

Chapter 2

SHARED HISTORY, SHARED HERITAGE, SHARED DESTINY: DISCOVERING NEW NARRATIVES ON PHILIPPINES-CHINA RELATIONS*

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Introduction

The Filipinos celebrated the return of the Balangiga bells to its rightful place at Balangiga Church in Eastern Samar on December 11, 2018 (Go 2018, 8-9). The people of Samar, especially, rejoiced in this act, which made the whole nation remember with pride the events in Samar's history that led to the stealing of the Balangiga bells as war booty 117 years ago (Umali 2018). But, few Filipinos, not even historians I believe, would know how the September 1901 Balangiga Massacre was connected

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to the suppression of the Boxer Rebellion in Beijing (1898-1901) (“Rebels,” 2020; Cleary, “The Boxer Rebellion”).

In the centuries of relations between China and the Philippines, there have been many historical incidents that showcase the intertwining destinies and shared history between our two peoples. New research and findings on various topics on the Chinese Filipinos and Philippines-China relations contribute significantly to Philippine studies. These studies include the role of the Philippines and the significant contributions of the Chinese in the Philippines to the spread of Christian faith and Christianity to China, the important role of the Fujianese in the Philippines in enabling Europe to learn about China, as well as the direct connection between the Balangiga Massacre and the Boxer Rebellion. The 19th century struggle against imperial rule (in China) and against colonial rule (in the Philippines) is another period in history where the common cause for emancipation crossed paths. The common defense of freedom and the struggles against Japanese fascist rule, the Nanjing Massacre and the Manila massacre are other vignettes in the shared history, heritage, and destiny of our two peoples (Banlaoi 2019, 8-9).¹

This paper focuses on new narratives that point to this shared history and destiny starting from the early days of Spanish occupation when the Philippines became the most important source of European knowledge about China to the present-day mutual influence in our culture, religion, language, and traditions. These narratives, mostly from Chinese sources or English sources related to China, are important and significant contributions to Philippine historiography and the entire field of Philippine studies.

¹ An earlier paper on new narratives, research, and studies covered some of these topics. See Banlaoi (2019, 8-9); also available at *Tulay Fortnightly*, <http://tulay.ph/2019/03/05/chinese-sources-on-the-philippines-new-narratives-on-ph-china-relations/>.

Chinese Links to the Spanish Occupation

The Chinese connection to the Spanish occupation of the Philippines is evident in the very early efforts of the Spanish missionaries to learn Chinese. Letters of the Spanish friars to the King of Spain showed that the interest in the Philippines was borne by their desire to evangelize a million barbarian souls in the country they called Cathay (Felix 1966, 119-132). It is not an accident that of the first three books printed in the Philippines, two are in Spanish and Chinese and one in Spanish and Tagalog. The first three books published in the Philippines, circa 1593, are *Doctrina Christiana en Lengua Tagala*, *Doctrina Christiana en Lengua Tsina*, and *Shih-Lu – Apologia de la Verdadera Religion*. As well, it is not an accident that the first Chinese book to be translated into a European language (Spanish) is *Libro Chino* or *Beng Sim Po Cam* of Father Juan Cobo (高母羨) (Go 2006, 5).² These publications are proofs of the close historical relationship between Spain, China, and the Philippines. The role of the Philippines and the significant contributions of the Chinese in the Philippines to the spread of the Christian faith and Christianity to China and the important role of the Fujianese in the Philippines in enabling Europe to learn about China are likewise significant studies that further enhance our knowledge of the Chinese and China's links to the Philippines during the Spanish occupation.

Philippine Studies from Chinese Sources and Chinese-Filipino Narratives

A great part of European knowledge about the great China empire came from Marco Polo's accounts of China. But lesser known is the

² For a write up on Father Juan Cobo and *Libro Chino*, see Go Bon Juan's Gems of History column in *Tulay Fortnightly* 18 (2006).

fact that China was introduced to Europe and the world from books and knowledge sources that came from the Philippines. Foremost among these is Fray Juan González de Mendoza, OSA's *Historia de las Cosas más Notables, Ritos y Costumbres del Gran Reyno de la China (The History of the Great and Mighty Kingdom of China and the Situation Thereof)*. Published by him in 1586, the book is an account of observations of several Spanish travelers in China. It the most important work about China introduced to the west. The book was translated into all major languages – Latin, Italian, English, French, German, Portuguese, Dutch – an unprecedented 46 editions (*Wikipedia* 2020).

Mendoza's accounts came from Spanish translations of Chinese books brought to the Philippines from Fujian by Padre Martin de Rada who visited Fujian in 1574 to seek trade, evangelize, and proselytize. He wrote a journal about his experiences and published it as Rada's visit/mission to Fujian (He 1998). On his return back to the Philippines, Rada brought a lot of books from Fujian – classics, dictionaries, geography. These books were brought to Intramuros and translated to Spanish by long-term Hokkien residents there and were used as materials for his mission to Fujian. These would be the materials also used by Mendoza in his main references.

This information showcased that contrary to previous knowledge that most of the early sojourners to the Philippines were impoverished illiterate peasants, it was apparent that some of the Hokkiens were highly educated and literate.

Among these books was the *Libro Chino (Espejo rico del claro corazon [明心寶鑑 Ming Xin Bao Jian in Mandarin, Beng Sim Po Cam in Hokkien])* by Fan Li Ben, the first Chinese book ever translated into a European (Spanish) language by the 16th century Dominican friar at Manila's *parian*, Father Juan Cobo (Wu 2014, 8). Cobo wrote that in spite of humble social background, many Manila Chinese were literate. He observed that, although they were “the scum of the earth, in a thousand, there will be 10 who do not know quite a lot of characters, while in the villages of workers

in Castile, out of a thousand, there are hardly 10 who know letters” (Felix 1966, 141). Cobo also described Chinese booksellers and bookbinders in Manila; he used a number of books in the *Parian* for his Chinese language studies: dramas (featuring romantic and historical topics), historical digests, route books for merchants, geographical gazetteers, descriptions of foreign countries and *flores doctorum* (collections of moral sayings) (Felix 1966, 140; Jimenez 2018, 2-28).

Time spent in the Manila Chinese parishes gave the Dominicans first-hand experience of Chinese customs and attitudes to life and religion, as well as working knowledge of the Minnanese dialects. More importantly, it gave them access to network of people and commerce between Manila and Fujian.

According to *China and Spain: Creating Global Culture (Part III)* by Luis Francisco Martinez Montes (2009), the manuscript of Cobo’s translation of *Beng Sim Po Cam*, together with the Chinese text, were brought and presented to Felipe II in 1595 by Father Miguel del Benavidez, with the above words: “The Chinese take to their great and true wealth not gold nor silver, nor silk, but books, wisdoms, virtues and just government” (Zaide 1990).

The Philippines in China’s Maritime Trade: Impact on the West

One important reason for Spain’s colonization of the Philippines was triggered by the desire to link up with the China maritime trade – sources of spices, silk, cotton, porcelain, and other important Chinese products and raw materials (Barrows 1905). The stabilization of the trade with China – the exchange of Chinese silks for Mexican silver – created a solid base of prosperity for the Spanish community. For two centuries, the Manila galleon plying between Manila and Acapulco was the economic lifeline of the Spanish colony in the Philippines. In Mexico, there was an almost

limitless demand for Chinese silks, and Chinese merchants had an equally insatiable appetite for Mexican silver. Like a magnet, the profits of the silver and silk trade kept most Spaniards in and around Manila (Phelan 1959, 11).³

Phelan wrote:

The galleon trade must be ascribed the beginning and the continuance of Chinese immigration, which has substantially altered the ethnic composition of the Philippines. So large was the Chinese colony that in the early 1580s, it was assigned a separate quarter, the *Parian*, located within range of the guns of Manila's fortress. The *Parian*, meaning market place in Chinese, became the nerve center of the capital's commercial life. In its colorful bazaars could be purchased all the goods and products of East and West. The Chinese soon acquired a virtual monopoly of the retail business. They dominated the craft trades, and their agricultural skills eventually did much to increase productivity" (11)"

Quoting Menegon about the Spanish empire: "The Castilian fascination with China, the Cathay of Marco Polo that sparked Columbus' imagination, played the propulsive role in pushing the borders of the Spanish empire to the western end of the Pacific, which the Spanish reached by the 1570s" (2009, 43).

Chinese official and travel accounts richly documented Hokkien merchants' maritime activities in the South China Sea, Southeast Asia, and Indian Ocean from as far back as 84 CE through the 14th and 15th centuries, up to the moment in the 16th century when Portuguese and Spanish colonizers and merchants made permanent contact (Hu DeHart 2018, 49-61).

³ John Leddy Phelan attributed Horacio dela Costa, SJ, "Church and State in the Philippines during the Administration of Bishop Salazar," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 30 (August 1950): 314-324 as his source; also see the suggestive article of Pierre Chaunu, "*Le galion de Manille, grandeur et decadence d'une route de la soie*," *Annales, Economies-Societes-Civilizations* 6 (October-December 1951): 447-462.

When the Spanish arrived in Luzon, they found out that it is an important base for Fujian merchants to conduct their trade. Spain got its great idea of being an imperial power from Fujian vis-a-vis the Chinese traders in Luzon. They were impressed by “Chinese merchants bring silk and brocade...”

With their attention focused on the galleon trade, the early Spaniards were little inclined to bother with a remote, untamed territory which lacked any readily exploitable sources of wealth. But with China, the source of silk shipped by the galleons to Mexico, did hold an interest for the Spaniards, and they saw Cagayan as virtually at its doorsteps. One official explained: ‘Although the land [Cagayan] is of much cost and no profit, it is a foothold and stepping stone by which to enter the wealth of Great China (De Jesus 1998, 24).

Western industrialization, in fact, was a direct consequence of maritime trade expansion, new markets and new sources of raw materials. Without this maritime trade, there would have been no rapid changes in Europe, no western colonial advantage, nor contractual relationship between western colonization and maritime trade, which all started out of Fujian.

An interesting and concise account of the *Parian* and the Chinese and Chinese mestizos in Cebu during the Spanish time appears in the book of National Artist for Literature Resil B. Mojares.

Mojares’ “Origin and Rise of Parian,” in his 2017 edition of *Casa Gorodo in Cebu, Urban Residence in a Philippine Province: 1860-1920*, traces the beginnings of Cebu’s *Parian* to 1590 (23-28). The urban aristocracy of Cebu in the last decade of Spanish was made up of the 30 to 40 inter-related Chinese mestizo families descended and related to the native Cebu elites who resided in the old *Parian*. By the 1890s, several Chinese merchants controlled a large part of the trade of the port. Although most of the pre-1860 merchants remained wealthy and prominent, they now shared their socio-economic position with new elements who had taken advantage of numerous opportunities prevailing throughout the region (Cullinane 1982, 277).

This proves that it is really China and the Chinese market, not the Philippines per se, that Spain wants. What they offered the Mexican merchants was the well-established Sino-Filipino trading relationships that quickly transformed Manila into an entrepôt linking China to Mexico.

By the end of the 17th century, they would firmly entrench themselves as indispensable middlemen in the new global commercial system (Wang 1958). Mexican merchants connected this first trans-Pacific commerce to the trans-Atlantic trade of Spain, while the Hokkien traders linked the old and vast Indian Ocean world to the Spanish Pacific, together making the galleon trade the first complete global commercial enterprise. Almost immediately after arriving in 1571, the Spaniards began to see the potential for trade with China. As a result, they made concerted efforts to establish good relations with Chinese merchants in the area. In its first 40 years, the galleon trade grew quickly, unhindered by cumbersome restrictions. Commerce increased, bringing with it Chinese immigrants as well as merchants from all over Asia (Reed 1978, 26-27).⁴

For the last decade, China has been promoting its modern-day “One Belt One Road” program that revives the ancient land and maritime silk road (“Reviving Ancient Silk Road,” 2017). Manila or the Philippines played a vital role in the connection of this maritime silk and silver route that tied China to Mexico to Europe and to the rest of the world. Going out of Yue Gang of Zhangzhou, the route passed by Manila, traversed the Pacific through the galleon trade which connected the Chinese empire and Mexico, the Americas and Europe (Jin 2017).

⁴ See also Reed 1967, 110. Hereafter, “Reed, quoted in Pranav Merchant, in “Economic Effects of the Spanish Conquest of the Philippines and Mercantile Theory,” *Social Sciences* (University of Texas, 1990): 55.

Untold Narratives

Koxinga (Zheng Chenggong 鄭成功)

There are many other interesting vignettes that highlight the interconnectedness of our histories. An earlier article shared the story of Limahong (Lin Feng 林鳳), the rebel, pirate, and folk hero (See 2010, 8). Another example of a new narrative relates to the story of Koxinga (Zheng Chenggong 鄭成功). The Spanish occupation of the Philippines could have been halted early in the 17th century and Philippine history could have been completely different had Koxinga succeeded in attacking the Spaniards and punishing them for the massacre of the Chinese. Koxinga's strength and network of prosperous trade was highly dependent on Chinese merchants. He gave importance to the protection of overseas merchants and their interests. Koxinga's reason for conquering Taiwan from the Dutch was because of the Dutch abuse of the native Taiwanese, confiscating their merchant vessels and their goods. They were no better than pirate thieves (Go 2004, 5).

In 1662, Zheng Chenggong sent Vittorio Ricci, a missionary in the Dominican mission at Xiamen, as emissary to governor of the Philippines, Sabiniano Manrique de Lara. He demanded tribute from the governor, which was refused, but the demand so agitated the colonial government to prepare for attack. Troops fighting the Muslims in Mindanao were pulled out to Manila. After Zheng's death, his son and successor, Zheng Jing, sent Ricci to Manila to sign a peace pact to reestablish trade. Zheng's purpose was to gain economic and political supremacy over the Philippines and the South China Seas (Busquets 2019, 442-457; McCarthy 1970, 187-196).

Ricci mentioned that a merchant ship captain cried recounting about the massacre of Manila Chinese. Koxinga was so enraged and immediately asked soldiers to prepare for war and attack

Manila. However, he got sick and died at age 39. Koxinga's threat and rumors of his threat to attack Manila as a reprisal for an earlier Spanish massacre unfortunately led to a real third massacre of the Chinese in the *Parian*.

The Spanish governor-general Sabiano Manrique de Lara ordered all Chinese in the cities or in the provinces to be confined to the Binondo-*Parian* internment zone for fear that they would assist Koxinga's threatened attack. The Chinese residents, seeing the war-like preparations, feared that another massacre was being planned. A demonstration by the *Parian* residents ensued, which was mistaken by the garrison for a general uprising. The soldiers shelled the entire quarter of about 9,000 residents. This 1662 bloodbath wiped out the Chinese in the *Parian* for the third time (McCarthy 1971, 119-120).

Cholera Epidemic

As this paper is being finalized, the entire Philippines, especially the National Capital Region, was placed on enhanced community quarantine from mid-March to mid-May 2020 because of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. At the start of the COVID-19 scare in early February, Asians all over the world suffered from blatant discrimination from ignorant people who blamed China for the spread of the coronavirus. The Philippines was no exception.

This discrimination and fear was not new. During the Spanish occupation, a similar epidemic (cholera), ignorantly and falsely blamed on the Chinese resulted to the sixth *Parian* massacre in Binondo on October 9-10, 1820. It was the least known or mentioned massacre and the only one that occurred outside the *Parian*. The number of Chinese killed, 85, was the smallest but 50 Europeans were killed as well.

The severe cholera epidemic ravaged Manila for several months. Several hundred *indios* especially in communities along Pasig River

and Tondo were stricken by the disease and were “dying like flies” (Sevilla 1997, 237). The highly contagious disease had spread rapidly through the contamination of the water of Pasig River – the city’s main source of potable water. Tondo’s military governor issued an advisory to all residents to stop using the river water for drinking without first boiling it.

The natives’ misery and grief turned into fury and violence when word spread out that the foreigners caused the epidemic by the criminal act of poisoning the waters of Pasig River. Fred Sevilla (1997) writes: “...in a fit of insane rage, [the natives] plundered the homes of Europeans and other foreigners [including the Chinese] in Binondo and Santa Cruz and slew any resident they chanced upon” (238).

Gov. Gen. Mariano Fernandez de Folgueras (term: 1816-1822) later sent out troops to the scene. Eyewitness reports mentioned that the soldiers merely stood by and did nothing to check the rampage which ended at nightfall, leaving a wide swath of destruction and looting and at least 50 Europeans dead. Many others were injured or taken as hostages and brought to Tondo by the *indios*. Curiously, not a single Spaniard was killed nor any Spanish home plundered. Circumstantial data incriminatingly pointed to a direct involvement of the ruling peninsular elite of Intramuros in spreading the nasty rumor that incited the *indios* and in tolerating and doing nothing to stop the two-day rampage.

Sevilla writes:

The motive was clearly to strike a fatal blow on the flourishing European expatriates and the Chinese merchants of Binondo who, particularly in the last two decades, had competitively dislodged the Spanish merchants in the overall control of the economic life of the colony... (242)

They had become the object of envy and hatred of the Spanish ruling peninsulars.

The preponderance of circumstantial data incriminatingly pointed to a direct involvement of the ruling peninsular elite of Intramuros in spreading the nasty rumor that incited the *indios* and in tolerating

and doing nothing to stop the two-day rampage – even as Gov. Gen. Folgueras and his fact-finding team performed a good job in “whitewashing” and deflecting the issues from themselves (242-243).

The envy, distrust, and hatred of the Spaniards against their European and Chinese competitors who threatened their personal fortunes led to this most unfortunate incident. In times of economic crisis even in these modern times, we still see people who become convenient scapegoats for the failures of administrators (243).

Christianity: The Philippines and China

Evangelization and the spread of Christianity played a critical role in the Spanish colonization of the Philippines. Historian Rafael Bernal writes: “The Spaniards used the enormous resources of their Empire to convert the entire world and China with its millions and its ancient culture was the most coveted. They therefore saw that the Chinese who lived in this country [Philippines] the most fruitful field for experiment. Not only may the missionaries learn from them how to speak and write Chinese but they may even convert some... (Felix 1966, 63).”

To this we can add Bishop Domingo Salazar’s letter to King Philip that it would be a glory to God if we [Spain] could convert a million barbarian souls in Cathay. His letter said: “If we can go there [China] in God’s own time, then we shall carry out one of the greatest conversions that the world has seen from the time of the early church (Felix 1966, 122). Unable to discover spices and gold in the islands, Spanish authorities considered abandoning the colony. But the priests’ persuasion that the Philippines could be used as a stepping stone to propagate Christianity in China convinced the king to maintain the colony. It is not a coincidence that four of the six earliest and rarest books in the Philippines are on Chinese letters and language, used by the early friars for evangelization (Felix 1966, 119-132).

Chinese Missionaries Trained in the Philippines

The great role the Philippines played in converting Chinese souls in China and spreading Christianity is highlighted by the fact that the first bishop of China, Luo Wenzao (羅文藻 1615-1691), or Gregorio Lopez, was ordained as a priest in Manila. He was a product of the University of Santo Tomas – the oldest university in Asia. He was not only the first bishop in China but the only bishop until early 20th century (Menegon 2009, 127).

In August 1649, Luo traveled to Xiamen to bring to Fu'an a new group of Dominicans who arrived from Manila, including Francisco Varo, who compiled the Chinese-Spanish dictionary. These Dominicans started a full-fledged Christian community in Fu'an until they and the converted lay leaders were exiled back to the Philippines (Liongson 2017, 121-132).

Following the Dominican priests in exile to the Philippines was Joaquin Guo Bangyong (郭邦雍 ca. 1582-1649). He was the first Chinese literatus to have lived for a prolonged period inside a Christian environment outside China and to receive a thorough Christian education in a priory.

Between 1638 and 1641, he resided in one of the Dominican parishes in Bataan. He worked with the Dominicans on the compilation of Chinese grammar and a Spanish-Chinese dictionary. The chronicler Riccio wrote that during Guo's stay in the Philippines, "[Joaquin Guo] complied with all the religious duties of the friars as if he were one of them, became a Dominican novitiate and lay leader (Menegon 2009, 25)."

Over the years, despite great difficulties arising from persecution, Fu'an and Zhangzhou continued to supply a number of Chinese students: most traveled from Fujian to Manila for training. Among these trainees were eight Chinese students admitted into the Colegio de San Juan de Letran between 1736 and 1741.

Francisco del Rosario (Francisco Lu, 1736) would not complete the course. Miguel de los Angeles (Miguel Hang, 1741) and

Matias de los Santos (Matias Ching, 1741) returned to China and became regular priests. The remaining five would profess their vows and complete their studies at Colegio de San Juan de Letran and University of Santo Tomas: the first novice, Juan Feng Shiming (馮世明 Juan Bautista Fung de Santa 1719-1755), was admitted to the Colegio de San Juan de Letran in 1736; Pedro Yan (Pedro Nien de Santo Domingo, 1737); Simon Luo (Simon Lo del Rosario, Simon de Santa Cruz, 1741); Pedro Mino (Pedro Mien de Santa Rosa, Pedro de San Francisco, 1741); and Vicente Huy (Vicente Huy de Santo Tomas, Jorge de los Reyes, Jorge Hang, 1741).

The five Letran alumni who finished the training shared common ties and experiences and their destinies closely intertwined, especially the training and the lives of the venerable martyrs Juan Feng Shiming and Pedro Yan. Both Juan Feng and Pedro Yan made their vows on June 3, 1744 before Fr. Bernabe de Magdalena, OP. Juan Feng was ordained by the Archbishop of Manila and officiated his first mass on the feast day of his patron saint, St. John the Baptist, at the Colegio de San Juan de Letran in 1747. After that, he departed immediately for China at the insistence of the Vicar Apostolic. He arrived in Zhangzhou on Nov. 12, 1747.

Story of Martyrdom

In March [1754], a cruel persecution started against the Catholic religion in Foshan, Fujian. Father Juan Feng Shiming was among those imprisoned and he was sent to perpetual exile in the province of Kiang-si (Jiangxi 江西) in southeastern China. He left with an iron chain around his neck, handcuffs and shackles on his feet, escorted by two soldiers and three Christians who wished to accompany him. Throughout his tortuous 14 months journey, he appeared before 36 tribunes, in chains and shackles, suffering from hunger, thirst, and the vagaries of extreme weather

changes throughout the great distance, with barely any rest or sleep.

He arrived in June 1755 at his cramped cell in Kiang-si (Jiangxi). The untold difficulties and sufferings did not, however, break his apostolic dedication. Loyal witnesses who accompanied him were touched by his robust display of joy and contentment declaring his willingness to suffer in the home of Jesus Christ. His death was described thus: “With his eyes transfixed on a rustic crucifix hanging on his prison wall, Juan Feng Shiming succumbed on July 1, 1755 to an acute fever exacerbated by fatigue and the debilitating physical stress of the long journey (Liongson IV 2017, 128).” This story of martyrdom is a hitherto untold history of Letran, untold story of Catholic history in China, as well as its close relation with the Philippines.

Common Cause End of 19th Century

Among other Asian countries, the Chinese and the Filipinos were the earliest people to aspire for freedom. The reform and the revolutionary movements that brought an end to China’s Imperial Dynasty and ushered in the Republican period had significant impact especially on Southeast Asia, including the Philippines. On the other hand, the Chinese revolutionaries looked up to and were inspired by the Filipino revolutionaries who they lauded for daring to fight not just one but two white foreign colonialists. Dr. Sun Yat-sen, had close relations with the Filipino independence movement and its leaders, a situation which is unique in Southeast Asia, where Sun’s relationship was mainly with the Chinese community (Zhou 1993, 33-46).

The late 19th century Philippine Revolution that extended to the early 20th century Filipino-American War coincided with the peak of the reform and revolutionary movements in China from the Opium War up to the intellectual revolution called the May

Fourth Movement in 1919. While the Philippine revolutionists struggled to unshackle our nation from colonial rule, the Chinese revolutionists struggled to unshackle their nation from the ravages of imperial dynastic rule. The Chinese and Filipino revolutionists gave mutual support and sympathy to one another for their common revolutionary causes and for that period, their fates and fervor intertwined. An earlier article on the Chinese in the Philippine revolution detailed some of the Philippines and Chinese sources that highlight this period of shared history and destiny of our two people (See 2018, 159-210). For the purpose of this paper, additional information is shared on how General Emilio Aguinaldo's and Dr. Sun Yat-sen's forces crossed paths and how they mutually supported and encouraged one another.

General Emilio Aguinaldo and Dr. Sun Yat-sen

The lives of the leaders of the revolutionary movements in the Philippines' General Emilio Aguinaldo and China's Dr. Sun Yat-sen touched one another in many ways. Also highlighted were the close ties between these two people, both of whom come from Asia – suffered from persecution, abuses, and the imperialist ambitions of colonizers, mutually supported and empathized with one another's fate, and shared a common destiny. When Sun Yat-sen was defeated in his second uprising against the Manchus, he lost many of his supporters and was quite discouraged. It was Aguinaldo, as head of the revolutionary government, who gave Sun a hundred thousand Japanese yen for his expenses. It was a very crucial gesture, considered by Sun Yat-sen and his supporters as “sending coal in freezing winter (雪中送炭).”

In June 1898, the Philippine representative to Japan, Mariano Ponce, met China's leader, Dr. Sun Yat-sen, in Yokohama and requested him to help the Philippine revolutionists acquire military arms. Sun agreed and helped procure two shipments of arms. But the first shipment in the vessel *Nonubiki Maru*, hit

some reefs somewhere off the Zhejiang province and sank in July 1899. The second procurement, in January 1900, likewise failed because of the intervention of the governments of Japan and the United States, and the shipment was not able to leave Japan.

Sun Yat-sen also agreed with Ponce to send some members of his revolutionary party to the Philippines to help fight against the American invading army. After the Philippines gained its independence, they agreed then the Philippines would help China in its own struggle. When the Philippine revolution failed, Sun Yat-sen changed his strategy and concentrated on winning China's own struggle for independence so that they could help the Philippines achieve hers later. He said: "There's no first or last in this big struggle. Our party decided to establish its revolutionary army and pursue its own task. When we succeed in our objective, then we can also look into the cause of Philippine independence" ((Peng 1936, in Zhou 1993; Quirino 1963, 267-268; Miyazaki 1934, 1-115).

In Yokohama, Ponce actually stayed near the house of Dr. Sun Yat-sen who lived there with his wife and only son. The house was situated in a district totally occupied by Japanese, outside of the Bund (which was) a residence of foreigners. They frequently had dinner together (Ponce 1965, 3), often with another revolutionist, Galicano Apacible, thus highlighting how closely connected Filipino and Chinese revolutionists were.

The first book about Sun Yat-sen in a European language (Spanish) was written by Mariano Ponce, which highlights the close ties between these two revolutionaries.

Chinese Links During the American Occupation

The book, *Republic or Empire: American Resistance to the Philippine War*, by Daniel Schirmer revealed that American President William McKinley's final decision to colonize the Philippines was actually motivated by America's ambition to conquer China, to use the

Philippines as jumping board to penetrate the great super market that is China, invade its territory, and eventually conquer China.

This illustrates even more clearly how closely intertwined are the destinies of the Philippines and China – sharing common fates, fighting common enemies, and aspiring for common development goals and were, in fact, “tied together in one umbilical cord,” to use a Filipino expression.

A Chinese revolutionist, Zhang Binglin, in his “A Treatise on Five Nothings,” reported: “The archvillain McKinley [US President 1897-1901], using his own tactic, on the pretext of extending help to the Philippines, is actually bent on extending territory, such actions must be condemned and cannot be forgiven” (43-44). The author castigated the US for its shameful and imperialistic designs on the Philippines in the guise of aiding the country.

Filipino-American War and the Boxer Rebellion

China’s foremost reformist Liang Qi-chao emphasized in his writings that America’s war with Spain was motivated by commerce. It was America’s strategy to gain a foothold in Asia’s market and to use the Philippines as its jumping board to penetrate the rich China market, invade its territory, and eventually conquer China (Taylor 1971-1973, 31-33; See 2004, 109-121).

At the end of the 19th century, while the Philippines was struggling for independence from Spain and later from the US, China was fully occupied with putting down the Boxer Rebellion. Both events necessarily involved US military troops in the Far East. The US faced the big dilemma of whether to concentrate the troops in putting down the Boxer Rebellion or to quell the Philippine revolution. In mid-July of 1900, America planned to send 10,000 soldiers to China to stifle the Boxer Rebellion but the war between the Philippines and America intensified and the US was forced to retain these soldiers in the Philippines to combat the

Filipino revolutionaries. With the cessation of the Boxer activities in China, other American soldiers returned from the China expedition to the Philippines and had been scattered throughout the islands (“Shared History, Shared Destiny,” 2019).

How closely intertwined the historical events between the Philippines and China were can be seen in the little known story about the connection between the Boxer Rebellion and the Balangiga bells, which were finally returned to the Philippines in 2018. The events highlight how the Balangigans and the Chinese in Beijing crossed paths, and how the Balangigans unwittingly avenged the death of the Chinese when they killed the Americans soldiers who had pillaged and murdered innocent Chinese civilians when they put down the Boxer uprising. Most importantly, there is the tantalizing possibility of how the Filipino revolutionists could have won the war against the Americans (just as they won the war against Spain). This again is a manifestation of the intertwining destinies of the Filipino and the Chinese people. Had the United States pulled out a bigger contingent of soldiers from the Philippines to be sent to China to quell the Boxer Rebellion there, would the Philippine revolutionaries have succeeded in the Filipino-American War (Sexton 1944, 229-230)?

From Beijing to Balangiga

The Balangiga bells, which figured in the Filipino-American War, were finally returned to the Philippines on December 11, 2018, after 117 years. But few people know that behind the story of the bells is another interesting vignette in the intertwining destinies of the Filipinos and the Chinese.

On September 28, 1901, local guerrillas in Balangiga, Samar cut down eight officers and 50 enlisted men of Company C of the US 9th Infantry. In this battle, Filipinos took 52 valuable rifles and 26,000 rounds of ammunition from the girls’ school used by Company C as its arsenal in Balangiga. The townspeople helped in

this endeavor. It was a genuine uprising by the oppressed and persecuted Samareños, led by the Balangiga townsfolk (See 2018, 9).

What few people know is Balangiga and Beijing crossed paths in this historical event. The 9th Infantry was actually sent to China from Manila on June 26, 1900 as the first contingent of the China Relief Expedition of the United States to suppress the Boxer Rebellion in Peking.

The 9th Infantry joined the soldiers from seven other Western powers in suppressing the uprising in China. The so-called “rebels” were actually anti-colonial, anti-foreign and anti-Christian folk heroes who could no longer swallow the humiliation and subjugation of the eight imperialistic foreign powers who wanted to cut up China like a melon for their own ambitions. The foreign troops committed countless atrocities. They looted, ransacked and ruined Peking and many historic landmarks.

As US Colonel William Thaddeus Sexton described it:

The 9th Infantry had but recently returned from the China expedition. It had performed signal service there, had taken part in the capture of Tientsin and had been among the first to rush the walls of the Imperial Court of Peking. With the cessation of the Boxer activities in China, it had returned to the Philippines and had been scattered in small garrisons throughout the islands” (229-230).

The American soldiers returned to the Philippines from China at the conclusion of their mission. They arrived on the island of Samar to relieve the squadrons of the 9th and 10th Cavalries. Back from China, this notorious Company C of the 9th Infantry repeated their depraved and atrocious acts (in China) against the inhabitants of Samar. Hence, the extreme hatred of the Balangigans against them.

Quoting these excerpts from *A Trilogy of War* (2004):

Then on August 3, a platoon from Company C, accompanied by a 13-man squad of native police, set out on a two-day march up the

valley of a river 10 miles north of Borongan. This mixed force killed all the carabaos they saw and burned all the houses in the valley except two homes that sheltered the women and children of the insurgents...

On the second day of their march, they found a herd of about a hundred carabaos. All the animals were shot while a few wounded allowed to dash into the bush.

Five days later... as soon as they reached Filipino Army territory, they began burning houses and destroying crops of sugar cane, rice, sweet potatoes and bananas. A herd of 25 carabaos tied with ropes was discoursed by the river and all were shot and killed" (599).

The "signal service" mentioned by Sexton here meant that they killed, maimed, tortured, and even raped women and children in China. In a way, the Balangigans unintentionally avenged the Chinese – civilians and rebels – killed in China then. The sad aftermath was, of course, commander of the US forces of Samar Brig. Gen. Jacob Smith's order to turn Samar into a "howling wilderness," in retaliation for the Balangiga massacre. "Among the islands conquered by the Americans, Samar had the most incidents of sexual assaults because of the enmity engendered by the slaughter of Company C, 9th Infantry, in Balangiga (Dioso 2004, 605)."

In fact, the initial US plan was to send 10,000 soldiers to China to stifle the Boxer Rebellion mid-July of 1900 but the Filipino-American War intensified and the US was forced to retain these soldiers in the Philippines to combat the Filipino revolutionaries. The commander-in-chief of the US Armed Forces, General Arthur McArthur, reported:

If we pull out even just one battalion from the Philippines, there is grave danger of losing the entire island. However, the US also recognized the grave importance of putting down the Boxer Rebellion. Hence, we decided to pull out part of our Philippine troops to China. But, in early August, since the Boxer Rebellion has weakened, the US need not pull out more troops from the Philippines" (Zhou 1993, 38).

The above coincidences point to one of many historical conundrums – if the US had pulled out a bigger contingent

of soldiers from the Philippines to be sent to China, would the Philippine revolutionaries have succeeded in the Filipino-American War?

Mother of Philippine Carabao is Chinese

One significant but hitherto unmentioned exchange between China and the Philippines early during the American occupation has to do with the Philippine carabao (water buffalo). Scientific research has recently affirmed what Chinese records documented a hundred years ago – the bloodline of the hardy Philippine national animal, the carabao, is definitely Chinese.

Genetic (DNA) research and molecular study conducted by Leslie Anne del Barrio of the Philippine Carabao Center in Munoz, Nueva Ecija proved that the Philippine carabao is not endemic to the Philippines but descended from the maternal line of Chinese swamp buffaloes (Felongco 2010).

When and how the Chinese buffaloes came to be in the Philippines was explained by historian Go Bon Juan who wrote about the 10,000 water buffaloes imported from China in 1904 by the US colonial government in the Philippines. (“Philippine Carabao,” 2010, 3; Go 2004, 5-6).

The protracted Filipino-American civil war from 1899 to 1902 and the resultant famine decimated 90 percent of the carabao (water buffalo) population in the Philippines.

To avert the “great distress” brought about by the loss of the carabaos, the US colonial government decided to replenish local herds with imports from China. Documents from China’s national archives show the Americans transacting with China for importation of 30,000 carabaos. The documents are compiled in the *Collection of Archives on the Relations between China and Southeast Asian Countries in the Qing Dynasty, Vol. II: Philippines*.

The archival collection yielded six documents on the carabao importation, two of which are in English. These are the letters

of Edwin Hurd Conger, minister plenipotentiary of the United States in China, dated October 22, 1903 and November 13, 1903, to the President of the Board of Foreign Affairs of China, Prince of Ch'ing (Qing Dynasty). The other four documents are in Chinese, two of which are translations of Conger's letters (*Collection of Archives* 279, 281-282). The letters reveal that Chinese government agreed only to supply 10,000 carabaos to help the Philippines alleviate the dire situation and allow farmers to till the land again. China did not agree to export all 30,000 carabaos requested because "it would seriously affect the means of support of the farming population" in China.

Go Bon Juan, who first wrote about the Qing archival documents pertaining to this matter emphasized that no historical documents on this matter exist anywhere in Philippine history textbooks and except for the Chinese ones, there were no locally available materials explaining the mass deaths of carabaos at the turn of the 20th century (5-6). These Chinese archival documents validate the famine that occurred during the Filipino-American war and mentioned disease that plagued the carabaos. In addition, the loss of the beasts may partly be due to the famine itself, which pushed hungry farmers to slaughter their own animals because the civil war prevented them from working their lands anyway. Thus, the 10,000 carabaos from China crossbred with the surviving local carabaos to become the modern day Philippine carabao studied by Del Barrio (5-6).

Conclusion

The above narratives highlight the interconnection and interrelation of historical events in our two countries – Philippines and China. Being close neighbors in Asia, linked by geography, kinship, cultural affinity and friendship, events that happened in one country have impact on the other.

Although the great explorer, Zheng He's seven voyages to the western ocean failed to pass by the Philippines, it nevertheless put in the map many uncharted islands in the South Seas, islands in the Philippines included. Zheng He's voyages took 28 years to reach 37 countries in Asia, Middle East, and Africa. It is the world's earliest, biggest and historically the longest and farthest expedition ever undertaken. It opened China's ancient maritime silk route for economic, cultural and political exchanges with near and distant partners and established a true global network long before the term "globalization" became a norm (See 2018, 383-392).

The footprints of Zheng He's voyages are evident in many parts of Southeast Asia. The Philippines' relations to the Ming Imperial court that launched the Zheng He voyages are well documented. A highlight of Ming Dynasty Philippines-China relations revolved around the visit of the Sultan of Sulu to the Ming Court of Emperor Yong Le in 1417, which has caught researchers' imagination and historians' avid interest (See, et.al 2005, 32-33; See 2017, 17-22). Though there has been no evidence, to this date, that Zheng He passed by the Philippines, the Sultan's visit must be directly related to the second and third voyages in 1407 and 1409. These historical accounts are precursors of the sharing of knowledge, ideas, and information about the great Chinese empire, knowledge which was later exploited by the Spaniards and the Americans in their colonization of the Philippines.

Whether it is the amazing stories about the Philippines' vital role in the spread of Christianity in China, trivia about the Chinese origins of the Philippine carabao, vignettes on the Boxer Rebellion in Beijing and its connection to the Balangiga massacre in Samar, lesser known information about Mariano Ponce, Galicano Apacible, and Sun Yat-sen having dinner in Yokohama, Japan and talking about the common cause for Asian emancipation, and the vital links between the American occupation of the Philippines and its desire for access to the vast super market that is China

– these narratives, taken together, throw light into how closely intertwined the Filipinos and the Chinese fate and destinies were. It emphasizes that not only are our countries geographically close to one another but the Chinese and the Filipino people have been historically and culturally linked through centuries of relations and shared history, heritage, and destiny.

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