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FORUM: PANARIGAT (TO STRUGGLE)



Joseph Allen Ruanto-Ramirez

This Forum welcomes scholars who compiled a syllabus on the Philippine Martial Law Period during the dictatorship of, then, President Ferdinand Marcos Sr. Composed by scholar-activists of the Critical Filipina/x/o Studies Collective, this on-going project welcomes scholars to contribute to this body of work at a time when, in the Philippines, a re-writing, nay, an erasure of the Marcos era atrocities is happening both in schools and in Philippine society. Even in the diaspora, the rewriting of Philippine history and the erasure of martial law violence have seeped into the minds of many, especially those who recently migrated from the Philippines. The current result of the national elections that propped Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. into presidency has also sparked discussions around his policies and how he might mirror his father’s political and human rights violation legacies. During the campaign season, Bongbong, presumably to garner etho-linguistic solidarity and support among the Ilocano people, boasted how he wanted to centralize and make the Ilocano language the Philippines’ national language. In a speech in Laoag, Ilocos Norte, then-presidential candidate Bongbong spoke (in Tagalog) “Magbabalik sa Ilocano ang national language (The national language will go back to Ilocano).” This Forum’s title, “Panarigat,” which is Ilocano for “to struggle,” not only harkens back to the People Power Movement’s chant of “Makibaka! Huwag Matakot! (Dare to struggle! Do not be afraid!)” but centers the Ilocano language, as Bongbong has promised his followers...even though he purportedly does not speak the language or barely understands it.

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