A Timeline of Philippine History

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Philippines, Marxist-Leninist-Mao Tse-tung Thought (CPP-MLMTT) with avowed aims of overthrowing U.S. imperialism, feudalism, and bureaucratic capitalism and the eventual seizure and consolidation of political power.

1969

March 29: Jose Maria Sison's band of revolutionaries merges with the Huk peasant army of Bernabe Buscayno, alias Kumander Dante, to form the New People's Army (CPP-NPA), military arm of the communist party. They adopt the strategy of a protracted people's war. Kumander Dante had broken with Kumander Sumulong in disillusionment over the latter's perpetration of non-ideological and criminal Huk activities.

July 26: U.S. President Richard Nixon visits the Philippines and emphasizes that Asia should be responsible for its own security.

1970

January 26: President Marcos delivers his State-of-the-Nation address before both houses of Congress at the Legislative Building in Manila. Student groups led by the National Union of Students of the Philippines (NUSP) and the Kabataang Makabayan stage a rally outside the building. When the Marcoses exit from the building, the students become unruly and march to Malacañang. A confrontation between riot police and the students leaves scores injured.

January 30: NUSP President Edgar "Edjop" Jopson of the Ateneo de Manila and other student leaders dialogue with President Marcos in Malacañang to call for a nonpartisan Constitutional Convention and to seek a promise from him not to run for a third term.

Above: On a campaign promise of more rice and more roads, President Marcos wins reelection in 1969.
Right: The Cultural Center of the Philippines was conceived by First Lady Imelda Marcos as the home of the country's cultural heritage.
Spread: Police take a hardline stance as protests escalate.

September 10: The Cultural Center of the Philippines along Manila Bay is formally inaugurated. A project of the First Lady, Imelda Marcos, the center is envisaged to house, extend, and exhibit the nation's cultural heritage. Governor of California Ronald Reagan and his wife Nancy represent the Nixons at the inaugural ceremony.

November 11: Campaigning on the slogans, "Marcos means more rice; Marcos means more roads," President Marcos wins reelection to the presidency, the first to be granted a full second term. He defeats Sergio Osmeña, Jr. of Cebu, son of the former wartime president and garners nearly 60 percent of the total votes. Fernando Lopez is also reelected as vice president.
The dialogue is unproductive and a second confrontation occurs between riot police and about 2,000 demonstrators outside the Palace. In what has come to be called the “Battle of Mendiola” (Mendiola is the street leading to Malacañang), rioters attempt to ram a fire truck through Gate 4 of Malacañang. By dawn, six students have been killed. The press dubs these events the beginning of the First Quarter Storm.

February 18: After holding a People’s Congress in Plaza Miranda, 3,000 youths and militant students attack the U.S. Embassy in Manila, charging the U.S. with being a fascist imperialist power supporting Marcos. Protests and riots continue into the summer.

March 3: The Movement for a Democratic Philippines organizes a People’s March, a 23-kilometer march from the Quezon City-Manila Rotunda along the streets of Manila and ending at the Post Office building (Plaza Lawton) in Manila. Riot police prevent the marchers from entering the U.S. embassy.

April 5–7: General demonstrations and strikes protest increased oil prices and transportation costs. Radical students also lead violent anti-American riots.

May 20: Students and workers hold another protest action against the Marcos government and the U.S. involvement in Vietnam.

November 10: Filipinos elect 320 delegates from among 2,482 candidates to the Constitutional Convention, which will meet to revise the 1935 Constitution.

November 26: Pope Paul VI begins a three-day visit to the Philippines. The reception at the Manila International Airport is marred by an unsuccessful assassination attempt by a visiting Bolivian, Benjamin Mendoza.

December 29: A young political science instructor and constabulary officer at the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) in Baguio City, Lieutenant Victor Corpuz, opens the academy’s armory to a raiding party of NPA cadres. He defects to the NPA and flees with them to the hills. The senior cadets at the PMA at that time are led by Class Baron Gregorio “Gringo” Honasan.

- Nur Misuari, a respected intellectual and campus radical at the University of the Philippines in the mid-1960s, formally
establishes the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) in an island off the coast of Perak, Malaysia. Misuari was among the first group of 90 trainees to work for the independence of the Moro nation (Bangsa Moro).

February: Radical students set up the Diliman Commune and take over the University of the Philippines campus in Diliman to conduct teach-ins and rallies. After three days, constabulary and police troopers enter the campus and dislodge the students.

June: Soldiers kill nearly 70 men, women, and children huddled in a mosque in barrio Manili, Carmen in Cotabato, allegedly in revenge. The Manili Massacre confirms the existence of the Ilaga (literally, "rats"), a well-armed gang organized by a group of mayors to attack Muslims. Moro politicians organize the Barracudas in retaliation.

June 1: The Constitutional Convention formally opens in ceremonies at the Manila Hotel. Former President Carlos P. Garcia is elected presiding officer.

June 14: Former President Garcia dies shortly after being named presiding officer of the Constitutional Convention. Former President Diosdado Macapagal is chosen to take his place.

August 21: Bombs explode at a Liberal Party rally in Plaza Miranda, killing nine spectators and injuring most of the opposition senatorial candidates, among them Jovito Salonga, John Osmeña, Eddie Ilarde, Ramon Mitra, and Eva Estrada Kalaw. Also injured are opposition Senators Sergio Osmeña, Jr. and Gerardo Roxas. Only Senator Benigno Aquino, Jr., who was not present, escaped injury. President Marcos blames the attack on the communists and suspends the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus, allowing detention without formal charges.

August 24: In a nationwide address, Marcos vows to impose martial law if the communist attacks persist. He accuses Aquino of aiding the subversives.

September 1: U.S. operations at the
Sangley Point Naval Station in Cavite are terminated. The naval base is turned over to the Philippine Navy.

**November 7:** Off-year elections for eight senatorial seats are marked by widespread violence. Opposition candidates from the Liberal Party, despite having been injured in the Plaza Miranda bombing, win six of the eight seats at stake.

**January 12:** President Marcos restores the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus, except for those already in detention. Marcos's "ilocanization" of the military is believed to have begun this year, as he retired 18 generals, 20 colonels, and 13 lieutenant colonels in favor of men close to him. Juan Ponce Enrile, who was defeated in his senatorial bid, is reappointed secretary of national defense.

**June:** The military conducts a combined air, land, and naval operation in the mountains of Palanan, Isabela after a 100-ton freighter, the M/V Karagatan, was grounded and found to contain a cache of arms and ammunition allegedly for the use of communist rebels.

**July 7:** The Constitutional Convention votes to change the form of government from the presidential to the parliamentary system.

**August:** The Supreme Court issues a decision on the petition filed by American businessman William Quasha. Taking a nationalist line, the court declares, in what is called the "Quasha decision," that American ownership rights granted by the parity amendment would not extend beyond 1974, and that American ownership of private agricultural land between 1946 and 1974 is illegal.

**September 11:** Two explosions hit the main office of the Manila Electric Company. These are blamed on communist rebels and Marcos threatens to enforce emergency rule.

**September 15:** Senator Benigno Aquino, Jr., in a privileged speech in the Senate, charges that sources in the Armed Forces have revealed to him plans for Oplan Sagittarius, which would place Manila and its environs under martial law.

**September 21:** President Marcos signs Proclamation No. 1081, placing the Philippines under martial law. The document bears this date but the public announcement is made two days later.

**September 22:** The convoy of Secretary of National Defense Juan Ponce Enrile is allegedly ambushed and attacked. No one is killed, but Marcos uses this as a pretext to declare martial law. Enrile would later admit, soon after launching a rebellion against Marcos in February 1986, that this bombing had been staged.

Left: In a privilege speech in the Senate, Senator Benigno Aquino, Jr., reveals the Marcos administration's plans to declare martial law.
Far left: Metrocom troopers are given their marching orders by Colonel Robustiano Javier.
Below: President Marcos announces over nationwide television that the entire country has been placed under martial law.
September 23: President Marcos announces over nationwide television early on this Saturday morning that he is declaring martial law, citing the attack on Secretary Enrile the previous evening. He imposes a curfew, bans public demonstrations, closes newspapers and radio and television stations, and orders the arrest of opposition politicians. Among those arrested and detained in the first days of martial law are Senators Benigno Aquino, Jr., Jose Diokno, and Ramon Mitra; publishers Joaquin Roces and Teodoro Locsin; journalists Max Soliven, Luis Beltran, and Amando Doronila; and broadcaster Jose Mari Velez.

October 21: A force of nearly 1,000 men attacks Marawi City, but lacking support, is forced to withdraw two days later. Seventy-five persons are killed. The attackers call themselves the Mindanao Revolutionary council for Independence, and are led by the former police chief of Marawi City. After the incident, Nur Misuari and his Bangsa Moro Army (BMA) begin military operations in Sulu, Cotabato, and Zamboanga.

President Marcos issues Presidential Decree No. 27, outlining his land reform program. The law provides that all tenants whose landlords own more than seven hectares of rice and corn lands are to be sold the land.
they till at a price two-and-a-half times the average annual production. The eligible tenant would receive a Certificate of Land Transfer (CLT) identifying his cultivated area and promising him the right to purchase the land.

**November 29:** The Constitutional Convention delegates, minus 11 who were arrested by the military in its drive against subversives, approve the new constitution and prepare to submit the document for ratification.

**December 7:** During awarding ceremonies onstage, an assassination attempt on Imelda Marcos by a bolo-wielding assassin is foiled by security men. Imelda is injured, suffering cuts on her arms; the assassin is shot dead.

**January 3:** President Marcos orders the immediate execution of Lim Seng by firing squad for drug trafficking. The highly publicized execution, shown on national television, is meant to serve as a warning that Marcos would take strong steps against drug dealers. It is the first and last execution of its kind.

**January 17:** President Marcos announces that the new constitution has been ratified by citizens' assemblies in a referendum on January 15, at which voting was done by a show of hands. The assemblies were composed of all residents 15 years old and above, and could declare a quorum with 20 percent attendance.
April 24: The National Democratic Front (NDF) is formally founded. Along with the newly-established Christians for National Liberation (CNL) led by Father Edicio de la Torre, the NDF serves as a broad coalition of Filipino nationalists, democrats, and progressive Christians. It serves as the political arm of the Communist Party of the Philippines, tasked with making strategic alliances with militant, government, and other opposition groups.

May: President Marcos launches the Masagana 99 program to provide credit to tenants and smallholders to purchase the new agricultural inputs which would increase their production.

July 27: President Marcos holds a second referendum asking the people whether they want him to continue in power beyond 1973 and finish the reforms initiated under martial law. The government reports that 90.7 percent of those voting answered "yes."

August 27: Benigno Aquino, Jr. refuses to recognize the military tribunal which will try him for murder and subversion charges.

1974

February: Muslim forces fighting under the MNLF banner and the Bangsa Moro Army burn, then occupy the city of Jolo for two days. More than 10,000 persons are reported missing. The city is eventually recaptured, smoldering, and in ruins.

March: Lieutenant Hiroo Onoda, a 52-year-old Japanese straggler, emerges from 29 years of hiding in the jungles of Lubang Island in Mindoro. President Marcos offers him a general amnesty for crimes committed while in hiding.

June: The First Filipino All-Muslim Congress meets in Marawi City. Around 14,000 delegates attend the gathering, including some rebels granted safe conduct passes by the government.

July 3: The parity rights amendment contained in the Laurel-Langley Trade Act of 1955 expires. Americans are henceforth prohibited from owning real estate and from engaging in the exploitation of the country's natural resources. President Marcos decrees that it is his government's policy not to disturb the status quo for at least one year.

July 21: The Philippines hosts the Miss Universe Pageant where Amparo Muñoz of Spain is proclaimed the winner. Critics deplore the project as extravagant, but the Marcos government claims that it garnered a 54 percent share of the American television audience and that the P40 million spent generated earnings worth P117 million.

August 24: The military raids the Jesuit Sacred Heart Novitiate in Novaliches, allegedly in search of Jose Maria Sison. According to the defense secretary, the raid yields evidence of rebellion. Twenty-one persons are arrested and detained, including Father Jose Blanco.

September 1: In response to the raid, the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) petitions Marcos to end martial law. Bishop Jaime Cardinal Sin leads hundreds of Catholics in a public prayer.
September 11: President Marcos orders the release of former Senator Jose Diokno.

September 20–October 2: First Lady Imelda Marcos visits the People's Republic of China. She confers with Chinese leaders, visits Chou En-lai, and is granted an unscheduled meeting with Mao Tse-tung. The groundwork is being laid for formal recognition by the Philippines of Mao's government.

September 21: By virtue of Presidential Decree No. 557, President Marcos recognizes barangay status by drawing every barrio in the nation into the barangay system, and declaring that September 21, the anniversary of the declaration of martial law, is to be celebrated as Barangay Day.

October 1: In a memorandum of cooperation signed by Felicisimo Macapagal, secretary-general of the PKP, the old communist party, the party pledges to cooperate in the efforts of President Marcos to achieve common goals.

November 14: Eugenio Lopez, Jr., nephew of the former vice president, stages a hunger strike to protest his protracted detention. He is later joined by Sergio Osmeña III, son of the former presidential candidate. Both had been in jail for two years on charges of plotting against the life of Marcos.

1975

February 20: In a press conference in San Francisco, Primitivo Mijares, former aide and newspaperman who served as chairman of the Media Advisory Council, announces his defection from the Marcos government.

February 27: President Marcos holds a third referendum asking the people whether they approve of the manner in which he has been exercising his powers in issuing decrees and proclamations, and whether they want him to continue exercising such powers. The government reports that 87.5 percent of the voters voted "yes."

April 4: Benigno Aquino, Jr. begins his 40-day hunger strike in protest against the order for him to appear before a military tribunal.

June: President Marcos visits Beijing to formalize diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China. However, the locally-based communists who subscribe to Chairman Mao's teachings continue to be considered enemies of the state.
Nationalism and modernism are the twin motive forces that have shaped Philippine art from Luna to the present. Moreover, each era gave nationalism a particular meaning, a context unique to the period. For Juan Luna (1857–1899), Felix Resurreccion Hidalgo (1855–1918), and others, it meant aspiring for equality, or showing that the Filipino artist could paint as well as any European – certainly as well or better than any Spaniard.

The ilustrados of Jose Rizal’s time, Luna and Hidalgo included, translated the yearning for equality into a passion for correctness: to be attired correctly – even if one was picking up cigarette butts on the streets of Madrid to warm oneself, as did Marcelo H. del Pilar; or condemned to face the firing squad, as Rizal was. It also meant indulging in the gentleman’s art of fencing long after it was deemed illegal; or embellishing one’s writing with allusions to classical gods and goddesses as the mark of an educated man, as did Francisco Baltazar (1788–1762); and, in music – yearning for correct form, particularly in the case of Marcelo Adonay (1848–1928).

In the paintings of Juan Luna and Hidalgo, correctness meant using historical themes, preferably pertaining to the Graeco-Roman heritage, as in Luna’s Spoliarium, which featured the disposal of dead gladiators painted in the grand manner acceptable to the establishment or Academy, and Hidalgo’s Christian Virgins Exposed to the Rabble. Both paintings won prizes at the 1884 National Exposition of Fine Arts in Madrid – the gold and silver medals respectively, showing beyond doubt that Filipino artists at the time were equal to anyone. The Indios Bravos in Madrid and the whole Filipino community in Manila rejoiced in and toasted the triumph.

The yearning for equality, imprinted in the Filipino psyche as “I can do what you can do,” resulted in a mind set with strong repercussions well into the 20th century. Thus, when the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) launched its visual arts programs in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the main thrust became a sort of fashionable avant-gardism, a reprise of most of the art eddies in New York, Paris, of London. Conceptual art, serial art, happenings, and many others – all found sympathetic showcasing at the Cultural Center. The CCP in effect placed its imprimatur on art trends fumbling from the underground. It was a stance pregnant with New York chic.

The way was prepared by the ascendancy of Modern Art, especially after World War II, when the increasingly formalist concerns of the artists working around the tiny Philippine Art Gallery also gained acceptance. They painted with a keen awareness of the world looking over their shoulders.

The era produced modern art pioneers like Fernando Zobel and Arturo Luz, who injected visual thinking into their works; Vicente Manansala, Romeo Tabuena, and Cesar Legaspi, who saw reality with a Cubist-inflected idiom; Hernando R.
Ocampo and Constancio Bernardo, who both explored totally abstract, non-object forms. Their formalist concerns, very much in step with international art currents, almost shut off the figurative vision before World War II. The beautiful genre pieces of Fernando Amorsolo and his circle, as well as the grimy, expressive pieces of Victorio Edades and others, were temporarily marginalized.

The activist decade, which started in the late 1960s with the emergence of the equally fashionable engaged intellectual, once more pushed expressive figuration into the artistic limelight: Adi Baens Santos, Renato Habulan, and Danilo Dalena became the preferred artists within the art gallery circuit, including the CCP. Known as the Social Realists, they were later joined by other artists like Egai Fernandez, Imelda Cajipe-Endaya, and a host of younger ones who rode through the equally chic activist storm.

The seed of protest, activist art in the Philippines, actually dates all the way back to the 1920s. Activism in Amorsolo and his circle was premised on nationalism, while that of Victorio Edades implied both an artistic program as well as the visual echoes of the socialist rumbles going on at the time, such as the Sakdal uprisings and the Colorum movement.

In the case of Amorsolo and others, their protest was against the Caucasian ideal of beauty used as the norm in almost all art works. Amorsolo and his group posited an ideal brown beauty, and went so far as to write down all the characteristic features of such a native beauty, to be used in lieu of Mona Lisa or Venus de Milo.

And, as it was with the writers of the time, rural life, with its implied purity and innocence, became the main artistic motif. The rural motif was a most acceptable vehicle of protest for the new American Sultans, who viewed it as something exotic. For Amorsolo and his circle, the dalagang bukid (country girl) and the nipa hut became identified with what was “really Filipino,” just as it was in musical works like Muta ng Pasig and Dalagang Bukid.

The question of the nipa hut motif as the hallmark of the Filipino identity came under closer scrutiny among the modern artists of the 1950s. It was inevitably discarded because by that time, the rise of abstraction as the mainstream idiom of modernism made the question of motif almost irrelevant.

As the 20th century approaches its end, the world is truly becoming no more than a global village. Thus, as artistic expression becomes more and more homogeneous — such as in performance art, installations, and the like — the question of identity assumes a crucial role with all its nationalist undercurrents.

The past or history has become, for a number of artists, the new wellspring of many motifs. Roberto Feleo and Mario de Rivera create images from Philippine history; Ivi Avellana Cosio works around the ancient Filipino syllabary; and others explore other historic images with equal zest. Among artists working through abstraction, or with performance and installation art, the lure of indigenous materials became an apt motif in itself.

Among the pioneer artists in this direction are Junyee, Roberto Villanueva, and others who use readily available materials in their installation pieces. More conventional hanging pieces have been done by Paz Abad Santos, who explores not only indigenous materials but also ethnic motifs.

It may be too early to definitely delineate the face of 20th century art in the Philippines, but certainly the desire to be modern and the intrinsic urge to articulate nationalist sentiments — as seen in various contexts through different periods — undeniably fueled most of the art movements in the country. This, it is not too early to see.
June 17: Primitivo Mijares begins to testify before a U.S. Congress House Committee on International Relations on the alleged abuses and corruption inside the Marcos martial law regime. An attempt is made to bribe Mijares to prevent him from testifying. Within a year, Mijares would publish his story in a book entitled *The Conjugal Dictatorship of Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos* (1976). Soon after, he disappears in the U.S., alleged to have been murdered by Marcos operatives. Kumander Dencio, had been captured in July, but his arrest is announced only at the time of Dante’s capture.

October: The Philippines hosts the annual meeting of the boards of governors of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. The Philippine International Convention Center (PICC) is built on reclaimed land on Manila Bay specifically for this purpose.

October 16: President Marcos holds another referendum asking the people if they approve of amendments to the new constitution which will allow the creation of a Batasang Pambansa (National Assembly) and allow Marcos to exercise his powers until martial law is lifted. Government reports again that 86.7 percent voted in favor of the amendments.

November: President Marcos appoints Imelda governor of Metro Manila, consolidating under her control the four cities and 13 municipalities of the district. Duly-elected mayors of these local units are to report to her and her board, composed of a vice governor and three commissioners.

1976

August 26: Bernabe Buscayno, alias Kumander Dante, head of the New People’s Army, is captured in a sitio of Mexico, Pampanga. Lieutenant Victor Corpuz, alias

November: First Lady Imelda Marcos visits Libya upon the invitation of Colonel Muammar Khadafy. The focus of the talks is the armed conflict in southern Philippines.

December 23: The Tripoli Agreement between the Philippine government, the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), and the secretary-general of the Islamic Conference, is signed. The agreement calls for a ceasefire between government forces and Muslim rebels and provides for Muslim autonomy in the 13-province region of southern Philippines. The substance of the autonomy is still to be determined.

1977

August 22: At the World Law Conference in Manila attended by delegates from many countries, President Marcos announces am-
nesty for some persons "deemed guilty of subversion." He lifts the travel ban and the curfew in stable areas.

**October:** Eugenio Lopez and Sergio Osmeña III escape from detention and flee to the U.S.

**November 10:** The government announces the capture of Jose Maria Sison, chairman of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP).

**November 25:** A military commission finds former Senator Benigno Aquino, Jr. guilty of several violations of the Anti-Subversion Law and of related murders and sentences him to death. The decision comes nearly four years after Aquino was charged before a military court. Aquino constantly challenged the jurisdiction of the military court over his case. The same judgments were handed down on his codefendants, Bernabe Buscayno and Victor Corpuz.

**April 7:** Elections are held for the Interim Batasang Pambansa, the first national elections since martial law was declared. The opposition forms a slate for the 21 seats available for Metro Manila under the banner of Lakas ng Bayan (Laban). Ninoy Aquino leads the opposition candidates and campaigns from his prison cell. The citizenry in Manila conduct a noise barrage on the eve of elections in support of the opposition.

**April 8:** The results are announced, showing that the Kilusang Bagong Lipunan (New Society Movement) garnered 187 seats; only 13 seats are won by a semi-opposition party, the Pusyon Bisaya. In Manila, the KBL led by Imelda Marcos wins all 21 seats, shutting out Aquino and members of Laban.

**April 9:** Opposition leaders and around 600 followers stage a rally to protest electoral fraud and massive cheating. All are arrested and detained, among them Lorenzo Tañada, Aquilino Pimentel, Francisco Rodrigo, and Teofisto Guingona.

**May 2:** During a week-long visit to Asia and a stopover in Manila, U.S. Vice President Walter Mondale urges Marcos to promote more liberty and democracy.

**June 12:** The Interim Batasang Pambansa is inaugurated and Marcos is sworn in as Prime Minister of the assembly in addition to his post as president. A new parliamentary building and complex in Quezon City has been built for this purpose. The Ministry of Human Settlements is created and Imelda is appointed minister, elevating her to cabinet rank.

**January 7:** The U.S. military bases agreement is amended. The Philippines is assured of sovereignty over the bases, in which the Philippine flag will be flown, but the U.S. is guaranteed "unhampered military use" of the

Above: President Marcos called the Philippines under his stewardship a "New Society," proclaiming that his new rules of governance provided it enlightened leadership.

Far left: A military court finds Senator Benigno Aquino, Jr. guilty of violating the Anti-Subversion Law.

Left: President Marcos developed mass housing for the middle class through BLISS (Bagong Lipunan Improvement of Sites and Services) projects.
bases. The sizes and land areas of the bases are significantly reduced. The U.S. commits US$500 million to the Philippines over the next five years.

May 7: President Marcos stages regional assembly elections in the two predominantly Muslim regions. MNLF supporters boycott the elections and government-supported KBL candidates win all the seats.

May 7–June 1: The Philippines hosts the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) at the PICC. Opulent accommodations are arranged for 2,000 delegates from 157 countries in 13 five-star hotels around Manila.

November: President Marcos orders a stop to the construction of the P1.1-billion-peso nuclear power plant being built by Westinghouse Electric Corporation in Bataan under contract from the National Power Corporation.

December: Benigno Aquino, Jr. is given a three-week furlough to be with his family to celebrate his 25th wedding anniversary, the first time he is released from detention.

December 24: Military authorities arrest Eduardo Olaguer, a 44-year-old Harvard-trained businessman and vice president of Business Day, and accuse him of being the mastermind of the Light-a-Fire Movement, responsible for a series of explosions at places such as the Sulo Hotel, Manila’s floating casino, and Rustan’s Department stores, all owned by the Marcos family or its cronies.

January 30: Marcos’s KBL candidates dominate the local elections for governors, vice governors, mayors, and vice mayors in the nation’s first elections for provincial and municipal officials since the declaration of
martial law. The Liberal Party and Laban do not participate. The KBL wins 69 of 73 gubernatorial posts and 1,550 of 1,560 mayoralty positions.

May 1: Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU or May First Movement) is organized by militant labor leaders to protest declining wages. It becomes a constituent member of the CPP’s National Democratic Front.

May 8: Benigno Aquino, Jr. is released and flies to Texas in the U.S. for heart bypass surgery.

1981

January: Businessman-tycoon Dewey Dee flees from the Philippines, leaving behind personal and corporate debts amounting to about US$100 million.

January 17: President Marcos lifts martial law after almost nine years. In a festive ceremony, he orders the release of 160 prisoners charged with violating national security and public order. However, he signs an order providing that all his previous decrees and instructions by which he ruled under martial law would remain in force. He also retains extralegal powers, such as the Presidential Commitment Order (PCO) that allows him to order the detention of anyone suspected of subversion or rebellion.

February: Pope John Paul II arrives in Manila for a four-day visit which will also take him to other parts of the country.

June 10: President Marcos casts his vote in the first presidential elections since the declaration of martial law are held. President Marcos wins 88 percent of the votes over rivals Alejo Santos, a former guerrilla leader and defense secretary, and Bartolome Cabangbang, president of the Statehood USA movement. The genuine opposition parties refuse to participate.

June 30: President Marcos is installed for another six-year term as president. Vice President George Bush praises Marcos for his “adherence to democratic principles.” Cesar Virata is chosen prime minister.

August 1: President Marcos appoints Fabian Ver, former head of the National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA) and
Above: President Marcos appoints Fabian Ver as chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.
Right: President Marcos and Imelda grace the dance floor at the grand inauguration of the Manila International Film Festival.
Far right: U.S. President Ronald Reagan welcomes President Marcos on Marcos's 13th state visit to the U.S.

1982

January: Sportsman Tomas Manotoc is abducted and mysteriously “rescued” by government agents. A month before, in December 1981, he married Imee Marcos after divorcing his wife, former beauty queen Aurora Pijuan.

The Philippines hosts an International Film Festival at an estimated cost of US$100 million. In the haste to complete the Manila Film Center for this purpose, the structure collapsed about two months before the opening. Dozens of workers were buried alive and left in place, since the construction could not be stopped to retrieve their remains.

April: Assemblyman Salvador “Doy” Laurel announces the formation of the United Nationalist Democratic Opposition (Unido) – a grand coalition of 12 opposition groups with officials among the Filipino exiles in America, such as Benigno Aquino, Jr. and Raul Manglapus.

May 17: Local elections are held for the first time in the country’s 42,000 barangays for the positions of barangay captain and six councilors.

August: President Marcos orders the arrest of labor leaders Felixberto Olalia and Crispin Beltran of the KMU, on charges of sedition and rebellion.

September: U.S. President Ronald Reagan welcomes President Marcos for a 15-day state visit to the United States, his first in 16 years. He travels with an entourage of 700 persons and the whole trip is estimated to cost between US$5 to US$20 million.

December: President Marcos closes down two opposition newspapers, We Forum and Malaya, for engaging in “black propaganda” against the government.

1983

March: Ninoy Aquino prepares to return to the Philippines after his term as fellow at Harvard University expires.
May: Imelda Marcos meets with Aquino in the U.S. and warns him not to return home since there might be people who want him assassinated.

August: President Marcos's health deteriorates and he disappears from public view for some days. In secret, he undergoes a kidney transplant. The Malacahang press camouflage the operation and does not report his illness.

August 21: Ninoy Aquino lands at the Manila International Airport aboard a China Airlines (CAL) flight. Five military officers board the plane to arrest him. Before he reaches the tarmac, he is assassinated. Government reports place the blame on Rolando Galman, an alleged communist gunman who was also killed shortly after Aquino was shot.

August 31: After a wake at the Santo Domingo Church in Quezon City, where for several days thousands viewed his bloodstained body, Ninoy Aquino's remains are buried at the Manila Memorial Park in

Far left: Ninoy Aquino, temporarily allowed to stay in Boston for medical treatment, enjoys life with his family out of detention.

Left: Ninoy Aquino, arch political rival of President Marcos, is assassinated upon his return to the Philippines on August 21, 1983.

Below: Ninoy Aquino's funeral draws hundreds of thousands, turning it into one of the country's longest marches of protest and indignation.
Grassroots Scientists and Inventors

QUEENA LEE-CHUA

When asked to name Filipino inventors, schoolchildren invariably mention Eduardo San Juan and Agapito Flores. A graduate of Mapua Institute of Technology, San Juan allegedly designed the Lunar Rover, the Moon Buggy used in the 1971 Apollo XV mission. Local lore has it that he built a prototype straight from the junkyard: old umbrellas, bicycle handlebars, automobile hubcaps. Similar ingenuity is also attributed to Flores, who allegedly invented the fluorescent lamp. Rumor has it that President Manuel Quezon granted him an audience, but it took a Frenchman to help this Tondo electrician get a patent, which was later sold to General Electric. All this he accomplished without a high school diploma.

The enthusiasm generated by such high-profile inventions seldom leads to verification. Indeed, one instructor erroneously claimed that the term “fluorescent” was coined from the inventor’s last name. Some local textbooks mention these two personalities, and even Filway's Philippine Almanac includes their profiles. However, encyclopedias and scientific journals reveal that the moon buggy was the brainchild of a team of NASA astronauts. The fluorescent lamp has been variously credited to the British chemist Stokes, the American inventor Edison, and a host of others. The two Filipinos are not listed.

So what is the score? Inventions are seldom the domain of one person or group. Even such a complex system as calculus was invented independently: by the English (Newton) and the French (Leibnitz). It is therefore not inconceivable that San Juan and Flores may be part of a group of inventors, or among many patent holders for similar products. Unless more solid evidence can be found, one should probably focus on other scientists.

I have had the great fortune of meeting South Cotabato pilot James Reamon, whom I have christened “The Aerodynamic Inventor” for his windmills, aircon ventilators, and watermills—many of them protected by Australian patents, and ironically in more use Down Under. Locally, his Gizelle windmill, named after his daughter, garnered the Presidential Gold Medal, and internationally, the World Intellectual Property Organization's award for “Most Outstanding Invention of the Year” in 1984.

He is proud of homegrown talent: “Put a plant in a box and punch a hole in the side. The plant would tend to grow towards the hole. The same with creativity. If we look for outside direction, the ideas would not flow as well. Only basic knowledge is necessary, and concepts should be as unadulterated as possible.”

Teresita Rifareal-Raganit would agree. This lively chemical engineer from Mapua is fascinated by ginger and its byproducts: powder, tea, candy, and even no-tar-no-
ninocine cigarettes. In 1991, her ginger projects won third prize in the National Capital Region Inventors' Week.

She dedicates herself to manufacturing chemicals suitable for local use: "We disdain the Filipino label, but many imported chemicals are not suited for local use and consumption. Why transplant foreign technologies to Filipino soil if they do not benefit us at all?"

But she would agree with our biotechnologists, who adapt the cutting-edge technology of genetic engineering for local use. At the University of the Philippines, Natural Science Research Institute agronomicist Saturnina Halas and her team specialize in propagating superior species of sugarcane, bananas, and cut flowers through tissue cultures. Another project involves utilizing agricultural wastes like rice stalks to obtain much-needed glucose for fermentation and feed.

She minces no words. "Scientists are creative people and should be given room to let their ideas flow. They should not be hindered by administrative matters. We should also improve the methods in school. There should be a forum to propagate the principles of science to everybody. If you ask a child why there are humans with black, or white, or brown skins, he will most likely answer it with the legend of Bathala baking people in an oven. That can be used as a starting point for genetic ideas."

Perhaps Filipinos in science and technology can best be described by the old adage: necessity may indeed be the mother of invention. After first keenly observing the environment, they invent products from scratch, or transform foreign expertise for local purposes. In a lush chain of islands filled with prodigious land, mineral, and water resources, it is no wonder that the country excels in agriculture-based technologies, plant breeding, solar and geothermal power, food processes and the like.

And because of its unique geographical location, the Philippines pioneers in weather science. A revered scientific and historical landmark in this part of the world, the Manila Observatory was established in Intramuros in 1865 by Spanish Jesuits to analyze earthquake and typhoon data. By royal decree it became nationwide in scope in 1884, with the Jesuit Federico Faura as its first director; transformed into the official Weather Bureau in 1901; rebuilt itself after the war at Mirador Hill in Baguio in the 1950s; and finally transferred to Loyola Heights in Quezon City in 1962, with substations in nearby Balara and far-away Davao. With radio telescopes, underground vaults, observation posts scattered all over the Pacific, the observatory zeroes in on seismological, ionospheric, geomagnetic, and environmental research.

But the epitome of Philippine scientific genius lies among a select group of fewer than two dozen individuals: the National Scientists. They shine in diverse disciplines: nutrition, chemistry, animal husbandry, plant taxonomy, phycology, and others. Juan Salcedo, Jr. was not only an excellent biochemist and nutritionist, but a wise policy developer as well. Carmen Velasquez's love affair with trematodes (yes, worms) made her a well-loved parasitologist. Professor and pediatrician Fe del Mundo's work with children won her a Ramon Magsaysay Award. Gregorio Zara was responsible for the two-way TV telephone and an alcohol-fueled plane. Francisco Fronda was the father of poultry-raising. Geminiano de Ocampo introduced corneal transplants in the country and helped set up the Philippine Eye Bank. Hilario Lara studied the epidemiology of cholera, typhoid, diphtheria, measles, and dysentery.

We need not dwell forever on the moon buggy or the fluorescent lamp. Many other scientists and inventors want to take center stage.
Parañaque. Thousands join one of the longest and largest funeral processions in Philippine history, an 11-hour march which turns into a protest and indignation rally against the Marcos regime.

Barangay Day and the anniversary of the declaration of martial law. The rally, held at Liwasang Bonifacio, mourns Aquino's death and the death of democracy. At the end of the rally, a breakaway group of about 5,000 students marches to Mendiola Bridge and faces riot police guarding Malacañang. A confrontation breaks out and 11 people die.

**November 27:** Thousands gather at the Luneta to commemorate what would have been Ninoy Aquino's 51st birthday. The Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) issues a pastoral letter urging reconciliation as a means to avoid the bloodbath of revolution.

**1984**

**February:** Members of the opposition and coalition groups led by the August Twenty-One Movement (ATOM) and the Justice for Aquino, Justice for All (JAJA) stage a march they call "Tarlac to Tarmac" to dramatize their opposition to Marcos.

**May:** The National Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) is resurrected to serve as a citizen's watchdog for the forthcoming parliamentary elections. Jose Concepcion, businessman, serves as chairman. The Coa-

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*Right:* Bloodied students cover before truncheon-wielding riot police defending approaches to Malacañang Palace.

*Below:* A "Tarlac-to-Tarmac" march was staged by opposition groups.

*September 21:* Corazon Aquino, Ninoy's widow, leads a rally of opposition leaders and supporters in a National Day of Sorrow, a month after Ninoy's assassination, while the Marcos regime commemorates
lition for the Restoration of Democracy (CORD) led by Ninoy's brother Butz Aquino, and supported by nationalists Lorenzo Tañada and Jose Diokno, carry out a boycott campaign against the elections, believing that it would only further legitimize the Marcos regime. Corazon Aquino urges the people to vote.

**May 14:** Elections for the Batasang Pambansa are held. The United Nationalist Democratic Organization (UNIDO) and the People's Democratic Party-Lakas ng Bayan (PDP-Laban) decide to participate and field candidates. The opposition wins 53 of the 183 seats at stake, amid the usual allegations of electoral fraud.

**July:** The National Assembly convenes. Prime Minister Cesar Virata is reconfirmed while Nicanor Yntiguez is chosen as speaker of the assembly.

**August 21:** Corazon Aquino leads a rally to commemorate the first anniversary of her husband's assassination.

**September 21–22:** The opposition organizes a rally at Liwasang Bonifacio commemorating a National Day of Sorrow. The rallyists move on to Mendiola Bridge and hold an all-night vigil in front of Malacañang. By dawn the following day, the rallyists are dispersed with water cannons by riot police.

**October 24:** The commission tasked to investigate the Aquino assassination concludes that there was a military conspiracy to assassinate Aquino, and repudiates the military version that it was the handiwork of a communist hitman. However, the board is divided on the level of responsibility. Court of Appeals Justice Corazon Agrava submits a minority report, implicating only Avsecom chief Brigadier General Luther Custodio. The rest of the members, led by Justice Andres Narvasa, indict General Fabian Ver.

**December:** A Convenor Group composed of Corazon Aquino, Lorenzo Tañada, and businessman Jaime Ongpin is organized to devise a strategy to choose an opposition candidate if a snap election is called.

**1985**

**January 23:** The government formally charges before the Sandiganbayan (a civilian court for government personnel) chief of staff General Fabian Ver and 25 others for the slaying of Aquino. Ver takes a leave of absence as chief of staff.

**February:** A group of officers displays a banner of the Reform the Armed Forces Movement (RAM) - We Belong during the annual graduation and homecoming
December 1: The Corazon Aquino for President Movement (CAPM) led by former publisher Joaquin Roces presents Aquino with 1 million signatures endorsing her candidacy.

December 2: By a unanimous verdict, the three-member Sandiganbayan acquits General Ver and his co-accused on the charges of the Aquino assassination. The decision is met by the citizenry with widespread disbelief and disgust.

Right: Members of the Reform the Armed Forces Movement (RAM) become the lightning bolts of protest within the military.

Far right: The UNIDO is convinced to endorse Corazon Aquino as its presidential candidate and to field Salvador Laurel, its former standard bearer, as its vice presidential bet.

Below: To convince Ninoy Aquino’s widow, Corazon, to run for president, Joaquin Roces gathers for her over one million signatures of support.

ceremonies of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA). The group had been organized much earlier and is composed of junior military officers disgruntled by President Marcos’s handling of the military.

February 22: General Ver and the rest of the accused stand trial before the Sandiganbayan for the Aquino murder.

August: Opposition members of parliament file a motion for impeachment against Marcos in the Batasan, citing culpable violation of the Constitution and hidden wealth, but members of the majority party squelch the motion.

October: President Ronald Reagan sends Senator Paul Laxalt to Manila as his emissary to urge Marcos to carry out political and economic reforms.

November 3: President Marcos suddenly announces before an American television audience that he is holding a snap election for the presidency to confirm that he still has the mandate of the people. The announcement is made after much prodding from his American allies.
December 3: Corazon Aquino declares her candidacy for the presidency. Salvador Laurel, who had earlier wanted to run for the same position, agrees to be her running mate.

December 15: Aquino and Laurel are officially proclaimed as the opposition party's (Unido) presidential and vice presidential candidates in a large rally at the Liwasang Bonifacio. They begin a campaign to cover cities and provinces of the Philippines. President Marcos chooses former Senator Arturo Tolentino to be his running mate and also launches his reelection campaign.

1986

February 4: Aquino and Laurel hold their miting de avance at the Luneta Park. Thousands attend.

February 7: A heavy voter turnout marks the snap elections, which draws international attention and a group of American observers. Incidents of fraud, ballot box-snatching, vote-buying, and intimidation are reported. The Commission on Elections (Comelec) tally shows Marcos comfortably ahead, but the Operation Quick-Count of the National Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) consistently shows Aquino leading.

February 9: Thirty computer workers walk out of the Comelec tabulation center at the PICC, protesting that the results were being rigged.

February 11: Oppositionist ex-Governor Evelio Javier of Antique province is murdered in broad daylight in front of the provincial capitol where the canvassing was being held.

February 15: The Batasang Pambansa proclaims Ferdinand Marcos the winner of the recently-concluded snap elections. Opposition assemblymen walk out of the proceedings in disgust.

Spread: The political opposition wields its muscle at its culminating campaign rally at the Luneta Park. Above: “Don’t Resign! Just die!” film director Lino Brocka’s T-shirt urges Marcos. Left: Computer operators walk out of the COMELEC Tabulation Center to protest attempts to manipulate the vote count.
February 16: Cory Aquino leads a rally called Tagumpay ng Bayan (Victory of the People) at the Luneta Grandstand, attended by over 2 million people. She proclaims a victory for the people despite the proclamation of Marcos as the winner. She vows to lead a civil disobedience campaign against Marcos and a boycott of crony-owned companies and products.

February 22: Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile and General Fidel Ramos announce withdrawal of their support for President Marcos and call for his resignation. With about 300 followers, they barricade themselves inside Camp Aguinaldo. An attempted coup led by elements of the Reform the Armed Forces Movement (RAM) had been foiled, and they brace themselves for retaliation from Marcos forces. Cardinal Jaime Sin makes an appeal over Radio Veritas for people to send food and moral support to the beleaguered troops.

February 23: Crowds of opposition supporters gather around Camps Aguinaldo and Crame along Epifanio de los Santos Avenue (EDSA) and set up human barricades. By the afternoon a large force of loyalist marines and tanks are stopped a mile from their target by hundreds of people forming a barricade, armed only with rosaries and prayers.

February 24: At dawn, marines capture the Logistics Command inside Camp Aguinaldo. The 15th Air Force Strike Wing with seven helicopter gunships led by Colonel Antonio Sotelo defects to the rebels' side. Reformist soldiers led by Colonel Mariano Santiago take over Channel 4, the government television station. Rebel helicopters destroy enemy helicopters at Villamor Air Base. Malacañang is fired upon.
February 25: Corazon Aquino takes her oath of office as the duly-elected president before Supreme Court Justice Claudio Teehankee in simple ceremonies in Club Filipino in Greenhills. On the same morning, Ferdinand Marcos holds his own inauguration ceremonies at the Malacañang Palace grounds. Before the ceremonies are over, the other television channels are destroyed by the rebels, cutting Marcos off completely. By evening, Marcos makes a last call to his American allies, who advise him to “cut (now) and cut clearly.” By 9 p.m. four American helicopters fly the Marcos party from Malacañang to Clark Air Base. After a day, they stop at Guam, and are flown to Hawaii. After hearing of Marcos’s departure, crowds storm Malacañang Palace and the people at EDSA celebrate the triumph of “people power.”

Far left: Cardinal Sin says a thanksgiving Mass on EDSA for Fidel Ramos, Juan Ponce Enrile, and the crowds of defenders. Left: Marcos installs himself back into office by having himself sworn in by his appointed Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. Below: The new leaders of the country, Cory Aquino and Doy Laurel, show what they think of the man they deposed with a thumbs-down sign in front of the mountainside bust of President Marcos, which Marcos had commissioned.