

# Autobiography Of President Ferdinand Marcos



READINGS IN PHILIPPINE HISTORY

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## Ferdinand E. Marcos

Ferdinand E. Marcos was born on September 11, 1917 in Sarrat, Ilocos Norte. His parents, Mariano Marcos and Josefa Edralin, were both teachers. From 1923 to 1929, he attended the Sarrat Central School, Shamrock Elementary School in Laoag and the Ermita Elementary School in Manila. He finished high school and liberal arts course at the University of the Philippines. While still a student, he was commissioned as third lieutenant (apprentice officer) in the Philippine Constabulary Reserve after having been an ROTC battalion commander.



In 1935, Assemblyman Julio Nalundasan, a political rival of his father, was shot dead. Suspicion for the crime fell on the Marcoses. Ferdinand Marcos who was arrested on a charge of conspiracy to murder, was tried, and found guilty in 1939. He argued his case on appeal to the Supreme Court, luckily winning an acquittal a year later.

In the summer of 1939 he received his bachelors degree, cum laude from the U.P. College of Law. He would have been a class valedictorian and magna cum laude had he not been imprisoned for the Nalundasan murder. The case prevented him from attending several weeks of classes. He reviewed for the bar examinations while in prison. He bailed himself out in order to take the examination, where he emerged topnotcher in November of the same year. He became trial lawyer in Manila.

During World War II, he served as an officer in the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

As a lawyer and a master politician, Marcos led a most a interesting and controversial political career both before and after his term as Senate President. He became Senator after he served as member of the House of Representatives for three terms, then later as Minority Floor Leader before gaining the Senate Presidency. He is one of the legislators who had established a record for having introduced a number of significant bills, many of which found their way into the Republic statute books.

**The autobiography of President Ferdinand Marcos** is a compelling narrative that reflects the complex life of one of the most controversial figures in Philippine history. Marcos, who served as the 10th President of the Philippines from 1965 to 1986, is often remembered for his martial law declaration, economic policies, and the eventual downfall of his regime. His autobiography not only sheds light on his personal journey but also offers insights into the political landscape of the Philippines during his time in office.

## Early Life and Education

Ferdinand Emmanuel Edralin Marcos was born on September 11, 1917, in Sarrat, Ilocos Norte. He

grew up in a modest family, with his father, Mariano Marcos, serving as a lawyer and politician. His mother, Josefa Edralin, was a teacher. The following outlines key aspects of his early life that paved the way for his future endeavors:

- **Childhood:** Marcos was raised in a rural setting, heavily influenced by his family's political background.
- **Education:** He excelled in academics, attending the University of the Philippines where he earned a degree in law.
- **World War II Experience:** During the war, he claimed to have served as a guerrilla leader, which he later highlighted in his political campaigns.

Marcos's educational achievements and military experiences contributed to his sense of nationalism and ambition, shaping his future political aspirations.

## Political Rise

Marcos entered the political arena in the late 1940s. His political career began when he was elected as a member of the House of Representatives in 1949, representing Ilocos Norte. His rise to power can be attributed to several key events:

## Senate Career

In 1959, Marcos was elected to the Senate, where he gained prominence due to his eloquent speeches and legislative initiatives. His time in the Senate is marked by:

- **Legislative Achievements:** He sponsored several bills focusing on infrastructure and social welfare.
- **Presidential Ambitions:** Marcos's growing popularity and ambitions led him to run for president in 1965.

## Presidency

Marcos won the presidency in 1965, running under the Nacionalista Party. His initial term was marked by significant economic growth, but underlying issues began to surface.

- **Economic Policies:** Marcos implemented various infrastructure projects and sought foreign

investments.

- **Social Programs:** He initiated land reform and rural development programs aimed at poverty alleviation.

However, as his presidency progressed, challenges emerged, leading to his controversial declaration of martial law.

## Martial Law and Its Implications

On September 21, 1972, Ferdinand Marcos declared martial law, citing the need to suppress rising civil unrest and the threat of communist insurgency. This decision has been widely debated and analyzed for its impact on Philippine society.

### Reasons for Martial Law

Marcos justified martial law through various claims:

- **Political Instability:** He argued that the country was on the brink of chaos due to political dissent and violence.
- **Economic Crisis:** Marcos claimed that martial law was necessary to address economic issues and restore order.

### Consequences of Martial Law

The declaration of martial law had far-reaching consequences for the Philippines:

- **Human Rights Violations:** Numerous reports emerged of extrajudicial killings, torture, and imprisonment of dissenters.
- **Suppression of Press Freedom:** The media was heavily censored, and opposition voices were silenced.
- **Constitutional Changes:** Marcos amended the constitution to extend his term and consolidate power.

Marcos's martial law regime remains a contentious topic, with supporters arguing it brought stability,

while critics highlight the human rights abuses that occurred.

## Economic Policies and Issues

During his presidency, particularly under martial law, Marcos implemented various economic policies aimed at modernization and growth. However, these policies led to significant challenges:

## Infrastructure Development

Marcos initiated several major infrastructure projects, including:

1. Construction of roads and bridges to improve connectivity.
2. Development of the Manila International Airport.
3. Establishment of several state-owned enterprises.

While these projects initially seemed successful, they were often marred by corruption and mismanagement.

## Debt Crisis

By the 1980s, the Philippines faced a severe debt crisis. Marcos's government had borrowed heavily, leading to economic instability and widespread poverty. Key points include:

- **Rising Foreign Debt:** The country's debt ballooned, leading to economic strain.
- **Public Discontent:** The economic downturn fueled public unrest and calls for political change.

## Downfall and Exile

The culmination of economic decline, political repression, and mounting public dissatisfaction led to the People Power Revolution in February 1986. This peaceful uprising resulted in Marcos fleeing to Hawaii, where he lived in exile until his death in 1989.

## Legacy and Reflection

The autobiography of President Ferdinand Marcos offers a complex portrayal of his life and presidency. His narrative presents various aspects, including:

- **Nationalism:** Marcos emphasized his love for the Philippines and his vision for its future.
- **Justification of Actions:** He often justified his controversial decisions, including martial law, as necessary for national security and progress.
- **Historical Revisionism:** His autobiography seeks to reshape the narrative of his presidency, often downplaying the negative aspects.

Marcos's life story continues to evoke strong emotions and debates among Filipinos, reflecting the deep divisions in the country regarding his legacy.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the autobiography of President Ferdinand Marcos not only serves as a personal account of his life but also as a reflection of a tumultuous period in Philippine history. His reign was marked by significant achievements and equally significant controversies. Understanding his narrative is crucial for comprehending the complexities of Philippine politics and society, both past and present. The legacy of Marcos remains a significant point of discussion, with lessons that continue to resonate in the political landscape of the Philippines today.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What are the key themes explored in Ferdinand Marcos' autobiography?

Ferdinand Marcos' autobiography explores themes of leadership, nationalism, resilience, and the impact of martial law on Philippine society. He reflects on his childhood, military service, and the challenges he faced during his presidency.

### How does Ferdinand Marcos portray his time in power in his autobiography?

In his autobiography, Ferdinand Marcos portrays his time in power as a period of significant progress and development for the Philippines. He emphasizes his efforts in infrastructure, education, and economic growth, while downplaying the controversies surrounding martial law.

## What historical events does Marcos discuss in his autobiography?

Marcos discusses several historical events in his autobiography, including World War II, the declaration of martial law in 1972, the People Power Revolution of 1986, and his exile to Hawaii. He provides his perspective on these events and their implications for the nation.

## How does Marcos address the criticisms of his regime in his autobiography?

In his autobiography, Marcos addresses criticisms of his regime by presenting counterarguments and providing justifications for his actions. He often frames dissent as part of a larger narrative of national security and development, while portraying himself as a misunderstood leader.

## What impact has Marcos' autobiography had on public perception in the Philippines?

Marcos' autobiography has had a mixed impact on public perception. While some supporters view it as a legitimate account of his legacy, critics argue that it glosses over human rights abuses and corruption, contributing to ongoing debates about his rule and its ramifications for Philippine history.

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