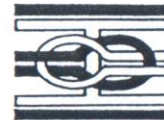


**PHILIPPINE PERSPECTIVES
ON TIANANMEN**



**CHINESE STUDIES
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(PACS)

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1991

THE PHILIPPINE ASSOCIATION FOR CHINESE STUDIES is a non-political and non-profit professional association committed to increasing understanding of China and the Chinese.

The Association was incorporated in October 1987 with the following objectives:

1. To promote, encourage and support academic studies and research on China and the Chinese through discussions, lectures, seminars, publications and international exchange.
2. To identify the gaps in research subjects and methodology and stimulate work in these areas.
3. To set up a resource center for the documentation and the collection of information and materials in order to develop serious interest in Chinese studies.
4. To establish and maintain contact with other professional national and international organizations in the interest of mutual enlightenment in the field of Chinese studies.
5. To offer to government, business, and other sectors, when deemed appropriate, assistance in research and education, policy formulation, and program development that may lead to a better understanding of China and the Chinese.
6. To assist persons engaged or interested in Chinese studies with respect to opportunities for work or studies and similar information, such as the strengths of various training institutions and the availability of grants and scholarships here and abroad.
7. To encourage the establishment of Chinese studies as a part of the curriculum or as a program of study in the different institutions of learning.
8. To promote understanding of the Philippines and the Filipinos among the Chinese.

Introduction

IT HAS BEEN A YEAR since the slaughter of unarmed civilians at Tiananmen Square, an event that left most of the world aghast with horror as well as shock. It was clear to all that Tiananmen in June 1989 was a turning point in the history of modern China; for some, perhaps a turning back too, if we are to judge its consequences on the reform project begun in 1978. Now it seems that it was a turning point in the history of socialism as well, as we see the multitudes of youth, intellectuals and workers overrunning the streets and squares of Eastern Europe, raising many of the very same banners we saw at Tiananmen.

From the moment the first news of student unrest in China appeared in Philippine newspapers, the issue caught the imagination of various sectors of the Philippine public. Was it a Chinese EDSA, many asked. What did the students want? How much were the Chinese leaders prepared to give? Was it possible to have socialism and democracy at the same time? How would the subsequent crackdown in China affect our relations with her?

From among the hordes of questions and the din of confusion stood out the voices of our friends from PACS (the Philippine Association for Chinese Studies). Originating from different perspectives, beholding different dimensions of the reality that was Tiananmen, we sought humbly to try to comprehend what it all meant, in the process hoping to enlighten others. We discussed, gave lectures, wrote in newspapers, and debated among ourselves. The articles in this collection represent many of those views expressed in immediate reaction to the tragedy that befell the Chinese pro-democracy movement. What perhaps distinguishes them from many others is the fact that they are written from a Filipino perspective, or at least with a Filipino audience in mind.

Theresa Cariño's article, "The Democratization Movement in China", is a preliminary assessment of the democratization movement in China. It gives us much of the background information we need to understand the sentiments and the behavior of the dissenters. "China after Tiananmen" by Aileen San Pablo-Baviera tries to envisage the post-massacre era, daring to dwell on the historical significance of a movement not quite yet belonging to history. Lily Rose Tope transports us to Beijing last spring, and through her eyewitness account, entitled "The Spring of Discontent", we begin to hear the chanting and to feel the elation, followed by dark despair, of the clamoring crowds. Mario Miclat writes an allegorical piece that uses symbols as old as Chinese civilization itself to dwell on the bitter ironies of life in modern China, in "Beijing . . . The Other View".

The article, "Politics and Polarization" by Teresita Ang See examines the reactions of the sector in Philippine society we would expect to be most affected by the recent developments — the local Chinese community. But she reveals the most unexpected observations. The final article, which I also wrote, explores some of the implications of the events of the "Beijing Spring" on Philippine-Chinese relations as well as on domestic Philippine politics.

We have also decided to reprint in this issue an interview from the new journal, *Echoes from Tiananmen*, published by a Hong Kong-based group which calls itself Friends of Chinese Minzhu (democracy). The interviewees reply to the questions most commonly raised about the democracy movement, and their answers need no elaboration as they speak eloquently for themselves.

If there is one thing that binds together the articles in this collection, aside from the fact that except for the reprint, they were all written by members of the Philippine Association for Chinese Studies, it is perhaps the overwhelming sympathy for the Chinese people shared by the authors. These people, who have in their long history shouldered heavy burdens, and who have relentlessly tried to overcome them through great sacrifice, certainly deserve our admiration and more.

June 1990
Aileen San Pablo-Baviera
E D I T O R

The contributors

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