later Ministry) of Human Settlements was established with the First Lady as its first chief.

This brought two issues to the fore. The first one was more political and involved the First Lady's appointment in yet another key government post. Many were alarmed including both the administration's critics who considered this as proof of the growing nepotism in the government, and allies who saw this a threat to the stability of Marcos Sr.'s inner circle of cronies and technocrats. They were also concerned of the large sums of money that would be put in the hands of Mrs. Marcos not only as governor but also now as Human Settlements minister.



Image 4. Imelda Romualdez Marcos
Source: 1981-1982 Fookien Times Philippines Yearbook,
page 37

Meanwhile, the second one concerned the administration of Metropolitan Manila. By virtue of PD 1396, Metropolitan Manila was designated as the National Capital Region—the New Society's region *par excellence*—placing its administration under the hands of the appointed Secretary for Human Settlements. This came with the regime's recognition of Metro Manila's importance in national

progress, and that it should be one of the major sites for human settlement planning and urban land reform. Hence, the region's urban development turned to be one of the administration's top priorities.

With Metro Manila's urban development now part of the regime's agenda for the achievement of the New Society, the appointment of Mrs. Marcos in the two key positions of governor and minister appeared justifiable. As years went on, the regime would continuously work on legitimizing the First Lady's political roles. As a result, Imelda R. Marcos (Image 4), wife of Ferdinand E. Marcos Sr. became one of the most powerful and influential personalities during the Philippine Martial Law era⁴⁷.

The First Lady's "City of Man"

If the Martial Law propaganda called *Bagong Lipunan* is attributed to Ferdinand E. Marcos Sr., a somewhat similar political project, or rather an off shoot of the vision for a new society, can be associated with the First Lady. As Human Settlements Minister and Metro Manila Governor, Mrs. Marcos envisioned that Metropolitan Manila would become the "City of Man," an ideal city in the Philippines' *Bagong Lipunan*, or new society.

To understand better what the "City of Man" was, it is imperative first, to look at how the Marcos Sr. regime described Metropolitan Manila, and second, to know the Metropolitan Manila Commission's role in making the region the "City of Man". There are two books published by the National Media Production Center (NMPC), a Philippine state-owned media company, that discussed these matters. These are *Manila: Toward the City of Man* and *Metropolitan Manila Towards the City of Man. Total Human Resource Development* published in 1976 and 1985, respectively.

Both publications recognized the strategic role of Metro Manila in the Philippines' overall development. They also described Metro Manila as increasingly urbanizing to the extent that it became a challenge and an opportunity. The 1976 publication, however, only briefly discussed in what ways urbanization posed a challenge in Metropolitan Manila. Instead, it gave a more detailed discussion on how to harness the potentials of an urbanizing metropolis.

⁴⁷ This was the primary reason why Marcos Sr.'s critics dubbed his regime as a 'conjugal dictatorship'.

Meanwhile, in the 1985 publication, it provided a brief historical basis of the problems faced by the region citing the lack of planning with the country's colonial past as the root cause. Accordingly, the protracted colonial history diminished the ability of the Filipinos to design their own environment based on their own needs, desires, and aspirations. As a result, the current layout of Metropolitan Manila became incongruent with the Filipino identity as it "seemed to mock the talent of the Filipinos to create" (p. 14). This led to the region's stagnation and decay. In other words, Metropolitan Manila was in a blight state in need of transformation.

Given this context, the Marcos Sr. regime, through its governor, proposed the vision of the "City of Man". In the foreword of the 1976 NMPC publication, Governor Marcos wrote that Metropolitan Manila is the City of Man because "it exists for one primary purpose: the enhancement of the quality of life of every human being" (p. 3). As such, the vision for Metro Manila was anchored on a humanistic ideology best encapsulated in the words of Governor Marcos: "To be an authentic Manilan is to be a human being" (p. 3).

Concretely, this humanistic approach was translated into projects that were geared towards the fulfillment of man's eleven basic needs: water, power, food, clothing, shelter, medical services, education, sports and recreation, livelihood, mobility, and ecological balance (Manuel, 1978). The MMC led by Governor Marcos, with the aid of the Marcos Sr. regime's technocrats, believed that these needs must be met not only for the region's residents "to live fully, happily and with dignity" but also "to enable every Filipino to experience the gains of the New Society directly" (Manuel, 1978, 50).

The inclusion of mobility as one of the eleven basic needs in the City of Man was part of the Marcos Sr. regime's problematization of traffic in the Metropolitan Manila region. In 1974, the president recognized the existence of a "transport crisis" (Manuel, 1978; Crisanto, 1979) in the region caused by the convergence of poor urban planning, irrational public transport routes, and growing number of private vehicles (National Media Production Center, 1976; Manuel, 1978).

In order to resolve the urban transport crisis, the national and regional governments led by the First Couple had a two-pronged approach. The president issued policies mostly concerning government reorganization while the governor was in-charge of the implementation. An illustrative example of

this is the issuance of Presidential Decree no. 492 in June 1974 creating the Manila Transit Corporation (later Metro Manila Transit Corporation), a government office tasked to consolidate the operations of all public transport vehicles (i.e. buses) and to rationalize existing public transport routes in the region. Governor Marcos was designated as an ex-officio member of the new corporation's board and was engaged in the implementation of projects such as the Love Bus and the LRT-1.

A string of government issuances and urban transport projects would ensue as the First Couple sought to make their dream of the City of Man in the New Society come true. The discussion of which will be presented in the subsequent chapter. For now, it is crucial to understand what served as the bedrock of the transport policies, programs and projects of the Marcos Sr. regime. In doing so, it will allow us to better appreciate what informed the First Couple's mobile visions for the Philippines' capital region.

Transport Studies and Plans for Metropolitan Manila

“The Mass Transit System in Metro Manila: From Tranvia to MRT, 1879-2014” is an interdisciplinary research program from the University of the Philippines, conducted from October 2015 until April 2017 by researchers from the TWSC, NCTS, UPD Department of History, and UPD Department of Geography. One of the aims of the program was to come up with a critical survey of mass transit plans in the region. In doing so, historian Ricardo T. Jose and his colleagues (2015) explained that contrary to popular belief, the urban transport system in Metro Manila underwent multiple planning stages, and that its present dire conditions may be attributed to the piecemeal adoption of these plans' recommendations.

While the initial findings of this research program are interesting, what is more instructive from their work, in relation to my research, is the identification of the transport studies commissioned during the Marcos Sr. regime. According to Ricardo T. Jose et al. (2015), there are three major transport-related studies conducted from 1973 until 1983. These are the Urban Transport Study in Manila Metropolitan Area (UTSMMA) by the Japanese government's Overseas Technical Cooperation Agency in 1973; the Metro Manila Transport, Land Use, and Development Planning Project (MMETROPLAN) by Freeman, Fox and Associates in 1977; and the Metro Manila Urban Transportation Strategy Planning Project (MMUTSTRAP) by Pak-Poy & Kneebone Pty. Ltd. in 1983.

Apart from them, there were numerous transport-related works as early as 1968 during the first term of President Marcos and years before the establishment of the Metropolitan Manila region. They include government reports and academic position papers as identified by Daguio and Lagman (2015). This wide array of documents mostly done by engineers and economists were beneficial in providing both the national and regional governments the needed technical expertise on urban transportation.

Nevertheless, the three commissioned studies mentioned would become influential in the overall urban transport policies and projects of the regime. In the next subsections, I have reviewed the three transport studies commissioned by the Marcos Sr. government and summarized their key recommendations.

Urban Transport Study in Manila Metropolitan Area (UTSMMA)

The UTSMMA is the Philippines' first ever transport study. It was conducted by the Overseas Technical Cooperation Agency (OTCA), the forerunner of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), through the request of the Philippine government in February 1971. At that time, Japanese transport technology had become modernized (Dick & Rimmer, 1986) making them one of the world's leading experts in that field.

A preliminary survey team was sent in March 1971 followed by a 12-member team in July 1971 led by Prof. Takashi Inouye of the Department of Urban Engineering in Tokyo University. The study which involved exchange visits lasted until the last quarter of 1972. It was conducted in close coordination with the Philippine Bureau of Public Highways and later on with the Department of Public Works and Communications. The final report, completed in September 1973, contained eleven chapters which provided detailed discussions on the identified urban transport problems and their corresponding solutions.

The UTSMMA team described the region's traffic congestion as a serious problem wherein "it takes about an hour and half to travel over a distance of 9 km by car during the morning and evening peak hours on major roads" (p. 41). The traffic congestion was attributed mainly to traffic behaviors particularly of jeepney and bus drivers. The report mentioned how jeepney drivers "picks up customers any place when motioned or called on and therefore has to make frequent starts and stops.

As a result, it runs very slowly and follows a zigzag course, thereby interfering the traffic of other vehicles behind it. This practice coupled with frequent on-street parking considerably reduces traffic capacity of the road" (p. 41). The bus was described similarly like the jeepney and was compared to provincial buses in Japan.

Meanwhile, other causes of traffic identified were the mismanagement of roads as well as the tendency to use roads as parking spaces due to lack of parking facilities. The rotary intersections along with the inadequate number of traffic signals and their improper placement were also included as sources of congestion. In sum, the Japanese planners observed that traffic in the region was mostly due to behavioral and infrastructural issues as already mentioned.

But a thorough reading of their report would reveal that they also identified the rapid urbanization of the region coupled with the high concentration of activities in the central business district (CBD) which at that time was the City of Manila. With this, it makes sense when they proposed an urban transport system that would facilitate the dispersion of urban activities from the CBD towards the planned regional sub-centers. Based on this, the UTSSMA planners envisioned Metro Manila's urban transport as an integrated transportation system which espoused rail-dependent pattern as basic policy for transport planning while designing its road networks into circumferential and radial systems.

A review of the UTSSMA report revealed that it envisioned the urban transport in the region as intermodal making use of some of the then already existing transport systems and investing not only on their improvements but also in new infrastructure (i.e. heavy rail transit). For instance, the planners in their proposed railway network aimed to gradually downgrade the role of jeepneys and buses as auxiliary transport modes. This means that buses and mostly jeepneys will become feeders to the subway and PNR stations and will no longer ply along the major thoroughfares. This is the planners' solution to traffic congestion which they primarily attribute to the 'undisciplined' behavior of the jeepney and bus drivers.

Moreover, the planners acknowledged that demand for cars in the region would not easily diminish over time. In fact, they believed cars would still be used for private reasons such as in going to work as well as an end transport system to reach railway stations. They cited the park-and-ride system as the

closest to what could be the cars' role in their proposed plan. Table 1 summarizes the proposed transport system of the UTSSMA planners for Metro Manila.

Mode	Infrastructure Type	Purpose/Use	Design	Recommendation
Road networks	Circumferential roads (C-roads)	To serve as major thoroughfares linking the CBD with the sub-centers; long travel distances within the region	Concentric roads with increasing radius in which the CBD in Manila is its core; Each road must have 4-6 lanes	Construction and improvement of existing roads to form a C-road system consisting of 6 roads (C-1 to C-6); then already existing Epifanio de los Santos Avenue (EDSA) or Highway No. 54 is designated as C-4 and will serve as the region's main axis
	Radial roads (R-roads)	To link the major thoroughfares (i.e. C-roads) to collect and distribute traffic	Roads emanating from the CBD and runs through the C-roads; Must have at least 4 lanes	Construction and improvement of existing roads to form a radial road system composed of 10-11 roads
	Urban expressways	To provide easier access for vehicles entering from and exiting to the subcenters and neighboring provinces or regions	Similar to the C-roads but with toll	Construction along C-4 because it is already connected to the existing North and South Diversion roads
Railway network	Philippine National Railway	To service commuters entering from and exiting to the subcenters and neighboring provinces or regions	An existing railway line with Tutuban (in Manila) as the central terminal and extends north until San Fernando, Pampanga and south up to, Legaspi, Albay, 270 kms and 470 kms from Manila, respectively. Both end points are in the neighboring regions of Metro Manila	Improve the PNR line through construction of double tracks and elevated railway; line electrification; and relocation and addition of stations particularly in the proposed sub-centers

	Subway system	To service commuters within the region	Consists of 4 lines three of which are radial and the other one is circumferential. While it is termed as a 'subway', only certain portions where land acquisition will be impossible are to be built underground. Other parts may be elevated or at-grade (street-level) depending on road density.	Construction of this system is dependent on the improvements of the existing PNR line as detailed above
--	---------------	--	--	---

Table 1. Summary of the UTSSMA proposed transport system for Metropolitan Manila area
Source: Overseas Technical Cooperation Agency, 1973

Metro Manila Transport, Land Use, and Development Planning Project (MMETROPLAN)

The recommendations of the UTSSMA plan were not completely implemented. As noted by Jose and his team (2015), only the recommendations on the PNR rehabilitation and some of the road works were adopted albeit their prolonged execution. Three years later, in 1976, the Marcos Sr. government commissioned another transport study. This time they sought the assistance of a British transport consulting firm, Freeman Fox and Associates (later to be renamed Halcrow Fox and Associates in 1977).

The contract between the Philippine government and the consulting firm was signed on November 14, 1975 and work ensued on January 5, 1976. Six months later, in June 1976, the MMETROPLAN was incorporated in the general International Bank of Reconstruction and Development (IBRD; forerunner of the World Bank) program called Manila Urban Development Project (MUDP). The MUDP was concerned with "urban development projects and help[s]ed finance much of the sites and services programme in Metro-Manila" (Freeman Fox and Associates, 1977, p. 1).

As stipulated in the Terms of Reference, the MMETROPLAN was specifically aimed to formulate "a transport strategy for Metro-Manila for both the short and longer term" (p. 1). The said strategy was

expected to become part of a larger regional plan with "clearly identified policies and projects" set within a three-year implementation and a more general programming thereafter.

It is important to note that compared to the UTSSMA, the MMETROPLAN was conducted the same time the Metropolitan Manila Commission was established. In fact, the notion of a 'City of Man' was one of its main premises. This is why one can argue that the MMETROPLAN best resonated the vision of Metro Manila as the ideal city of the New Society in comparison to the UTSSMA. While this might be true, one must not forget how the MMETROPLAN planners built on the assessment and recommendations of the earlier transport plan. Without the UTSSMA, the British planners would have started from scratch in understanding the issues of the region they were studying.

The British planners observed the same transport issues described in the UTSSMA. They noted the region's worsening traffic congestion, poor maintenance and management of road infrastructure as well as the various uses of roads other than for transport (e.g. children's playground). Traffic congestion, however, was not the region's most concerning issue according to the MMETROPLAN but the increasing commuter woes. In the report, the then prevailing bus system of Metro Manila was deemed to have many problems which manifested in long waiting lines, frequent interchanges, and poor services for the bus commuter. Moreover, these problems stemmed from insufficient fare levels, the insecurity of private bus operators to compete with the government bus operation and the inadequate bus structure.

Interestingly, in contrast to the first transport study, the MMETROPLAN viewed the jeepneys in a much positive light. What the Japanese planners saw as undisciplined, the British described the jeepneys as unique and flexible to the point that it was "the envy of many cities in the world" (Freeman Fox Associates, 1977, p. 24). This probably stemmed from the British planners' emphasis on maximizing the existing transport systems of the region. They insisted that it would be better to look for more cost-efficient means in solving transport problems instead of investing in costly infrastructure projects as earlier proposed by the Japanese.

In this regard, the MMETROPLAN outlined two stages of implementation to resolve the transport problems of the region. The first stage which they termed as short-term transport action should be done from 1977 until 1980. Acknowledging that some of the recommendations particularly those

requiring construction could not be easily implemented, the British planners proposed the introduction of transport policies such as cordon pricing as well as bus and jeepney lanes.

Meanwhile, the second stage, or the long-term transport action, involved the continued implementation of the short-term action as well as infrastructure projects. Because this action plan involved construction of a light railway transit and urban highways, it should be implemented on a much later timeline, that is from 1980 until 1985, to allow for a more detailed study and preparation. Table 2 summarizes the two-tiered proposal of the MMETROPLAN planners for the region.

Stage	Proposal	Details
Short-term (1977-1980)	Cordon pricing	A fee amounting to Php 6.00/day must be charged to every vehicle entering the cordoned area covering the CBD up to circumferential road 2. To avoid traffic congestion, vehicle owners must purchase stickers in advance which they must put in their windshields. Buses, jeepneys and trucks are exempt from paying this fee.
	Bus and jeepney lanes	A designated lane must be provided for buses and jeepneys in select major thoroughfares.
	Bus, jeepneys and taxi policies	Fare schedule must be revised regularly. The franchise system for bus and jeepneys must be restructured and must accommodate the clear designation of route plans.
Long-term (1980-1985)	Institutionalization of short-term policies	All policies introduced as short-term action plans must be continued and widened in scope except where the LRT is justified
	Light Rail Transit (LRT) construction	A street-level railway to be constructed along the middle of existing major thoroughfares especially where road space is sufficient and bus/jeepney lane is inadequate. This can also be put in areas where passenger demand is higher where buses and jeepneys are not sufficient to accommodate this demand.
	Urban highway construction	This is categorized as highway in urban areas and those in the outer areas. The former supports the earlier recommendations laid out in the UTSSMA study (i.e. circumferential and radial road networks). Meanwhile, the latter aims to restrict and control the further urbanization in neighboring areas of the metropolitan region (i.e. Marikina Valley in the east, Laguna de Bay in the south, and Manila Bay in the north).
<p>Table 2. Summary of the two-stage proposal by MMETROPLAN Source: Freeman Fox and Associates, 1976</p>		

The Marcos Sr. government adopted only a few of the recommendations of the MMETROPLAN such as the construction of the LRT as well as the bus and jeepney lanes albeit with some modifications. As to how and why it was done so would be discussed in detail in the next chapter. But what is important here was the way the Marcos Sr. government took these recommendations seriously to the point that institutional arrangements were done to implement them. By this, I am referring to the creation of the Light Rail Transit Authority, a government office tasked to administer and manage the construction of the light rail as proposed in the MMETROPLAN.

Metro Manila Urban Transportation Strategy Planning Project (MMUTSTRAP)

Despite the adoption of the MMETROPLAN recommendations, the Marcos Sr. government undertook yet another transport study with another group of consultants. Almost six years after the completion of the MMETROPLAN, the Metro Manila Transportation Policy Committee sought the assistance of Pak-Poy & Kneebone Pty Ltd., an Australian consulting firm, in 1983. The aforementioned Committee was composed of the Transport and Communication Minister, the Public Works and Highway Minister, the Vice Governor of the Metropolitan Manila Commission, and Chief of the Philippine Constabulary.

Partly funded by the Australian Development Assistance Bureau, the study which would later be part of a larger project called Metro Manila Urban Transportation Strategy Planning Project (MMUTSTRAP) aimed to layout a comprehensive transport plan by synthesizing the “diverse, oftentimes disparate, and conflicting studies and proposals into a unified whole” (p. 3). In the end, the Australian consultants were able to produce a report consisting of ten chapters discussing the state of Metro Manila’s transport system, their proposed solutions and their underlying principles, and an overall implementation plan.

Although the Australian planners built on the previous transport studies, namely the UTSSMA and the MMETROPLAN, their proposed solutions emphasized mainly a wide-scale introduction of a new set of transport policies, and the appropriate prioritization of investment programs. Instead of painting the transport situation in Metro Manila as chaotic and in the brink of a crisis as the past studies did, the MMUTSTRAP constructively criticized the adoption of the recommendations given by the previous consulting firms.

One of these recommendations which they heavily disapproved of was the rehabilitation of the Philippine National Railway. According to them, the PNR had become a financial burden for the Philippine government amidst declining customer patronage. Based on their observation, the PNR did not even meet at least half of the buses' and jeepney's patronage share. The latter had the largest share among all the transport modes available at that time which also included tricycles⁴⁸.

Aside from the PNR rehabilitation, the MMUSTRAP planners showed ambivalent attitudes towards then ongoing construction of the light rail transit (LRT) which was adopted from the MMETROPLAN. The LRT construction began in September 1981 and was scheduled to be operational in 1984, a year after the MMUSTRAP was finished. Citing the financial losses of the PNR and the futility of halting the LRT construction, the planners expressed their concern on the future financial viability of the LRT. Nevertheless, they believed that it was too early to be pessimistic and that they would give at least a year to properly evaluate its impact.

Given this, the Australian planners proposed a shift in public transport policy orientation from total deregulation to differentiated regulation where each mode would be regulated based on their economic and operating characteristics. For them, this differentiated regulatory mechanism would build towards a transport scenario in the region which they term as the “family of public transit modes” (p. 65). In this scenario, each transport mode would complement each other and would not be competitors to one another. The respective efficiencies of each mode would be harnessed through market segmentation and differential pricing. Table 3 summarizes the proposals outlined in the MMUSTRAP.

Type	Details	Rationale	Proposed Action
Policy recommendations	Strategy of government-owned and privately-managed transit systems	Differentiated regulation regime	Expanded implementation not only in the LRT but also in the PNR
	Multi-modal public transit system	Principle of “Family of Public Transit Modes” where each transport mode is essential in the overall functioning of the region’s transport network; Differentiated regulation regime	Each transport mode should be segmented in terms of market share and pricing; Each transport mode should be regulated differently in terms of market entry and exit, service standards, and regulation and inspection.

⁴⁸ Still used up to this day, a tricycle is made up of a motorcycle with an attached side car. It is a bit similar to Thailand’s toktok, and is mainly used as feeders to and from subdivisions and villages.

Investment (infrastructure) Plan	10-year program divided into sets each to be implemented within a 5-year duration	Budget optimization	First stage of implementation would be from 1983 to 1987 with allowable budget of PHP 2.950 billion; Second stage of implementation would be from 1989 to 1992 with allowable budget of PHP 3.015 billion
-------------------------------------	---	---------------------	---

Table 3. Summary of recommendations in the MMUSTRAP
Source: Pak-Poy & Kneebone Pty Ltd., 1983

Technocratic visions of transport in the national capital region

As already mentioned, the three major transport studies reviewed would prove to be influential in the subsequent transport projects of the Marcos Sr. government to realize the New Society’s City of Man. By simply reviewing these transport studies, it would be too easy to justify the need for these planners’ expertise. One could say that it is common sensical for the Marcos Sr. government to seek expert assistance because of the planners’ technical know-how. I would like to argue, however, that such an explanation puts us at risk of losing a more nuanced understanding of Marcos Sr. and his administrators’ motivations in making those decisions.

To better understand what led Marcos Sr. and his transport officials to seek expert assistance, it would be crucial to properly examine what seemed to be a purely professional relationship between these planners as knowledge and skill holders and the Philippine government as their client. In addition, it would be also useful to understand how the Philippine government in turn deployed the knowledge and skills they acquired in terms of policies and projects.

Looking at the urban public transport in southeast Asia, Howard W. Dick and Peter J. Rimmer observed how governments of this region became interested to decongest their respective capital cities by replicating transport systems of more developed, often Western countries in the late 1960s. Also concerned with their image brought by their ‘exotic’ transport modes, these governments would eventually attempt to modernize by replacing “less capital-intensive vehicles, such as pedicabs and jitneys, by more capital-intensive vehicles, such as taxis and buses” (Dick & Rimmer, 1986, p. 180). In

addition to this, they also took over the non-corporate, discrete private operators by placing them under a single state-operated organization.

Furthermore, in order to ensure that any future plans, particularly for capital cities, would subscribe to modern standards, southeast Asian governments solicited the assistance of foreign consultants (Dick & Rimmer, 1986). Malaysia was the first to do so in 1964 when its government sought the expertise of Australian consulting firm Crooks Michell and Peacock for Kuala Lumpur. Singapore came in next in 1971 also with the same Australian planners. Two years later, in 1973, the Philippines would seek the assistance of the Japanese as discussed above.

Given this, it is no longer surprising why the Marcos Sr. government commissioned first the Japanese in 1973, followed by the British in 1977 then the Australians in 1983 as this was common practice in the region during those times. Evidence of which can be gleaned on the work of Dick and Rimmer (1986). Not only was the Marcos Sr. government following a trend, Dick and Rimmer would further explain that these foreign consultants would act as “‘trojan horses’ to facilitate aid programs for developing large-scale and capital-intensive public transport” (p. 184).

In this case, foreign consultants would come in to countries like the Philippines, evaluate their clients’ transport systems based on western standards, and propose the adoption of technologies and skills which were available in their home countries. Dick and Rimmer (1986) referred to this as technological imperialism wherein countries whose governments sought expert assistance from foreign, often Western, developed countries, would become dependent to the latter not only for technical knowledge but also for technological products (e.g. transport vehicles).

This reliance to foreign technology would make more sense if we add into consideration the fact that the foreign-led commissioned transport studies, at least in the case of the Philippines, were funded by foreign institutions. As we might recall, the transport studies in the Philippines were financed by the Japanese Overseas Technical Cooperation Agency, the International Bank of Reconstruction and Development (forerunner of the World Bank), and the Australian Development Assistance Bureau, respectively.

With this, it could be argued that the relationship between the foreign consultants and their clients was predicated on the entry of foreign capital in the guise of assistance. As non-government thinktank IBON Foundation (2018) pointedly noted that by accepting foreign funding to remedy transport woes, the Philippine government bound by the terms and conditions of the foreign aid not only accommodated notions and practices of modern transportation systems but also allowed the unbridled entry of foreign businesses to dominate the country's transport systems.

Meanwhile, this situation became beneficial for the Marcos Sr. government who at that time was in need of the appropriate rhetoric and imagery to communicate its vision of the City of Man in the New Society. As already observed by Dick and Rimmer (1986), they claimed how transport planning in southeast Asia starting in the 1960s was motivated by political rather than economic reasons. Accordingly, they mentioned that

“The capital cities of Southeast Asia are not only sources of political power but also symbols of national prestige. Beset by problems of underdevelopment, national governments nevertheless try to model their capital cities on those of advanced capitalist countries. While poverty may be the reality, modernity must be the image. Governments have, therefore, sought to bestow upon their capitals *the visible paraphernalia of a modern city*” (Dick & Rimmer, 1986, p. 190; emphasis mine).

This had been particularly true in the case of Metro Manila especially when the vision of the City of Man is taken into account. Armed with the recommendations of the commissioned studies, the Marcos Sr. government now had the capacity to deploy visions of a modern transport system that befitted Metro Manila as the City of Man, the national capital region of the regime's New Society.

In other words, the plans discussed above were crucial in forming, as Anne Jensen (2011) would have put it, “particular ways of seeing mobilities” (p. 255). This is apparent not only on the foreign consultants' proposed solutions but also on the way they framed Metro Manila's transport woes. The justification for the creation of the Manila Transit Corporation (later Metro Manila Transit Corporation) best illustrated this.

In 27 June 1974, President Marcos signed Presidential Decree 492 creating the Manila Transit Corporation. To justify its institutionalization, the decree described that the urban public transport of Manila allowed for the “proliferation of independent road transportation utility operators” which did not offer “the commuting public with adequate and responsive service” (Presidential Decree 492, 1974). This is reminiscent of the observation by the UTSMMA planners a year before, in 1973, wherein they pointed out that the reason behind the undisciplined behavior of jeepney and bus drivers was the lack of proper regulation on their operations. In turn, this situation was one of the main causes of traffic in the region.

Aside from this, another obvious ‘way of seeing mobilities’ taken by the Marcos Sr. government from the foreign consultants was their proposed solutions to the transport woes of Metro Manila. The Marcos Sr. government, through its key institutions such as the Metropolitan Manila Commission and Ministry of Transportation and Communication, deployed the foreign planner’s modernized view on transport by implementing reforms.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that the commissioned plans not only offered specific ways of looking at mobilities in Metro Manila. What was equally crucial is what Jensen (2011) explained as the political dimension of mobilities in which the ‘ways of seeing mobilities’ reconfigure movement’s spatial aspects. According to her, particular ways of seeing are translated into physical arrangements of space in order to manage the movements of people, things, and to some extent, ideas.

This was quite apparent with the proposals on road construction as well as the designation of exclusive lanes for buses and jeepneys. In doing so, it aimed to discipline the unruly driving behaviors of bus and jeepney drivers which in turn would regulate the flow of traffic. But if there is one thing that best illustrated this, that would be the construction of the light rail transit. Not only did the LRT represent modern transportation, it rearranged the physical layout of the region.

Be that as it may, we should remember that these transport studies were only one of the multiple means of looking at the urban transport situation of Metro Manila. These commissioned studies along with their proposed solutions were only recommendations which people in positions of power such as policy makers and government officials may choose to accept or not. In the end, should they decide to utilize them, or to view mobilities the same way as the planners they commissioned did, one must

examine how these same people accommodated the various ways of seeing (or imagining), including their own, in order to achieve their dreams.

In the case of the Philippines during martial law, the question remains as to how these technocratic or expert visions of transport were utilized by President Marcos and the First Lady Imelda Marcos, the governor of Metro Manila, to renegotiate other forms of seeing mobilities, informed by contrasting interests and beliefs, in pursuing the New Society's City of Man.

Chapter 4

Beyond the transport plans: Mobility regime of an authoritarian government and the case of the Light Rail Transit-Line 1 (LRT-1)

“The COA [Commission on Audit] reported that during the last two years of the Marcos regime, chartered flights of the Marcoses on the Philippine Airlines (PAL) amounted to \$2.7 million. These expenses included Mrs. Marcos’ trips to the US and Europe as well as junkets of their friends, including George Hamilton”

-Ricardo Manapat⁴⁹, *Some are Smarter than Others* (2020)

“It’s getting dark and car lights are beginning to flash. The streets at the heart of the city, at this time, are fenced by a countless number of people staring at overpacked vehicles. For each passenger who alights the jeepney, twenty have become like warriors fighting to get a ride, it is as if they are battling for dear life itself. At the doors of the buses, bodies are like morsels of food forced inside an already full mouth. A passenger-less taxi suddenly arrives and ten hands wave at it to stop. Meanwhile, those inside their cars are at rest, smiling, sitting comfortably in their Cadillacs, Buicks, Plymouths, and Pontiacs.”

-Edgardo M. Reyes, *In the Claws of Light* (1966)⁵⁰

The transport studies commissioned by the Marcos Sr. administration were an important reference for concerned government institutions at that time to draft policies and projects. As I initially discussed in the previous chapter, each of these studies provided government offices such as the Metropolitan Manila Commission and the Ministry of Transportation and Communications a particular perspective with its concomitant assessment and proposed solutions to the region’s transport woes.

A quick observation of Metro Manila’s current transport infrastructure, however, would show that the proposed solutions outlined in the commissioned studies were not religiously implemented. As already pointed out by historian Ricardo T. Jose and his colleagues (2015), particularly with the Metro Manila Transport, Land Use, and Development Planning Project (MMETROPLAN) in 1977, only a few of its recommendations were adopted albeit with modifications.

How and why the Marcos Sr. administration decided to modify the recommendations of the foreign transport planners it commissioned is the focus of this chapter. While it is easy to perceive that it might have been the result of the regime’s authoritarian or dictatorial character, I would like to argue

⁴⁹ Filipino activist and former chief of the Philippine National Archives from 1996 until 1998 then again in 2002.

⁵⁰ Translated from the original Filipino *Sa Mga Kuko ng Liwanag* (1966)

that what occurred was a convergence of the multiple ways of seeing mobilities of the various actors concerned.

By this, I mean that aside from the Marcos couple who were the principal actors during Martial Law, the local technocrats, other government officials, and the Marcos cronies also played a significant role in the overall political regime. In fact, this shaped the mobility regime envisioned, and later on, pursued by the Marcos administration under its New Society propaganda.

To better understand this, the case of the Light Rail Transit-Line 1 (LRT-1) is examined in this chapter wherein I looked at the stages of its realization from conceptualization to actual construction. Here I looked not only at the roles of the Marcos couple but also at one of their cronies, Rodolfo Cuenca who owned the Construction and Development Corporation of the Philippines (CDCP). In the end, I aim to unravel the representations associated by the Marcos Sr. regime to the LRT-1 and its relation to the overall mobility regime of that period.

Marcos Sr. the builder and the Philippines' 'Golden Age of Infrastructure'

Ferdinand E. Marcos Sr.'s twenty-one-year rule as president and authoritarian, was rendered by members of the Marcos dynasty and their supporters as the Philippines' 'Golden Era'. For them, this is evidenced by the enduring infrastructural projects built during the time of Marcos Sr. With the concentration of governmental powers under Marcos Sr., his economic managers saw an opportunity to finally implement what they deemed were needed national economic reforms.

In a forum organized and later published by the National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP) in 2020, former Marcos Sr.'s technocrats namely Cesar Virata, Vicente Paterno, Estelito Mendoza, Gerardo Sicat, Jaime Laya, and Placido Mapa discussed how pending bills in the pre-martial law Philippine Congress were immediately pulled out and implemented through the issuance of decrees by the president. As former Prime Minister Virata also recalled, economic policies were saved from the "time-consuming debates in the Philippine Congress" (Tadem, 2014: 352).

It is in this context that the Marcos regime would embark in what could be considered as the Philippines' most ambitious socio-economic development program. Mostly financed through foreign

and domestic loans, the Marcos Sr. government would institute numerous programs encompassing agriculture, industrial manufacturing, and infrastructure. These programs were designed by the technocrats themselves and were approved by the president.

The immensity of the regime's development plan can be gleaned in Marcos Sr.'s eight State of the Nation Address (SONA) which coincided with the first anniversary of the martial law declaration. Specifically, he described his administration's infrastructure plan as follows,

“There was no letup in our effort to support the growth of the economy with infrastructure. We have increased capital expenditures to P5.3 billion—an increase from 15% to 45% of the budget” (Marcos, 1973).

This was followed by an enumeration of various projects from land reclamation, road construction, as well as flood control and drainage systems. It would continue in the succeeding years with the construction of numerous buildings that many Filipinos would associate with the Marcos Sr. presidency. Among these are the ‘designer’ hospitals⁵¹ found in Quezon City, the Cultural Center of the Philippines complex in Pasay, the San Juanico bridge⁵², and the Light Rail Transit-Line 1 (LRT-1).

These numerous infrastructure projects during the martial law regime of Marcos Sr., however, were a continuation from his first term as president in 1965 until 1969. A government publication aptly entitled “Achievement of President Marcos” documented what it deemed as “an impressive record of achievements never before witnessed in our history” setting them against “the past decades of inaction and stagnation” (p. 3).

This display of achievements by the Marcos Sr. administration was built on the idea that there were no massive infrastructure projects not only during the administration of his predecessor Pres. Diosdado P. Macapagal but even as early as the post-war administration of Pres. Manuel A. Roxas in 1946. In the years following the publication of “To Move a Nation to Progress: Achievements of

⁵¹ These ‘designer’ hospitals refer to the Philippine Heart Center, the Lung Center of the Philippines, and the National Kidney Institute which were built as part of the Marcos regime's medical tourism plan.

⁵² Considered, until recently, as the longest bridge in the Philippines

President Ferdinand E. Marcos”, and especially in the early years of martial law, the Marcos Sr. regime would recurrently deploy these achievements to justify its prolonged hold to power.

Further publications funded by the government reinforced this view of the Marcos Sr. regime and of Marcos Sr. himself as a builder. Examples of these publications were “The Marcos Revolution: A progress report on the New Society of the Philippines” by the National Media Production Center in 1980; “The Marcos Years: Achievements under the New Society” by the Office of Media Affairs in 1981; and the “Marcos: The Builder” by Jose T. Tumbokon⁵³ published by New Mercury Printing Press, Inc. in 1981.

The contents of these publications are more or less the same. They glorify the infrastructural developments of the regime while putting them in contrast to what they deemed as the insignificant contributions of the previous administrations. They were also peppered with images wherein Marcos Sr. could be seen in action (Images 5-7). Later on, these would be instrumental, aside from the infrastructures themselves, in forging the image of Marcos Sr. as the literal builder of the nation especially during the early years of the New Society.



Images 5-7. (From left to right) Action photos of Marcos Sr. in actual construction sites of roads and bridges juxtaposed with a photo of ‘modern’ access roads in the South Superhighway. *Source:* To move a nation to progress: Achievements of President E. Marcos (undated)

⁵³ He was an assemblyman during the Interim Batasang Pambansa (1978-1984) representing Region VI or the Western Visayas.

Marcosian transport infrastructure and the LRT-1

Part of the massive infrastructure development initially instituted during Marcos Sr.'s first term and continued up until the declaration of martial law were a number of transport infrastructures which up to this day are still used. These include the San Juanico bridge, the Pan-Philippine Highway, later to be known as the Maharlika Highway, as well as various roads and ports (both air and sea).

Brian Larkin (2013) explained how infrastructures can be understood not only based on their technical functions, but also as “concrete semiotic and aesthetic vehicles oriented to addressees” (p. 329) which most of the time becomes independent to each other. For Larkin (2013), this stems from the fact that the ontology of infrastructures is both as “things and the relation between things” (p. 329). This means that infrastructures serve a specific function while also facilitating connections between and among things often through the meanings they generate.

When seen through this lens, the overall Marcosian transport infrastructure which includes the roads, bridges and all that form part of that transport system can be argued to be constructed by the Marcos Sr. regime not only to facilitate efficient movements of peoples and things, but to communicate and impose a certain kind of politics and ideology. It can also be that the Marcos Sr. administration was using these transport infrastructures to “proffer [these] representations to its citizens and asks them to take those representations as social facts” (Larkin, 2013: 335).

Urban transport plans and the beginnings of the LRT-1

The plans of building a metro rail in post-war Manila, the Philippines' capital, came as a result of transport studies and plans commissioned by the Marcos Sr. government. It started with the Philippine Transport Survey financed by the UN Development Program in 1970 which was then followed by two transport plans. The first one was the Urban Transport Study in the Manila Metropolitan Area (UTSMMA) with the Japanese government's Overseas Technical Cooperation Agency (OTCA) in 1973. Four years later, in 1977, another plan was drafted by Freeman Fox and Associates and funded by the World Bank called Metro-Manila Transport, Land Use and Development Planning Project (MMETROPLAN).

As discussed in the preceding chapter, both of these plans believed that Metro Manila should maintain and improve its existing road-based transport system. With that, they proposed the construction of roads based on a more efficient land use plan; the rationalization of bus and jeepney routes; and the rehabilitation of the Philippine National Railways (PNR) and addition of more rail lines. However, there were two main differences between them: the length of implementation, and the type of rail. The UTSMMA was envisioned to be finished within 10 to 15 years and proposed a subway or elevated heavy rail transit. Meanwhile, the MMETROPLAN proposed both short-term and long-term plans and the use of a street-level light rail transit design.

The 1983 World Bank report described the earlier UTSMMA plan as incoherent and argued, in a self-adulatory manner, that the MMETROPLAN was “the only significant and comprehensive study recommending transport investments within Philippine urban areas” (p. 19). It added that the MMETROPLAN had since then become influential in Philippine urban transport policy and project implementation. Needless to say, the recommendations of the said plan were taken but were modified by the Marcos Sr. government.

From then on, plans for the construction of a light rail transit had begun. To facilitate the initial phase, Marcos Sr. instituted in July 1980 a Light Rail Transit Authority (LRTA) through Executive Order (EO) No. 603 which has corporate and borrowing powers and whose main task is to “oversee the effective implementation of the light rail transit project, including the construction and operation thereof.” He also appointed then First Lady Imelda R. Marcos as chairperson who was concurrently Metro Manila Governor and Human Settlements Minister.

The LRTA had an initial Php 500 million capitalization and complemented by a loan from the Belgian government and a Belgian consortium worth Php 300 million and 700 million, respectively. The consortium also provided equipment and technical assistance to the LRTA. The construction commenced a year later in 1981 with the Construction and Development Corporation of the Philippines (CDCP) as the main contractor with the assistance of Losinger, a Swiss firm, and the Philippine subsidiary of the American company Dravo (Jose et al., 2015:10).

The LRT-1 became fully operational in 1984, the first not only in the Philippines but also in Southeast Asia. Its line covers approximately 15 kilometers with 18 stations that runs from north to south of

Manila along Taft Avenue and parallel to the Manila Bay (Image 8). But unlike the original proposal, it is on an elevated track 7 meters above road level. Each train used 2 cars with a capacity of 374 passengers each. Its maximum design speed is at 60 kph, but commercial speed is only at 18 kph. In 1985, it was estimated to have a ridership at 245,000 passengers/day (Ministry of Transportation and Communications, 1985:10). Since then, it has become a vital component of the transport system of Metropolitan Manila, or the City of Man.

The urban reconfiguration of Metro Manila and the LRT-1

As I have lightly touched upon the preceding chapter, one of the implications of the ‘ways of seeing mobilities’, as explained by Anne Jensen (2011), is the rearrangement of physical arrangements of space to manage the movements of people, things, and to some extent, ideas. In the case of the LRT-1, this is apparent on how the newly introduced transport system reconfigured the spatial aspects of Metropolitan Manila.

Going back to the MMETROPLAN which gave birth to the idea of an LRT-1 in the region, one must recognize that the study itself not only aims to craft transport solutions but also to put it in a particular land use and development context. This is clearly shown in the full title of MMETROPLAN which refers to Metro-Manila Transport, **Land Use and Development Planning** Project (emphasis mine).

Its planners explained on their cover letter that “The development planning recommendations have been devised to stimulate new development and to control where it takes place, to establish new integrated communities and to tackle the problems of the inner city areas. The transport recommendations complement these initiatives, and include an integrated package of projects and policies”. In this regard, the MMETROPLAN planners saw the importance of anchoring their transport proposals on a larger land use and development framework.

Fig. 2: Metrorail Taft-Rizal Line

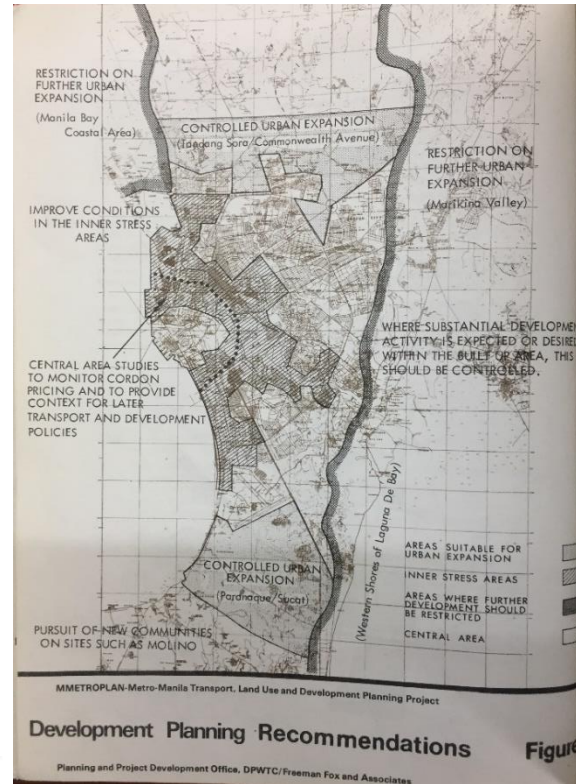
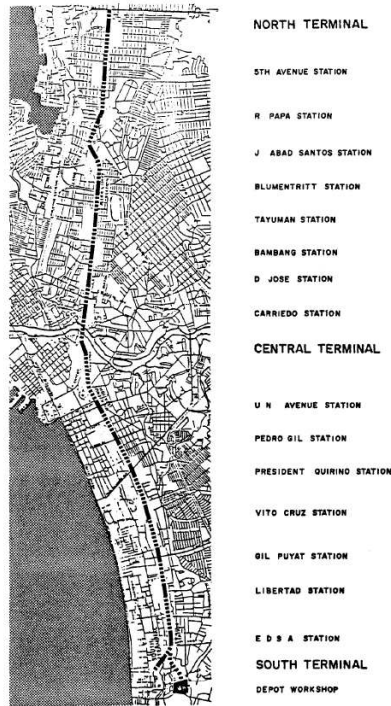


Image 8. (left) The LRT-1 Stations. *Source:* Ministry of Transportation and Communications, 1985, p. 35
 Image 9. (right) The MMETROPLAN development framework for Metro Manila. *Source:* MMETROPLAN, 1977

Based on their assessment, they categorized the urbanized areas of Metro Manila into action areas, the central area, and stress areas (Image 9). With these, they proposed a region-wide transport proposal that best suited the land use and development requirements of each. Specifically, they envisioned a regional transport system that would allow the redistribution of development centers from Manila to other areas in the region. Hence, they proposed the construction of an LRT system which has the potential of “providing the skeleton of a mass transport system” (p. 13). It would traverse the central area in Manila connecting it to new development areas in the southern and northern portions of the region.

How the LRT-1 actually changed the physical layout of Metro Manila can be further gleaned from a study led by the Ministry of Transport and Communications in 1985, almost a year since the full operation of the LRT-1. The study called Urban Land Management Study (ULMS) was part of the Third Urban Development Project Loan Package funded by the World Bank. It aimed to craft an

urban development plan for Metro Manila that would “promote the development of idle, under-utilized and blighted properties” (Metro Manila Commission, 1985: 46) in the region.

The ULMS mentioned in passing that the LRT-1 literally changed the landscape of certain parts of Manila as it necessitated to tear down then existing structures. An example of which is the Carriedo Station in downtown Manila. It is situated near Escolta and Rizal Avenue which were the historical central business district. In the construction of the station, two structures namely Isetann and President’s Hotel were demolished to give way for the Carriedo Station.

Aside from the actual reshaping of Manila, the ULMS also looked at the development potentials of the areas where the 18 LRT-1 stations are situated. This stemmed from the belief that since many of these stations are points of interchange, they have the potential for urban development. Accordingly, “[T]his potential is further reinforced by the availability of sizeable plots either privately or publicly owned in the area. The locational advantages of the areas around the terminals are too apparent to be overlooked by leading urban developers” (Metro Manila Commission, 1985: 48).

Meanwhile, the same study considered that the LRT-1 would also bring negative, if not total positive, consequences such as the in the case of Blumentritt near downtown Manila, and Baclaran (South Terminal) in the southern portion of the region. These areas were seen to have the less tendency to further commercially develop owing to the disinterested attitude of building owners on rehabilitation.

LRT-1 and its constellations of mobility

Geographer Tim Creswell in an attempt to theorize on the political dimensions of mobility studies proposed the notions of “constellations of mobility” (2010). According to him, mobilities consist of the entangled relations among representations, movements, and practices. This allows for a nuanced appreciation of how mobility involves power dynamics. Further, Creswell emphasized that the best way to uncover this constellation is by employing a historical approach. For doing so, he provides us with the understanding that meanings, practices and the embodied movements not only vary across time but are historically rooted.

Technopolitical representations of the LRT-1

Atty. Jose Crisanto Jr., general manager of the state-owned Metro Manila Transit Corporation, wrote in the Philippine Planning Journal in 1979 on the state of Philippine transport and its accompanying issues. Looking back, he declared that then Pres. Marcos Sr. had noticed five years prior (in 1974) that there was a transportation crisis (Crisanto, 1979). Going back to some years before Crisanto's article, both the UTSMMA and the MMETROPLAN also gave a similar verdict on the urban traffic conditions in the capital. In fact, as outlined in the MMETROPLAN (1977), the urban transport problems "manifested to the travelling public in long waiting times, the need for frequent interchange, and poor levels of comfort for travellers" (p. 24).

Transport statistics by the World Bank and the preceding transport plans as well as Filipino popular imagination (as quoted from Edgar M. Reyes' *Sa mga Kuko ng Liwanag [In the Claws of Light]*) attested to this dire situation. Meanwhile, the government would repeatedly invoke these urban transport problems to further justify its intensive infrastructure projects, particularly road constructions, and eventually the LRT-1. It is obvious how the Marcos Sr. administration used the technical aspects of infrastructure building to give a sound impression of their efforts to solve urban traffic. Moreover, the transport plans it commissioned buttressed their justifications by providing the appropriate technical language.

For instance, the MMETROPLAN described the LRT as the up-to-date mass transit by emphasizing its successful usage in Europe and North America. Not only that, it mentioned that the same technology could be adopted in the Philippines because "it occupies the same amount of roadspace [sic] as a single bus lane but has at least the capacity of a double lane" (p. 49) citing Rizal Avenue, a major road in Manila, as an ideal site for the LRT. In addition to this, the plan further justified the LRT in financial terms by indicating that despite the high cost it entails, it has a low maintenance cost with a high capacity to produce high revenues.

Expectedly, the same line of argumentation is evident in government pronouncements related to the LRT-1 even prior to its realization. One good example is EO 63 wherein part of its rationale clause mentioned that national development requires "an efficient, adequate, economical, safe, convenient,

and dependable transportation system.” It explicitly indicated the MMETROPLAN and its recommendation that the LRT is the solution to the worsening traffic situation in Metro Manila.

This somewhat neutral and economic explanation provided by the government would eventually not last. In the September 1981 issue of *Business Day*, there is an advertisement on the LRT-1 or the Metrorail depicting it as “The New Republic’s Gift to the City of Man” (Image 10). What appeared to be an *innocent* publicity material is, in fact, tinged with political meanings. For one, it clearly shows LRT-1 and its connection not only with the nationalistic goals of the New Republic, or the successor of the New Society, but also with that of the vision of Metro Manila as the ‘City of Man’ propagated by the First Lady.

Image 10. Metrorail as a component of the First Lady’s City of Man. *Source:* UP Third World Studies

Another way of reading it is that the LRT-1 symbolizes the aspirations of the president and his wife, in a somewhat parental figure, towards the realization of a better Philippines and Metro Manila. On the one hand, it can be seen as the First Couple bestowing LRT-1 as the “greatest legacy” for their

“children”, the Filipino people, while on the other, it is a gift of the *national patriarch* to the *matriarch*, the custodian of the City of Man. Incidentally, the advertisement was published on the birthday of Marcos Sr. which makes it appear that his generosity extends even at a time when he was supposed to be the receiver of gifts.

Another layer of LRT-1’s political representation can be observed in its architectural design, particularly in its stations. The LRTA commissioned Architect Francisco Mañosa, known for his Philippine neo-vernacular style, to design the LRT-1 stations. On the Mañosa Company’s Facebook page, it explained how the late architect used the *bahay kubo* (nipa hut) as his inspiration for the stations (Image 11) and envisioned them to be “tropical, climatically responsive and truly spoke to our local culture.”



Image 11. *Bahay kubo*-inspired LRT-1 station. Source: Mañosa Company’s Facebook page

This architectural style for the LRT-1 was no coincidence as the New Society was also envisioned by the Marcos Sr. regime as the Filipino cultural renaissance. As Caroline Humphrey (2005) once noted, ideologies, in this case the New Society and the City of Man, are “a political practice that is [also] manifest in constructing material objects” (p. 29). As such, the LRT-1 as an infrastructure has become the embodiment of the aspirations and dreams of Marcos Sr.’s New Society and his wife’s the City of Man.

In fact, this is in consonance with the observations made by Architect Gerard Lico in his seminal book *Edifice Complex* (2003). Much like the LRT-1, Lico remarked that the state infrastructure during the Marcos Sr. regime is characterized by a palingenetic architecture that “sought to prescribe a reincarnation (palingenesis) of vernacular civilization, fashioned from a synthesis of indigenous and cosmopolitan aspirations of modernity” (p. 40). With the convergent use of the state-of-the-art (imported) technology and native cultural element in the form of the light rail transit and the *babay kubo* design, respectively, the Marcos Sr. regime was able to portray the LRT-1 as the image of modernity *à la New Society*.

Practices and movements associated with the LRT-1

The inauguration of the LRT-1 held in 11 September 1984, coinciding with the 67th birthday of Marcos Sr., serves as the final act in the crystallization of its technopolitical meanings. Although this event can be considered not a typical one, still it demonstrated a particular way of practice and movement related to the LRT-1. An extant yet inaudible video recording by The Associated Press (2018) available online⁵⁴ can be used to examine this event.

Watching through the video, one would notice the event’s exuberance as local and foreign guests were present. At the entrance of an unnamed LRT station, where the event was held, hung a three-lined banner stating “*Alay sa kinabukasan ng Metro Manila Maligayang Bati Pangulong Ferdinand E. Marcos*” (A gift to Metro Manila Happy Birthday President Ferdinand E. Marcos). There was even a cake designed with the seal of the Philippine president, a congratulatory message for the LRT inauguration, and a miniature version of an LRT station complete with a train car.

The president was accompanied by the First Lady who was there to represent multiple government offices she was heading. In Marcos Sr.’s speech, he re-portrayed the dire transport conditions of Metro Manila putting highlight on its historical roots. For him, the disorderly transport system in Manila is brought by previous leaders who “chose to allow the evolution of a system that favored the private, often rich, motorist over the commuter.”

⁵⁴ Link to the Associated Press’ video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jSXfg4QejNw>

He went on to add that with the LRT-1 now almost complete it would right the wrongs of his predecessors for the LRT-1 “has the interest of the mass commuter—the common man—at heart.” Moreover, it “will soon displace other forms of mass transport” which he deemed as “unclean, wasteful, inefficient and evidently incapable of satisfying our requirements for mass mobility.”



Image 12. President Marcos taking the driver's seat of an LRT train car. *Source:* Screenshot of 'The Associated Press' video recording (2018)

After the speech, the ceremonial ride commenced in which a selected group of people including some members of the Marcos family were passengers while their patriarch, Marcos Sr. himself, took the train's driver seat (Image 12) and drove until after a few stations. This performance by Marcos Sr. is arguably the most symbolic as it rendered Marcos Sr. hyper-visible vis-à-vis the LRT-1. By taking the driver's seat, it can be argued that he was sending the message that he was the country's driver towards the modern New Society.

Meanwhile, there is another form of practice and movement, this time, one that is associated with the ordinary citizens. This can be gleaned by looking at two things: (1) the physical structure and (2) the operations of the LRT-1 in its early years. As one might recall, the LRT-1 was structurally designed as an elevated line running along approximately 15 kilometers from Pasay in the south to Caloocan in the north. Each station, described as economical and utilitarian by the Ministry of Transport and Communications (1985), was accessible from the street below through a covered staircase. To accommodate a heavy volume of passengers, there were mezzanines at some stations.

During its early operations in 1985, the daily first trip started at 5:00 AM and ended at 11:00PM with an average roundtrip travel time of 1 hour. At each station, the train carriages had a 3-minute headway

time during peak hours and a 5-minute headway during non-peak hours. The train carriages would have a dwell time of 20 to 30 seconds per station. For the fare schedule, the cost of one ride in 1985 was Php 2.50⁵⁵. Passengers had to use a token to enter the stations (Ministry of Transportation and Communications, 1985).

Given these structural and operational characteristics, they give an impression that LRT-1 encouraged a calculated and disciplined form of movement among commuters. In contrast to the jeepneys and buses that dominated the pre-LRT-1 mass transport system of Metro Manila, the LRT-1 was more reliable given the timetable that it followed. Moreover, the LRT-1 instilled discipline since passengers must go to stations, avail a token, then pass through a turnstile before they eventually board the train cars. This was in stark difference with the practice of taking the bus or the jeepney in which passengers may board and alight as they pleased.

If we are to go back to the representations of the LRT-1 discussed earlier, we can see that all of these along with the forms of movements and practices feed on each other. The technopolitical meanings attributed to the LRT-1 particularly the way it was framed as modern, efficient, and reliable were translated into the practice of using the LRT-1 and the act of moving around Metro Manila through the same public transport system. This would become more effective if juxtaposed with the LRT-1's opposite: the inefficient, decrepit, and unruly jeepneys and buses.

Mobility regime of Marcos Sr.'s Martial Law

At this point, we can examine the mobility regime of Marcos Sr.'s martial law. Following Schiller and Salazar (2013), I refer to mobility regime as the “relationships between the privileged movements of some and the co-dependent but stigmatised and forbidden movement, migration and interconnection of the poor, powerless and exploited” (p. 6). In other words, who were allowed to move, where, when, and how under the New Society.

In the more than two-decade rule of Marcos Sr., the quote above taken from Ricardo Manapat (2020) demonstrated one instance of how the Marcos family, their allies and cronies were able to move with

⁵⁵ For reference, USD 1=PHP 18.60 based on Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (Central Bank of the Philippines)

comfort and ease. Another illustrative example provided by Manapat (2020) were the numerous luxury cars owned by the Marcoses and their friends. Meanwhile, the national transport situation even in Metro Manila was at the brink of crisis characterized by traffic jams, unreliable public utility vehicles, and unfixed roads.

Cognizant of the latter, this was the justification for the numerous transport studies commissioned by the Marcos Sr. government as discussed in the previous chapter. These studies eventually led to transport reforms including the LRT-1 in 1984. The LRT-1 would become prominent as the first light rail system not only in the Philippines but also in Southeast Asia.

In addition, as explained in the preceding sections, the LRT-1 evoked various technopolitical representations that resonated with the modern vision of the New Society. It was also instrumentalized in the depiction of the Metropolitan Manila as the First Lady's City of Man.

Amidst these notions of comfort, safety and modernity in transport, however, was the underlying issue of corruption made possible by crony politics prevalent during Martial Law. And putting this into perspective might show how and why the original proposal for the LRT-1 was modified.

'A friend in need is a friend indeed': Cronyism and the LRT-1 construction

As I already discussed in the second chapter, one of the characteristics of Marcos Sr.'s martial law was the predominance of cronyism, or crony politics. Although Marcos Sr. explicitly mentioned his disapproval of the oligarchy, what happened during the early years of martial law was not its dismantlement but rather its replacement of a new set of "reformed oligarchs" (Manapat, 2020: 21).

This new group of oligarchs were composed of close friends, former classmates, golf partners, campaign financiers, and allies of Ferdinand E. Marcos Sr. In exchange for their support to Marcos Sr., the government gave them privileges in the form of government posts and business favors. Such is the case of Rodolfo Cuenca whose role in the infrastructure projects of the Marcos Sr. regime will be examined here. In particular, I will look at his involvement in constructing the modified version of the LRT-1.

The infrastructure boom of the Marcos Sr. administration would not be possible if not for Rodolfo Cuenca, Marcos Sr.'s golf buddy and owner of Construction & Development Corporation of the Philippines (CDCP). Formed in 1966 with a capital of USD 650,000, CDCP received its first government contract the following year in 1967 to build the Manila North and South Expressways costing to a total of USD 16.1 million (Manapat, 2020).

From then on, it won other contracts for major government infrastructure projects and eventually became “the biggest civil engineering firm in the country in terms of assets and the size of contracts” (Manapat, 2020: 685-686). Among the projects it handled were the San Juanico Bridge in 1974, the reclamation of Manila Bay on the same year, and the LRT-1 in 1981. These projects were later criticized for being too exorbitant and unnecessary.

In the case of the LRT-1, The World Bank (1983) expressed uncertainty regarding the economic benefits of its construction. Citing that at most 5% of motorists in Metro Manila were only expected to patronize the LRT-1, the World Bank (1985) asserted that the “originally estimated Php 2.1 billion [or USD 278 million] cost of the first phase system is equivalent to about 10 years worth of road construction (using inflation-adjusted expenditure trends for the 1977-82) in Metro Manila” (p. 26).

In relation to this, the World Bank also reported that based on calculations the LRT-1 could become a financial burden for the Philippine government especially in its first 10 years of operation. Accordingly, it was estimated that the Philippine government had to subsidize Php 100 million per year for the continued operations of the LRT-1. In simplest terms, the World Bank considered the LRT-1 a bad investment for the Philippine government.

Meanwhile, the actual construction of the LRT-1 was subject to issues of corruption. This stemmed from the involvement of Rodolfo Cuenca and his construction firm which received the civil engineering aspect of the project. Initially, the cost of building the LRT-1 was set at Php 4 million/km based on the actual recommendation of the MMETROPLAN in 1977.

However, two years later, the then Ministry of Public Works, Transportation and Communications, recommended to elevate some sections of, then later on the entire, the LRT system. The Philippine

government would adopt this recommendation making the estimated budget for LRT-1 construction to increase to Php 135 million/km in 1979 prices.

But as we have seen in the earlier discussions, it would take another two years before the construction actually began. By that time, the project already needed an estimated Php 2.1 billion to be completed (in 1981 prices). More than half of this cost amounting to Php 1.1 billion referred to the civil engineering component of the project which was handled by Cuenca's construction firm (World Bank, 1983).

There were speculations that the reason why the construction cost ballooned from Php 135 million to Php 2.1 billion was corruption. And if we look at the background and the practices of the CDCP alone, we can say that there could be some truth to this allegation. For instance, Manapat (2020) detailed how the CDCP was known to undertake projects that were considered monumental and costly yet superfluous.

The prime example for this was the San Juanico Bridge linking the islands of Samar and Leyte to encourage economic activity in the eastern Visayas region. However, upon evaluation it was learned that there was no need for such an infrastructure and that its cost was not justifiable. Rumors then began to come out that the project was requested by the First Lady who hailed from Leyte.

In 1992, an alliance called Freedom from Debt Coalition (FDC) published the booklet *The CDCP Sting: Or how the Marcos-Cuenca Construct built a highway to haven*. It was written by Filipino investigative journalist Malou Mangahas. The contents were almost similar to Manapat's work except that Mangahas focused more on the relationship of the CDCP fiasco to the Philippines' debt situation especially after the fall of the Marcos regime. She explained how the CDCP worked in connivance with the Marcoses to siphon funds from loans acquired for infrastructure building.

Nevertheless, despite these works by Manapat and Mangahas neither the CDCP nor the Marcoses were held accountable. In fact, in 2018 the Philippine Supreme Court ruled in favor of the Marcoses and Cuenca in a case filed by the Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG). The PCGG was established in 1987 by President Corazon C. Aquino with the main goal to recover ill-gotten wealth by the Marcoses and their cronies.

The Court ruled that due to lack of evidence it would be insufficient to declare that the CDCP and the Marcoses “engaged in schemes, devices and stratagems designed to unjustly enrich themselves and to prevent disclosure and discovery of ill-gotten assets” (Supreme Court, 2018).

Despite this ruling, what the Court did not dismiss was not the close relationship among the Marcoses and people such as Rodolfo Cuenca. And I think it would be safe to say that their relationship influenced one way or another the Marcos Sr. administration. It might not have bore negative consequences, as the Supreme Court decided, but still, it shows us the complexity of the martial law regime.

Returning to the query on Martial Law’s mobility regime, the case of the LRT-1 from its conception up to its construction demonstrated how various actors helped shaped transportation. As can be gleaned from the discussion above, the LRT-1 and its associated representations, practices and movements, or constellations of mobility, suggest that the Martial Law regime supported movements that were modern, that is Western, yet aesthetically Filipino, and at the same time disciplined.

Contrary to the assumption that these were solely based on the vision of the dictator, the mobility regime during Martial Law was also informed by technocratic notions of safety, calculability, and efficiency. Moreover, it was built on (and by) relations between (and among) cronies.

Finally, what the case of the LRT-1 tells us about the mobility regime of its time was that in building his dream of a *Bagong Lipunan*, or New Society, Marcos Sr. exalted movements as imperative such that it was a requirement for national development and fostered national pride.

Yet, if we dig deeper, his practices showed how he also viewed its realization as paternalistic. On the one hand, it was a gift handed down to the people while on the other hand, it was a disciplinary tool. The same way that a father should provide for his children while instilling desired behavior. And however stretched it might appear, just like any parent, Marcos Sr. also had his favorites, those that got the more benefits not only in terms of business favors but also those who were able to share the front seat in every travel destination.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

I have started this research with the intention of contributing to the better understanding of the complicated chapter of Philippine history that is Ferdinand E. Marcos Sr.'s martial law (1972-1985). Growing up in Atimonan, a town in Quezon Province (approximately 170 kilometers south of Manila), I am witness to the conflicting ways of remembering the dictatorship.



Image 13. The Marcos marker at the Old Zigzag Road, Atimonan, Quezon. *Source:* Manila Bulletin (2023)

On the one hand, I grew up listening to stories from my mother's side of the family on how the Marcoses and their allies plundered the country. My grandmother, in particular, would tell us how she joined the people who went to Malacañang Palace after the Marcoses fled in 1986. She would describe the ill-gotten extravagance they witnessed when they toured the presidential palace. On the other hand, every time I would leave (and return to) my home town, a big marker (Image 13) along the Old Zigzag Road would always remind me and the other passengers that the road we are travelling on was improved at the time of Marcos Sr.

These incompatible views of remembering Marcos Sr. left an impression on me which obviously influenced why I decided to write my thesis on the matter. In choosing the topic of Philippine Martial Law (1972-1986), I wanted to provide a balanced view on the legacies of the dictatorship which led me to look into his transport infrastructure.

Initially, I was interested to know the discourse on transportation during martial law. Eventually, I sought answers to questions pertaining to the mobility regime at that time. In other words, I began to wonder who were allowed to move, where, when and how? Lastly, I wanted know how different views on mobilities were accommodated by the authoritarian regime of Marcos Sr.

To answer these, I consulted numerous documents such as the economic plans of the Marcos Sr. administration, speech transcripts, decrees and executive orders. Besides these, my main references in this study were the transport studies commissioned by the Marcos Sr. government in 1973, 1977, and 1983. All of these documents and texts were accessed in two libraries and a research center of two Philippine universities.

I started by contextualizing Philippine Martial Law, the justifications used by Marcos Sr. in its implementation as well as his vision moving forward. He described his regime as the *Bagong Lipunan*, or New Society wherein he envisioned a modern and developed Filipino society where citizens are free to reach their fullest potentials. Part of the *Bagong Lipunan* was the reconfiguration of the entire Philippines into different regions. This is the reason for being of the Metropolitan Manila.

I then zoomed in on Metro Manila and the vision of the former First Lady and first Governor of Metro Manila, Imelda Marcos, as the City of Man. This project of Mrs. Marcos coincided with her appointment as Minister of Human Settlements and her adoption of a humanistic approach to community development. Part of this approach were the enumeration of the so-called eleven basic needs of man which included mobility, or transport.

These national and regional contexts led me to examine the transport studies commissioned by the Marcos Sr. government from 1973 until 1981. These studies promoted foreign expertise and investment, replacing traditional transport modes with buses and taxis and leading to the creation of the Manila Transit Corporation and the Light Rail Transit (LRT). The Marcos Sr. government's transport projects in Metro Manila, guided by foreign consultants, aimed to modernize the capital as part of the New Society's "City of Man." While these projects were based on recommendations, the Marcos administration used them to shape Metro Manila's image as a modern, disciplined capital, reconciling foreign ideas with local interests to achieve political goals.

I ended by analyzing the LRT-1's constellations of mobility and Martial Law's mobility regime. The mobility regime during Martial Law, while shaped by Marcos Sr.'s vision, was also informed by technocratic ideals and cronyism. The LRT-1 exemplified Marcos Sr.'s view of movement as essential for national progress and pride, serving as both a gift to the people and a disciplinary tool.

The project, however, was marked by corruption, with inflated costs and the involvement of crony Rodolfo Cuenca, whose company benefited from government contracts. Despite the World Bank's concerns about its financial viability and allegations of mismanagement, the LRT-1 went ahead, illustrating the regime's use of infrastructure to promote a modern, disciplined, and politically controlled vision of mobility.

I recognize that there is still ample opportunity to further deepen this study. I acknowledge that there are certain aspects that may not have been fully addressed. Thus, should additional time and resources become available, I envision expanding this research through a more thorough investigation—not only of the transport studies commissioned by the Marcos Sr. administration, but also by surveying all the transport policies issued during the dictatorship.

I could also focus on other aspects of mobility, particularly movements outside the conventional centers of politics and economics, or areas beyond Metro Manila. I could also juxtapose this with a broader national perspective on transportation. Finally, a comparative approach with the case of the Indonesian capital, Jakarta in the context of Suharto could also be an avenue for further understanding the mobility regimes of authoritarian governments.

References

Journal Articles

- Bernad, M.A. (1968). The first year of the Philcag in Viet Nam. *Philippine Studies: Historical and Ethnographic Viewpoints* 16, 1, 131-154. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/42720576>
- Bernaldez, P. B. (1989). The state in compromise: The U.S. military bases in the Philippines. *Asian Perspective* 13, 2, 89-109. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43739079>
- Caoili, M.A. (1985). Reflections on Metropolitan Manila Reorganization and Social Change. *Philippine Journal of Public Administration* 29(1) 1-26. [https://pssc.org.ph/wp-content/pssc-archives/Philippine%20Journal%20of%20Public%20Administration/1985/Num%201/05 Reflections%20on%20Metropolitan%20Manila.pdf](https://pssc.org.ph/wp-content/pssc-archives/Philippine%20Journal%20of%20Public%20Administration/1985/Num%201/05%20Reflections%20on%20Metropolitan%20Manila.pdf)
- Cresswell, T. (2010). Towards a politics of mobility. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 28, 17-31.
- Crisanto, Jose Jr. (1979). The Metro Manila Transport Problems and the Traffic Experiments. *Philippine Planning Journal* 10(2), 30-32.
- Daguio, K.G. & Lagman, M.S. (2015). Beyond UTSMMA and MMETROPLAN: Other transport-related plans, reports, and position papers, 1968-1982. *Kasarinlan* 30(2), 221-234. <https://journals.upd.edu.ph/index.php/kasarinlan/article/view/5708/5116>
- Dick, H.W. & Rimmer, P.J. (1986). Urban public transport in southeast Asia: A case study of technological imperialism? *International Journal of Transport Economics* 13(2), 177-196. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/42746937>
- Hernandez, C.G. (1985). Constitutional authoritarianism and the prospects of democracy in the Philippines. *Journal of International Affairs* 38, 2, 243-258. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24356912>
- Humphrey, C. (2005). Ideology in infrastructure: Architecture and Soviet imagination. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 11(1), 39–58. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9655.2005.00240.x>
- Jensen, A. (2011). Mobility, Space and Power: On the Multiplicities of Seeing Mobility. *Mobilities*, 6(2), 255–271. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17450101.2011.552903>
- Jose, R.T., Lagman, M.S.B. et al. (2015). Planning Metro Manila's Mass Transit System. The Mass Transit in Metro Manila: From Tranvia to MRT, 1879-2014. <https://riles.upd.edu.ph/index.php/2018/07/25/planning-metro-manilas-mass-transit-system/>
- Larkin, B. (2013). The politics and poetics of infrastructure. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 42, 327–343. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-anthro-092412-155522>

- Magdalena, F. (1977). Intergroup conflict in the southern Philippines: An empirical analysis. *Journal of Peace Research* 4, 14, 299-313. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/422883>
- McCallus, J.P. (1989). The myths of the new Filipino: Philippine government propaganda during the early years of martial law. *Philippine Quarterly of Culture and Society* 17, 2, 129-148. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/29791974>
- Metro Manila Commission. (1985). Urban Land Management Study: Urban Redevelopment in connection with Metrorail. *Philippine Planning Journal*, 17(1), 46-56.
- Ministry of Transportation and Communications. (1985a). Urban transportation in Metropolitan Manila. *Philippine Planning Journal*, 17(1), 1-19.
- Ministry of Transportation and Communications. (1985b). The LRT as a component of Metro Manila's transport systems. *Philippine Planning Journal*, 17(1), 33-45.
- Moraglio, M. (2017). Seeking a (new) ontology for transport history. *The Journal of Transport History* 38, 1, 3-10.
- Moraglio, M. (2018). Peripheral mobilities: Looking at dormant, delegitimized and forgotten transport regimes. *Tempo Social* 30, 2, 73-85.
- Navera, G.S. (2018). Metaphorizing martial law: Constitutional authoritarianism in Marcos' rhetoric (1972-1985). *Philippine Studies: Historical and Ethnographic Viewpoints* 66, 4, 417-452. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/45172792>
- Noble, L.G. (1976). Philippines 1975: Consolidating the regime. *Asian Survey* 16(2), 178-185. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2643146>
- Noble, L.G. (1981). Muslim separatism in the Philippines, 1972-1981: The making of a stalemate. *Asian Survey* 11, 21, 1097-1114. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2643996>
- Pante, M. (2016). The history of mobility in the Philippines: Defining a discursive space. *Mobility in History* 7, 90-97.
- Reyes, M.P. (2018). Producing Ferdinand E. Marcos, the scholarly author. *Philippine Studies: Historical and Ethnographic Viewpoints* 66, 2, 173-218. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/45171919>
- Ruland, J. (1985). Metropolitan government under Martial Law: The Metro Manila Commission experiment. *Philippine Journal of Public Administration* 29(1) 27-41. https://pssc.org.ph/wp-content/pssc-archives/Philippine%20Journal%20of%20Public%20Administration/1985/Num%201/06_Metropolitan%20Government%20under%20Martial%20Law.pdf
- Schiller, N.G., & Salazar, N.B. (2013). Regimes of Mobility Across the Globe. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 39(2), 183-200.

Tadem, T. S. E. (2014). Philippine technocracy and the politics of economic decision-making: A comparison of the martial law and post-martial law periods. *Southeast Asian Studies*, 3(2), 345–381. <https://doi.org/10.15057/2433/189574>

Books

Aguilar, F.V. (2022). Studies of the Marcos State and the Imperative to Negotiate History and Fantasy. In L.C. Anastacio & P.N. Abinales (Eds.), *The Marcos Era: A reader* (pp. 28-51). Quezon City: BUGHAW.

Anastacio, L.C. (2022). Hard cases, bad law: The martial law cases and the judicial legitimation of constitutional authoritarianism. In L.C. Anastacio & P.N. Abinales (Eds.), *The Marcos Era: A reader* (pp. 55-90). Quezon City: BUGHAW.

Biagi, F. (2020). *Henri Lefebvre's Critical Theory of Space* (L. Moniz, Trans.). Palgrave-Macmillan. (Original work published 2019)

Carr, E.H. (1990). *What is history?* Penguin Books.

De Quiros, C. (1997). *Dead aim: How Marcos ambushed Philippine democracy*. Foundation for Worldwide People's Power.

Huxley, A. (1932). *Brave new world*. Phoenix Library.

IBON Foundation. (2018). *Mass transport system in Metro Manila and the quest for sustainability*. IBON Foundation, Inc.

Lacaba, J.F. (1982). *Days of disquiet, nights of rage: The First Quarter Storm and other related events*. Anvil Publishing.

Lefebvre, H. (1991). *The Production of Space* (D. Nicholson-Smith, Trans.). Blackwell Ltd. (Original work published 1974)

Lico, G. (2003). *Edifice complex: Power, myth, and Marcos state architecture*. Ateneo de Manila University Press.

Manapat, R. (2020). *Some are smarter than others: The history of Marcos' crony capitalism*. Ateneo de Manila University Press.

Mangahas, M. (1992). *The CDCP Sting: Or how the Marcos-Cuenca Construct Built a Highway to Haven*. Freedom from Debt Coalition.

Marcos, F.E. (1974). *The democratic revolution in the Philippines*. Prentice-Hall International.

Mayr, A. (2015). Institutional discourse. In D. Tannen, H.E. Hamilton & D. Schiffrin (Eds.), *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis* (2nd ed.) (pp. 775-774). Blackwell Publishers Ltd.

Mijares, P. (1976). *The conjugal dictatorship of Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos*. Ateneo de Manila University Press.

National Historical Commission of the Philippines. (2020). *In Dialogue: The Economic Managers of the Marcos Administration*. National Historical Commission of the Philippines.

National Media Production Center. (1976). *Manila: Toward the City of Man*. National Media Production Center.

National Media Production Center. (1980). *The Marcos Revolution: A progress report on the New Society of the Philippines*. National Media Production Center

National Media Production Center. (1985). *Metropolitan Manila Towards the City of Man. Total Human Resource Development*. National Media Production Center.

Office of Media Affairs. (1981). *The Marcos Years: Achievements under the New Society*. Office of Media Affairs.

Punongbayan, J.C. (2023). *False nostalgia: The Marcos 'Golden Age' myths and how to debunk them*. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press.

Spivak, G. C. (1988). Can the Subaltern Speak? In C. Nelson, & L. Grossberg (Eds.), *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*. Urbana/Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Tumbokon, J.T. (1981). *Marcos: The Builder*. New Mercury Printing Press, Inc.

Wise, E. (2019). *Manila, City of Islands*. Ateneo de Manila University Press.

News Articles

Abad, M. (2023, Sept. 27). DepEd insists Marcos dictatorship not being erased from new curriculum. *Rappler*. <https://www.rappler.com/nation/deped-insists-marcos-dictatorship-not-being-erased-new-curriculum/>

Aurelio, J.M. & Corrales, N. (2023, July 16). More rebranding: Marcos unveils 'Bagong Pilipinas'. *Inquirer.Net*. <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1802212/more-rebranding-marcos-unveils-bagong-pilipinas>

Beltran, M. (2022, June 29). Disinformation reigns in Philippines as Marcos Jr takes top job. *Aljazeera*. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/6/29/disinformation-reigns-in-philippines-as-marcos-jr-takes-top-job>

Butterfield, F. (1976, Feb. 24). Governorship of Manila is increasing powers of Imelda Marcos. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/1976/02/24/archives/governorship-of-manila-is-increasing-powers-of-imelda-marcos.html>

- Coronel, S. (2022, May 17). The triumph of Marcos dynasty disinformation is a warning to the US. *The New Yorker*. <https://www.newyorker.com/news/dispatch/the-triumph-of-marcos-dynasty-disinformation-is-a-warning-to-the-us>
- Gloria, G.M. & Vitug, M.D. (2018, March 18). Jabidah and Merdeka: The inside story. *Rappler*. <https://www.rappler.com/newsbreak/24025-jabidah-massacre-merdeka-sabah/>
- Jones, G. (1989, Aug. 3). Ex-communists party behind Manila bombing. *The Washington Post*. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1989/08/04/ex-communists-party-behind-manila-bombing/b987c165-4f26-4609-aeb5-cd05134c0cec/>
- Lema, K. & Dela Cruz, E. (2022, May 10). Philippines election winner Marcos tells world to judge him by actions, not family's past. *Reuters*. <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/philippines-election-win-returns-marcos-power-polarisation-2022-05-10/>
- Lema, K. & Morales, N.J. (2022, May 10). Marcos, son of strongman, triumphs in Philippines presidential election. *Reuters*. <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/prospect-marcos-revival-looms-philippines-votes-new-president-2022-05-08/>
- Manuel, M.T. (1978). The Metro Manila Experience. *Fookien Times Philippines Yearbook 1978*
- Morallo, A. (2017). Sabotaging the system. *PhilStar Global*. <https://newslab.philstar.com/31-years-of-amnesia/best-democracy>
- Ocampo, A. (2022, Sept. 30). Marcos: 'History is not through with me yet!'. *Inquirer.Net*. <https://opinion.inquirer.net/157442/marcos-history-is-not-through-with-me-yet>
- Ocampo, A. (2022a, Oct. 5). Case closed: Plaza Miranda bombing. *Inquirer.Net*. <https://opinion.inquirer.net/157566/case-closed-plaza-miranda-bombing>
- Ocampo, A. (2022b, Oct. 21). Plaza Miranda: The view from Malacanang. *Inquirer.Net*. <https://opinion.inquirer.net/158051/plaza-miranda-the-view-from-malacanang>
- Ortigas, M. (2013, March 18). Remembering the 'Jabidah Massacre'. *Aljazeera*. <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2013/3/18/remembering-the-jabidah-massacre>
- Prys-Hansen, M. (2023, June 29). The Global South: A problematic term. *Internationale Politik Quarterly*. <https://ip-quarterly.com/en/global-south-problematic-term>
- Quezon, M. III. (2018, Sept. 19). September 23, not 21. *Inquirer.Net*. <https://opinion.inquirer.net/116178/september-23-not-21>
- Safire, W. (1998, Feb. 1). On Language: Crony Capitalism. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/1998/02/01/magazine/on-language-crony-capitalism.html>
- Sarao, Z. (2023, Sept. 11). DepEd confirms receiving proposal to remove Marcos in 'Diktaturang Marcos'. *Inquirer.Net*. <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1830123/dep-ed-confirms-receiving-proposal-to-remove-marcos-in-diktaturang-marcos>

Tuquero, L. (2022, April 14). Tracking the Marcos disinformation and propaganda machinery. *Rappler*. <https://www.rappler.com/newsbreak/iq/stories-tracking-marcos-disinformation-propaganda-machinery/>

The New York Times (1972, July 14). More religious strife feared in Mindanao. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/1972/07/14/archives/more-religious-strife-feared-in-mindanao.html>

Government and International Organization Documents

Central Intelligence Agency. (1974). Weekly Summary Special Report: The Philippines: New Society, Old Problems.

Executive Order No. 603, s. 1980. (1980, July 12). *Official Gazette*. <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/1980/07/12/executive-order-no-603-s-1980/>

Gregor, A.J. (1984). The key role of U.S. bases in the Philippines. *Backgrounder*, No. 7. <https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP88T00528R000100010046-1.pdf>

Human rights in South Korea and the Philippines: Implications for U.S. policy: Hearings before the U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on International Organizations of the Committee on International Organizations, 94th Cong. (1975). https://books.google.com.ph/books?id=zeRNSTA_LasC&pg=PA353&source=gbs_toc_r&cad=2#v=onepage&q&f=false

Human Rights Violations Victims' Memorial Commission. (2022). *Essential truths about Marcos' declaration of Martial Law in 1972*. Human Rights Violations Victims' Memorial Commission.

Memorandum Circular No. 24, (2023). <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/downloads/2023/07jul/20230703-MC-24-FRM.pdf>

National Economic and Development Authority. (1977). Five-Year Philippine Development Plan, 1978-1982. National

Pasion, F.K. (2023, Sept. 22). The real date of the declaration of Martial Law: 23 September 1972. *National Historical Commission of the Philippines*. <https://nhcp.gov.ph/articles/the-real-date-of-the-declaration-of-martial-law-23-september-1972/>

Philippine Constitution of 1935, Art. VII, Sec. 11, par. 2. <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/constitutions/the-1935-constitution/>

Philippine Constitution of 1973, Amendment No. 6 (1976). <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/constitutions/1973-constitution-of-the-republic-of-the-philippines-2/>

Presidential Decree No. 824 (1975). <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/1975/11/07/presidential-decree-no-824-s-1975/>

Presidential Decree No. 1396 (1978). <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/1978/06/02/presidential-decree-no-1396-s-1978/>

Proclamation No. 1081, s. 1972. <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/1972/09/21/proclamation-no-1081/>

Supreme Court of the Philippines. (2018, April 4). *Republic of the Philippines, Petitioner vs. Rodolfo M. Cuenca, Ferdinand E. Marcos, Imelda R. Marcos et al., respondents* (G.R. No. 198393). E-Library. <https://elibrary.judiciary.gov.ph/thebookshelf/showdocs/1/64140>

World Bank. (1983). *Philippines- Urban transport sector review: Main report*. World Bank Group. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/447751468095057112/Main-report>

Speech Transcripts

Marcos, F.E. (1969). *Second inaugural address of His Excellency Ferdinand E. Marcos*. <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/1969/12/30/second-inaugural-address-of-president-marcos/>

Marcos, F.E. (1972a). *Address of President Marcos at the launching of the Mabuhay ang Pilipino Movement*. <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/1972/11/30/address-of-president-marcos-at-the-launching-of-the-mabuhay-ang-pilipino-movement/>

Marcos, F.E. (1972b). *Radio-TV Address of President Marcos: Second Address to the Nation Under Martial Law*. <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/1972/10/21/radio-tv-address-of-president-marcos-2/>

Marcos, F.E. (1973). *Eighth State of the Nation Address: Report to the Nation after One Year of Martial Law*. <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/1973/09/21/ferdinand-e-marcos-eighth-state-of-the-nation-address-september-21-1973/>

Marcos, F. E. (1984). *Address of President Marcos at the inaugural run of the Light Rail Transit System*. <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/1984/09/10/address-of-president-marcos-at-the-inaugural-run-of-the-light-rail-transit-system/>

Marcos, F. R., Jr. (2024, July 19). *Speech by President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. at the inauguration of the Light Rail Transit Line 1 (LRT-1) 4th Generation (4G) Light Rail Vehicles (LRVs)*. <https://pbbm.com.ph/speeches/speech-by-president-ferdinand-r-marcos-jr-at-the-inauguration-of-the-light-rail-transit-line-1-lrt-1-4th-generation-4g-light-rail-vehicles-lrvs/>

Marcos, F. R., Jr. (2024, July 22). *Third state of the nation address*. <https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/2024/07/22/ferdinand-r-marcos-jr-third-state-of-the-nation-address-july-22-2024/>

Transport Studies

Freeman, Fox and Associates. (1977). *Metro Manila Transport, Land Use, and Development Planning Project*. Government of the Republic of the Philippines.

Overseas Technical Cooperation Agency. (1973). *Urban Transport Study in Manila Metropolitan Area*. Department of Public Works, Transportation and Communications.

Pak-Poy & Kneebone Pty. Ltd. (1983). *Metro Manila Urban Transportation Strategy Planning Project*. Ministry of Transportation and Communications.

Unpublished manuscripts

Palisoc, J.A. (2020). *Mobilities outside the center: Towards a study of rural mobilities in the Philippines* [Unpublished master's thesis]. Central European University.

Scalice, J. (2017). *Crisis of Revolutionary Leadership: Martial Law and the Communist Parties of the Philippines, 1957-1974* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of California, Berkeley.

Webpage/ Social Media Post/ Video

Light Rail Transit Authority. (n.d.). *LRTA history*. Retrieved September 1, 2024, from <https://www.lrta.gov.ph/lrta-history/>

Mañosa Company. (2022, August 3). *Facebook post*. <https://www.facebook.com/manosacompany>

The Associated Press. (2018, October 4). L020185M. *AP Archives*. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jSXfg4QejNw>

