

## The Rise and Fall (?) of Sister-Cities in Philippines-Japan Relations

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Sister-city relationships are rarely a subject of research in international relations. And yet, as this article will show, sister-cities have been international actors for almost half a decade. And it seems, they are now fading away. This paper will argue that as a formal agreement, the sister-city arrangement may be fading away, but its substance will remain in this age of globalization.

Sister-city relationship is an official partnership between two local government units (LGUs) of two nation-states. The relationship is forged through the signing of a memorandum of agreement or any official document usually by the elected public officials of the two LGUs. Although the relationship is called sister-city, the LGUs or one of them may not necessarily be a city. It may be a town, a province, or any LGU. For the sake of simplicity, the term “sister-city” is used regardless of what level of LGUs are involved and this practice is followed in this article. City-bonding is called “Friendship Cities” in other countries, especially in the case of China and Japan, wherein China wants to emphasize equality, rather than the hierarchical relationship implied in sister-city.

City bonding or city twinning happens both locally and internationally. Two cities within a nation-state may establish a sister-city relationship. Examples are sister-city covenants between Parañaque and Sta. Cruz in Ilocos Sur, Cebu City and Manila, and Lapu Lapu City and Pasay City. A city within a nation-state like the Philippines may bond or twin with a city in another nation-state, like Japan. This international sister-city relationship is the focus of this paper.

In *Japan's Subnational Governments in International Affairs* (2005), Purnendra Jain has a lengthy discussion of Japan's sister-city relationships with the United States, China, Australia, and others, but he omits Southeast Asia (Jain 2005, p. 69). Such omission is understandable, considering that the few sister-city tie-ups of Japan with Southeast Asia pale in comparison to the huge number of sister-city relationships between Japan and these countries (435 with the United States, 290 with China, 105 in Australia).

In 1997, the Philippines had eighty sister-cities with Japan (Table 1; see the appendix to this chapter), but as will be seen below, only twenty are identified, and less than half of the twenty are active. Nevertheless, sister-city relationship between the Philippines and Japan is a significant subject for study because among Southeast Asian countries, it is the Philippines that had and still has the most number of sister-cities in Japan. Moreover, the Philippines was the first Southeast Asian country to forge a sister-city relationship with Japan. The Yokohama-Manila sister-city relationship was established in 1965. With Indonesia, Japan established its first sister-city only in 1984. In both Malaysia and Thailand,

the beginning was even later, in 1989 (CLAIR Singapore).

Japan established sister-cities with the Philippines as early as the 1960s, way ahead of the other countries in Southeast Asia because sister-city relationship had been presented by the United States as the model of people to people goodwill and friendship. In the 1960s, Japan was eager to normalize trade and other commercial relations with the Philippines because the economy of the Philippines was the best in Southeast Asia, and second only to Japan. However, anti-Japanese feeling in the Philippines caused by the Second World War and the Japanese Occupation had remained strong until around the end of the 1960s. To counteract the anti-Japanese sentiment and foster goodwill and friendship, establishment of sister-cities became one of the strategies.

It is commonly believed that sister-cities are the embodiment of grassroots diplomacy. They are the vehicles of international goodwill and friendship not only among governments, but also among the humblest citizens. "The Sister-City Program is an important resource to the negotiations of governments in letting the people themselves give expressions for their common desire for friendship, goodwill and cooperation for a better world," said President Dwight D. Eisenhower when he launched the Sister-Cities International in 1956. Obviously, the Philippines got its inspiration from this ideal, for the quote is repeated in the 1997 Souvenir Programme of the First National Convention on Local Government Exchange and Cooperation in the 1990s (PHISTA 1997). Satō Torao, former Japanese diplomat to the Philippines, considers sister-cities as one of the indicators of the vitality of post World War II Philippines-Japan relations. Together with various associations of Japanese expatriates and residents in the Philippines, different cultural organizations and institutions jointly run by Filipinos and Japanese, student exchange programs, popularity of ikebana and bonsai, Satō lists seventeen sister-cities as indicators of the growth of grass-roots inter-actions between the Philippines and Japan (Satō, pp. 199–201).<sup>1</sup>

This paper asks to what extent the sister-cities between the Philippines and Japan did foster friendship and goodwill on the grassroots level. After a brief review of the literature on sister-cities and their supposed role as critiques of the nation-state, a survey of the pioneer sister-cities, their motivations and activities, will be presented. It will then analyze the interplay between the LGUS and the national governments of Japan and the Philippines. And last but not least, it will discuss the role of people—civic organizations, descendants of pre-World War II Japanese immigrants to the Philippines, and NGOs—in the establishment and sustainability of the sister-cities.

### **Sister-cities and the nation-state**

Among the rare studies that focus on cities and sister-cities are those of Wilbur Zelinsky (March 1991), Chadwick F. Alger (1990), and Purnendra Jain (2000; 2005). Zelinsky and Alger cover a broad scope and tend to be normative. Jain focuses on Japan and is more descriptive.

1 Satō uses the term "minkan," meaning civilian, ordinary citizens, as opposed to government officials and functionaries. Sister-cities, however, as this article shows, are not civilian organizations. They are projects or programs of LGUs. Nevertheless, as this article will also stress, civic organizations, NGOs, and individual persons were instrumental in the success of sister-cities.

Zelinsky does a global survey of sister cities in temporal and spatial perspectives. He traces the social and technological antecedents of city twinning to the 1940s, but considers the Second World War as the impetus to the movement (p. 5). Rehabilitation and reconciliation after the war inspired states and former enemies to establish sister-cities. The movement started in Western Europe, spread to North America, and by the 1980s, it was a worldwide phenomenon. When the city bonding was among states of equal socio-economic status, it was marked with reciprocity. As it began to include less developed states, reciprocity became minimal and was replaced by a tendency of the less developed LGU to expect aid from the more developed LGU (pp. 7–8).

A finding by Zelinsky that justifies the focus of this article on Japan and the Philippines is that Japan and the Philippines are two of the countries in East Asia that have enthusiastically forged sister-city relationships. Joining them are China, Taiwan, and South Korea (p. 10). The least enthusiastic are Vietnam, Indonesia, Thailand, and Singapore (p. 11).

Zelinsky identifies several factors that influence decisions about with what nation-state and with which local government unit in that nation-state to bond with. He finds historical ties and the spirit of reconciliation after World War II to be the most pervasive factors (p. 21). The other factors are geographical propinquity, social or economic interest, political ideologies, identity or similarity of names of the cities, foreign policies of the national governments, and personal histories of the initiators of the relationship (pp. 21–23). All these factors, except similarity of names apply to the sister-city relationship between Japan and the Philippines.

This article pursues a point made by Zelinsky, who says: “A given country’s array of twinings tends to reflect the larger national interest. Under the benevolent gaze of the central regime, the sister-city program usually serves to advance politically acceptable commercial and diplomatic ends, or is at worst neutral. The close accordance between official objectives and those of the twinners is especially clear in such instances, *inter alia*, as Japan, China, Israel, the Congo, and the supranational European community” (p. 26). Zelinsky is not happy about this political fact, and advocates that sister-cities should develop into promoters of “social ideals that transcend national borders and/or constitute controversial enterprises that challenge statist interests and are a rebuke to the idea of the unbridled sovereignty and omnipotence of nation-states” (p. 28). The case of the Philippines will show that the cities that forged sister-city relationships with Japanese cities initially transcended the nation-state and only lately echoed national policies. The same thing cannot be said about the Japanese cities; Zelinsky’s observation applies to them.

Alger’s main concern is to explore the impact of foreign policies on the cities of the world and how people in cities create movements and institutions through which they and/or local governments can become involved in formulating foreign policies. The scope of the work is large, covering NGOs, NPOs, local citizens, and cities. Sister-city is only one of the institutions or movements created by local citizens. Alger does a review of relevant literature, and because mainstream social sciences are still focused on the state, he reviews scholarly works in anthropology, economics, history, sociology, and political science that go beyond this mainstream preoccupation with the state. He focuses on issues of war prevention and disarmament, poverty, and human rights, and analyzes the aware-

ness of local citizens about the impact of these issues on them and the movements they have created to support, alter, or criticize foreign policies of states.

Alger writes about altering or criticizing foreign policies when he looks at a wide range of sub-national, non-governmental, and citizen's participation in macro issues such as poverty, human rights, and war and disarmament. When he writes about sister-cities, however, he recognizes that they often support, rather than alter or criticize foreign policies of the national government. Sister-cities, he says, are "alternative foreign service," in the sense that they link cities, not states (p. 506). Most of them are "unlike conflict movements within societies, whose primary goal is to change government policies" (Ibid.). He cites as examples the eighty-five United States' sister-cities with Nicaragua, and the over thirty with the Soviet Union. In the end, however, Alger credits these sister-cities for also being critical of government policies. He writes: "Of course, a long-term goal of these programs is also to change the policies of national governments" (Ibid.).

Alger's notion about the implicit subversive character of sister-cities was true in the case of the pioneer Philippine cities that forged relationships with Japan; it was not true in the case of the Japanese cities. But as bilateral relations developed, the sister-cities gradually became more like "foreign service," to borrow Alger's analogy, that implement the national governments' foreign policies, at least those parts they found useful for their particular conditions and needs.

Purnendra Jain, in "Emerging Foreign Policy Actors: Subnational Governments and Nongovernmental Organizations" (2000) and a more expanded work on the same topic, *Japan's Sub-national Governments in International Affairs* (2005), focuses on Japan, and arrives at a conclusion similar to Zelinsky's and Alger's. Jain concludes that NGOs and LGUs (he calls them SNGs, sub-national governments) tend to support, rather than contradict national goals. He writes: "Individually, SNGs are political actors with varying degrees of clout, beholden to the central government, but usually seeking to increase their autonomy from it. We see this in their push to become international actors . . . with their own interests and priorities. Usually their goals are reasonably consistent with those of the central government . . . , but certainly not always" (p. 19).

Putting together the work of Satō (Satō, pp. 199–201) and the records of Japan's Council of Local Authorities for International Relations (CLAIR) based in Singapore, the following sister-cities between the Philippines and Japan have been identified.<sup>2</sup> The date after each pair is the date of the establishment of the sister-city relationship.

1. Ōizumi-mura<sup>3</sup> (Yamanashi-ken) and Caba (La Union), 25 December 1964
2. Yokohama-shi (Kanagawa-ken) and Manila, 1 July 1965

2 In addition, Osaka and Manila declared themselves as "business partners" on 27 October 1989. Papyrus Center in Imadate-chō (Fukui-ken) entered into a *shimai-kan* (sister-center) relationship with Papel Likha Kamay Center in Manila on 15 September 1994. Papyrus and Papel Likha Kamay are engaged in hand-made paper. A certain Loreto from Papel Likha Kamay was sent to Japan for training. To date, Japan imports materials for hand-made paper from the Philippines (Tateoka Mitsuaki e-mail).

3 The geographical areas in the list are mura (village), shi (city), ken (prefecture), and chō (town).



3. Hanyū-shi (Saitama-ken) and Baguio City, 11 February 1969
4. Marugame-shi (Kagawa-ken) and Pasig, 10 February 1972
5. Chiba-shi (Chiba-ken) and Quezon City, 24 October 1972
6. Wakkanai-shi (Hokkaidō) and Baguio City, 20 March 1973
7. Iwata-shi (Shizuoka-ken) and Dagupan City, 19 February 1975
8. Kōchi-ken and Benguet, 28 July 1975
9. Yamato-chō (Hiroshima-ken) and Kanlaon City (Negros Occidental), 25 July 1977
10. Takatsuki-shi (Osaka) and Manila, 25 January 1979
11. Fukuyama-shi (Hiroshima-ken) and Tacloban (Leyte), 19 October 1980
12. Gonohe-chō (Aomori-ken) and Bayombong (Nueva Vizcaya), 22 December 1983
13. Chōshi-shi (Chiba-ken) and Legazpi City (Albay), 27 June 1985
14. Yagi-chō (Kyoto) and Manila, 21 August 1985
15. Sakegawa-mura (Yamagata-ken) and Kawit (Cavite), 30 June 1988
16. Tozawa-mura (Yamagata-ken) and General Trias (Cavite), 11 August 1989
17. Amagi-chō (Kagoshima-ken) and Silay City (Negros Occidental), 20 April 1989
18. Niisato-mura (Iwate ken) and La Trinidad (Benguet), 7 August 1992
19. Gunma-chō (Gunma-ken) and Muntinlupa (Metro Manila), 1 March 1994
20. Satomi-mura (Ibaragi-ken) and La Trinidad (Benguet), 7 November 1994

The creation of most of these sister-cities was LGU initiated. A few were created through the efforts of old-time Japanese immigrants to the Philippines, Japanese veterans of World War II, descendants of pre-World War II Japanese immigrants to the Philippines, and civic organizations such as the Lions Clubs and the Rotary Clubs.

### **The pioneer sister-cities: Goodwill on some local levels, hostility on the national level**

It is interesting to note that fourteen out of the twenty sister-cities in the list above were founded before the 1980s, considering that it was only by the mid-1980s that relations between the Philippines and Japan started to gradually improve as the dark shadows of World War II began to fade with the passage of time. This shows that the lukewarm, sometimes hostile bilateral relations between the Philippines and Japan prior to the mid-1980s were not repeated on the level of some Philippine LGUs.

Even though the Philippines and Japan had ratified the Peace Treaty and the Reparations Agreement in 1956, the memories of World War II and the Japanese Occupation were still very much alive until the early 1980s. The clearest indication of this was the failure of the national government to officially conclude a treaty of amity, commerce, and navigation with Japan, despite the latter's persistent insistence. The treaty was signed in 1960, but no Philippine president dared present it to the Philippine Senate for ratification, for fear of being called "pro-Japanese" and thus, jeopardizing his political career. It took President Ferdinand Marcos, using his Martial Law powers, to unilaterally declare the treaty as "ratified" in December 1973. (Strictly speaking, there was no ratification, because Marcos had dissolved the Congress of the Philippines.)

The sister-cities established before December 1973 were attempts by the LGUs to quietly establish links between the Philippines and Japan. The purpose of the Japanese LGUs, consistent with Japan's national policy, was to earn the goodwill of the Filipinos. For the Philippine LGUs, they would not lose anything by positively and cordially responding to the offer of friendship and cultural exchanges, even though they would be acting contrary to the national policy.

Manila, the economic and political capital of the Philippines especially in the 1960s was the most organized among the LGUs in pursuing sister-city tie-ups. The city mayor, Antonio J. Villegas, issued an executive order creating the Manila International Sister Cities Association (MISCA) on 13 July 1967. MISCA described the sister-city program as "people to people" exchanges directed by "civic-spirited citizens with minimum government participation to avoid any tint or color of international politics" (MISCA brochure, revised 1996). As will be seen below, MISCA is still alive and active in organizing the activities of Manila's sister-cities.

Thus, in the 1950s through the 70s, sister-city activities were mostly ritualistic and symbolic expressions of friendship and goodwill. One example was the tie-up between Yokohama and Manila, the oldest of the sister-cities of Japan and the Philippines. Forged in July 1965, two years ahead of MISCA, the Yokohama-Manila twinning mainly consisted of exchange of official visits, cultural exchanges such as performances by musical groups, dance troops, sports matches, and exhibits of Filipino children's paintings in Yokohama. Exchanges of congratulatory messages and visits were observed during anniversaries. One such exchange took place during the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of Manila in 1971.

Another example was the Chiba-Quezon City Sister-City, established in 1972. It may not be a mere coincidence that the major industrial plant of Chiba City was the Kawasaki Steel, built in 1952 (Scout Exchange Program, p. 6). The major reason why Japan greatly wanted to conclude a commercial treaty with the Philippines was to obtain raw materials for its industries. Pending the ratification of the treaty, and for it to be ratified, the Japanese had to earn first the goodwill of the Filipinos.

Some sister-cities explicitly stated reconciliation for the atrocities during World War II as a motivation for the tie-up. The Hanyū-Baguio Sister-city relationship, established in 1969, was inspired by such spirit. The Lions Clubs of Hanyū and Baguio were instrumental in bringing the two cities together. The Lions Club of Hanyū was led by a certain Kamiyama, an army doctor who served in Baguio during the war (interview with Escaño). The Baguio City Council Resolution, in accepting the offer of sister-city relation from Hanyū reads in part: "While the people of Baguio find it difficult to forget the ruins and depredation their city had been subjected to during the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War, the gesture of the people and most especially the officialdom of Hanyū City in seeking to establish a sister-city relationship with the City of Baguio is a genuine manifestation of their desire to help mature the bond of brotherhood..." (Resolution 37-69).

The Wakkanai-Baguio Sister-City was also started by the Lions Club, the then vice mayor of Baguio, Pedro Z. Claravall, being the president of the Baguio Lions Club. The resolution establishing the sister-city relationship states: "Whereas the war in which the

Filipinos and Japanese have been involved is almost thirty years remote; and in the intervening years the painful memories have receded and in their place have blossomed feelings of peace and goodwill" (Resolution 70-73).

Japan used goodwill projects and programs aimed at the Filipino youths to counteract the remaining ill-feelings towards the Japanese. Pen Pal clubs were encouraged (Jose and Jose, p. 25). International youth exchanges were promoted. The Marugame-Pasig Sister-city was one of the by-products of an international youth exchange program. The Mayor of Marugame, representing the International Youth Exchange Association, came to Pasig. During his visit, he and the Mayor of Pasig agreed to propose a sister-city agreement. The agreement was signed in 1972 (Marugame, Kagawa General Affairs Secretary e-mail). Exchange of persons followed soon. Due to lack of funds, the exchange was stopped, but the two cities continued contacts through exchange of works and letters by school children of Marugame and Pasig. Even this, however, was stopped in 1986, due to political instability in the Philippines (Marugame, Kagawa General Affairs secretary e-mail).

The establishment of the pioneer sister-cities between the Philippines and Japan was a reversal of the Philippines' national policy of rejecting the treaty of amity, commerce, and navigation with Japan. Expressions of friendship, reconciliation, goodwill on the level of these LGUs were the exact opposite of the anti-Japanese public opinion on the national level.

If promotion of goodwill had a long-term agenda, such as the establishment of a stable trade and investment climate, it was not explicit. The expressed goals of goodwill and cultural relations, while not exactly outside the scope of the classical concept of foreign relations and foreign policy, were considered minor concerns and if cities wanted to undertake them, the national government's power would not be diminished even if they let the cities to do so. The concerns of foreign relations and foreign policy were and are still major ones, such as self-reliance, sovereignty, security, and prestige (Holsti, pp. 83-116).

Therefore, the national government left the cities free to forge ties with the Japanese cities because the national government officials did not feel that the activities of the cities would affect their political career. The activities of the cities seemed trivial compared with the more serious foreign policy concerns in the post-World War II period, when the national government was busy with war damage reparations issues and the normalization of trade and commercial relations. But it was precisely because they were seen as trivial that they were considered safe during these years when the bilateral relations had yet to be extricated from the negative impact of World War II.

In Japan, Japanese overtures for goodwill and friendship were in support of the national policy of winning the hearts of Filipinos as a stepping stone towards the ratification of the treaty of amity, commerce, and navigation.

### **The national governments of Japan and the Philippines give the cue**

After the "ratification" of the Treaty of Amity, Commerce and Navigation, Philippines-Japan relations became more stable. Under President Marcos' policy of diversifying Philippine foreign relations, the Philippines' bilateral relations with its Asian neighbors

including Japan became closer. The passage of time also helped in healing the wounds of World War II. Both Japan and the Philippines exerted efforts to promote bilateral economic and cultural ties. Japanese LGUs continued to support the national government's foreign policy goals vis-à-vis the Philippines. Philippine LGUs that positively responded to Japanese LGUs' offer of goodwill and cooperation no longer acted against the national sentiment. On the contrary, the national government of the Philippines, like the national government of Japan earlier on, had found in sister-cities supporters of its national foreign policy goals.

In the 1980s, when the impact of the Japanese economic miracle had been felt domestically and internationally, and most of the major issues brought on by World War II had been settled, the Japanese government felt that its international status was still far from being recognized by the world. Thus, in 1986, Prime Minister Nakasone stated in his January address to the Diet that he wanted Japan to become a *kokusai kokka*, an international state (Drifte, p. 7). *Kokusaika* became the buzz word of Japanese foreign policy.

"Internationalization," which is the English translation of the Japanese *kokusaika* (becoming international) had two inseparable goals: the foreign and the local. The foreign policy goal was to have the world recognize Japan's status as an important player in international relations. Coupled with this was the local goal: to transform the domestic scene in Japan; that is, to make its prefectures, cities, and towns international (or at least, look international), to increase the foreign population, to encourage Japanese to speak foreign languages particularly English, and to increase the variety of foreign products in Japanese department stores and groceries.

It was important to make local government units "international." Many Japanese cities and towns sponsored activities and programs to project an international image and expose the local people to different nationalities and cultures. The sister-city program was only one of these programs.

The Japanese national government further tried to harness the potential of sister-cities in promoting national foreign policy goals by creating the Council of Local Authorities for International Relations or CLAIR in 1988 (Jain 2000, pp. 30–31). The Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA) supervises CLAIR.

In the Philippines, sister-city programs came under the supervision of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG). The DILG launched in 1994 the sister-city or town-twinning program. By this time, all the sister-city relationships between the Philippines and Japan had been established. Moreover, the goals of sister-cities had expanded to include development goals. By launching the sister-city or town-twinning program, the DILG only meant to increase the number of international and local city twinings and to enhance their utility as tools for the promotion of development initiatives and goals (Memorandum circular 94–93).

To facilitate coordination between the DILG and the local government units, the Philippine International Sisterhood and Twinning Association (PHISTA) was organized, and became the duly accredited liaison office to assist the DILG in the furtherance of international exchange and cooperation among local governments (Memorandum Circular 97–306). PHISTA has been more successful in promoting city and town twinning among the cities and towns in the Philippines, than in twinning Philippine cities with

cities abroad. In fact, as far as the Philippines and Japan are concerned, PHISTA has not been able to add any sister-city relationship to the ones already existing before its creation in 1994. One was established in 1998, the Katsushika-ku ("ku" means ward or town. Katsushika-ku is in Tokyo)-Pasay Sister-city, but nothing is known about this relationship, except the date of its establishment. On 11 August 1998 the city council of Pasay City passed a resolution establishing a sister-city relationship with Katsushika-ku, identified in the resolution as a city, although strictly speaking, it is a ward in the Tokyo Metropolitan. The sister-city affiliation agreement was signed on 21 August by Imai Yoshito, member of the Tokyo Metropolitan Assembly from Katsushika and Greg F. Alcera, Vice-Mayor of Pasay City (Resolution 1045-S1998). Still another one is Cotabato City, which passed a resolution expressing a desire to twin with Amagi in Kagoshima in 1997, but to date, the twinning has not been formalized (Resolution 1691 Series of 1997). Likewise, the Davao-Kagoshima sisterhood has been waiting for official conclusion since 2000 (Resolution 1119 Series of 2000).

The Philippines seeks to use foreign relations to contribute to domestic social and economic development. Technology transfer, educational programs, employment abroad, relief aid in case of natural calamities, donations of fire trucks and ambulance, local tourism, among other projects, are welcome complements to the larger national policy of attracting foreign aid and investment, creating employment, promoting the tourist industry, and giving basic education to as many children as possible.

### **Toeing the national policy and tailoring it to the city's and people's particularities**

During Marcos' dictatorial rule in the 1970s through the mid 1980s, development of the tourist industry was one of the national goals. This fitted very well in the reconciliatory attitude of Marcos towards Japan, as relatives and former comrades of the soldiers who died in the battlegrounds of the Philippines during the Second World War began to organize trips to the Philippines to visit the places where their relatives were said to have fallen, or were buried. They offered prayers, and the lucky ones who could actually spot the grave sites of the war dead were able to gather bones to be brought home and be given a proper burial in Japan. Since the pilgrims were already in the Philippines, there was nothing wrong if they also did a little sightseeing and souvenir shopping.

These commemorative and bone-gathering trips started in the early 1970s. The first commemorative memorial for the souls of the dead was the Caliraya Memorial Park in Batangas, inaugurated in March 1973 (Nakano, p. 359). More war memorials were built one after the other in various places, but the better known ones were in Corregidor, Leyte, and Bataan. They became parts of the itinerary of almost all Japanese tourists.

To develop tourism, the first lady, Imelda Marcos, launched beautification projects in several parts of the country. One of these projects indirectly resulted in the forging of the sister-city relationship between Takatsuki and Manila, a sister-city relationship which combined commemoration of the war dead and promotion of tourism, using not a World War II symbol, but one from an older period, the sixteenth century.

In support of Imelda Marcos' beautification project, the Mayor of Manila, Ramon Bagatsing, undertook the beautification of an intersection of a road often traveled by tour-

ists from the international airport to major hotels in Manila.<sup>4</sup> Discussions about the project pointed to a historical connection between Takatsuki and Manila. This connection was the arrival of a Christian feudal lord, Ukon Takayama in Manila in the sixteenth century. Shortly after, he died in Manila. A statue of Ukon Takayama now stands on a small park in Paco, a district of Manila. In January 1978 Mayor Nishijima of Takatsuki, who had been to Manila in connection with the beautification project, proposed a sister-city tie-up. Mayor Bagatsing responded positively, and the agreement was signed in October of the same year (de Pedro, *passim*).

A look at the activities of the Takatsuki-Manila Sister-city will show that they were mostly touristic, plus the cultural bonus that came with tourism. One of the few visits of the delegations from Manila to Takatsuki took place when Takatsuki invited Manila City officials to the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of Takatsuki in March 1993. The delegation from Manila was requested to make a slide presentation about Manila.<sup>5</sup> The delegation showed photos of the statue of Legazpi, Manila City Hall Building, Manila City Hospital (Ospital ng Maynila), Manila City University (Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila), Puerta Isabel of Intramuros, Fort Santiago, statue of MacArthur at Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila, Manila Cathedral, Manila Hotel, sunset at Manila Bay, and Philippine folk dances like the “Bangko” and a Muslim dance (Raymundo G. Hipolito to Hideyo Fujii, 5 March 1993). Obviously, the aim was to attract tourists to Manila.

The Banda Kawayan, a musical group of students of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines performed in a local shopping mall in Takatsuki in 1995 through 1997 (Tanikawa to Quiason, 25 November 1997; Tanikawa to Velasco, 17 October 1997). Such an activity passes for promotion of Philippine culture to Japan, but the ultimate goal is to attract tourists. In October 1999 children of Manila schools participated in Takatsuki’s children’s art exhibit on world peace. Again, this passes for cultural exchange and promotion of peace, but it also contributes to the promotion of tourism.

In the case of the visitors from Takatsuki, especially the World War II veterans, tourism was combined with personal missions of paying homage to the Japanese war dead.

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4 The Takatsuki-Manila Sister-city relationship is anchored on the historical event of the banishment of the Christian feudal lord Ukon Takayama and around 300 Japanese Christians to Manila in December 1614. The first fiefdom of Takayama was the castle town of Takatsuki in the present Osaka. The Christian exiles settled in San Miguel, a district in Manila. Ukon Takayama died on 5 February 1615, less than two months after he arrived in Manila. His steadfast adherence to his faith in the face of oppression by the Japanese shogunal government earned him the respect and admiration of the Spanish colonial administrators, both ecclesiastical and secular, that he was given a royal funeral. Centuries later, on 17 November 1977, in connection with the beautification of Manila, what was believed to be the original site of the Japanese community in Manila called Dilao was cleaned up and developed into a small park, and a statue of Ukon Takayama was erected to accentuate the park. A delegation of thirty-five from Japan attended the inauguration, and among the members was Nishijima Fumitoshi, mayor of Takatsuki.

5 The delegation consisted of Ramon V. Marzan, city administrator; Raymundo G. Hipolito III, director, Manila Tourism and Cultural Affairs Bureau, Gemma I. Alivio, Tourism Operations Officer V., Clarice C. de Leon, Tourism receptionist, Ma. Norisa E. Martin, Tourism receptionist (Lim, Alfredo S., Manila City Mayor to Emura Toshio, Takatsuki City Mayor, 6 January 1993).



Corregidor, where several war memorials for Americans, Filipinos, and Japanese have been erected since the late 1980s, was a regular part of their itinerary (Fujii to Hipolito III, 16 January 1994). Wreath-laying at the statue of Ukon Takayama in Paco was usually part of the tour. In addition, the delegations usually visited the regular tourist spots: Fort Santiago, Rizal Park, and Malacañang. In 1994, a year before the fiftieth anniversary of the end of World War II, some ex-navy men expressed a desire to visit Leyte and pay homage to the souls of the war dead who saw action there during World War II (Fujii to Velasco, 10 August 1994). In 1998, the centennial of the declaration of Philippine independence, the director of the Takatsuki International Association expressed a desire to time their annual visit to Manila during the centennial celebration (Velasco to Tanikawa, 29 October 1997). Hence, when they came in 1998, places related to the centennial celebration became part of their itinerary. They visited Expo Filipino 1998 in Clark, and the Aguinaldo Shrine in Kawit, Cavite.

Visits of the Takatsuki delegation to Manila were more often and regular than visits of the Manila delegation to Takatsuki. The Japanese, especially in the high economic growth of the 1980s had more money to spare for international travel than the Filipinos. Moreover, the former veterans among them had stronger motivation to come: to commemorate the war dead. Even if they themselves did not come, perhaps they persuaded others to come in their behalf. As the years went by and as the veterans passed away, visits from Takatsuki gradually became rare. The last recorded visit from them was in 1998. Other factors may have contributed to the virtual death of the city relationship, such as the unsatisfactory peace and order situation in the Philippines, and the decline of the Japanese economy in the late 1990s. The park with a small garden accentuated by the statue of Ukon Takayama, is in a state of disarray and neglect.

The case of the Yagi-Manila Sister-city is a little bit different in that tourism was combined with the giving of scholarships to the needy students of the schools of Manila.<sup>6</sup>

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6 The establishment of the Yagi-Manila Sister-city relationship is anchored on a historical event linked to the banishment of Ukon Takayama to Manila. Among the 300 or so Christian companions of Takayama on the ship that brought them to Manila in the seventeenth century was Don Juan Naitō or Naitō Yukiyasu, feudal lord of Kameyama, and his sister Julia, a Catholic nun. Juan and Julia's hometown was Yagi-chō in Kyoto. Unlike Ukon Takayama who had a short life in San Miguel, Manila, Juan and Julia lived longer. Leaders of Yagi, upon learning about the statue to Ukon Takayama in Manila, thought of how the Naitōs' exile to Manila could also be preserved in historical memory (de Pedro, p. 527). They came to San Miguel in 1983 to retrace the lives of Juan and Julia (Hirose, [p. 2]). They also saw the statue to Ukon Takayama, which by this time already had signs of neglect and disrepair. Instead of erecting a statue that might suffer the same fate, therefore, a scholarship fund for children was established (Hirose, [p. 2]; de Pedro, p. 527). This scholarship program precedes the Yagi-Manila Sister-city and is not a project of Yagi. The funds do not come from the government budget but from contributions of the local donos in Yagi. The management of the funds does not fall under the sister-city, but rather, under the Manila-Yagi Friendship Association. (Manira-Yagi kyōiku sato-oya undō). Japanese foster parents send Filipino children to school by sending money for the children's tuition fees. The first collection was enough to send thirty-nine children to the elementary school. It was given through Fr. Nishimoto Toru, Catholic chaplain of Japanese residents in Manila. Distribution of scholarship money became an auspicious

The scholarship program, however, had been conceived even before the sister-city agreement was forged. Strictly speaking, therefore, the scholarship program is not a project of the Yagi-Manila Sister-city, despite the public impression that it is.<sup>7</sup>

The day following the signing of the sisterhood agreement in 1985, forty residents of Yagi-chō (“chō” is a LGU smaller and lower in rank than a city. It roughly equates to a town in the Philippine system.) visited the Philippines. They toured Manila and visited war memorials in Caliraya, Corregidor and Bataan to pray to the souls of the Japanese who died in the Philippines in World War II (*Ooibashi*, 1985 October and *Gikai Dayori*, 1987 October).

In 1990, just five years after the establishment of the sister-city relationship, visits both of government and non-government officials dropped until the visits virtually stopped by the mid-1990s (Hirose, various pages; Interview with Co). The main reason for this was lack of funds. The financial burden was too much for Yagi-chō, with a population of 10,000 (interview with Yoshikawa). The chairman of the city board was once a Japanese soldier who experienced Filipino kindness, and thus wanted to continue the visits, but the members of the city board decided otherwise. The scholarship program has continued, but the money is no longer distributed in the presence of the Japanese donors.

Another sister-city, the Fukuyama-Tacloban Sister-city, was established specifically, at least as far as the Japanese counterparts were concerned, to commemorate the war dead in Tacloban, Leyte. Its main activity, carried out by the YMCA of the partner-cities, was to visit Tacloban every 20<sup>th</sup> of October and pray to the souls of the members of the 41<sup>st</sup> Infantry who died in the Battle of Leyte during World War II (Fukuyama web page). This brief but annual commemoration contributed to tourism in Leyte, but only minimally, and lasted only for as long as there were individuals who remembered and cared to commemorate. According to the local residents of Tacloban, Japanese visitors have stopped coming.<sup>8</sup>

Pioneer cities such as the Yokohama-Manila and the Chiba-Quezon City which were originally forged for goodwill and friendship quickly added to their original aims the promotion of tourism. In the 1990s, the expressed aims of Manila in forging sister-city relationships were 1) promotion of culture, arts and sports; 2) promotion of education, and 3) development of tourism (Questionnaire Survey on the Exchanges with the Local Cities in Japan).

The most recent activity of the Yokohama-Manila Sister-city was the holding of a “Santaruzan” in the heart of the Yokohama shopping district in October 2005 (*Philippine Daily Inquirer*, p. H-2).<sup>9</sup> Organized by MISCA and advertised in Yokohama as “Flores de las Islas,” the parade featured beauty queens from Manila and children (Japinos) of

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event that paved the way for tying Yagi-chō and Manila as sister-cities.

7 A number of pamphlets list the scholarship program as part of the sister-city relationship.

8 The author and her husband visited several war memorials in Tacloban and the vicinity in May 2003 and found them in a state of neglect. Local people they met said “Dati may mga Hapong nag-pupunta rito” (Japanese used to come here).

9 “Santacruzán” is a religious festive activity usually held in various parts of the Philippines in May. The Holy Cross (hence, Santacruzán) is paraded around the streets with local beauties and their consorts. Its main attraction is the beauty dressed as Sta. Elena, carrying a small cross.

Filipino-Japanese parents residing in Yokohama. Parenthetically, Yokohama has one of the biggest concentrations of Filipino residents in Japan. The funds for the “Santacruzán” came from the Philippine Tourism Authority and several Japanese donors doing business in the Philippines (*Philippine Daily Inquirer*, p. H-2)

On the part of their sister-cities in Japan, “internationalization,” or at least the appearance of it, became the major goal. For instance, in 1989, Yokohama invited countries all over the world to put up booths, exhibits, and performances for its Yokohama Exotic Show (YES '89). Manila was allotted a 128 square meter pavilion to exhibit Philippine crafts, dolls dressed in different tribal costumes, and accessories. YES '89 did not only project an international image. It also promoted domestic tourism in Japan. On the other hand, participating countries represented by the sister-cities of Yokohama, were able to display attractions meant to entice Japanese tourists to their countries.

Yokohama also wanted to promote itself as a supporter of the value of world peace. The Kanagawa (the prefecture where Yokohama belongs) Biennial World Children's Art Exhibition started in 1979, the International Year of the Child, and since then, Manila was among the LGUs worldwide invited to send entries to the annual exhibition. These exhibitions are meant to promote the culture of peace by cultivating international understanding.<sup>10</sup>

Chiba, on the other hand, held in October 2002 the Chiba City International Cultural Festival. Since the festival coincided with the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Chiba-Quezon City twinning, Quezon City was invited to participate. The Performing Arts Foundation of Quezon City participated. With the official entourage were the city mayor, vice mayor, assistant secretary to the mayor, city treasurer, two councilors, head of environmental and waste management department, and head of the Cultural and Tourism Affairs Office (Report, Q.C. Official Delegation's Courtesy visit to Chiba City, Japan, October 21–27, 2002). Chiba paid the expenses of the official delegation, except their round-trip airplane tickets.

Many sister-cities established between Japan and the Philippines in the mid 1970s through the early 1990s had touristic activities aside from activities meant to carry-out their *raison d'être*. And in the case of Takatsuki, Yagi, and Fukuyama, supporters of these sister-city relationships had involvement in World War II in the Philippines. They were either veterans of the war, or descendants of the war dead. As long as the veterans and their descendants were alive and strong to travel to the Philippines, they came, and visited historical places related to World War II. Such visits, however, have stopped. Yokohama and Chiba, on the other hand, have sustained the relationship and have successfully used it for “internationalization.”

### **Economic cooperation, “internationalization,” and cultural relations**

Since the 1990s, while ritualistic expression of friendship and goodwill are not neglected, more and more sister-cities focus on economic aid, transfer of technology, training, and other goals for development, including employment of Filipinos by Japanese

10 See, for example, a letter of invitation sent to Manila by Mihara Saburo, Executive Director, Kanagawa Plaza for Global Citizen, Kanagawa Prefecture, on 28 March 2000.

companies in Japan and revitalization of the villages in Japan suffering from depopulation. Such economic cooperation reinforces “internationalization,” which continues to be one of the goals of Japanese foreign policy. Moreover, cultural relations in its real sense, and not only as a by-product of or a tool of tourism and “internationalization” has become an aspect of some sister-city activities.

The trail-blazer sister-city along the line of economic cooperation was established as early as 1975, an exception to the typical sister-cities of the time, which were primarily for tourism and “internationalization.” This was the Kōchi-Benguet tie-up, which is actually a relationship between a Japanese prefecture and a Philippine province. On the other hand, the beginning of the Kōchi-Benguet tie-up could, like the other sister-cities of the 1970s, be traced to Japan’s aim of “internationalization,” for the spark that launched it was the visit to Benguet of the “Ship for Kōchi Youth” (Kōchi-ken seinen no fune) in 1975. The Kōchi-Benguet tie-up, however, took a direction different from most of the sister-cities of the 1970s, probably because even years before the visit of the “Ship for Kōchi Youth,” Sinai Hamada, a Japanese descendant and famous writer, had already sought the help of Japan for the development of Benguet (interview with Hamada).

The Kōchi-Benguet twinning began with projects for transfer of technology from Kōchi to Benguet. Twenty years of technological cooperation yielded for Benguet twenty-eight Filipino agricultural experts who trained in Japan. Japanese agricultural experts from Kōchi Prefecture come to Benguet to give training to agriculturists. These exchanges, including projects for environmental protection, have the support of Japan’s Local Government Association for Internationalization (*Jichitai koku saika-kyōkai*) (kōchi web page).

The other sister-cities for economic development were established a decade or so later. The Satomi-La Trinidad Sister-city relationship was established in November 1994.<sup>11</sup> Exchange of visits between Satomi Village and La Trinidad City involve research on rice, transportation facilities for vegetables, and folk arts of La Trinidad. Sale of folk arts from La Trinidad in Satomi’s tourist information office gives Satomi an international image, as it contributes to the livelihood of La Trinidad (Satomi Village communication, 8 January 2004).

The Gunma-Muntinlupa Sister-city was also established in 1994.<sup>12</sup> Muntinlupa sends

11 The formal tie-up between Satomi and La Trinidad in 1994 was preceded by a visit by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to La Trinidad in 1992, a visit by La Trinidad high school students and local officials to Satomi in 1993, and a rice donation to the victims of the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo.

12 The Muntinlupa-Gunma Sister-city relationship was established through the efforts of Ōsawa kiyoshi, a Japanese businessman who came to the Philippines in the 1920s. He was repatriated to Japan after World War II, and came back to the Philippines in September 1959 for good (Ōsawa, *Go South, Japanese*, p. 165; *A Japanese’ Miraculous Life*, p. 197). On 1 March 1994 the mayor of Muntinlupa and the mayor of Gunma signed a sister-city agreement. As sister-cities, Muntinlupa and Gunma undertake various activities other than the sending of trainees to Japanese companies. As of 1997 the Gunma Bridge of Friendship Scholarship has a total of 173 students. Gunma has also donated fire trucks, service vehicles, and sewing machines for the training of the citizens of Muntinlupa (PHISTA 1997).

Filipino workers to industrial establishments in Gunma as trainees. Their contract is for three years. These so-called trainees provide Japanese companies with cheap labor. Nevertheless, the salaries they get are definitely higher than what they get in the Philippines (Ōsawa, *A Japanese' Miraculous Life*, p. 192). They may be cheap laborers, but as far as statistics of foreigners in Japan is concerned, they do add to the figure, and augment the image of an open Japan. This activity of sending Filipino workers to Japan as trainees in the industrial establishments of Gunma is very much along the lines of the Philippine government's policy of sending workers abroad, as well as Japan's need for cheap labor and desire to project an international image.

The Niisato-La Trinidad Sister-city relationship, established in 1992, is for the revitalization of Niisato.<sup>13</sup> Niisato, a village rich in forest resources, was once upon a time famous for woodcarving. Unfortunately, today, it no longer has woodcarvers. In the late 1980s the Japanese government gave to each LGU one hundred million Yen to be used for projects aimed at reversing the depopulation of the villages. After grassroots consultation, Niisato officials decided to use the funds for international linkages. Middle school students were sent to the United States, Nepal and Thailand. The Philippines entered the picture only in 1992 when nine people from Niisato led by a village official, visited La Trinidad and observed woodcarving, weaving, and other folk crafts.

The village officials of Niisato must have thought of reviving the art of woodcarving not only for it to be handed down to the next generation, but also to use this once pride of the village to entice the villagers who had left for the city to make a U-turn, and hopefully, to stay. It was also meant to attract Japanese from other parts of the country to consider settling in Niisato. Displaying the village's special products, such as pickled fruits, vegetables, dried fish, and handicrafts is one of the strategies employed by villages to attract people to settle in the village, and thus check population decline.<sup>14</sup> In order to revive the lost craftsmanship of woodcarving, Niisato hires skilled woodcarvers from La Trinidad to do woodcarving in front of tourists and local people.<sup>15</sup> In 1993 two craftsmen, Hector Himmiwat and Simon Buda worked in Niisato. They stayed there for six months and finished a giant statue of a traditional figure. This was sold and part of the proceeds was given to La Trinidad, which used the money to build a school for handicapped children (*Kōhō Niisato*, No. 384, April 1998 p. 9).

The wood carvers who worked in Niisato were given free round trip air ticket and free housing. Their contract was for six months, renewable up to two years. Working con-

13 In February 1992 nine people from Niisato, led by a village official, visited La Trinidad and observed woodcarving, weaving, and other folk crafts. To return the visit, in August of the same year four local officials of La Trinidad visited Niisato and observed garbage disposal and listened to lectures on social conditions in Niisato. On 16 November 1992 Edna C. Tabanda, mayor of La Trinidad, and Yamaguchi Michio, head of Niisato Village, signed a memorandum of agreement providing for exchange programs in the social, economic, and cultural areas, for the purpose of promoting mutual understanding and friendship (Memorandum of Agreement, Niisato-mura and La Trinidad, 16 November 1992).

14 For a discussion of this strategy, see Knight, pp.112-118.

15 They are from Asin, not La Trinidad, but since La Trinidad has no woodcarvers, they have been asked to represent La Trinidad.

ditions were eight hours a day, from Friday to Tuesday, with one-hour lunch break and a fifteen-minute break in the morning and in the afternoon. The monthly salary was 150,000 Yen, from which they had to pay their social security fees. Their unusual working days of Friday to Tuesday must have been necessitated by the fact that their work place was the Niisato Furusato Bussan Sentā (Niisato Hometown Center), a sort of tourist center (Himmiwat contract) visited by tourists on weekends.

The Hanyū-Baguio sister-city relationship, on the other hand, a tie-up built along the line of reconciliation, has been able to adjust its activities to the demands of “internationalization” and cultural understanding. It began as a tie-up for the purpose of healing the wounds of World War II. As such, it did not have many activities during the first twenty years or so, until a mutual home-stay program for cultural understanding was started in 1995. Young boys and girls from Baguio stay with families in Hanyū for around a week or two to learn Japanese culture, language, and arts such as tea ceremony, ikebana and calligraphy. The counterparts from Hanyū stay with Filipino families in Baguio and learn about life in a city less developed than Hanyū.<sup>16</sup> In 2000 hiring an English teacher from Baguio to teach English in a Hanyū middle school was started. To date, three Filipino teachers have gone to Hanyū for a one-year teaching stint (Hanyū webpage; interview with Escaño). Learning English is an important part of the “internationalization” of Japan. What is significant in the Hanyū-Baguio project is that Filipinos and not Caucasians are hired as English teachers. While the fact that Asian English teachers in Japan are paid less than Caucasians may be a factor in this arrangement, it is only an accidental one. The major motivation is to tighten the knot with Baguio, one of the major provinces in the Philippines that is home to many descendants of pre-World War II Japanese.

Another old sister-city that has tried to adjust its activities to economic cooperation is the Yokohama-Manila Sister-city. Environmental protection is now considered an important part of economic cooperation. As a token to this, during the celebration of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Yokohama-Manila Sister-city relationship in 1995, the Japanese delegation planted sixty-five trees in the Paraiso ng Batang Maynila (Children’s Park) (Laudico Message, 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Yokohama-Manila Sister-city Relations).

Still another one is the Chiba-Quezon City Sister-city. Officials of Chiba donated a fire truck to Quezon City on the occasion of their visit to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the sister-city relationship in 1982. Calamities have been occasions to renew contacts and extend help. Chiba sent relief goods for the victims of the strong earthquake that hit Luzon in 1990. Again, relief goods were sent to the victims of the landslide in Payatas, a garbage dump site, in 2000 (Quezon City Hall, typewritten notes in folder).

Since sister-cities are only microcosms of the nation-state, economic aid to them is also small, like one or two fire trucks, ambulances, and relief goods.

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16 Since around the year 2000 exchange of students between Hanyū and Baguio has stopped. This is probably due to lack of funds on the part of Hanyū, which has been shouldering most of the expenses. The city government of Baguio and civic organizations and NGOs, especially the Filipino Japanese Foundation of Northern Luzon Incorporated (FJFNLI), share a minimum of expenses. Reviving the relationship is uncertain, because of the current reorganization of local governments in Japan (interview with Escaño).



Another old, practically dormant sister-city established along the line of reconciliation that received aid from Japan is the Wakkanai-Baguio sister-city. It had no activity at all since the signing of the sister-city agreement, but in January 1991 Wakkanai donated 12.5 million Yen (roughly 6 million pesos) to Baguio City for the city's rehabilitation from the strong earthquake that hit it in July 1990 (de la Cruz to Vergara, et al).

### Grassroots international relations

Local government officials are the most visible in the ceremonial aspects of establishing sister-city relationships. Speeches or messages are delivered by them during the inauguration and anniversaries of the sister-cities. Local government officials, often the city mayors, initiated majority of the sister-city agreements listed above. Even sister-cities such as Kōchi-Benguet, Fukuyama-Tacloban, Gunma-Muntinlupa, and Satomi-La Trinidad, which were initiated by individual persons, civic organizations, or NGOs eventually called on the local government officials to bestow "officialness" on the tie-up.

With the exception of the city of Manila that has MISCA to oversee its sister-city relationships, almost all the sister-cities that remained active for at least a generation were able to do so largely because of the support from individual persons, civic organizations, and/or NGOs. These are Hanyū-Baguio, Chiba-Quezon City, Wakkanai-Baguio, Kōchi-Benguet, and Fukuyama-Tacloban (see Table 2 in the appendix to this chapter).

The Chiba-Quezon sister-city relationship, which is still alive is mainly maintained by exchanges between boy-scout organizations, YMCA, and Jaycees of the two cities. The Fukuyama-Tacloban tie-up is only legally alive, but during the twenty six years of annual commemoration of the Battle of Leyte, it was the YMCAs of Fukuyama and Tacloban who actively organized the ceremonies (Fukuyama web page).

The Kōchi-Benguet sister-city relationship was initiated by Sinai Hamada, a Japanese descendant. The Wakkanai-Baguio tie-up was started by the president of the Baguio Lions Club, while the Hanyū-Baguio tie-up was started by the president of the Hanyū Lions Club. Moreover, the sending of Filipino teachers from Baguio to teach English in Hanyū is kept alive by the Japan's Association of Language Teachers (ALT) (Hanyū web page).

It is significant to note that the counterpart Philippine cities of these three tie-ups are in Benguet (Baguio City is in Benguet), one of the provinces (the other one is Davao) where the descendants of pre-World War II Japanese immigrants are most numerous.<sup>17</sup> In Benguet, they are well-organized and a number of them have influence in society. One of them, Carlos Teraoka, is honorary consul-general of Japan to Baguio. In addition to the three sister-cities already mentioned are the two newer ones, the Niisato-La Trinidad and Satomi-La Trinidad (La Trinidad is the capital of Benguet). In total, Benguet at present has five tie-ups with Japanese cities. The Filipino Japanese Foundation of Northern Luzon Incorporated (FJFNLI), an association of Filipinos with Japanese ancestors,

17 The second and third generation descendants number around 1,855 (culled from Afable, pp. 313–322); the FJFNLI has 1, 788 members (Afable, p. 309).

gives training in the Japanese language to Baguio and La Trinidad residents before they go to Japan for agricultural training and cultural exchanges. The association also helps in the screening of applicants for agricultural training and cultural exchanges. It subsidizes, although minimally, the expenses of the Filipinos who go to Japan for agricultural training and cultural exchange (interview with Escaño).

In contrast with the sister-cities that existed for a generation or more, almost all the sister-cities which were still-born (no activity aside from the signing of the agreement) or became inactive only within a few years after inauguration were initiated by local government officials and did not have civic organizations or NGOs to depend on. The still-born sister-cities were Ōizumi-Caba, Gonohe-Bayombong, Chōshi-Legazpi, and Sakegawa-Kawit, while the sister-cities that stopped being active after only twenty years or less of existence were Marugame-Pasig, Iwata-Dagupan, Yagi-Manila, and Tozawa-General Trias (see Table 2, appendix ).<sup>18</sup>

It is difficult to maintain a sister-city relationship beyond the term of office of the local government official who has real interest in it unless there is a mechanism like MISCA that will see to it that sister-cities are kept alive even after the local government official has left his position. Change of local government officials was the major reason why some sister-cities did not even see action after their inauguration, and why many sister-cities became inactive only after a few years of operation. In the same vein, support from civic organizations, NGOs, and individual persons helped some sister-cities to carry on even after the local government officials behind the establishment of the sister-cities left office.

In fact, grassroots international relations is possible outside of sister-city relationship. The case of Yagi-Manila Sister-city and the scholarship program that is usually associated with it is a case in point. As stated above, the scholarship program had preceded the signing of the sister-city agreement. In spite of claims that the scholarship program is a sister-city project, the fact is it is not. Visitors from Yagi have stopped visiting Manila since the mid-1990s (Hirose, various pages; interview with Co), rendering the sister-city relationship inactive. But the scholarship program is still alive and in fact, Japanese

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18 Bayombong, the sister-city of Gonohe, is a city in Nueva Vizcaya. The only extant information about this sister-city tie-up is that it was meant to be an exchange for the development of industries, culture, and sports (Gonohe web page). The Iwata-Dagupan Sister-city was a result of Mayor Manauis' visit to Iwata in 1973. The sister-city agreement was signed in 1975. The activities were mainly exchange of visits between the two mayors and other local government officials, but since 1986 there had been no activity at all. In 1995 Mayor Fernandez visited Iwata, but the result of this visit is not known. The Tozawa-General Trias Sister-city agreement was signed in August 1989, a few months after the Tozawa Mayor and the president of the Tozawa City Council visited General Trias and paintings by Filipino children were exhibited in Tozawa. Contacts were quite regular, with General Trias officials going to Tozawa to observe modern agriculture. Tozawa donated a fire truck to General Trias. Since 1996, however, there has been no contact (Tomizawa e-mail, 7 January 2004). Nothing is known about the Ōizumi-Caba, Sakegawa-Kawit and Chōshi-Legazpi Sister-cities except their dates of establishment. The former mayor of Legazpi City who signed the city council resolution said in a telephone interview that he does not remember signing the resolution.

donors now come from all over Japan, beyond Yagi, where it started. The scholarship program has continued through the efforts of civic organizations in Yagi initially, and as it spread through newspaper advertisements, in other parts of Japan. In the Philippines, Father Nishimoto Toru, C.Ss.R., has been in charge of collecting, distributing, and accounting for the scholarship donations ever since it was started in 1983.

Another case in point is the present vibrant contacts between Japan and the province of Davao, like Benguet, is a home of one of the biggest numbers of Japanese descendants in the Philippines.<sup>19</sup> Unlike Benguet, however, Davao does not have any city that has a sister-city in Japan. And yet, the only college in the whole Philippines that has a Japanese name—Mindanao Kokusai Daigaku (Mindanao International University)—is in Davao City. It is the only college that offers an undergraduate degree majoring in Japanese Language and Literature. Moreover, it is the first and at present the only institution of higher learning that sends student caregivers to Japan for training in Japanese homes for the aged. The Mindanao Kokusai Daigaku is subsidized by the Philippines-Japan Volunteers Association (PJVA), based in Tokyo. As mentioned above, there has been a city council resolution since 2000 authorizing the mayor of Davao City to sign a sister-city agreement with Kagoshima, but to date, it has not been carried out. Given the close relationship between Davao and Japan, it seems there is no need for it.

## Conclusion

The few scholars who have written about sister-cities lament the conservative role of sister-cities and hope that the sister-city program would eventually become a catalyst of change. The scholars wish to see cities binding with other cities to fight for causes not necessarily supported by central governments. Philippine cities that had tie-ups with Japanese cities acted contrary to the national policy of the Philippines only in the first three decades after the normalization of the bilateral relations between the Philippines and Japan. Their partner cities in Japan, on the other hand, supported the Japanese national policy of promoting goodwill and friendship. Since the 1970s, cities in both Japan and the Philippines undertook activities along the general lines of the national policies of their respective governments, but they tailored the specifics of the policies to the particular conditions, needs, and goals of their cities.

It is difficult to know how effective the sister-cities have been in fostering goodwill and friendship and erasing the anti-Japanese sentiment in the Philippines because the national government of the Philippines under Martial Law took up the policy of fostering closer relationship with Japan and other Asian countries at the point when the activities of the pioneer cities were suppose to bear results. The least that can be said on this matter is that Manila, Quezon City, Baguio, and Benguet were ahead of the Philippine national government in positively responding to Japan's offer of goodwill and reconciliation. And they were able to do this quietly precisely because they were far from the center stage of foreign relations.

The long active periods of most sister-cities are attributable largely to the civic organizations, individual persons, and NGOs that support them. These individuals, civic

19 Estimated number is 2,000, that is, around 1,300 in Davao City and around 700 in Calinan.

organizations, and NGOs, sought to make their activities “official” by doing them through the sister-city framework. The sister-city, indeed, served as the framework for grassroots international relations from the 1950s to the mid-1990s. The pomp and the grandeur of power provided by the mere presence of the local government officials seemed to render more legitimacy to their activities, albeit they would have not been less legitimate and significant without the blessing of the local government officials. But such was the frame of mind at that time. Non-state actors (civic organizations, NGOs, multinational companies, students, immigrants, descendants of immigrants) and non-state international exchanges (student exchange programs, home stays, etc.) were in their infancy, and have become popular and “legitimate” without the presence of any government officials only in the last twenty years or so.

Sister-cities indeed, promoted grassroots international relations in the 1950s through the 1990s by giving recognition and legitimacy to the activities of grassroots organizations and individual persons.

Since the onset of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, non-state actors have become more numerous, confident, and legitimate on their own right. If even since the 1980s there have been cases of active international relations on the grassroots level outside the sister-city framework, what more today, the age of globalization?

On the other hand, the sister-city framework of grassroots international relations cannot be easily written off. Sister-city agreements do not have expiry dates. Neither has there been a case of two cities officially declaring a divorce, no matter how long they have ceased interaction with each other. As seen above, there were instances of sister-cities in long hibernation which were suddenly revived because of natural and man-made calamities like an earthquake and garbage dump landslide. True to the spirit of goodwill and friendship, the long lost sister-city came to the aid of the sister-city in need.

More important than the written, formal agreement of sisterhood, however, is the substantial fact shown in this study that LGUs can take up projects with other LGUs to pursue their mutual, specific interests beyond the nation-state. This can be done without formally signing a sister-city agreement. Substantive cooperation can still be clothed with pomp and grandeur associated with political power, for there are many instances aside from signing of agreements and delivering speeches during anniversaries where the presence of local government officials can be had. The sister-city framework as a formal agreement may be fading away, but the spirit of LGU to LGU cooperation beyond the nation-state will linger on in this age of globalization.

## APPENDIX

Table 1. Sister-Cities of the Philippines

<u>Number of Cities</u>	<u>Country</u>
142	USA
80	Japan
61	Taiwan
16	Australia
15	China
13	Spain
12	Germany
9	Canada
7	USSR, Israel
6	Korea
4	Malaysia
3	Mexico, Vietnam
2	Saudi Arabia, New Zealand, Netherlands, Italy, Brunei, Indonesia, Peru, South Korea, Romania, France, New Guinea
1	Costa Rica, Portugal, Argentina, Ireland, Norway, Pelau, Belgium, Great Britain, Ireland, Jamaica, Chile, Czech Republic, Brazil, Croatia, Colombia, Iran, Thailand, India

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Table 2. Status of Sister-Cities and Number of Years of Existence from Inauguration to 2006

<u>Philippine City</u>	<u>Sister-City in Japan</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Years of Existence</u>
Caba (La Union)	Ōizumi-mura (Yamanashi)	Still-born	
Manila (Metro Manila)	Yokohama City (Kanagawa)	Active	41
Baguio City (Benguet)	Hanyū City (Saitama)	Active	37
Pasig (Metro Manila)	Marugame City (Kagawa)	Inactive	reached 14
Quezon City (Metro Manila)	Chiba City (Chiba)	Active	34
Baguio City (Benguet)	Wakkanai City (Hokkaidō)	Sporadic	33
Dagupan City (Pangasinan)	Iwata City (Shizuoka)	Inactive	reached 20
Benguet	Kōchi	Active	31

Canlaon City (Negros Oriental)	Yamato-chō (Hiroshima)	No info	
Manila (Metro Manila)	Takatsuki City (Osaka)	Half-alive	27
Tacloban (Leyte)	Fukuyama City (Hiroshima)	Half-alive	26
Bayombong (Nueva Vizcaya)	Gonohe-machi (Aomori)	Still-born	
Legazpi City (Albay)	Chōshi City (Chiba)	Still-born	
Manila (Metro Manila)	Yagi-chō (Kyoto)	Inactive	reached 5+
Kawit (Cavite)	Sakegawa-mura (Yamagata)	Still-born	
General Trias (Cavite)	Tozawa-mura (Yamagata)	Inactive	7
Silay City (Negros Occidental)	Amagi-chō (Kagoshima)	No info	
La Trinidad (Benguet)	Niisato-mura (Iwate)	Active	14
Muntinlupa (Metro Manila)	Gunma-machi (Gunma)	Active	12
La Trinidad (Benguet)	Satomi-mura (Ibaragi)	Active	12

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