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A Key chapter of German-Chinese relations: political and economic ties 1974-1989

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Prior studies have shown that there were strategic considerations involved in the decision to establish diplomatic relations between China and the Federal Republic of Germany. China's strategic significance as a part of West German foreign policy, however, evolved significantly throughout the 1970s and 1980s. The German government had to be careful while handling the strategic importance of China in light of the perceived Soviet threat and US-American pressure. In contrast to political strategies, the acts of businesses and economic players are rather low-key and receive little Soviet concern. Therefore, their efforts in economic collaboration were even more important in laying the groundwork for the bilateral relations that exist today. Some of these commercial players already had business relationships with China before diplomatic relations were established. These commercial connections grew stronger during the 1970s and 1980s, making these 20 years a crucial period for the close economic ties we see today. This project analyses the development of Sino-German relations from 1974 to 1989 against the backdrop of the Cold War and provides historical context for understanding Sino-German relations today by examining the close interaction, cooperation, contradictions, and historical coincidences in political and economic contacts with China.