

DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES AND THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA DURING THE ADMINISTRATION OF FERDINAND E. MARCOS: 1975-1986

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ABSTRACT

The term of President Ferdinand Marcos marked another milestone in Philippine foreign policy. At the start of the Third Philippine Republic, from President Roxas' term to that of President Macapagal, our foreign policy had always been pro-American and anti-Communist. It was not until the time of President Ferdinand Marcos that a new direction was initiated. It was steered towards establishing diplomatic linkages with the Socialist countries. The People's Republic of China was one of them. This paper highlights the political, economic, cultural and social implications of forging diplomatic ties with the People's Republic of China under the Marcos presidency.

Keywords: Diplomacy, Foreign Policy, People's Republic of China, Mao Zedong, Communism

I. Philippine-Chinese Relations During the Third Philippine Republic

The Americans made the Philippines its bastion of democracy in Southeast Asia. When the Third Philippine Republic was established under President Manuel Roxas, the foreign policy of the country was quickly aligned with that of its former colonial master. From the 1950s to the early 1970s, China was branded as a menace to Asia following the Communist victory in 1949, and the

Philippines, in turn, was seen by the Chinese revolutionaries as a pawn of American imperialism.¹

The Chinese Minister Plenipotentiary proposed a treaty of amity to President Manuel Roxas in October 1946. The proposal was turned down because China wanted the same privileges as those given to its counterpart, the United States. The Treaty of Amity had the following provisions:²

1. Nationals of each country were at liberty to enter or leave, to travel or reside in the territory of the other upon the same terms as nationals of any third country following domestic laws and regulations;
2. They were, in each other's territory, accorded the privilege to establish schools, and to enjoy freedom of peaceful assembly and association, of publication, of worship and religion, of burial and maintaining cemeteries;
3. They had the right to acquire, inherit, possess, lease, occupy and dispose of by sale, testament, donation, or other means, any movable or immovable property and to engage in trade and other peaceful and lawful pursuits throughout the whole extent of the other country;
4. They received in the territory of the other no less favorable treatment than that accorded to the nationals of the other with regards to all legal proceedings and in matters relating to the administration of justice and levying of taxes;
5. Chinese treaty right did not extend to advantages then accorded by the Republic of the Philippines to the United States government or its nationals.

¹ Aileen San Pablo-Baviera "The Context of Philippine-China Relations" in Bernardita Reyes-Churchill, *An Assessment: Philippine-China Relations 1975-1988* (Manila, Philippines: De La Salle University Press, 1990), 19.

² Purificacion Quisumbing, *Beijing-Manila Détente* (Quezon City: UP Law Center, 1983), 57.

The Treaty of Amity was not approved because the prevailing international disposition at that time was to favor the Chinese Communist Party of Mao Zedong in its takeover of China. The Communist insurgency led by the Huks had been threatening the stability of the Philippine government, and many attributed this to the support of the Communists in mainland China. The continued American influence on the affairs of the state was evident in the unilateral abrogation of the treaty.

When Vice President Quirino succeeded President Roxas, he wanted to open relations with other countries in Asia. He then invited President Chiang Kai-shek of the Republic of China for a visit on July 10, 1949. Chiang stressed the necessity for the Philippines to commit itself to recognize Taipei as the only legitimate government of China and to consider the leaders of mainland China as usurpers.³

On October 1, 1949, the sudden takeover of the mainland by the Communists and the eventual founding of the People's Republic of China under Mao Zedong brought dread and suspicion against the new Communist government. America would warn the Philippines against establishing diplomatic ties with the People's Republic of China.

The People's Republic of China posed two problems to the Philippines. The first was internal, that is, increased control over Chinese immigration, and the other was external, the recognition of the Chinese Communist regime.⁴ Surprisingly, President Quirino kept a neutral stand and did not condemn the founding of the People's Republic of China. While he held back official recognition and sending a congratulatory message to Beijing, neither did he issue an official message to the Republic of China on Taiwan on the anniversary of "Double Ten."⁵

President Quirino did not push through an anti-Communist policy. When he was in Honolulu, his response to the question on whether he was going to combat Communism status in Asia was:

We are not anti-Communist. We are non-Communist. What we in the Philippines are interested in, is our economic prosperity and

³ Benito O. Lim, "A History of Philippine-China Relations" in Aileen San Pablo-Baviera and Lydia N. Yu-Jose, *Philippine External Relations: A Centennial Vista* (Pasay City: Foreign Service Institute, 1998), 224.

⁴ Hsiao Shi-ching, *Chinese-Philippine Diplomatic Relations 1946-1975* (Quezon City: Bookman Printing House, 1975), 36.

⁵ Benito O. Lim, "A History of Philippine-China Relations" in Aileen San Pablo-Baviera and Lydia N. Yu-Jose, *Philippine External Relations: A Centennial Vista*, 225.

our happiness. We are happy under our present system of government.⁶

This pronouncement worried the Americans who monitored the Communist expansion in Asia. Side by side with granting amnesty to the Huk, the softening stand of President Quirino on the staunch anti-Communist policy of the Americans made them anxious. The Americans then pressured President Quirino to stem the Huk rebellion by appointing Ramon Magsaysay as Defense Secretary and at the same time send a combat infantry battalion of 1,275 men to the ongoing Korean War.

The Philippines supported the bid to boycott the People's Republic of China and North Korea in the United Nations Resolution 500(V). On the resolution adopted on May 18, 1951, recommending military and economic sanctions against Chinese Communist and North Korea, the Philippines and ten other nations voted affirmatively, while nine abstained.⁷ The signing of the Mutual Defense Pact with the United States on August 30, 1951 was meant to serve a stern warning to the People's Republic of China that the US and the Philippines would not tolerate Communist expansionism in Southeast Asia.

Defense Secretary Ramon Magsaysay defeated incumbent President Elpidio Quirino in the 1953 presidential election because of American support and of his popularity among the ordinary people. However, he was branded in the November 1953 issue of the *Time* as "America's boy." Banking on the program of saving democracy, Magsaysay reasserted the previous foreign policy of aligning the Philippines closely to the American democratic ideology. Non-recognition of the Communist bloc continued, but this negative policy could not allay the uneasiness caused by the geographic nearness of the Chinese People's Republic.⁸

President Magsaysay, a staunch anti-communist leader of the Philippines advertently supported the formation of Southeast Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO) on September 8, 1954. The SEATO's fundamental mission is:

. . . For each party recognizes that aggression by means of armed attack in the treaty area against any of the Parties, or against any of the states or territory which the Parties by unanimous agreement may thereafter

⁶ Purificacion Quisumbing, *Beijing-Manila Détente* (Quezon City: UP Law Center, 1983), 63.

⁷ Milton Walter Meyer, *A Diplomatic History of the Philippine Republic: The First Years, 1946-1961* (California: Regina Books, 2003), 120.

⁸ Meyer, *A Diplomatic History of the Philippine Republic*. 188.

designate, would endanger its own peace and safety and agrees that it will in the event act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional processes.⁹

The Republic of the Philippines, United States of America, Australia, France, New Zealand, Pakistan, and Thailand considered the Communist countries as threats to peace in Southeast Asia and the Pacific region. In the provision as mentioned above, the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China were considered the source of danger to democratic nations.

Before this, the Philippine Armed Forces Intelligence Service coordinated with the Manila Police to eliminate Chinese Communist elements in the Philippines. They rounded up more than 300 Chinese residents alleged to have been engaged in Communist subversive activities.¹⁰

President Magsaysay's approval of sending a Philippine delegation to the Bandung Conference in Indonesia on April 20, 1955 gave the People's Republic of China through Premier Chou En-lai, an opportunity to invite the Filipinos to visit mainland China. Premier Chou said:

There is a notion between China and the Philippines that we have no common border. In spite of that, we also welcome a delegation from the Philippines. We welcome this delegation from the Philippines before the establishment of our border lines to visit especially our coastal regions, Fukien and Kwangtung provinces and see for themselves whether we are carrying out any activities to direct threats against the Philippines.¹¹

Although the guarantee of Premier Chou En-lai was meant to extend the olive branch to the Philippine government, the invitation fell on deaf ears. Following Magsaysay's death in a plane crash, Vice President Carlos P. Garcia became the Chief Executive of the country. On June 19, 1958, President Garcia's

⁹ Benito O. Lim, "A History of Philippine-China Relations" in Aileen San Pablo-Baviera and Lydia N. Yu-Jose, *Philippine External Relations: A Centennial Vista* (Pasay City: Foreign Service Institute, 1998), 228.

¹⁰ Hsiao Shi-ching, *Chinese-Philippine Diplomatic Relations 1946-1975* (Quezon City: Bookman Printing House, 1975), 108.

¹¹ Hsiao Shi-ching, *Chinese-Philippine Diplomatic Relations 1946-1975*, 121.

state visit to the United States of America revealed emphatically the Philippine stand on the recognition of the People's Republic of China. Garcia stressed:

We in the Philippines, who experienced fighting against the communist-inspired Huk rebellion, will never contemplate association with Red China, because being 650 miles away from the Philippines, she can flood the country, not only with traders and with immigrants, but can bring in their ideology that once stirred our country to an internal strife. We would never expose ourselves again to the danger of being subverted by Chinese Communists.¹²

This stand was again shown in his state visit to Taipei, from May 2 to 7, 1960. President Garcia assured Taiwanese President Chiang Kai-shek of his support thus:

I can assure you, Your Excellency that it was always and will continue to be of utmost gratification to my people and Government to have supported the cause of Free China in the international community. With your kind indulgence, I would like to dwell, too, on the spirit of cooperation which has characterized the efforts of our two countries' governments in the field of international relations.¹³

In April 1959, the Garcia administration banned the travel of Filipinos to Communist countries. Because of the Philippine recognition of Taiwan, several agreements were signed between the two countries. An air travel agreement was signed on October 23, 1959 to ensure safe and free air transport between Manila and Taipei.¹⁴ A Protocol on Trade Relations between the Philippines and Taipei was also signed by President Garcia and Minister Chen Chih-mai

¹² *China Yearbook 1962-1963* (Taipei: China Publishing Co., 1962), 263.

¹³ Benito O. Lim, "A History of Philippine-China Relations" in Aileen San Pablo-Baviera and Lydia N. Yu-Jose, *Philippine External Relations: A Centennial Vista*, 152.

¹⁴ Benito O. Lim, "A History of Philippine-China Relations" in Aileen San Pablo-Baviera and Lydia N. Yu-Jose, *Philippine External Relations: A Centennial Vista* (Pasay City: Foreign Service Institute, 1998), 230.

granting Taiwanese businessmen and traders the same privileges enjoyed by United States citizens in the Philippines.¹⁵

In 1961, Vice President Diosdado Macapagal defeated Garcia in their bid for the presidency. Macapagal pursued the same anti-Beijing policy of the Philippines. As President Garcia had paid them a state visit in 1960, the Republic of China returned the favor by sending Vice President Chen Cheng to the Philippines on March 20 to 23, 1963. Upon Vice President Chen's arrival at the Manila International Airport on March 20, 1963, he said:

We had no sooner landed than we found ourselves in the midst of a tide of warm affection of the Philippines' people. Such friendship helps to turn our ideals, our determination, and our strength into a great force for good. We have brought with us today the warm friendship as well as sincere wishes for solidarity of the people and the government of the Republic of China to the people and the government of the Republic of the Philippines.¹⁶

The warm reception accorded by the Macapagal administration to the second man of the Republic of China was a blatant show of support for the nationalist forces in Taiwan. Upon assumption of office, President Macapagal reiterated the "good neighbor" policy of the Philippine government, its anti-Communist stand, and its strong opposition to the proposed seating of the Chinese Communist regime in the United Nations.¹⁷ Philippine acceptance of Taiwan as the legitimate representative of the Chinese people further alienated the mainland Chinese from the Philippines. The vocal and open support of the Republic of China was clearly stated during a state banquet in honor of Vice President Chen. President Macapagal said:

On this ambitious program, we have the encouraging and stimulating example of the people of free China who, driven with their backs to the walls, as it were, fought back, under

¹⁵ Benito O. Lim, "A History of Philippine-China Relations" in Aileen San Pablo-Baviera and Lydia N. Yu-Jose, *Philippine External Relations: A Centennial Vista* (Pasay City: Foreign Service Institute, 1998), 230.

¹⁶ Vice President Cheng Chen, statement delivered at Manila International Airport on March 20, 1963.

¹⁷ *China Yearbook 1962-1963* (Taipei: China Publishing Co., 1962), 263.

the inspired leadership of President Chiang Kai-shek and his dedicated associates, thereby showing to the world that peoples cannot long remain in fear, insecurity, and poverty if they have the courage and the determination to fight for their survival. As long as the stimulating example of free China remains, as long as the courage of its people, on their embattled island, continues to defy their enemies, so long will other struggling nations of the world, facing similar life and death struggles, be encouraged and emboldened to look forward with confidence in the future.¹⁸

Along with Macapagal's full support of the cause of the Republic of China was his administration's continued ban on the travel to the People's Republic of China and vice versa. President Macapagal himself opposed the proposal for a direct trade to the People's Republic of China to ease the economic downturn in the country. He said:

For those who are attracted by the imagined profits of trade with Communist China, our answer is that there is not a single pound of sugar, copra, coconut oil, iron or lumber for which Communist China would or could pay or more than what our present customers' power pay. From our clear-cut policy there flows for us the direct advantage of reducing the risk of Communist subversion.¹⁹

Macapagal would not compromise Philippine internal security by establishing diplomatic, trade and even cultural relations with the People's Republic of China. Threat, distrust, and fear of Communist takeover from the mainland China still hounded the Macapagal presidency.

¹⁸ President Diosdado Macapagal's remarks at the State Dinner honoring Vice President Chen on March 22, 1963.

¹⁹ *Manila Times*, September 5, 1962, 2-A.

II. Formal Diplomatic Ties Between the Philippines and the People's Republic of China

The term of President Ferdinand Marcos marked another milestone in Philippine foreign policy. At the start of the Third Philippine Republic, from President Roxas' term to that of President Macapagal, our foreign policy had always been pro-American and anti-Communist.

It was not until the time of President Ferdinand Marcos that a new direction was initiated. It was steered towards establishing diplomatic linkages with the Socialist countries. The People's Republic of China was one of them. This diplomatic vision of the President was highlighted in his second inaugural address on December 30, 1969 when he said:

In Asia we must now forge a constructive unity and co-exists in purposeful peace, not on terms that must yet be drawn by a conquering ideology, but on bonds that now exists. For in the years of this challenging deeds, Asia must decide whether in this vast region of one of the greatest of the world's peoples, it will build a sanctuary, or set up a continental prison.²⁰

President Marcos' goal was to forge peace in the Asia Pacific realm by charting a new diplomatic policy directed towards mutual co-existence devoid of ideological bias. The President's aim of uniting Asia regardless of ideological influence was stressed in his third inaugural address under the Fourth Philippine Republic on June 30, 1981. He said:

It is unthinkable that we should approach this task as partisans to warring interests, creeds, and ideologies. Our goal is to unite, not divide.²¹

Marcos was aware of the international and domestic realities of the 1960s and the 1970s. In 1964, the People's Republic of China exploded its first atomic bomb.²² The mainland Chinese had long been suspected of aiding the Communist insurgents in the country and infiltrating the army to carry out

²⁰ Gregorio F. Zaide, *Documentary Sources of Philippine History* (volume 12) (Metro Manila, Philippines: National Bookstore, Inc., 1990), 276.

²¹ Gregorio F. Zaide, *Documentary Sources of Philippine History* (volume 12), 432.

²² *Manila Times*, March 10, 1967.

training of insurgents and also of shipping in counterfeit peso bills from the mainland.²³

The suspicion of the Philippine government was fueled by the foundation of the Communist Party of the Philippines on December 26, 1968, which was the 75th birthday of Chairman Mao Zedong. The Communist Party of the Philippines adopted Mao Zedong's ideas merged with Marxist-Leninist thought. Amado Guerrero, believed to be the nom de guerre of Jose Maria Sison, said:

The most significant development so far in the Philippine Revolution is the reestablishment of the Communist Party of the Philippines under the supreme guidance of Marxism-Mao Tse-tung thought.²⁴

President Marcos was aware of the geopolitical threat of the People's Republic of China and its strong ideological link and logistic support to the local Communist insurgency. Inspired in part by the young Red Guards spearheading Mao Zedong's Cultural Revolution in China, Kabataang Makabayan leader Jose Maria Sison, a university instructor, declared a "revolutionary situation" and founded the Maoist-oriented Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its military wing, the New People's Army (NPA).²⁵

The Philippine government planned to mitigate the rising local Communist movement in the country by pacifying through diplomatic initiatives their top supporter, which was the People's Republic of China. Aileen San Pablo-Baviera claims:

The emergence of China as an economic powerhouse also presents new questions for Philippine foreign policy... There is some agreement among analysts that whatever happens inside China is bound to affect the rest of the region, if not the world.²⁶

²³ *Industrial Philippines*, March 1967, 7.

²⁴ Amado Guerrero, *Philippine Society and Revolution* (Philippines: Aklat ng Bayan, Inc., 2006), 59.

²⁵ Arthur Zich, "The Marcos Era" *The Wilson Quarterly*, Volume 10, No. 3 (Summer, 1986), 118.

²⁶ Aileen San Pablo-Baviera, "Rethinking Philippine Foreign Policy" *Kasarinlan*, Volume 10, Number 2 (4th Quarter, 1994), 88.

Again, the looming economic repercussion of the termination of the Laurel-Langley Trade Agreement in 1974 was one of the considerations of President Marcos for opening diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China, the Soviet Union and Eastern European Socialist bloc. With more than 800 million people, the People's Republic of China was a viable market for Philippine products.

Alongside these global developments, in 1971 the People's Republic of China was given membership in the United Nations. In October 1971, the United Nations General Assembly adopted at its 26th session, Resolution 2858 which restored all the lawful rights of the People's Republic of China in the United Nations and expelled the "representatives" of Taiwan authorities from the body.²⁷

In 1971, the détente, or the easing of geopolitical tension between the United States and the Soviet Union came about. United States President Richard Nixon visited the People's Republic of China from February 21 to 28, 1972 to establish diplomatic ties with the country. In a joint communique in Shanghai, the United States side declared:

The United States acknowledges that all Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Straits maintain that there is but one China and that Taiwan is a part of China. The US Government does not challenge that position. It reaffirms its interest in a peaceful settlement of the Taiwan question by the Chinese themselves.²⁸

The Philippine government then assessed that it was already ripe for diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China. In his State-of-the-Nation address in 1972, the President said:

We are required therefore, to make concurrent efforts to ease the way towards the establishment of relations with the Soviet Union's rival socialist state, "the People's Republic of China." With that great power, we will undoubtedly have official and unofficial

²⁷ *White Paper on the Taiwan Question and Reunification of China* (Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1989), 531.

²⁸ Liang Liangxing, *China's Foreign Relations: A Chronology of Events: 1949-1988* (Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1989), 531.

contacts with its representatives in the United Nations.²⁹

On the go-signal from the President, First Lady Imelda Romualdez-Marcos visited mainland China from September 20 to 29, 1974. It was purportedly purely a “friendly visit,” and its objective was to promote mutual understanding and cultural and trade relations.³⁰

President Marcos and the First Lady went to the People’s Republic of China on June 7 to 11, 1975 to officially sign a diplomatic agreement. In a state dinner at the Great Hall of the People, President Marcos said:

China and its leaders enshrine as a fundamental guiding principle of international relations not only co-existence but also equality of all nations, irrespective of wealth, size and most important of all – of differences in social systems.³¹

On June 9, 1975, President Marcos and Premier Chou En-lai signed a joint communique providing for mutual recognition of their respective governments and the established diplomatic relations between the two countries. A trade agreement was also included in the communique. Signing in behalf of the Philippines was Secretary of Industry Vicente Paterno while Minister for Foreign Trade Li Chiang signed for the People’s Republic of China.³²

The signing of the joint communique between the two leaders reestablished the ancient ties that both countries had. More than one thousand years ago, the ancestors of our two countries, braving the waves and defying hardships, established contacts and traded with each other, and had thus forged a profound traditional friendship.³³

The Joint Communique of the Republic of the Philippines and the People’s Republic of China stated:

²⁹ Ferdinand E. Marcos, *Strength through Crisis, Growth in Freedom*, State of the Nation Address, January 24, 1972, 7.

³⁰ Hsiao Shi-ching, *Chinese-Philippine Diplomatic Relations 1946-1975* (Quezon City: Bookman Printing House, 1975), 134-135.

³¹ *Manila Bulletin*, June 8, 1975, 4.

³² *Manila Bulletin*, June 10, 1975, 1.

³³ Yu Minsheng, “Keynote Address.” in Bernardita Reyes-Churchill, *An Assessment: Philippine-China Relations 1975-1988* (Manila: De La Salle University Press, 1990), 7-8.

The Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the Government of the People's Republic of China, desiring to promote the traditional friendship between the Filipinos and the Chinese peoples, have decided upon mutual recognition and the establishment of diplomatic relations at ambassadorial level effective from the date of signature of this communique.³⁴

In addition, both countries highlighted their desire for an independent and mutual diplomatic relationship. The second section of the Joint Communique stated:

The two Governments hold that the economic, political and social system of a country should be chosen only by the people of that country, without outside interference. They maintain that the difference between the economic, political and social systems of the Republic of the Philippines and the People's Republic of China should not constitute an obstacle to peaceful co-existence and the establishment and development of peaceful and friendly relations between the two countries and peoples in accordance with the principles of mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit.³⁵

In the joint communique, the Philippines would have to withdraw its recognition of the Republic of China (Taiwan) and consider mainland China as the official representation of all Chinese people. The third section further asserted:

³⁴ Basic Document. Joint Communique of the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the Government of the People's Republic of China in Willy C. Gaa, *Philippine-China Agreements (1975-2005): Bridges towards the Golden Age of Partnership* (Beijing: Department of Foreign Affairs, Philippine Embassy-Beijing, 2005), 6.

³⁵ Basic Document. Joint Communique of the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the Government of the People's Republic of China in Willy C. Gaa, *Philippine-China Agreements (1975-2005): Bridges towards the Golden Age of Partnership*, 6.

The Philippine Government recognizes the Government of the People's Republic of China as the sole legal government of China, fully understands and respects the position of the Chinese Government that there is but one China and that Taiwan is an integral part of Chinese territory, and decides to remove all its official representations from Taiwan within one month from the date of signature of this communique.³⁶

The geopolitical and ideological divide between the Philippines and the People's Republic of China in 1949 was finally dismantled with the signing of diplomatic relations. It reestablished the close tradition of political, economic and cultural relations since the Tang dynasty period.

A. Signing of the Philippine-People's Republic of China Trade and Economic Agreements

The National Security Council and the Foreign Policy Council of the Philippines approved the establishment of full diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China. A trade agreement between the two countries was also signed during President Marcos' state visit in 1975.

The Philippines had cut off its relations with the People's Republic of China during the Communist takeover in 1949, but both countries kept the prolific economic relationship that they had since the ancient period. The earliest historical records of the Philippine foreign commerce recount the trading intercourse between China's sea-faring merchants and our pre-Magellanic forebear.³⁷

Even without a formal trade agreement, the Philippines had already opened itself to exploratory trade in the 1970s with the People's Republic of China. The Philippines' trade with Red China from May 1972 to July 1974 totaled US \$72 million.³⁸ The Philippines exported some US \$45.3 million worth of goods to Red China while importing from it goods worth US \$ 26.8 million.³⁹ This

³⁶ Basic Document. Joint Communique of the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the Government of the People's Republic of China in Willy C. Gaa, *Philippine-China Agreements (1975-2005): Bridges towards the Golden Age of Partnership*, 7.

³⁷ Hsiao Shi-ching, *Chinese-Philippine Diplomatic Relations 1946-1975* (Quezon City: Bookman Printing House, 1975), 137.

³⁸ Hsiao Shi-ching, *Chinese-Philippine Diplomatic Relations 1946-1975*, 137.

³⁹ "RP Trade with Socialist States Totals 134.8 M" *Bulletin Today*, November 2, 1974.

showed a favorable balance of trade for the Philippines amounting to US \$ 18.4 million.⁴⁰

In the 1970s, the Philippines also went through an oil crisis mainly due to the Arab-Israeli War and the subsequent oil embargo of the Arab nations against the supporter of Israel. The oil supply to the Philippines was drastically affected. The People's Republic of China delivered the initial shipment of 125,000 barrels of crude oil to the Bataan refinery in Limay on October 14, 1974.⁴¹

On June 9, 1975, a joint communique was signed by leaders of both the Philippines and the People's Republic of China. Secretary Vicente Paterno of the Department of Industry signed the formal trade agreement with his Chinese counterpart Minister Li Chiang of the Ministry of Foreign Trade. The Philippines and the People's Republic of China agreed to develop and strengthen the economic and trade relations between the two countries based on equality and mutual benefit. Article 1 of the agreement stated:

The Contracting Parties shall promote the expansion of economic and trade relations between the two countries within the framework of this Agreement and of laws and regulations effective in their respective countries.⁴²

Thus a formal mutual understanding was reached to facilitate the smooth trading transaction between the two countries. Article 2 provides:

The Contracting Parties shall grant each other the most-favored-nation treatment on the basis of full reciprocity with respect to customs duties and other taxes and duties applicable to trade exchanges between the two countries.⁴³

⁴⁰ "RP Trade with Socialist States Totals 134.8 M" *Bulletin Today*, November 2, 1974.

⁴¹ Benito O. Lim, "A History of Philippine-China Relations" in Aileen San Pablo-Baviera and Lydia N. Yu-Jose, *Philippine External Relations: A Centennial Vista* (Pasay City: Foreign Service Institute, 1998), 241.

⁴² Basic Document. Trade Agreement between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the Government of the People's Republic of China (Signed, 9 June 1975).

⁴³ Basic Document. Trade Agreement between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the Government of the People's Republic of China (Signed, 9 June 1975).

Equality and full reciprocity were further espoused in the trade contract. Article 4 stipulated:

The contracting Parties shall encourage and facilitate the conclusion of long-term contracts relating to imports and exports between trade organizations and enterprises of their two countries based on their respective requirements and possibilities in trade, energy, and development.⁴⁴

A long-term trade agreement was inked on July 18, 1979 between First Lady Imelda Romualdez-Marcos and Vice Chairman Li Xiannan of the Chinese Communist Party. The agreement covered a seven-year period, from 1979 to 1985.⁴⁵ The total value of import and export commodities to be exchanged between the two countries during the effectivity of the agreement was set at approximately two billion US dollars.⁴⁶

The oil crisis in the 1970s and the 1980s encouraged the Philippines to import crude oil from the People's Republic of China. Under the agreement, China committed to export to the Philippines 8,400,000 metric tons of crude oil and specific quantities of refined petroleum products, the specifications to be agreed upon by both sides.⁴⁷ The Philippines agreed to export to China 1,000,000 metric tons of raw sugar and 400,000 to 700,000 metric tons of coconut oil.⁴⁸

The seven-year period trade agreement started upon the signing of the contract and was expected to end on December 31, 1985. The Philippines' and the People's Republic of China exports are shown in Tables 7 and 8.

| Table 7. Exports from the Republic of the Philippines to the People's Republic of China | Table 8. Exports from the People's Republic of China to the Republic of the Philippines |
|---|---|
| Logs and lumber Plywood Coconut oil Copra and coconut products | Petroleum and petroleum products Coal Chemicals and chemical products |

⁴⁴ Basic Document. Trade Agreement between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the Government of the People's Republic of China (Signed, 9 June 1975), 2.

⁴⁵ Benjamin B. Domingo, *Philippine Trade and Economic Agreements* (Manila: Foreign Service Institute, 1983), 23.

⁴⁶ Benjamin B. Domingo, *Philippine Trade and Economic Agreements*, 23.

⁴⁷ Benjamin B. Domingo, *Philippine Trade and Economic Agreements*, 23.

⁴⁸ Benjamin B. Domingo, *Philippine Trade and Economic Agreements*, 23.

| | | |
|---|---|---------|
| Sugar (raw) | Medical instruments and medicines | Source: |
| Abaca | Machinery, power machines, and small plants | |
| Tobacco | Instruments and meters of any kind | |
| Light industrial products | Agricultural implements and tools | |
| Textiles | Telecommunication equipment and apparatus | |
| Medicinal herbs | Rice and other cereals | |
| Sesame | Foodstuffs and canned goods | |
| Pulp | Tea, native produce and specialties | |
| Newsprint, wrapping paper, and paperboard | Animal by-products | |
| Copper and copper concentrates | Textiles and knitwear | |
| Iron ore | Silk and woolen piece goods | |
| Nickel, chrome ore and other minerals | General merchandise | |
| Cable wires | Stationary and sport articles | |
| Others | Building materials | |
| | Others | |

Benjamin B. Domingo. *Philippine Trade and Economic Agreements*. (Padre Faura, Manila, Philippines: Foreign Service Institute, 1983), 21-22.

Chinese exports were industrial such as machinery, ships, steel products, and petroleum, unlike those of the Philippines which were mainly agricultural products.

B. Economic Implications of the Republic of the Philippines-People's Republic of China Relations: Trade and Tourism

During the Marcos era, the diplomatic ties with the People's Republic of China paved the way for the Philippines to have a prolific trading partnership with mainland China. When China became a People's Republic in 1949, our first trade mission was organized by the Philippine Chamber of Commerce in 1971. In February 1972, the Chinese assured the Philippines that it could trade with our country even without diplomatic relations. It was on March 11, 1972 that

President Marcos issued Executive Order Number 384 opening and authorizing trading relations of the Philippines with Communist nations.⁴⁹

With the promulgation of this policy, the Philippines opened its doors to commercial exchanges with either Socialist or Communist countries. On November 23, 1973, China's first trade mission headed by Wang Yao Ting brought a draft trade agreement.⁵⁰ Trade exchanges between the two countries became very active even without a formal trading partnership agreement. On July 24, 1972, Peking announced a donation of one million "Jangminpi's" food for the flood disaster-stricken Filipinos.⁵¹

The goods were delivered by Anting, the first Communist Chinese ship ever to visit the Philippines since the Communist takeover in 1949. In June 1973, an agreement was forged between Communist China and the Philippines concerning the purchase from the Reds of 50,000 tons of rice.⁵²

There was a substantial increase in the exchange of trade between the Philippines and the People's Republic of China from 1971 to 1985, as seen in Table 9.

| YEAR | Imports from PRC | Exports to PRC | TOTAL TRADE | BALANCE OF TRADE |
|------|------------------|----------------|-------------|------------------|
| 1971 | 1,006,390 | 401,805 | 1,408,195 | 604,585- |
| 1972 | 5,530,309 | 782,550 | 6,312,859 | 4,747,759- |
| 1973 | 21,317,652 | 6,571,480 | 27,889,132 | 14,746,172- |
| 1974 | 896,316 | 3,571,480 | 4865,516 | 3,072,884+ |
| 1975 | 47,036,027 | 25,215,777 | 72,251,804 | 21,820,250- |
| 1976 | 53,793,000 | 39,552,000 | 93,345,000 | 14,241,000- |
| 1977 | 78,352,000 | 92,752,000 | 171,104,000 | 14,400,000+ |
| 1978 | 111,627,000 | 47,458,000 | 159,085,000 | 64,169,000- |
| 1979 | 120,953,000 | 51,464,000 | 172,417,000 | 69,489,000- |
| 1980 | 205,705,000 | 44,986,000 | 250,691,000 | 160,719,000- |
| 1981 | 194,517,000 | 78,225,000 | 272,742,000 | 116,292,000- |

⁴⁹ Executive Order 384 or "Promulgating Policy Guidelines and Trade with Socialist and Communist Countries states that: "...it is in the national interest to develop as early as possible trade and other relations with all countries, including Socialist and Communist countries, a policy which has received the support of all significant sectors in the country..."

⁵⁰ Benito O. Lim, "China under Deng Xiaoping and its Commercial Relations with the Philippines." in Bernardita Reyes-Churchill, *An Assessment: Philippine-China Relations 1975-1988* (Manila: De La Salle University Press, 1990), 44.

⁵¹ Hsiao Shi-ching, *Chinese-Philippine Diplomatic Relations 1946-1975* (Quezon City: Bookman Printing House, 1975), 129.

⁵² Hsiao Shi-ching, *Chinese-Philippine Diplomatic Relations 1946-1975*.129

| | | | | |
|------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| 1982 | 206,327,000 | 105,205,000 | 311,532,000 | 101,122,000- |
| 1983 | 122,151,000 | 29,392,000 | 151,543,000 | 92,759,000- |
| 1984 | 220,256,000 | 60,186,000 | 280,442,000 | 160,070,000- |
| 1985 | 276,085,000 | 79,793,000 | 355,878,000 | 196,292,000- |

Source: Collated from the Central Bank Statistical Bulletin and Philippine Statistical Yearbook 1975, 1976, 1984, 1985 and 1986.

The data clearly show a dramatic increase in total trade between the two countries from 1975 to 1985. In the balance of trade, the Philippines had a positive gain only in 1974 at \$3,072,884 and in 1977 at \$14,241,000. The People's Republic of China had the most favorable balance of trade with the Philippines from 1971 to 1985. This can be explained by the fact that the People's Republic of China supplied crude oil to the Philippines, mainly when the country was in crisis because of the oil embargo from Middle East countries.

The crisis was due to our close tie-up with the United States which supported Israel during their war with Arab countries in the 1970s. Oil refineries owned by the Americans in the Philippine territory met substantial losses because of the oil embargo.

The Philippines' only option was to import crude oil from the People's Republic of China. The Philippines was thus able to survive the effects of the oil embargo because of its diplomatic and commercial tie-up with mainland China. Another thing to consider: some Philippine products were not widely acceptable to the People's Republic of China as they were also available in Communist China. Furthermore, if there were Philippine goods not available in the People's Republic of China, the Chinese could purchase other alternatives from Southeast Asian nations, sometimes at cheaper prices.

This may be seen in the light of the People's Republic of China's national interest in protecting her products. According to Mario Miclat:

An essential step that China takes in the formulation of her foreign policy is to define her national interests and relate them to her perception of the international situation in a particular period, putting particular emphasis in the position of the major world powers.⁵³

⁵³ Mario Miclat, "China's Foreign Policy Considerations since the Founding of the People's Republic" in Bernardita Reyes-Churchill, *An Assessment: Philippine-China Relations 1975-1988* (Manila, Philippines: De La Salle University Press, 1990), 25.

The top twenty exports of the Philippines to the People's Republic of China from 1981 to 1985 is shown in Table 10.

| Table 10. Pace and Pattern of the Philippines-People's Republic of China Trade from 1981-1985 (in US dollars) | | | | | |
|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Top 20 Exports of the Philippines to the PRC | 1981 | 1982 | 1983 | 1984 | 1985 |
| Centrifugal Sugar | 37,387,000 | 56,829,000 | X | 7,992,000 | 23,473,000 |
| Bars, rods & slobes neither polished nor coated, unworked of copper | X | X | X | 9,859,000 | 11,838,000 |
| Minerals or chemical fertilizers, phosphatic | X | X | X | X | 6,124,000 |
| Coconut oil, crude | 13,580,000 | 7,397,000 | 10,498,000 | 21,813,000 | 5,812,000 |
| Gold from copper ores and concentrates | 3,346,000 | 8,365,000 | 7,947,000 | 2,046,000 | 5,107,000 |
| Bananas, fresh | X | X | X | X | 4,586,000 |
| Copper concentrates | 11,830,000 | 16,572,000 | 7,554,000 | 6,098,000 | 4,475,000 |
| Plywood, ordinary | X | X | X | X | 4,244,000 |
| Refined sugar & other products of refining beet or cane sugar, solid | X | 4,440,000 | X | 2,691,000 | 4,513,000 |
| Fertilizers containing the three fertilizing | X | X | X | X | 3,479,000 |

| | | | | | |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| substances: nitrogen, phosphorous, and potassium | | | | | |
| Portland cement | X | X | X | 223,000 | 2,792,000 |
| Chromium ores | 1,105,000 | 1,810,000 | 568,000 | 1,445,000 | 1,319,000 |
| Other medicinal and pharmaceutica l products, nes | X | X | X | 151,000 | 500,000 |
| “Lauan” white in the rough | X | X | X | X | 319,000 |
| Flashbulbs, photographic, electrically ignited | X | X | X | X | 275,000 |
| Monochrome television picture tubes of all sizes | 1,481,000 | 3,544,000 | 440,000 | X | 215,000 |
| Other yarns of continuous synthetic fibers, not put up to retail sale | X | X | X | 105,000 | 176,000 |
| Glycerin, refined | X | X | X | X | 149,000 |
| Aluminum structure and fabricated parts | X | X | X | X | 123,000 |
| Yarn, textured of continuous polyester without a prior joint authorization | X | 212,000 | 1,128,000 | 3,362,000 | 156,000 |

| | | | | | |
|----------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| of the TC and BOI | | | | | |
|----------------------|--|--|--|--|--|

Note: n.e.s. – not elsewhere specified.

Source: Philippine Foreign Trade: 1980-1981, 1981-1982, 1983-1985, Planning Service, Ministry of Trade and Industry.

The top ten export of the Philippines to PRC from 1981 to 1985 included centrifugal sugar, coconut oil, copper concentrates, gold from copper ore and concentrates, bars, refined sugar, chromium ores, chemical fertilizers, monochrome television picture tubes, and yarn. Other exports that made substantial earnings for the Philippines include bananas, plywood, fertilizers, Portland cement, pharmaceutical products, "lauan," synthetic fibers, flashbulbs, glycerin, and aluminum structures.

On the other hand, the top twenty import of the Philippines from the PRC from 1981 to 1985 is shown in Table 11.

Table 11.

| Top 20 Import of the Philippines from the PRC | 1981 | 1982 | 1983 | 1984 | 1985 |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Petroleum oil, crude | 138,165,00 0 | 134,983,00 0 | 95,273,00 0 | 156,743,00 0 | 191,085,00 0 |
| Rice, non- glutinous | X | X | X | 17,434,000 | 16,222,000 |
| Maize (corn) unmilled | X | X | X | X | 13,076,000 |
| Coal | X | X | X | 1,645,000 | 9,203,000 |
| Oil cake and other residues of soya beans | X | 5,865,000 | X | X | 8,681,000 |
| Soya beans (excluding flours & meals) | X | 20,000 | X | X | 5,422,000 |
| Fabrics imported on | 4,111,000 | 3,938,000 | 3,750,000 | 5,789,000 | 4,532,000 |

| | | | | | |
|---|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------|
| consignment basis for embroidery or manufacture of outer garments | | | | | |
| Gas oil (bunker fuel) | X | X | X | X | 3,894,000 |
| Paraffin wax | 74,000 | 14,0000 | 40,000 | X | 3,402,000 |
| Machine and mechanical appliances and parts | 2,640,000 | 2,373,000 | 2,076,000 | 1,543,000 | 2,082,000 |
| Cotton (other than linters) not carded or combed | 9800 | 8820 | 7600 | X | 1,906,000 |
| Crude oil imported for further refining | X | X | 115,000 | 2,074,000 | 1,564,000 |
| Generators, alternating current (AC) | X | 1,950,000 | 10,024,000 | 299,000 | 1,313,000 |
| Parts, nes of the power units & engines | X | X | X | X | 643,000 |
| Parts, nes of the machinery | X | X | X | X | 620,000 |
| Macaroni, spaghetti, macaroni | X | X | X | X | 487,000 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| noodles and vermicelli | | | | | |
| Dentifrices | X | X | 4,000 | 5,000 | 478,000 |
| Groundnuts (peanuts) green, whether or not shelled (excluding flours and meals) | X | X | X | X | 403,000 |
| Sodium sulfate (glauber's salt), sodium hydrogen sulphate and sodium pyrosulphate | 245,000 | 706,000 | 836,000 | 152,000 | 363,000 |

Note: n.e.s. – not elsewhere specified.

Source: Philippine Foreign Trade: 1980-1981, 1981-1982, 1983-1985, Planning Service, Ministry of Trade and Industry.

Petroleum oil, rice, fabrics, residues of soya beans, generators, maize, coal, machine, soya beans flour, gas oil were the top ten imports of the Philippines from the PRC. Other imports of our country from the PRC include crude oil for refining, paraffin wax, sodium sulfate, cotton, engine parts, machinery parts, dentifrices, noodles, and peanuts.

PRC extended loans to the Philippines. On October 13, 1980 the US\$30 million loans from the People's Republic of China for the purchase of 500 mini-hydropower plants was signed by President Marcos and Ambassador Chen Hsin Jen.⁵⁴ Mrs. Marcos proved very effective in securing trade concessions and continuous oil supply for the Philippines. During a 1984 visit of Imelda Marcos, the Chinese agreed to increase its trade volume with the Philippines from the targets of US\$20 million in 1974 and US\$30 million in 1978 to US\$500

⁵⁴ Benito O. Lim, "A History of Philippine-China Relations" in Aileen San Pablo-Baviera and Lydia N. Yu-Jose, *Philippine External Relations: A Centennial Vista* (Pasay City: Foreign Service Institute, 1998), 251.

million.⁵⁵ The Chinese also promised to buy more Philippine products to balance the trade deficit with the Philippines. Mrs. Marcos also negotiated an agreement for China to supply US\$60 million worth of oil on deferred payment basis.⁵⁶

On tourism, the mainland Chinese visitors increased substantially, growing steadily from 1980 to 1987, as shown in Table 12.

| Year | AIR | SEA | TOTAL |
|------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1977 | 15,822 | 11 | 15,833 |
| 1978 | 13,971 | 7 | 13,978 |
| 1979 | No available data | No available data | No available data |
| 1980 | 909 | 1,548 | 2,547 |
| 1981 | 819 | 2,233 | 3,052 |
| 1982 | 690 | 2,892 | 3,582 |
| 1983 | 946 | 2,080 | 3,026 |
| 1984 | 918 | 1,186 | 2,104 |
| 1985 | 974 | 2,201 | 3,175 |
| 1986 | 1,241 | 1,481 | 2,722 |
| 1987 | 942 | 1,659 | 2,601 |

Source: Culled from the Distribution of Foreign Visitor Arrivals by Country of Residence and Mode of Travel, Planning Service Division, Ministry of Tourism.

The diplomatic and cultural relations of the Philippines did not only avert the possible economic collapse of the Philippines because of the oil embargo in the 1970s but also boosted the tourism industry in the country, which was favorable to the Philippine economy.

From the signing of the diplomatic and cultural relations on June 9, 1975, several significant supplemental agreements were signed. These include:

1. A Five-Year Trade Agreement on Shengli Crude Oil (July 26, 1978).
2. A long-term Trade Agreement (July 8, 1979).

⁵⁵ Benito O. Lim, "A History of Philippine-China Relations" in Aileen San Pablo-Baviera and Lydia N. Yu-Jose, *Philippine External Relations: A Centennial Vista*, 251.

⁵⁶ Benito O. Lim, "A History of Philippine-China Relations" in Aileen San Pablo-Baviera and Lydia N. Yu-Jose, *Philippine External Relations: A Centennial Vista*, 251.

3. A Memorandum of Understanding whereby both countries agreed to increase trade volume to a value of \$500 million.
4. The 1978 RP-China Trade Protocol which provided for the change in description of fruits to fresh bananas, the increase in volumes target for wire rods, from unspecified quantities to 600 to 1,000 Metric Tons, the inclusion of 33 products of Philippine exports, the increase of Philippine imports of crude oil from 500,000 Metric Tons in 1986 to 650,000 Metric Tons to 900,000 Metric Tons in 1987, and the inclusion of rice, cotton and soybean meal to the Chinese export list.

Indeed, the trading partnership of the Philippines and the People's Republic of China benefitted both countries in various economic aspects.

C. The signing of Cultural, Scientific, and Technical Agreements between the Philippines and the People's Republic of China

Side by side with the commercial interaction between the two countries was the exposure to each other's culture. The exchange of information on such crafts as weaving, metalworking, crafting of jewelry and paper making was evident. Moreover, Philippine languages were enriched with loan words from the Chinese.

On July 8, 1979, the Philippines and the People's Republic of China entered into a cultural agreement. Mrs. Marcos signed in behalf of the Philippines, while Minister of Culture Huang Zhen signed in behalf of the People's Republic of China. Both countries pledged to promote and develop exchanges in the fields of culture, art, education, and sports. Article 1 of the cultural agreement stated:

The High Contracting Parties agreed to promote the development of mutually beneficial relations in the fields of culture, art and education on the basis of mutual respect for sovereignty and in conformity with the laws

and regulations in each country, bearing in mind the interests of their respective peoples⁵⁷

Cultural, artistic and academic exchange was encouraged. Athletics was also prioritized. According to Article 3:

The High Contracting Parties agree to promote exchanges in sports and physical education through the holding of athletic competitions on the basis of reciprocal invitations.⁵⁸

The agreement also bound both countries to protect their artistic and literary treasures. Article 4 explains that:

The High Contracting Parties agree, on the basis of reciprocity and subject to the laws and regulations of their respective countries, to adopt the necessary measures for the protection in their respective territories of the literary and artistic property of each other's nationals, including national cultural treasures.⁵⁹

The pact also provided that the programmes for cultural exchange should be done through appropriate diplomatic channels in consultation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Philippines and the Ministry of Culture of the People's Republic of China. The agreement would be valid for three years unless any of the High Contracting Parties request its termination by providing a written notice six months before the end of the cultural agreement.

The scientific and technical cooperation between the Republic of the Philippines and the People's Republic of China was signed on March 14, 1978 by Foreign Affairs Secretary Carlos P. Romulo for the Philippines and Chinese

⁵⁷ Basic Document. Cultural Agreement between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the Government of the People's Republic of China. (Signed, July 8, 1979).

⁵⁸ Basic Document. Cultural Agreement between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the Government of the People's Republic of China. (Signed, July 8, 1979).

⁵⁹ Basic Document. Cultural Agreement between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the Government of the People's Republic of China. (Signed, July 8, 1979).

Minister of Foreign Affairs Huang Hua for China. The scientific and technological agreement was forged to strengthen scientific and technological endeavors between the two countries on the basis of the principles of equality, respect for each other's independence and national sovereignty, non-interference in each other's international affairs, and mutual benefit.

Noteworthy in the scientific and technical cooperation is the list of matters to be exchanged by the Contracting Parties. Article 2 provided:⁶⁰

The scientific and technical cooperation shall consist of:

1. Exchange of professionals and technicians for study, observation, and training in scientific and technical fields;
2. Mutual invitation of professionals and technicians to transfer scientific and technical knowledge and experience;
3. Mutual supply of scientific and technical data, as well as seeds, seedlings, specimens and similar materials for use in scientific experiments;
4. Such other forms of scientific and technical cooperation as the Contracting Parties may be deemed necessary.

Specific project arrangements would be negotiated by the Philippines and the People's Republic of China. The overseeing and implementation of these scientific and technological agreements were to be carried out by the Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs and the Chinese Ministry of Economic Relations with Foreign Countries.

Mutual assistance to professionals and technicians was also prescribed in the agreement. Section 6 stated:

The professionals and technicians exchanged under this agreement shall observe the laws and regulations in force in the country to which they are sent.

Each Party shall give the professionals and technicians sent by the other Party under

⁶⁰ Basic Document. Agreement of Scientific and Technical Cooperation between the Republic of the Philippines and the People's Republic of China. (Signed, March 14, 1978).

this agreement the necessary assistance so that they may accomplish their mission.

The provisions of the present agreement shall not limit the right of either Contracting Party to adopt or execute measures for reasons of public health, morals, order or security.⁶¹

The effectivity of the agreement was to be for two years unless terminated by either government with a written notice six months before the expiration of the agreement.

D. Strengthening of Cultural Relations between the Philippines and the People's Republic of China

China has had a profound impact on its neighbors since the early times. The Philippines and China are separated only by the South China Sea. From the start, it can be easily stated that the flow of cultural transmission came primarily from China to the Philippines, from a country with a vast territory, a tremendously large population even from the last hundred years BCE, and one of the oldest civilizations in the world.⁶²

When mainland China became Communist in 1949, the Philippines severed diplomatic relations with it. The only means by which the Filipinos could reach out to China and other Socialist countries at that time was through friendly organizations and associations. Prior to the inking of diplomatic relations in 1975, the Association for Philippine-China Understanding (APCU) was able to organize and send delegations to the People's Republic of China. Such delegations were composed of writers, journalists, civic leaders, and social analysts – among whom were Carmen Guerrero-Nakpil, Teodoro Locsin, Max Soliven, Poratio Planas, Alejandro Roces, and Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo – who brought back glowing reports about that country.⁶³

Activists from the University of the Philippines, workers, farmers, journalists, writers, and academicians were interested in the social and cultural transformation staged by their Chinese counterparts. As part of the First-

⁶¹ Basic Document. Agreement of Scientific and Technical Cooperation between the Republic of the Philippines and the People's Republic of China. (Signed, March 14, 1978), 2.

⁶² Aurora Roxas-Lim, "Cultural Relations" in Bernardita Reyes-Churchill, *An Assessment: Philippine-China Relations 1975-1988* (Manila: De La Salle University Press, 1990), 56.

⁶³ Aurora Roxas-Lim, "Twenty-Five Years of Philippine-China Cultural Relations" in Aileen S. Mendiola, *Ugnayan ng Lahi: Celebrating Twenty-Five Years of Philippine-Chinas Diplomatic Relations* (Philippines: Department of Foreign Affairs, 2000), 77.

Quarter Storm in the 1970s, the Beijing operas "The Red Detachment of Women" and "The White-Haired Girl" were shown in a film at the University of the Philippines. The Filipinos were able to witness not only the ideological struggles of the Communist Chinese but also the artistic skills of the dancers, musicians, and filmmakers in China.

Entertainment coming from mainland China would emerge in the Philippines in the late 1970s. Chinese acrobatic teams would enthrall Filipino audiences with their astounding feat at the Araneta Center, Cubao, Quezon City.

In the field of sports, exchanges were also remarkable. A Philippine basketball team led by Eduardo Romualdez, Philippine Ambassador to the United States, and Gonzalo Puyat of the Basketball Association of the Philippines, visited the Chinese mainland on March 17 to 27, 1974.⁶⁴ The Chinese Communist national basketball players arrived in Manila on April 30, 1974.⁶⁵ By testing the waters first, both governments led a "bouncing ball diplomacy" in early 1974.

From July to August 1976, the Bayanihan Dance Troupe and Pangkat Kawayan orchestra visited the People's Republic of China. The performance in Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, Nanjing, and Guangzhou stimulated Chinese awareness of Filipino culture. An interaction of Filipino and Chinese culture took place too. The Filipino dance and music artists visited historical sites, schools, manufacturing firms, and communes. The itinerary of the first Filipino cultural troupes and the way they were treated became the pattern for how the Chinese arranged succeeding missions from the Philippines.⁶⁶ Moreover, the head of the Cultural Center of the Philippines, Lucrecia Kasilag, became the only foreigner accepted to be a member of the China Music Association, considered the most prestigious music association in the People's Republic of China.

Chinese dance performers visited the Cultural Center of the Philippines. These included the Movie Star Arts Troupe on November 1976 and the Chinese Kung Fu and Gymnastic Arts Group of Guangdong on March 7, 1980.⁶⁷

The People's Republic of China sent its finest musicians and singers for cultural interaction with the Filipinos. Among them were the Shanghai Ladies String Quartet, composed of Yu Lina, (violinist) Shen Rong, (violin) Shen Xi-

⁶⁴ Hsiao Shi-ching, *Chinese-Philippine Diplomatic Relations 1946-1975* (Quezon City: Bookman Printing House, 1975), 132.

⁶⁵ Hsiao Shi-ching, *Chinese-Philippine Diplomatic Relations 1946-1975*, 133.

⁶⁶ Aurora Roxas-Lim, "Twenty-Five Years of Philippine-China Cultural Relations" in Aileen S. Mendiola, *Ugnayan ng Lahi: Celebrating Twenty-Five Years of Philippine-Chinas Diplomatic Relations* (Philippines: Department of Foreign Affairs, 2000), 80.

⁶⁷ Performance Program of the Cultural Center of the Philippines, "The Movie Star Arts Troupe," November 1986 and "Chinese Kung Fu and Gymnastic Arts Group of Guangdong," March 7, 1980.

ce, (viola) and Lin Ying-rong, (cello) on January 20, 1982; the Six Chinese Musicians namely Yang Bingsun, (violinist) Bao Huiqiao, (pianist) Hu Bo, (soprano) Ju Jixing, (tenor) Li Baoqiong, (pianist) and Yan Shixun, (interpreter) on November 5, 1983; the Xiamen Gaojia Opera Troupe of China on February 7, 1983 and December 1, 1985; and the Chinese Traditional Ensemble from the Conservatory of Chinese Music of the People's Republic of China with Liu Ming-yuan, (string instrument performing artist) Xiang Zu-hua, (Chinese dulcimer performing artist) Wang Fan-di, (pipa performing artist) Tian Bao-an, (conductor) Miao Xiao-yun, (versatile player of Chinese musical instruments) and Zhang Wei-lang, (bamboo flute performing artist) on February 8, 1986.⁶⁸

Exhibits were also displayed in Manila in October 1976. Entitled, "Recent Chinese Archeological Finds," the exposition vividly introduced the Filipinos to the history and culture of China from the Neolithic period to the late Tang dynasty. The Filipinos had access to the exhibit free of charge. Terracotta soldiers during the rule of Emperor Shin Shi Huang Di were also part of the exhibit.

Furthermore, the members of the National Museum, academicians from the University of the Philippines and collectors of Chinese ceramics were invited by the Academia Sinica in 1978. The team headed by Maria Socorro Pardo Paterno visited museums and archeological sites concentrating on ceramics collection in Beijing, Shanghai, Nanjing, and Guangzhou.⁶⁹

Chinese archeologists Hsia Nai and Chang Chengming met the Filipino group for academic interaction. There were diverse programs for cultural exchange and exchange visits from 1976 to 1984. Researchers, artists, writers, journalists, and athletes were some of those who benefitted from these programs. The impact of these visits is tremendous concerning popularization and the dissemination of information on both sides.⁷⁰

CONCLUSION

When President Ferdinand Marcos decided to ink diplomatic ties with the People's Republic of China, many Philippine government officials had

⁶⁸ Performance Program of the Cultural Center of the Philippines, "Shanghai Ladies String Quartet," January 20, 1982; "Six Chinese Musicians," November 5, 1983; "Xiamen Gaojia Opera Troupe of China," February 7, 1983 and December 1, 1985 and "Chinese Traditional Ensemble from the Conservatory of Chinese Music of the People's Republic of China," February 8, 1986.

⁶⁹ Aurora De Dios, "Contemporary Cultural Relations." in Bernardita Reyes-Churchill, *An Assessment: Philippine-China Relations 1975-1988* (Manila: De La Salle University Press, 1990), 69.

⁷⁰ Aurora De Dios, "Contemporary Cultural Relations.", 69.

reservations because of its possible impact on the Communist insurgency, China being geographically close to the Philippine archipelago. Philippine military intelligence had gathered concrete evidence pointing to mainland China's logistic support for the indoctrination of students, workers, and farmers.

The suspicion and threat were ruled out by President Marcos. He knew that befriending the People's Republic of China would mitigate the growth of the Communist movement in the Philippines. When US President Richard Nixon visited the People's Republic of China in 1972, and Soviet Secretary General Leonid Brezhnev visited the United States in 1973, the era of détente convinced President Marcos that it was high time for the Philippines to forge friendly relations with the Soviet Union. The mutual co-existence between the Western democracies and Communist countries assured the Marcos administration that official ties with Communist countries would not serve as a threat to the national security of the Philippines, but would significantly enhance the political, economic and socio-cultural life of the nation.

A bold move on the part of the Philippine Chief Executive was to consider the One China Policy favoring Mainland China as the official representation of all Chinese. It was a tough decision to make since cutting the diplomatic and trading relations with the Republic of China would have an economic impact on the Philippines. The Republic of China has been a significant trading partner of the Philippines. Be that as it may, President Marcos acknowledged the People's Republic of China's legitimacy, thereby severing diplomatic linkage with Taiwan. However, the Philippines reaped the diplomatic initiative by officially befriending the People's Republic of China which was viewed by the Americans as worrisome. Both the diplomatic ties with the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China were advantageous to the Philippines as they became leverage to gain respect from Third World and non-aligned countries. It was also considered a threat by the United States when Marcos opened diplomatic initiatives with the Communist countries. Such a move gained more leverage in the country's diplomatic relations with America that resulted in the increase of foreign aid by the U.S. to the country.

The Philippines was able to survive the onslaught of the global oil crisis in the 1970s and 1980s because of imported crude oil from the People's Republic of China. Although trading relationship was favorable to the mainland Chinese, undeniably the relationship with China helped the Philippine economy to stabilize at that most pressing time. Substantial gains were made with the export of agricultural products to the People's Republic of China, while imports of ships, machinery and steel products helped rehabilitate our Philippine industries. Tourism boosted the Philippine economy as the number of Chinese tourists grew steadily in the 1980s.

Cultural exchanges with the People's Republic of China became very fruitful. Programmes for cultural exchanges were created. Exchanges of students, writers, journalists, civic leaders, artists, performers, singers, and musicians proliferated during and after the Marcos administration. The sharing of scientific and technological knowledge and data and other forms of scientific and technical cooperation were encouraged.

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