

# *Explorations* in **Southeast Asian Studies**

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[Contents](#) [Article 1](#) [Article 2](#) [Article 3](#) [Article 4](#) [Article 5](#) [Article 6](#)

## **Dissertation Abstract:**

**Systematic Qualitative Comparison of Sources of Power in Presidential Foreign Policy Decision Making by Presidents Diosdado Macapagal, Ferdinand Edralin Marcos and Corazon Conjuangco Aquino**

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One may usefully distinguish between two approaches to the analysis of presidential foreign policy decision making in the Republic of the Philippines (RP). The first approach emphasizes the role of context or *precedent* in RP foreign policy. In the present study, *precedent* refers more broadly to the force or power of existing international agreements, economic interactions, treaty ratification provisions, external allies, domestic political institutions, and the president's previous political commitments, as well as the degree of reliance on the Department of Foreign Affairs. Some aspects of this dynamic milieu may even otherwise be classified as elements of political culture. More than the dead weight of the inherited past, precedent embraces the lively synergy of the contextual variables. Moreover, not all precedents have equal force. Thus, conceptualized as an initial step towards operationalization, precedent sometimes stimulates dynamic interactions in the milieu confronting a presidential foreign policy decision maker during each of the focused time frames in this dissertation.

The second approach emphasizes *presidential initiative* by decision makers pursuing their preferences in external affairs. Presidential initiative includes domestic and international articulation of issues prior to accession to the presidency, as well as gender, proposals diverging from precedent, and utilization of political resources in both Philippine political culture and relevant foreign political cultures. Presidential initiative can also refer to (and result from) the

way in which a candidate (or incumbent) became (or remained) president. This consideration, in turn, may sensitize the researcher to the possibility that an atypical road to presidential power or to extended incumbency gave the chief executive unusual impetus, as in two of the four cases. The impetus, however, is not always appreciated by presidential decision makers, and their initiatives are not always effective. Those initiatives may be counterproductive blunders. To the extent that psychological factors actually come into play, presidential initiative may also include them.

Despite lively clashes over normative agendas and style, both approaches use similar kinds of evidence. Where the two approaches are in competition, they emphasize, respectively, the causal role of precedent and presidential initiative. Differentiating the two approaches from one another is not intended to inflate them into constantly clashing schools of disciples. Without discounting the specific impact of precedent and presidential initiative, this dissertation focuses on their *combined* effect on foreign policy outcomes.

*Stretched organizational pluralism* is a third possible source of power in achieving foreign policy outcomes, and it is linked to both precedent and presidential initiative. Stretched organizational pluralism can generate problems for decision makers, as Graham Allison's "bureaucratic politics" model suggests. Stretched organizational pluralism generically refers to the extent to which the foreign policy making power is shared, willingly or unwillingly, with other individuals and institutions. Unlike Dahlian "polyarchy," stretched organizational pluralism does not necessarily imply a high degree of representation or contestation in the larger polity. As with precedent and presidential initiative, sharing of the foreign policy making power may occur on any level of analysis.

Stretched organizational pluralism sometimes overlaps but is not isomorphic with Dahlian polyarchy. But, whereas Robert Dahl's polyarchy refers to the widest possible contestation and representation, stretched organizational pluralism includes both democratic and authoritarian social movements and constitutional systems. Alternative concepts, like democracy, democratization, and pluralism, are narrower in connotation and scope and, therefore, unsatisfactory. Dahl himself, in his 16 May 1984 Rokkan Memorial Lecture, underlined problems associated with using his notorious concept of *polyarchy*, noting (1) that the term "does not appear to have a standard meaning" and (2) that he, Dahl, has "doubtless[ly] contributed to the confusion of usage" during the previous thirty-one years. Stretched organizational pluralism includes interactions with close advisors involved in making foreign policy. But stretched organizational pluralism also refers to the impact of institutions such as the press, the risk of foreign policy discussions during an election campaign, and the utilization of constitutional provisions by citizens or governmental officials influencing foreign policy. In this sense, stretched organizational pluralism is sometimes the most important determinant or channel of influences on foreign policy decision making outcomes.

Figure 1, below, introduces the four cases and their focused time frames during 1962-1987.

### **Figure 1. Scope and Character of the Decisions in the Sample of**

## Foreign Policies

<b>Case 1</b> <b>(1 March 1962-31 December 1963)</b>	<b>Case 2</b> <b>(1 March 1966-31 August 1967)</b>
<b>Macapagal:</b> Renewing & non-violently promoting a territorial claim to Sabah/North Borneo first raised by the Philippines in 1950.	<b>Marcos I:</b> Expanding the infrastructure for regional inter-governmental cooperation (participating in ASA;s revival, proposing an "Asian Forum" & joining in co-founding the Association of Southeast Asia).
<b>Aquino</b> Postponing a crisis in RP-USA military relations by rejecting immediate abrogation of the Military Bases Agreement, denying the US early, explicit public reassurances of future support for a renewed treaty & favoring a referendum on any extension.	<b>Marcos II:</b> Early response to the First Oil Crisis (deepening the RP's pro-Arab tilt in the United Nations with implications for the Israeli-occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip & for the militarized crisis in Muslim areas of Mindanao) while seeking diverse sources of oil and beginning to develop other types of energy for industry & domestic consumption).
<b>(25 February 1986-16 December 1987)</b> <b>Case 4</b>	<b>(1 September 1972-28 June 1974)</b> <b>Case 3</b>

The four cases include a territorial claim, the formation of an international organization, energy sourcing and diversification, and military affairs. Yet they share several key similarities. All were consequential at the time of their implementation. The effects of those policies continued to be felt by successive presidents long after the closing dates in the focused time frames for this study.

Identifying sources of power is a prerequisite for constructing a causal model of foreign policy decision making. But the overarching objective is to characterize the precise linkages and dynamics between precedent, presidential initiative, and stretched organizational pluralism, as well as their impact on foreign policy decision making outcomes. Retrospective hagiography or demonology of the presidents' preferences is better pursued in a different kind of study.

Simply expressed, the question asked in this dissertation is: In the focused case studies, did Presidents Macapagal, Marcos, and Aquino do what they said they would do? To the degree that they succeeded, what accounts for their ability or inability to do so? Conversely, what accounts for foreign policy outcomes that were less than what they preferred? Asking these questions is

altogether different from asking whether one retrospectively prefers that the president had pursued a course of action closer to some critic's own preference.

Although this study is still underway, tentative inferences can be made from the four case studies in the nonrandom quarter-century sample of foreign policy decision making (1962-1987). While it is fair to characterize all three presidents as anti-communist and favorable to the United States, President Macapagal's re-introduction in 1962 of the RP's claim to Sabah challenged the status quo in Southeast Asia more so than occurred in any of the other three cases. In the first of the two Marcos cases, success in co-founding of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) rested at least as much on precedents of commitment to regional cooperation by previous administrations as on initiatives by President Marcos in 1966-1967. In responding to the First Oil Crisis, President Marcos faced grave threats to his martial law regime and may have succeeded better than expected, but Marcos's claim to have acted "independently" from the United States in Middle Eastern relations in 1973-1974 is not supported by the evidence. And during 1986-1987, President Aquino achieved her RP-USA military relations preferences partly because of her initiatives, partly because of the manner in which those preferences were nested among her prior commitments to re-democratization (despite her dismissal of the legislature) and "demarcosification," and partly thanks to inept tactical errors by her opponents on the left and right. In all four cases, the role of the press as adversary or supporter looms large. Overall, mutually reinforcing interaction between components of presidential initiative and stretched organizational pluralism appears to account for some foreign policy outcomes in all four cases. But not for all outcomes.

Methods and materials for tracing foreign policy decision making processes in this study include published and unpublished RP and foreign sources-primarily verbal but also including some quantitative data. Table 1 specifies the methodological pathways and documentary materials.

**Table 1. Pathways, Methods and Materials for Tracing Philippine Foreign Policy Process**

1. Analysis of public and declassified government documents.
2. Thematic analysis of memoirs of foreign policy decision makers & their advisers.
2b. Selective extraction of data from biographies of foreign policy decision makers.
3a. Contemporaneous statements for mass communications media (print) by RP foreign policy decision makers.
3b. Contemporaneous statements for mass communications media (print) by other foreign policy decision makers.
3c. Analysis of printed transcripts of contemporaneous statements by decision makers for radion and television broadcasts.

**3d. Thematic analysis of contemporaneous videotaped statements by key decision makers for television broadcast.**

**3e. Contemporaneous statements for mass communications media by non-governmental critics of RP policy.**

**3f. Journalistic summaries of foreign policy decision making process during the focused time frame.**

**4a. Oral histories of key decision makers & their advisers.**

**4b. Oral histories of other participants in politics during the focused time period.**

**4c. Oral histories of astute observers (scholars, activists) of the political scene.**

**5. Chronology.**

**6. Aggregate data.**

**7. Reanalysis of scholarly treatments (monographs, articles, theses, dissertations).**

**In the interest of replicability, Gary King and his Harvard colleagues have recently asserted that "taking advantage of privileged access without seeking access for others precludes replication and calls into question the scientific quality" of one's research. In accord with that sentiment, I have deposited 833 pages of United States Department of State documents, declassified after my 1992 dissertation-related submission of a Freedom-of-Information Act request, in the Asia Collection of the Hamilton Graduate Research Library at the University of Hawai'i-Manoa. And, upon publication of the book based on this dissertation, copies of interview tapes will be made available to the Philippine Research Resource File in Hamilton Library.**