# Stuck in the Territorial Trap
How the transformation in the conception of political space led to the South China Sea rivalry of China and the Philippines

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Maraming Salamat!

"Silent gratitude," Gladys Brown once said, "isn't much use to anyone." So allow me to begin by giving thanks to all the people who have inspired and guided me throughout this journey.

To my supervisor, Dr. Enoch Wang, thank you for listening to me and for helping me fine tune my ideas. I deeply appreciate the patience you've given me. To the second reader, Dr. Ka Kin Cheuk, my warmest gratitude for your time and feedback.

To my partner, for all the love, understanding, support, and care. You are my best friend, my rock, my every time, every where, every day.

My master's education would have not been possible without the generous support of the following who donated to my crowdfunding campaign in 2015: Chi de Jesus, Petra de Sutter, Deirdre Mc-Closkey, Lynn Conway, Nadine Barcelona, and Nicolas Nihon. Thank you for your generosity, and as I promised, I will always seek ways to pay your kindness forward.

All this for the motherland!

* The front page photo is a painting by Manuel Panares, entitled "Trading at Port of Sugbo," depicting pre-colonial trade relations of the Philippines.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

Introduction: Two maps

A Ming dynasty nautical map, the Selden Map of China (fig. 1) represents a world engulfed by a wave of changes that happened in the South China Sea (SCS) region since the arrival of Europeans. Its maker and origin are still mysteries waiting to be solved.[1] It is named after its owner the English jurist John Selden, who wrote *Mare Clausum* (1635), which promoted the idea that the sea could be territorialised like land, in response to what Hugo Grotius argued in *Mare Liberum* (1609), which endorsed the notion of the sea as free for all mankind. It was bequeathed to the Bodleian Library in 1659, five years after Selden died.

Unlike other known Chinese maps, the Selden Map did not have China as its centre. Its heart is what we now call the SCS. Sinologist Timothy Brook finds this a rather "strange thing for the cartographer to do, not just because tradition didn't allow for it but also because there is almost nothing there: a hole in the centre of the map" (Brook 12). In this map, land areas are peripheral to the sea. And the Celestial Empire is depicted not as a dominant part but "merged" into the East and South East Asian region (Hongping 12).

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[1] Chinese scholars refer to the map as "the *Dongxiyang Hanghai Tu* (东西洋航海图) [Nautical Chart of the Eastern and Western Seas]. For a concise discussion of the different origin stories of the map, *see* Hongping Annie Nie, *The Selden Map of China*: *A New Understanding of the Ming Dynasty* (Oxford: Bodleian Libraries, 2014), 17-20.

Fig. 1. The Selden Map. From "Before Europe's Intrusion" by Paula Findlen
(*The Nation;* The Nation, 21 Jan. 2016; Web; 11 Dec. 2016)

Contrast the Selden Map with the map we now associate with that region: the SCS territorial

claims map (fig. 2). The SCS claims map highlights how the sea is divided by the territorial

interests of its littoral states. Though still at the centre, the sea is now a bone of contention of

polities which, throughout most of their history, had used it as the bridge of their diverse cultures

and economies connected by maritime trade links.
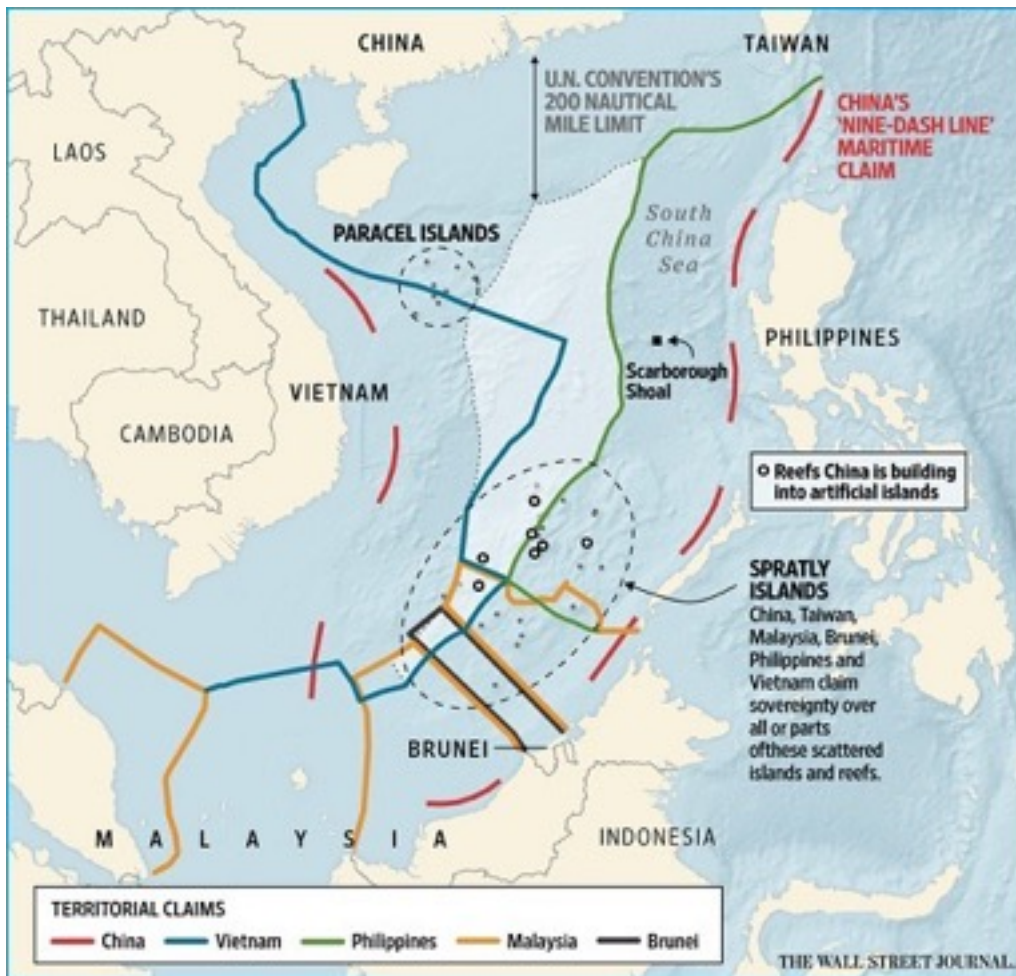
Fig. 2. South China Sea claims map. From "5 Things About Fishing in the South China Sea" by Trefor Moss (*The Wall Street Journal;* The Wall Street Journal, 19 Jul. 2016; Web; 11 Dec. 2016)

The Selden Map shows a "web of sea routes connecting China with the world" (Hongping 54); while the claims map presents the competing territorial interests interrupted by China's dashed lines, "the cow's tongue" as Nguyen Duy Chien, vice chairman of Vietnamese National Boundary Commission, once put it (qtd. in Kaplan). Upon its restoration, the back of the Selden Map revealed "a sketch of scale, navigation points, and a diagram showing shipping routes." Some of these routes include those that links Fujian, Nagasaki, Hirado, and central Vietnam; and one that links Quanzhou and Manila (Hongping 16). The lines in the Selden Map depicted routes connecting trade networks, which facilitated the economic efflorescence in this region; in the territorial claims map, they are like ominous lines in a palm, auguring trouble.

This transformation has a story. A significant part of this narrative is the shift from one conception of space to another: from relational to territorial. These two conceptions differ in terms of boundary and sovereignty. In a relational conception of space, boundaries are fuzzy and fluid, and sovereignty can be shared; in a territorial one, boundaries are clearly demarcated, sovereignty is exclusive (Ringmar 12-13). The shift from a relational to a territorial conception space serves as a "political shock" (Goertz and Diehls, "Initiation and Termination" 32) that set into motion a series of processes that changed the structure of interaction of the SCS's littoral polities, which in turn shaped their people's conception of their "political being-in-space or [their] territoriality" (Larkins 4). Just like any political shock, this conceptual shift has consequences; and this endeavour tells the story of how it is consequential to the rivalry of the sea's littoral states.

By focusing on the bilateral relations of two SCS claimants — China and the Philippines — this thesis will show how the transformation in the conception of political space from a relational to a territorial one is consequential to the development of their rivalry over a sea they have shared for the most part of their bilateral history. This undertaking departs from materialist explanations of the conflict by foregrounding the role of ideas in precipitating and structuring the logic of the disputes. To accomplish this goal, the following questions will be addressed: What is the difference between relational and territorial conceptions of space? How each manifested in the interaction of China and the Philippines? When did the shift from a relational to a territorial conception of space happened in the SCS region? What events prodded this shift and what are the ideas they engendered that midwifed the territorial conception of space? And how did this shift generated the rivalry between China and the Philippines?

After this introduction, there will be six chapters. Consisting of three sections, Chapter 2 will present a review of the literature on the SCS conflict. The first deals with the three major approaches scholars used to discuss the SCS tussle; the second highlights the preponderance of materialist explanations and the scarcity of explorations on the role of ideas in fostering the conflict;

and the last one focuses on the three major changes implicated as the cause of the conflict. It ends with a brief explanation of how this study will fill in the gap in the literature.

Chapter 3 begins by presenting the two theoretical frameworks this paper will use to structure the story it seeks to tell: the rivalry approach to conflict and constructivist theory of international relations. Fusing them into one analytical framework, this study will substantiate how the rivalry of China and the Philippines has been shaped by the transformation in their intersubjective understanding of space, which consequently shaped the way the saw themselves and influenced how they relate with each other. This chapter ends with a brief note on the methodology suited for the aim and theoretical framework of this study. Chapter 4 will then recreate the two different structures of interaction within which China and the Philippines played out their relations throughout their bilateral history.

In chapter 5, the major historical events that provoked the shift from a relational conception of space to a territorial one will be discussed. It will be followed by an unpacking of the intersubjective and institutionalised forms of ideas they engendered. Following that is an explanation of how these changes shaped the perception of China and the Philippines of each other as rivals, which consequently led to their rivalrous relationship over the SCS. This paper ends at chapter 6, with a summary and a reflection on how this paper is not just a scholarly contribution but a political intervention to the conflict between China and the Philippines.

Guided by the realist and liberal approaches to international relations, pundits and policymakers mulling over the SCS conflict often look at "the material notions of power" and "the role played by rationalist conceptions of geopolitical necessity" (Kupchan 19). Furthermore, they are stuck in what Agnew (1994) called the "territorial trap," which is the tendency to take for granted the historical specificity of nation-states. Corollary to this is to take the territorial conception of space as an unproblematic given. If the SCS territorial conflict is a game, these pundits and policymakers look at the rivalry of its players in terms of their interests, power, and

strategies as they assert their spatial claims. This overlooks the aspects of the game which constitute the intersubjective understandings of the players, i.e. the facets structuring the logic of the rivalry. Focusing on the process of rivalry development, with its constructivist stance, this thesis unravels the structuring logic of the rivalry between China and the Philippines. And through this unravelling, it is hoped that imaginative insights might be kindled in the minds of policymakers seeking to transform the relationship of China and the Philippines, and perhaps the rest of the littoral states of the SCS, from rivalry to cooperation.

CHAPTER 2

Charting the SCS conflict

This chapter presents a review of the literature on the SCS conflict. Composed of three sections, the first discusses the three major approaches used to tackle the SCS disputes: nationalist, international law, and international system approaches. The second examines how the discussions on the SCS conflict seem to disregard the role of ideas in precipitating the disputes. The third zeroes in on the three major shifts scholars identified as consequential to the conflict. The chapter ends with a brief explanation of how this paper intends to fill in the gap in the SCS literature.

Three approaches

Just like any conflict, the SCS row can be viewed from different angles, using divergent theoretical lenses, parsed at different levels of analysis. Tønnesson (2002) clusters the major approaches to the disputes into three broad categories: nationalist, international law, and international system approaches (571). The nationalist approach looks at the conflict through the perspectives, interests, and aspirations of the SCS claimants. The international law perspective approaches the conflict by weighing the merits of the each claim against international law (570). Nonetheless, even if they reference international law, a supposedly transnational tool, true to realist understanding of international relations,[2] SCS claimants interpret the law according to their

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[2] *See* Goldsmith and Posner.

interests. Lastly, the international system approach seeks to uncover the dynamics in the international system that precipitated the conflict.

A brief survey of the nationalist perspectives on the conflict reveals that China and Vietnam's claims sing the same tune. Since 1949, China's position remained the same, save for some minor changes "gradually clarified and strengthened by national legislation and official documents" (Bing Bing and Talmon 4). The most clarifying statements China has released about their claims are *China's Indisputable Sovereignty Over the Xisha and Nansha Islands* (1980); the *Position Paper of the Government of the People's Republic of China on the Matter of Jurisdiction in the South China Sea Arbitration Initiated by the Republic of the Philippines* (2014); and the *Statement of the Government of the People's Republic of China on China's Territorial Sovereignty and Maritime Rights and Interests in the South China Sea* (2016). The first one presented the historical basis of China's "indisputable sovereignty" over the Spratly's and Paracel's; the second is China's response to the arbitration case the Philippines filed in the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague; and the last succinctly declares China's claims and their bases, again emphasising history. Meanwhile, Vietnam's claims "are set out in a White Paper published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) in 1974." Echoing the structure of China's claims, Vietnam claims "sovereignty over all of the Hoang Sa (Paracel) and Truong Sa (Spratly) archipelagoes based on several factors, including historical evidence, economic development, effective administration, and international recognition" (Pedroza 37). The Philippines, Malaysia, and Brunei mainly base their claims on international law, marshalling the concepts of continental shelf and Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).[3]

For the international law approach, Valencia, van Dyke and Ludwig (1997) offers a concise analysis of the SCS claims of the parties to the disputes under international law (17-76). They opine that all of the claimants "made a claim that has significant weaknesses under international law, and

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[3] *See* The Asia Center; Roach.

it is highly unlikely that any of the claimants would receive all of its claimed areas in an adjudication by the International Court of Justice or an arbitral tribunal" (59-60). The apogee of the international law approach to the conflict is the decision on the arbitration case filed by the Philippines against China (*see* The Republic of the Philippines vs. The People's Republic of China; also *see* Bing Bing and Talmon).[4] Compared to the legal approach to the conflict, the international system approach is scarce.

Material vs ideational explanations

Discussions on the SCS conflict also seem to be dominated by the role of both living (e.g. fish) and non-living resources (e.g. minerals) in fomenting the disputes. For example, O'Brien (1977), Buzynski (2012), and Herberg (2016) talk about the role of mineral resources. Bartley (2016), Greer (2016) and Malasig (2016) see the disputes as primarily driven by the growing scarcity of fish in the sea. Meanwhile, he arbitration case filed by the Philippines revolves around issues of sovereign rights over particular areas of sea. These are all materialist explanations of the conflict.

The role of ideas, especially the concept of territory, is often treated as an unproblematic given. In this perspective, the SCS conflict is about the desire for acquiring or, in Chinese and Vietnamese governments perspectives, exerting control over a territory that originally belongs to them, rather than about how the very notion of territory itself is the cause of the problem. Perspectives pinpointing the role of the notion of territory itself as consequential to the SCS conflict

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[4] *Oxford Public International Law* provides an excellent starting point in navigating the legal aspect of the South China Sea conflict. *See "*Debate Map: Disputes in the South and East China Seas," *Oxford Public International Law,* http://opil.ouplaw.com/page/222/debate-map-disputes-in-the-south-and-east-china-seas#maritimeboundarysouth/*,* 12 November 2016. The *Peace Palace Library* has a collection specially dedicated to the South China Sea Territorial Disputes, *see* https://www.peacepalacelibrary.nl/library-special/south-china-sea-territorial-disputes/*,* 12 November 2016.

might be scarce because, as Elden (2013) puts it in his pioneering historical study of the idea of territory,

> it is generally assumed that territory is self-evident in meaning, and that its
>
> particular manifestations — territorial disputes, the territory of specific
>
> countries, etc. — can be studied without theoretical reflection on *territory*
>
> itself. Although it is a central term within political theory, geography, and
>
> international relations, the *concept* of territory has been underexamined (3).
>
> (italics by the author).

Since the concept of territory is considered a given, it is neglected as a crucial factor in precipitating conflicts. However, conflict over territory presupposes the existence not just of the material component of the concept (i.e. space). As Gottman (1975) puts it, "it would be illusory to consider territory as a gift of God and as a purely physical phenomenon…Territory is a concept generated by people organizing space for their own aims" (29). Thus, territory is space plus the institutionalised idea about it, created by people in pursuit of particular aims, which in turn shapes what actors do to space.

Unfortunately, even the three major subsequent narratives on the SCS conflict that will be parsed shortly do not pay much attention to how the concept of territory itself led to the SCS tussle. The sea as a space has always existed, but the ideas that turned it into an apple of discord has a history.

The shifts that led to the SCS conflict

The conflict has been associated with three different factors that shifted. First, the changing maritime role and policies of China; second, the shifting balance of power in the region, which

serves as the major reason behind the intractability of the conflict; and third, the transformation in the inter-polity system of this region.

China's changing maritime role and policies has been implicated as the "sine qua non" of the conflict (Samuels xvii). Other possible causal variables pale in comparison to China's attributes. The abundant resources and strategic value of the islands and waters of the SCS are relegated into mere "incentives" of the various claims (4). Meanwhile, the novel notion of "territorial or spatial sovereignty" is cast as a "new instrument of defense" China used in order to assert its maritime interests (47). In this narrative, China's changing roles and policies "conditions the meaning of the contest" (150) and serve as the "most fundamental context of the continuing dispute over the islands and waters of the South China Sea" (7).

This Sino-centric analysis unravels by first determining the major player of the game then proceeds to crediting that player as the origin of the game and how it is played. Other claimants are players of the SCS contest but not its consequential players. China is identified not just the consequential player, but also the constitutive actor in the conflict. This ignores the attributes of the game itself that actually constitutes the players and whose rules shape how the players play.

By focusing on one player, this narrative offers no explanation on why and how the rivalry among the parties to the conflict come about. It is more a story of China's presence, use, and claim-making than a causal explanation of the existence of the rivalry itself. At best, what can be inferred from this is that China's changing maritime role and policies affect the intensity of the rivalry rather than serve as the *sine qua non* of the rivalry. China is a significant party but not the cause of the SCS rivalry itself.

Departing from the previous Sino-centric approach, eschewing nationalist and legal approaches, another narrative appraises the conflict in light of the balance of power shifts in the SCS (Tønnesson 570-601). It proceeds by first unpicking the features of the international system in

different historical turning points in this region, and then proceeds to evaluate the balance of power in those periods.

However, this narrative is not about the cause of the conflict *per se* but about the cause(s) of the intractability of the conflict. It implicates four factors: 1) the complexity of the conflict; 2) oil; 3) stickiness of the Taiwan issue; and 4) lack of intervention of the "dominant power," i.e. the United States (595). The last one is the reason associated with the key variable: balance of power: "When the dominant power stays out of a dispute the prospect of resolving it is normally reduced" (596). This though is assumed rather than explained. Conspicuously absent is a theory of how the balance of power and changes in its configuration can lead to the de-escalation of the conflict. Without this theoretical framework, it is hard to understand the causal effect of balance of power to the SCS conflict. And as the recent turn of events has shown, contrary to its claim, the involvement of the United States has not de-escalated but further increased the tensions in the SCS (for instance *see* Benner; Mansour; Xue and Xu). Further weakening the claim that US involvement can pacify the situation, preliminary studies have shown that intervention of third parties to territorial conflicts "has not indicated…much success in achieving [territorial settlement] or significantly altering the dynamics of rivalries" (Stinnett and Diehl 737).

Nonetheless, despite its shortcomings, this narrative still offers insights on some of the key changes that shaped the rivalry: materialisation of the concept of territorial sovereignty during the colonial period, proliferation of states during decolonisation, emergence of the 200 nautical mile EEZs, and nationalism. These changes, however, are treated as separate events rather than as sequence of processes constituting the structural change that generated the conflict. This structural change has been touched upon by the next narrative in passing.

The third narrative identifies system's change as the foundation of the SCS conflict, which it limns as the shift "from fluid frontier to fixed frontline" (Hayton 47). Implicated in this narrative are the colonial powers which served as a major driving force of change in this region: "They

created the states and they created the borders between them, from which the maritime frontiers were measured." The territorial agreements of colonial powers were "part of a much wider process of defining and marking borders…, a process that generated great resentment and resistance" (49).

Through this process, South East Asia's international system has shifted from the "mandala system," composed of political units of fluid boundaries and "vague" maritime boundaries, into a Westphalian system of fixed boundaries (Hayton 46-50). This in turn "spawned a rush for territory in the South China Sea" (Hayton 60). Though this narrative has identified the structural changed that happened, it has not traced the causal mechanism linking the systemic shift identified with the rivalry it engendered.

Furthermore, the way this narrative uses mandala excludes China from that system. The way "South East Asia" has been used is also ahistorical: South East Asia, as a region, is a 20th century invention. As Emmerson (1984) unpacks the term, South East Asia is the "resulting zone" in the perceptions of Westerners who used "mammoth" landmarks to identify these group of polities lying east of India and south of China. Later on, the term assumed an institutional form when South-East Asia Treaty Organization was formed; it is an organisation spearheaded by the United States as a way of containing the spread of communism (1-21). Thus, South East Asia is a region carved during and not before the transformation of this region's inter-polity system into a Westphalian system. Whether this exclusion of China existed during the mandala system needs to be further explored.

Nonetheless, despite its weaknesses, the third narrative still inspires this paper. This study will build and improve upon that narrative by identifying the factors it did not mention and by making explicit the causal mechanisms that link changes in the structure of interaction between the political units of the countries we now call the Philippines and China and their current rivalry. Just like the second narrative, this paper will conduct its analysis at the international level. Unlike the first narrative, this study will not relegate territorial sovereignty into a mere instrument of defence

but a key element in the new spatial order that emerged in the SCS region. The changes the second narrative recognised, especially the materialisation of the concept of territorial sovereignty during colonial period and the emergence of the 200 nautical mile EEZs will not be considered as disparate processes but will be conceived as "sequences of occurrences that result in transformations of structures" (Sewell 843). To realise the task of this paper, the fusion of two theoretical frameworks and a methodology will be used, which the next chapter will discuss.

CHAPTER 3

Theoretical Framework and Methodology

The story this paper seeks to tell is guided by two theoretical frameworks: the rivalry approach to conflict and constructivist theory of international relations. Through their fusion, this study will substantiate how the rivalry of China and the Philippines has been shaped by a new intersubjective understanding of space which consequently shaped the way they perceived each other. After discussing how these two theoretical perspectives could be merged into one analytical framework, this chapter ends with a brief note on the methodology suited for the aim and theoretical framework of this study.

Rivalry approach to conflict

The rivalry approach to conflict treats war and disputes as related to each other and not as separate events. Accordingly, wars and conflicts do not just occur between any pair of states that have an adversarial relationship but only among states who are rivals (Lie 259-260). In international relations, rivalry is a type of interstate relationship among "pairs of states whose leaders see each other as threatening." Because of this, the interaction between these states typically involves "serious and repeated conflicts and disputes with each other" (Cashman 252).

Clash of interests, threat perception, and duration are three elements that must be present in order for an adversarial interstate relations to be considered a rivalry. As Hensel (1996) puts it,

"rivals are…actors whose relations are characterised by disagreement or competition over some stakes that are viewed as important, where each perceives that the other poses a significant security threat, and where this competition and threat perception last for substantial periods of time" (5). Thus, the rivalry approach to conflict identifies the presence of competition and mutual threat perception over a period of time as pre-conditions for an interaction among states to be called a rivalry, which has the potential to erupt into an armed contest.

Rivalry has been operationalised in two general ways: enduring rivalry, which is also called dispute density approach, and strategic rivalry approach. Diehl and Geortz's (2001) enduring rivalry approach operationalises rivalry as a militarised relationship over a particular period of time. Specifically, they have identified rivals as those states whose competition over an issue "involves six or more militarized disputes between the same two sates over a period of 20 years" (Diehl and Geortz, "Initiation and Termination" 33).

Meanwhile, the strategic rivalry approach does not have militarised disputes and duration as prerequisites to consider states as rivals. Colaresi, Rasler, and Thompson (2008) are the main proponents of this approach, which considers the mutual threat perceptions of the leaders of states that have incompatible goals as the precondition for an interstate relationship to be considered a rivalry. Researchers following this approach, "examines leaders' perceptions of other states to determine which dyads of states are rivals" (Hensel 23).

Between the two approaches, this paper follows the strategic rivalry tradition. Table 1 summarises (*see* Appendix) the interactions between the Philippines and China (as ROC and later as PRC). Strategic rivalries are classified as "being either spatial (where the main disputes are over control of territory), positional (over relative influence and status within the international system or a regional subsystem), or ideological" (Cashman 252-253). The rivalry between China and the Philippines is spatial. As can be gleaned from the Table 1.1, it started the moment the Philippines officially joined the contest for the Spratly Islands in 1970's, when Philippine president Ferdinand

Marcos appropriated the private claims of Tomas Cloma. Since then, the leaders of both nations have viewed each other as threats to each other's interests.

As important as identifying states as rivals is explaining how their rivalry come about. Stinett and Diehl (2001) identify two pathways to rivalry development: behavioural and structural. The behavioural approach posits that "long-term rivalries develop because the actors' behaviour in a given confrontation sets the stage for subsequent confrontations" (719). If in the nascent stage of their disputes adversarial states employ military rather than diplomatic means, that adversarial relationship would escalate into an enduring rivalry. This is because hard power means "create an atmosphere of distrust and hostility than can culminate in an extended rivalry" (719). On the other hand, the structural approach posits that a "rivalry relationship is determined largely by structural factors, such as the issues underpinning the conflict, basic characteristics of the states involved, or systemic attributes" (722). Inspired by the punctuated equilibrium model of biology and policy development, Goertz and Diehls (1995) argue that "political shock" is the "necessary condition" for the "initiation and termination of an enduring rivalry." These shocks are "dramatic changes" that reconfigure the context of the interaction of the actors. Without these shocks, the relationship of the actors "will remain stable over time," i.e. either they remain rivals or friends (Goertz and Diehls, "Initiation and Termination" 32). They identify two general types of shocks: system and state shocks. Some examples of system level shocks are "…world wars, dramatic changes in territorial sovereignty, and rapid shifts in power distribution." State level shocks include "independence and civil war" (Goertz and Diehls, "Initiation and Termination" 35-58).

In their empirical analysis of 1,177 militarised dispute from 1816-1992, Stinnett and Diehl find that neither approach holds the monopoly on explaining rivalry development. As they put it, "whether a rivalry becomes enduring or not is a function of the behaviour of the actors during early confrontations and the contextual factors surrounding those interactions" (736). As shown in Table 1, China and the Philippines have both utilised military means in the early stages of their territorial

conflict. This serves as a fodder to the behavioural explanation of the rivalry development between these two countries. However, this paper is not going to employ the behavioural approach; it is going to be guided by the structural approach to rivalry development. This is because this approach to rivalry development, just like strategic rivalry tradition, allow a "more rigorous understanding of the rivalry" as they both examine rivalries as "outcomes of broader historical processes" (265).

Constructivist theory of international relations

The constructivist theory of international relations emphasises the constitutive effects of ideas and social structure to how state interests develop (Wendt, *Social Theory*). Accordingly, interests are not "independent of social context." Interests are constituted by the identity of the states (such as friend, rival, enemy) that gets formed in the process of interacting with each other (Wendt, "Anarchy" 398-399).

However, these identities are not pre-given. They get constituted by the structure of their interaction which are "determined primarily by shared ideas" (Wendt, *Social Theory* 1), which actors learn – and unlearn – through "an on-going process of socialization and ritual enactment" (Wendt, *Social Theory* 163). It is through the process of socialization actors acquire "identities and interests" by interacting through exogenously given structures (Wendt, *Social Theory* 170, 245)

Shifts in the structure of interaction produce a change in identity and interests. Wendt illustrates this using the games Prisoner's Dilemma and Chicken. The "sub-optimal" (both players will defect) and "unintended" outcome of the game is "forced on [the players] by the *structure*" of the game itself. If the structuring logic of the game changes, then the game could become Chicken instead of Prisoner's Dilemma" (Wendt, *Social Theory* 148-149).

To sum up, constructivist theory of international relations emphasises that the *structure of interaction* of states prefigures their *identity* as either rivals, enemies, or friends, which in turn precedes their *interests*.

The analytical framework

The rivalry approach to conflict aids in conceptualising the relationship between China and the Philippines as a rivalry, which developed because of structural causes. However, the structural approach to rivalry development mostly accounts for materialist causes such as polarity of the international system, geographic proximity, military capabilities, and wealth (Stinnett and Diehl 722-727). Since this study aims to depart from materialist explanations of the SCS conflict, constructivism is the theoretical lens suited for this purpose. Constructivism is an alternative to materialist approach to international relations because it focuses on "the ideas that give shape to international politics…[which] are intersubjective (that is, shared among people) and institutionalized (that is expressed as practices and identities)" (Hurd 301).

Figure 3 shows how the two theoretical lenses could be fused into one analytical framework for the purpose of this thesis. Constructivism allows us to theorise the causal mechanism that connects system-level political shocks to interstate rivalry (rival theory of conflict). The causal mechanism is the process of socialisation. The system-level political shock, in the form of shift in the structure of interaction of states, triggers changes in intersubjective and institutionalised forms of ideas, which in turn changes the way states perceive themselves, which consequently shapes the way they conduct their relations with each other. Through the constant interaction of the parties involved, the changes precipitated by transformations in the structure of their interaction gets more and more entrenched, i.e. the intersubjective and institutionalised forms of ideas and states'
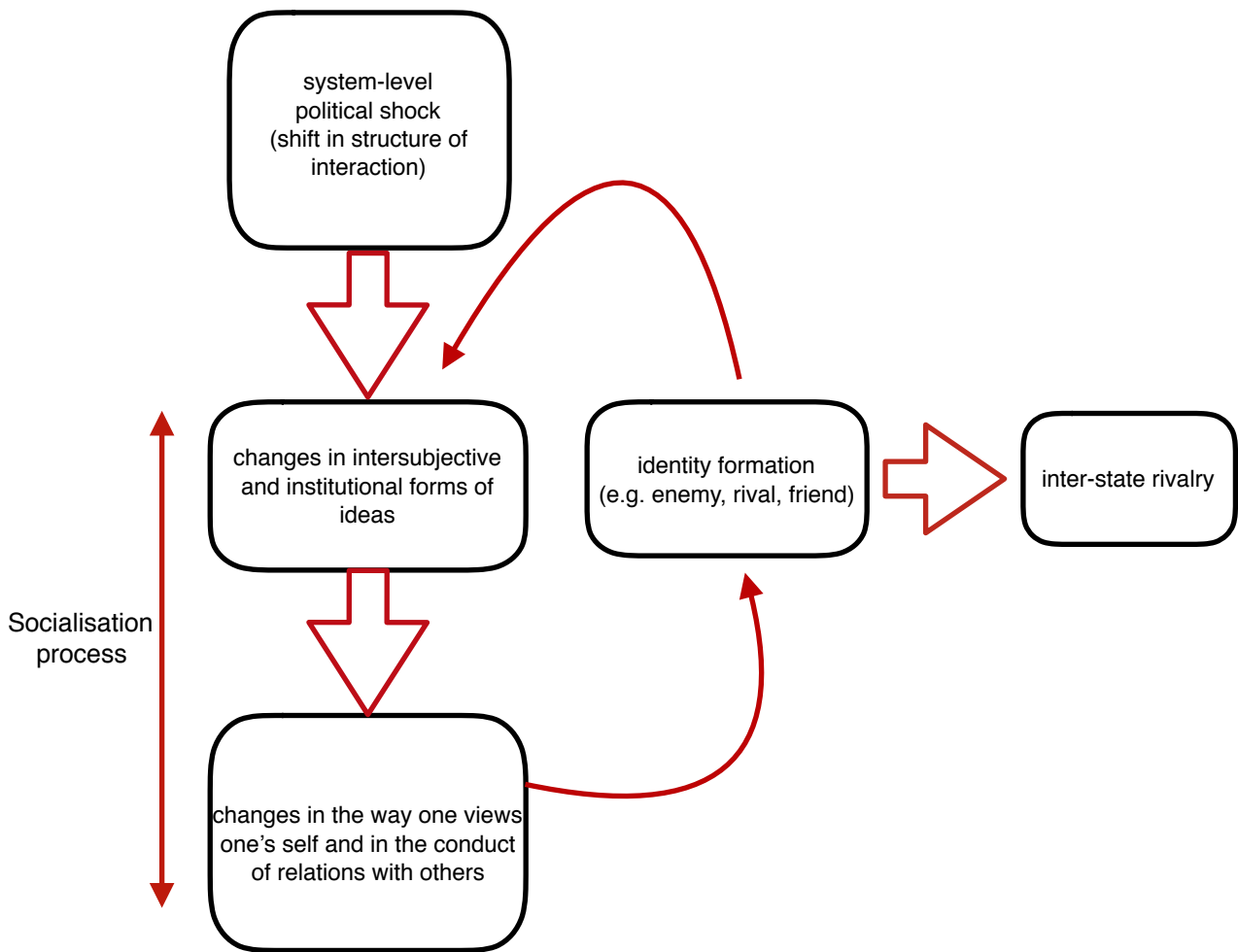
Fig. 3. Fusion of rivalry approach to conflict and constructivist theory of international relations

perception of each other gets reinforced. "Structural *re*production," as Wendt puts it, "is caused by a continuous process of interaction that has reproduction as its intended or unintended consequence" (*Social Theory* 186). Through this process of socialisation, states learn to perceive each other as either enemies, rivals, or friends. Through constant iteration of this mutual perception of each other as rivals in a structure of interaction generated by the initial political shock (as illustrated by the feedback loop), a rivalrous relationship between the states ensues and persists, until another political shock transforms the structure of their interaction, as the rivalry theory of conflict predicts.

Methodology

Since this thesis will unravel causal mechanisms, process tracing is the methodology suited for this purpose, specifically theory-testing process tracing. Beach and Pedersen (2013) explain that this type of process tracing is appropriate when the researcher knows "both X and Y" and 'either have existing conjectures about a plausible mechanism" or can just use "logical reasoning to formulate the casual mechanism" (Beach and Pedersen 14). This type of process tracing is appropriate for this study because it 1) has identified both X (system-level political shock) and the Y (rivalry between China and the Philippines); and 2) has a theory-supported conjecture on the tenable casual mechanism (constructivist theory of international relations).

As this study focus on the role of non-material factors (e.g. beliefs, norms, idea) in generating the rivalry, along with the deductive technique of theory-testing process tracing, the process tracing used in this study is not only theory-testing it is also interpretive.

Interpretive process tracing (IPT) is a form of process tracing that explains outcomes by studying "intersubjective social institutions as part of causal processes" (Norman 4-5). Using a combination of interpretive and inductive techniques, IPT "situates meaning making and identity formation in the context of processes that unfold over time to explain how these social dynamics produce specific outcomes" (Norman 6).

To begin the process, the next chapter will first recreate the two different structures of interaction within which China and the Philippines played out their bilateral relations throughout their history.

Chapter 4

The structures of interaction between China and the Philippines

To understand what has transformed, this chapter will discuss the two structures of interaction within which China and the Philippines played out their bilateral history. It begins by comparing the two modes of thinking about space: relational and territorial. Afterwards, there will be an explanation on how these concepts are expressed at the unit level and through the bilateral interaction of China and the Philippines.

Relational vs territorial conception of space

All throughout their bilateral history, the interaction between China and the Philippines has been structured by two different conceptualisations of political space: relational and territorial. Ringmar (2012) differentiates the two along the following aspects: border and sovereignty (13).

In a relational conception of space, borders are fluid and not clearly demarcated. They are transitional zones rather than either/or lines. Authority is "founded on personal allegiance…rather than on a precise territorial base" (El Ouali 89). Sovereignty is "not a binary notion and land can have several masters or no master at all" (Ringmar 13). It is thus possible to share sovereignty, as one can also have multiple personal allegiances.

On the other hand, in a territorial conception of space, borders are clearly demarcated by lines, which are extended into the sea. Authority is exercised within these clearly delineated borders, which tidily separates "the complete authority of one state from the similarly complete

authority of its neighboring states" (Branch, *The Cartographic State,* 21). Sovereignty cannot be

shared: "Each state either has complete sovereignty over a certain piece of land or not at

all" (Ringmar 13).

These two conceptualisations of space have manifested during different moments in the

history of China and the Philippines, which in turn shaped their bilateral interaction in

fundamentally different ways.

China and the Philippines and the relational conception of space

China: Part of a whole

Throughout its dynastic periods, China's relations with other polities was influenced by the

idea of *Tianxia* (天下). Roughly translated as "All-under-Heaven," *tianxia* envisions the world as a

single unit, with China as its centre. Inclusion is "one of its most important principles" (Zhao 10).

Everyone has a place in this *tianxia,* where Chinese rulers play the role of "the Son of Heaven,"

who exerts universal authority (Zhang 571). This universal authority is deemed to be like "universal

parenthood," through which the sovereign figure "rules the world only when he assumes parental

responsibilities for his subjects" (Chen 649). And since *tianxia* conceptualises the world as a single

unit, clear demarcation of inter-polity borders did not concern China in most of its history (Carlson

41). After all, as Dijkink argues, such claims to universal authority is "clearly inconsistent with the

practical aim of territorial delineation" (4). Having those boundaries would diminish the all-

encompassing character of universal authority.

By conducting "tributary relations"[5] with other polities, Chinese rulers legitimise and "demonstrate their status as the Son of Heaven" (Zhang 571). This foreign relations mechanism began during the Chin and Han dynasties. The Tang dynasty expanded it. It flourished during the Song and Yuan periods, reached its zenith in the Ming period; while the Qing dynasty saw its decline (Wu 6). The exchanges that happened through these tributary relations with "China as the center of the world and the peripheries of other countries [were] defined in terms of the son of heaven's obligations to pay greater gifts to the tribal chieftains, who were, in turn, the 'sons' of their emperor 'father'"" (Wang 364).

Tributary visits of foreign visitors were governed by an elaborate ritual. Paying tributes and performing the kotou were part of this ritual. During the kotou, delegates of the tributary mission kneel three times and prostrate nine times before an emperor seated on "a throne placed on an elevated platform…" The ritual performed during tributary visits was the way for foreigners to acknowledge "the cultural supremacy of China" and to express their gratitude "to the emperor for his role in maintaining the cosmic order." (Ringmar 9-10). In return, the emperor recognised the legitimacy of the rulership of the foreign leaders. It is important to note that the polities headed by these leaders "did not become colonies or part of the imperial administrative system: they were simply enrolled as independent states now occupying their proper niche in the Chinese cosmic order" (Scott 3). Thus, though the Chinese ruler viewed himself as ruling at the centre of *tianxia*, he "did not claim sovereignty over [the] system as a whole…[T]he constituent units were free to carry on their affairs much as they please" (Ringmar 5).

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[5] According to Zhang (2009), "the term 'tribute system' is a western invention devised no later than the nineteenth century and translated back into Chinese as *chaogong tixi*…The terms *chao* and *gong* do appear in Chinese historical sources, but the Chinese had no conception of it as such. The tribute system is a modern intellectual construct that we refine or abandon that we refine or abandon, depending on the intellectual payoffs that can be generated. The important point is that one can talk about tributary *relations* without feeling simultaneously obliged to stick to the tribute system" (574).

Through these tributary relations, China also established trade relations. However, these trade relations ran parallel to and in contrast with maritime trade conducted by private Chinese merchants. As An (2009) describes it, the tributary relations "manifested official, legitimate and monopoly trade from above, while maritime private trade represented…direct business transactions from below" (10).

The Philippines: Kinship

Throughout most of its history, the Philippines is not a single unit but composed of what can be called independent kinship networks, chiefdoms, rajahnates, and sultanates. The exact names for these political entities are hard to ascertain as the terms for them "either did not exist or have not survived" (Woods 34). However, as Woods argues, these political entities most probably share the same features of the political organisations of other Southeast Asian pre-nation-state societies (34). Nonetheless, ethnographic studies of indigenous communities in the Philippines still offers a glimpse into pre-nation-state political practices.

Walters (1990) uses *mandala* as a conceptual tool to describe these societies. A Sanskrit word, which literally means circle, *mandala* "represented a particular and often unstable political situation in a vaguely geographical area without fixed boundaries" (28). A *mandala* "always remained personal and impermanent; it was not a mapped territorial unit" (114).

Woods considers the concept of *bayan* in Tagalog societies as a close associate of *mandala*. As fluid and relational as *mandala*, *bayan*[6] was the basic organization of Tagalog societies. As described by a Franciscan friar Juan de Plascencia: ruled by a chief called *datu*, a *bayan*[7] was composed of as many as a hundred households. Each *bayan* is "a family of parents and children,

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[6] Woods (2008) diverges from the popularly held notion that *barangay,* a "Spanish corruption version of the Tagalog balangay" was the basic political organization of Tagalog societies. He refutes this by reexamining early Spanish accounts of Tagalog societies and highlighting documents produced by Tagalog speakers during the Spanish colonization of the Philippines (30-54).

[7] Plascencia used "barangay" instead of bayan. But convinced of the analysis of Woods, I will use bayan.

relations, and slaves. There were many of these [*bayan*] in each town…They were not, however, subject to one another, except in friendship and relationship" (qtd. in Woods 31).

Kinship is an important principle in forming relations with another community. As Andaya puts it, it is "the binding medium in the creation of bonds between communities…, usually formalized by a ceremony whereby two leaders accepted each other as brothers" (407). Blood oath was the ritual through which this bond was established. The ritual involved "a ceremony in which drops of blood from the persons entering into this relationship were mixed in an alcoholic drink, which they then drank" (Aguilar 85). This oath does not prevent the parties to perform it with others. They just establish mutual obligation, cements "alliances among rulers or chiefs and their followers" or ends a feud. The Tausug of Jolo called this blood brotherhood, *bagay magtaymañghud.* It is either a ritual friendship sworn on the Koran between two "casual friends [who decided] to cement their relationship with supernatural sanctions" or between two adversaries who would like "to finalize an amicable settlement between them" (Kiefer 228). Blood oaths "transform the most distant stranger into a kinsman [as] suggested in an early Spanish account of the Philippines" (Andaya 408). The most famous blood oaths between foreigners and natives were between Ferdinand Magellan of Portugal and Rajah Humabon of Cebu; and Miguel Lopez de Legazpi and Datu Sikatuna of Bohol.

Even trade relationships could be expressed in terms of kinship. Take for example how the Teduray and Maguindanaoan forge their trade relations. The Teduray people live in the uplands of Cotabato in Mindanao, while the Maguindanaon people live in the lowlands. To establish trade pacts, the Teduray *kefeduwan* (legal authority) and Maguindanaon *datu* would perform a ritual called "*seketas teel or* "cutting rattan together" (Schlegel 6)[8]. The ritual is described as follows The *kefeduwan* and *datu*

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[8] Thanks to Schlegel for sending me a copy of his paper.

would each take hold of the end of a strip of a rattan and, laying the rattan

upon a log, would chop it into two with a kris, while swearing to be 'as

brothers' –- to treat each other henceforth not as hostile but, for purposes of

trade, as being 'of one father, one mother'(6).

China and the Philippines in a 'Single Ocean'

Interactions between China and polities that are now part of the Philippines have been

recorded as early as the Sung dynasty (960 - 1279). These interactions have existed at two levels:

private trade and official tributary missions.

The earliest recorded contact between Chinese and inhabitants of the Philippines "took place

when traders from Mai-i (now Mindoro, a major island in Luzon) went to Canton in the tenth

century through the Champa (Vietnam coast). In 982, the Mai-i traders went directly to Canton for

the first time" (Dagdag 32). Calapan City, Oriental Mindoro annually celebrates the history of this

trade relations every last week of April through their Sanduguan Festival. According to oral history,

the Mangyans, indigenous inhabitants of Mindoro, "taught the Chinese native games, while the

foreigners performed the lion dances and plays." This festival also serves as a reminder of the

relational conception of space during that period. "The word sandugo, the root word of Sanduguan,

means brotherhood or friend in the Mangyan dialect" ("*Sanduguan Festival*"). Since then, Chinese

traders have frequented Philippine shores that by 1225, the Philippine-China trade relations

expanded to other areas such as, Palawan, Babuyan, Lingayen, and Manila (Dagdagan 32).

The most noteworthy tributary relations were between China and Butuan and the Sultanate

of Sulu, which are now both part of contemporary Mindanao. Since March 1001, Butuan's King

Kiling sent tributary missions, "requesting equal status with Champa." It was Sri Bata Shaja's

tributary mission in 1011 that secured that status (Scott 4). The most significant tributary-trade

relations was the one between the Sulu Sultanate and China. Warren (1979) notes that it was "a

trade which dominated so much of the economic life of Southeast Asia…Under the stimulus of the

China trade the Sulu Sultanate experienced tremendous economic growth" (228). The Sultanate of

Sulu started to appear in Chinese sources during the Yuan dynasty (1278-1368); then the Ming

Annals describe lengthily its tributary mission in 1417; Sulu then reappeared in the Qing Annals,

which recorded "five separate tribute-bearing missions dispatched by the Sultans..in the years

between 1727 and 1763" (Warren 5).

How the death of a sultan of Sulu was treated by the Yongle dynasty also reflected the

relational conception of space during that time. Sulu's king Paduka Pahala died in China in

September 1417 while on his way back from a tributary mission. Upon learning this, the Yongle

emperor arranged a funeral fit "for a brother of the empire." Paduka Pahala's mausoleum still stands

as a well-kept tourist attraction "in Dezhou [in Shandong, in a] Chinese-Muslim village, many of

whose inhabitants trace their roots to the Sultan of Sulu." These descendants of Paduka Pahala, who

bear the surnames Won and An, were granted citizenship during the Qing dynasty in 1731

(Tordesillas).

Throughout this period of interaction, the SCS served as an open channel of communication.

According to Wolters (1999), the SCS is part of what he calls "the single ocean," which consists of

"the vast expanse of water from the coasts of eastern Africa and western Asia to the immensely long

coastal line of the Indian subcontinental and on to China." In this "single ocean," trade routes were

kept open. Possessing a seamless unity, "the trading connections that linked the opposite ends of

maritime Asia resemble links in a chain which would join together again even if one link were

temporary broken." Consequently, the single ocean was "a vast zone of neutral water, which rulers

inside and outside and outside Southeast Asia independently and for their own interests wanted to

protect" (45).

Actually, in writing *Mare Liberum*, Grotius "got his helpful cue from the Asian State

practice of freedom of commerce and trade between various countries and peoples without let or

hindrance" (Anand 442). The most evocative expression of this freedom of the seas norm among

Asian polities was what Sultan Alauddin, King of Gowa XIV, said in 1615 to the Dutch East India

Company, which wanted "to rule the spice trade routes and to uphold monopoly mandated by their

parliament." He said: "God created earth and sea. Land was distributed among human yet ocean

was given to all. That a journey by sea is forbidden for certain races is unheard of" (qtd. in Arsuka

310). Corollary to this norm "was a tradition of hospitality to foreign traders,…attracted by suitable

port facilities, fair trading practices, and protection from sporadic piracy in local waters" (Walters

46).

China and the Philippines and the territorial conception of space

The territorial conception of space in this region arose when its polities started to become

nation-states. The Philippines started to become one, under the occupation of the Americans, in

1898; while China began assuming that form in 1911 when the Republic of China was established.

Because of this territorial conception of space, the world now consists of "absolute political spaces,

of clear-cut boundaries separating polities" (Taylor 8). In this new spatial configuration, China and

the Philippines are now discrete units in an international system, a continuation of the wave of

"success of state-centered politics legitimating itself as national politics," which started in Europe

(Taylor 1). Their boundaries are now demarcated, determined by exact geographic coordinates.

From being the centre of *tianxia,* China is now just a state, with a status nominally equal to

other states.

> The Republican government of 1912, inherited…the *Da Qing Guo* the
>
> vast Qing empire, the multinational and multicultural expanse that
>
> included Manchuria, Mongolia, Easter Turkestan and Tibet, among other

areas…[T]his space was not only redefined, as 'Chinese' and as the

sacred soil of China, but also *defended* diplomatically…(Kirby 436-437).

Meanwhile, the different polities in pre-nation-state Philippines no longer have their independence as they are now subsumed under one body politic. This unity began to be forged during centuries of Spanish colonisation, which began in 1521. Spain established a "centralized government," which soldered the different polities in pre-colonial Philippines "into an entity." This, however, did not include "places which had not been effectively governed and Christianized by the Spaniards, such as…the mountains of northern Luzon and the Mohammedans in Mindanao." By the middle of the nineteenth century, "the Philippine nation was being impressed with its own individuality; the inhabitants saw themselves as a distinct group" (Pilapil 250).

The relationship between China and the Philippines is no longer determined by tributary relations nor expressed through language of kinship but by inter-state diplomatic norms. Their sovereignty is absolute, exclusive, and exercised within a bounded political space. The norm has now become to exclude foreigners rather than consider them as part of *tianxia* or strangers who could be incorporated through kinship rituals.

In this new order, the SCS has been territorialised. In China, Chinese premier Li Keqiang referred to the seas as "blue-colored national soil" during the National People's Congress in early 2014 (Cheng). Holmes (2013) views it as China's intention to exercise "the absolute territorial sovereignty at sea that governments exercise within their land frontiers." Chih (2014) notes that "it reveals how China's articulations are premised upon a commonsensical and unproblematic notion of territory and its intersecting relationship with sovereignty and legal regimes" (345). Meanwhile, to assert its claims over the SCS, the Philippines unilaterally proceeded to parcelise the sea, as if it is land, by renaming some parts of it as the "West Philippine Sea," which are the waters around the Luzon Sea, as well as the maritime areas "within and adjacent to the Kalayaan Island Group and Bajo de Masinloc, also known as Scarborough Shoal" ("*Naming the West Philippine Sea*"). It is

within this context shaped by the territorial conception of political space that the rivalry between China and the Philippines sprang. But how did this shift in spatial thinking generate the rivalry?

The next chapter will identify and discuss the major historical events that provoked the shift from a relational conception of political space to a territorial one. It will be followed by an unpacking of the intersubjective and institutionalised forms of ideas they engendered. Afterwards is an explanation of how these changes shaped the perception of China and the Philippines of themselves as rivals, which consequently led to their rivalrous relationship over the sea they have shared for the most part of their history.

Chapter 5

The Path from Ideas to China-Philippines Rivalry

This chapter will identify the major historical events which stirred the shift from a relational conception of space to a territorial one. This will be accompanied by a discussion of the intersubjective and institutionalised forms of ideas they engendered. Afterwards is an explanation of how they shaped the perception of China and the Philippines of themselves as rivals, which consequently led to their rivalrous relationship over the sea that once served as the bridge of their peoples throughout most of their bilateral history.

The shift from a relational conception of space to a territorial one is a narrative of what Maier (2006) once called the "fixation with social enclosures," through which "defending rigid borders became a preoccupation of social and political life" (46). This preoccupation is the structuring logic of the SCS rivalry between China and the Philippines, whose respective claims are about defending their own version of SCS enclosure. China's version is represented by the nine-dash line (previously known as the eleven-dash line),[9] which was originally drawn by the nationalist government of China (Republic of China) "in an official map in 1947 and publicly released the following year, titled the *Location Map of the South China Sea Islands*" (Chung 39). Meanwhile, as mentioned in the previous chapter, the Philippines' claim is represented by its parcelisation of the SCS, which it did quite recently, through Administrative Order. No. 29, series of 2012, signed by President Benigno Aquino, entitled *Naming the West Philippine Sea of the Republic*

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[9] For the story of how the 11-dash line became a 9-dash line, *see* Hannah Beech, "Just Where Exactly Did China Get the South China Sea Nine-Dash Line From?" *Time*. Time, 19 July 2016. Web. 15 February 2017.

of the Philippines, and for other Purposes. Both China and the Philippines fiercely defend their respective claims over the islands, reefs, shoals, and rocks in the SCS, marshalling concepts of sovereignty and exclusive economic zone. Accompanying this is their desire to exclude nationals of each other from their respective areas of interests.

The preoccupation of China and the Philippines in drawing boundaries and excluding the other from parts of the sea is the root of the rivalry. It is a product of three interrelated elements: the rise of the cartographic state, sovereignty becoming the right to exclude, and the territorialisation of the sea. These elements comprise what Diehl and Goertz call the "well-entrenched causes" of the "political shock" (*War and Peace,* 221) which dramatically changed the structure of the interaction between China and the Philippines from being structured around a relational conception of political space to a territorial one. These three well-entrenched causes are what stuck China and the Philippines in a territorial trap, which predisposes them in a rivalrous relationship.

The Rise of the Cartographic State

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the territorial conception of space has two important aspects: delineated boundary and exclusive notion of sovereignty. The former is a necessary condition for the latter.

Branch (2014) foregrounds the role of the cartographic revolution in the rise of a new way of thinking about territory. This revolution was ushered in by the rediscovery in the fifteenth century in Europe of "Ptolemaic techniques — particularly the foundational idea of using celestial coordinates and geometric map projections" (Branch, *The Cartographic State,* 51). European powers started applying these Ptolemaic cartographic grid techniques in the Americas. Since then, the world, through various colonial projects of Europeans, was neatly divided into non-overlapping political spaces. In early nineteenth century, political spaces with clearly demarcated boundaries

started to spring up when the post-Napoleonic wars treaties defined territories according to their boundaries (Branch, "Colonial Reflection," 284-291).

In the SCS region, the cartographic state is a product of the encounters of Asian polities with Western powers. As Roskzko (2015) notes, "due to the colonial encounter, many Asian states saw a need for creating their own national geo-body through mapping and by creating an outline of the map as a national symbol." Consequently, traditional conception of political space and practices "have to change to conform to the new geography of a country outlined by a modern map" (234). However, though contact and struggle with Western powers is common to both China and the Philippines, how their respective cartographic geo-bodies emerged and got understood followed different trajectories.

The different independent and Spanish-colonised upland and lowland polities of the Philippines coalesced into a national geo-body after the United States supplied the geographic coordinates of the group of islands they wanted from the Spanish East Indies. Originally, Article III of the 1898 Washington Peace Protocol between Spain and the United States only mentioned "the city, bay, and harbor of Manila" as the areas to be occupied by the Americans. However, during the negotiations of the 1898 Treaty of Paris, the American negotiating team demanded from the negotiating team of the Spanish Empire all the islands and polities within the geographic coordinates that they arbitrarily determined. The Americans carved a line around all the group of islands they wanted — from Luzon to Sulu — and pressured Spain to give them up, even though not every polity within the perimeter of the coordinates the Americans supplied were successfully conquered by Spain, such as the interior of Maguindanao polity (Junker 297) and upland polities of Ifugao and Kalinga (Henley 170). After protesting, the Spanish negotiating team agreed after the Americans proposed to pay twenty million dollars and promised "to maintain in the Philippines an open door to the world's commerce" and gave permission to "Spanish ships and merchandise…into the ports of the Philippine Islands on the same terms as American ships and merchandise" (for the

exchange of communications between American and Spanish negotiators on cessation of the different polities of the Philippines, *see A treaty of Peace,* 107-211; *see* also Bautista).

The emergence of the geo-body of China as a nation-state is less abrupt than the Philippines. Though cartographic Ptolemaic cartographic techniques were introduced to China as early as the sixteenth century by Jesuit missionary Matteo Ricci (Branch, *The Cartographic State,* 58), maps of China do not reflect clear demarcation of boundaries, defined in precise geographic coordinates. As Callahan (2009) notes, "instead of using mathematical surveys to clarify China's territorial boundaries, they appeal to contingencies of historical geography" (153). From the maps produced before and after China became a republic in 1912 it can be inferred that Chinese understanding of unbounded space and territory (*jiangyu*) remains in "creative tension" with the "modern understanding of bounded sovereign territory (*zhuquan lingtu*)" (Callahan 146). The first map the Republic of China released in 1912 in its founding *Almanac* "does not assert clear boundaries between [China] and other sovereign states." This might be because the founding constitution of the Republic of China simply declared the territory of China to be the same as the domain of the Qing dynasty (Callahan 151). Nonetheless, the notion of modern version of boundary started to be reflected in Chinese maps after European, Japanese, and American powers pressured China to sign "unequal treaties limiting Chinese territory" in the nineteenth century. "These maps argued in national terms, using lines and different colors when depicting different countries and aiming at describing boundaries and territories as a way of defining particular territories considered inviolable" (Matten 128).

Sovereignty as the right to exclude[10]

When territorial sovereignty advanced in the seventeenth and eighteenth century, it has been used "sparingly" to exclude non-nationals in the territory of the state "and only against those persons who were perceived to be a threat to the kingdom" (Waldman 14). People largely enjoyed freedom of movement (Nafziger 815). Territorial sovereignty assumed its current form as essentially the right to exclude because of legislations and jurisprudence aligning with anti-immigrant persuasions at the end of the nineteenth century.

The rise of nationalism and economic protectionism ushered in immigration policies intended to exclude non-citizens. In 1882, the United States passed the Chinese Exclusion Act, considered to be "an important watershed in the history of American immigration legislation. It marked the beginning of a period of more than eight decades (1882-1965) in which the immigration policy of the United States was officially racist" (Fisher and Fisher 73). The Act was a response to anti-Chinese coolies protests which started in San Francisco, and it aimed to ban all Chinese labourers. In 1902, the Act was extended "to all American insular possessions," which included the Philippines (Soennichsen 82).

The validity of the Act was tested in *Chae Chan Ping v. United States* (1899). It involved Chae Chan Ping, a Chinese resident and worker in California. He was denied entry to the United States after returning from China. The Supreme Court confirmed the constitutionality of the Act and developed the doctrine of territorial sovereignty as essentially the right to exclude foreigners. Since then, "leading jurists and international law commentators" propagated this belief (Waldman 18).

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[10] This part has been derived from a section of my bachelor's thesis at Leiden University College. It has been repurposed and developed further for this master's thesis. *See* Sasot, Sass Rogando. "The Thomas van Beersum Affair: Who has the right to participate in the parliament of the streets?" Bachelor's thesis. Leiden University College, 2014. Print.

Territorialisation of the sea

The territorialisation of the sea or "maritime territorialisation" involves "the process by which coastal states' sovereignty, exclusive rights and specific jurisdictions are spatially implemented at sea (the creation of maritime zones, limits and boundaries)" (Bouchard 79). This process of extending one's sovereignty over the sea has been going on at least as early as the seventeenth century. The watershed moment was the publication of the influential Selden's *Mare Clausum*, "which maintained that the seas were indeed capable of ownership and, since the resources of the seas were by no means inexhaustible, a State had the right to protect its interests by restricting the use of certain areas." Then in 1782 Italian jurist Galiani published an influential "treatise in which he suggested that three miles be taken as the breadth of uniform belts of sovereignty along the cost" (Alexander 563).

Since then, the process termed "ocean enclosure movement" (Alexander 561) further developed, giving birth to "two institutional devices — regimes and zones," which "represents a mode of thinking about the assertion of land-based authority over areas of the ocean and activities at sea." Regime pertains to "system of principles, rules, procedures, and institutions," while zone refers to "an area that has been spatially defined for separate or special treatment within a functionally defined context of official action" (Johnston 42-44). The latest development in this process is the introduction of the concept of EEZ through the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982). Marshalling this concept, coastal states are able to nationalise and border ocean spaces and extend their "national sovereignty beyond their territorial sea" (Roszko 234).

These three processes: the rise of the cartographic state, sovereignty becoming essentially the right to exclude non-nationals, and the territorialisation of the sea were the elements of the territorial conception of political space, which served as the new structure of interaction between China and the Philippines. It is in this structure of interaction that the rivalry between these to

countries developed and continued to persist. How then these three worked together to spur these two countries into a rivalrous relationship?

Ideas to Rivalry

The cartographic revolution, sovereignty as the right to exclude, and the territorialisation of the sea are the shared ideas that constituted the identity of China and the Philippines, which compelled them to be *territorial*. "Territoriality," Maier (2006) explains, "is created because multiple powers contest a finite global space, each seeking, as Weber emphasized, some zone of monopoly or exclusive control or sovereignty" (34). Consequently, this identity shaped how they behave towards each other. And the SCS serves as the theatre within which they perform their territorial identity and the interests that such identity engenders.

The introduction of new cartographic ideas "changed rulers' foundational norms and ideas about how politics *should* and *could* be organized, altering the conditions of possibility for political rule and interaction…" by enabling "new capabilities and practices and simultaneously constituted new goals as legitimate" (Branch, *The Cartographic State,* 8). The delineation of political spaces promoted by new mapping practices created "the imaginary of an apparently impermeable sovereign territorial state" (Matten 128). The mapping practices of identifying geographic coordinates engendered states obsessed with creating exact and linearly demarcated boundaries. In turn, these boundaries generated mutually exclusive political spaces, which are being sought by both China and the Philippines as they put forward their own ways of enclosing the SCS.

China's nine-dash line and the SCS parcelisation sought by the Philippines are cut in the same cloth of boundary-obsessed territorialism. Corollary to the boundary-obsessed territorialism engendered by cartographic ideas state is the exclusive notion of sovereignty, which relies on determining boundaries. Once identified, sovereignty is marshalled by states to exclude non-

members of their political communities from the areas under their control or within the zones of their interests. Rozko (2015) notes that "the SCS was, up until the 1990s, considered open sea (*high sea*), with its fishing grounds considered common property. This has changed as China, Vietnam, the Philippines, and Taiwan have taken a more assertive stance towards the SCS" (234). This assertive stance is enabled by an understanding of sovereignty, which has been essentialised to be the power of political communities to exclude non-citizens even from areas like the SCS which have been traditionally a common fishing grounds of its littoral states. Now, "seizing upon the exclusive notion of sovereignty, state governments do no just adopt new technologies and new forms of knowledge but also push for modifications in the international legal regime to allow them to demarcate their national borders *at sea*" (Rozko 234).

In turn, these boundary-making practices and exclusionary sovereignty have been extended into maritime areas as the movement to territorialise the sea intensified in the twentieth century. The latest development in this sea enclosure movement is the UNCLOS, which "generated or exacerbated [the SCS] conflict by raising the stakes, failing to resolve key legal issues, and encouraging overlapping zone claims" (Song and Tønnesson 258).

As both China and the Philippines continue to see themselves as territorial states with sovereignty essentially interpreted as the power to exclude non-citizens within their clearly demarcated political spaces which include the sea, the more they will see each other as rivals who see their relationship as a zero-sum game. In this game, China and the Philippines mutually seek to exclude each other from their areas of interests in the SCS. Some may see this territorial behaviour as a product of human nature (*see* for example Ardrey); however, as Smith (1990) argues,

> territoriality is…not some innate human trait but a social construct. It can
>
> take different forms in different geographical and historical circumstances,
>
> and its specific manifestations must be contextualized. It is not sufficient to

see territoriality simply as a normal and necessary characteristic of human

existence…(3).

This thesis has shown that the territorial claim making of China and the Philippines emerged as a result of a shift in the conception of political space in the SCS region. This shift from relational to territorial ushered in new ideas, chief of them are mapping techniques, sovereignty as the power to exclude non-citizens, and maritime territorialisation. Exogenous both to China and the Philippines, these ideas changed the traditional order in the SCS region which was structured by a relational conception of political space. Learning and internalising these ideas, both China and the Philippines are performing the imperatives of territoriality as they assert exclusive control in their areas of interests in the SCS. Their respective quests for exclusive control "implies inability to share with some others, and their exclusion by various means" (Smith 1). And it is this quest brought by a shift in the conception of political space that predisposes them to a rivalrous relationship.

Chapter 6
Conclusion

As the "coldblooded territorial disputes" of the littoral states of the SCS goes on, the dim future pundits predict advances like a wave that might soon break upon the shores of the present (Kaplan, "The South China Sea," 82). The intersecting claims of the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei, and Indonesia overlap with China's U-Shaped Line, demarcating the area it claims in the Sea (*see* Chung). Since China dwarfs the other parties in terms of their capability to enforce their claims, Kaplan sees them as inevitably "dependent on the United States," the power that can balance against China (Kaplan, "The South China Sea," 82). And that is precisely the intention of America's "pivot to Asia" (Campbell and Andrews): a gesture reassuring to some of the littoral states, but deeply worrisome to some observers. The entanglement of the current superpower with a conflict that involves the emerging superpower, the observers warn, might stimulate the Thucydidean Trap to snap (*see* Allison, The Thucydides Trap; Coker; Rosecrance).

Derived by Graham Allison from Thucydides' analysis of the proximate cause of the Peloponnesian War, the Thucydidean Trap posits that war is the likely outcome of the power transition between a declining hegemonic power and an emerging one. Provoked by fear of the other, the former will launch a war to secure its position or the latter will initiate it to speed up its ascent (Allison, Case File). American involvement in the SCS conflict might just pave the way to doom. This paper dealt with a trap prior to the possible Thucydidean Trap: the territorial trap. The territorial trap has a history. Its emergence is a consequence of a series of processes that began in the past that produced a shift in the structure of interaction which spawned the rivalry identity of the littoral polities of the SCS. And this paper traced the process of its emergence.

Departing from materialist understanding of the SCS conflict, this endeavour foregrounded the role of ideas in producing the rivalry between China and the Philippines. Guided by

constructivist theory of international relations fused with the rivalry approach to conflict, this undertaking has shown how a shift in the intersubjective and institutionalised conception of space generated the rivalry. Three ideas were identified as consequential: new cartographic ideas which promoted linearly demarcated boundaries, sovereignty as the power to exclude non-citizens, and the territorialisation of the sea.

By taking a constructivist stance, this study has questioned the givenness of the conflicting interests of the claimants, which has been taken for granted by writers of the conflict. Just like identity, these interests are fashioned by the shared ideas which also determine "the structures of human association" (Wendt, *Social Theory* 1).

Since these shared ideas are socially constructed, they can be deconstructed, and re-constructed in such a way that transforms the relationship of the conflicting parties to a more amicable one. Thus, this paper is not only a scholarly examination of the conflict, it is also a political intervention, offering the reflection needed to usher in that stable peace between China and the Philippines, and hopefully among the rest of the coastal states competing over the SCS' bounty. The reflection this intervention offered has put a spotlight on how the transformation in the conception of political space led to the rivalry of the two countries over their shared sea. It imparted the story of how the institutionalisation of a historically specific idea of territory itself is a crucial factor in entrapping China and the Philippines into a rivalry. Hopefully, this reflection can prompt the re-imagination of the interaction between China and the Philippines — one that does not predispose them to rivalry that could erupt into enmity, which could rile them to cut each other's heads off. And that re-imagination must be radical enough in order to serve as the political shock needed to stem the inertia of the enduring rivalry between the two countries.

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APPENDIX

Table 1 *Philippines - China Interactions in the context of the SCS Conflict*

Event	Date
Establishment of the Republic of the Philippines	June 1898
United States occupied the Philippines	August 1898
Establishment of Republic of China	January 1912
France occupied nine features of the Spratly Islands. Chinese government protested.	1930/1932
Japan took over the features France occupied	1939
Japan occupied the Philippines	1942
Philippines liberated from Japanese occupation	1945
Philippines granted full independence by the United States	1946
Republic of China placed SCS island groups under authority of Hainan District of Guang Dong Province	May 1949
Chinese Legation in Manila informed Philippine government that Taiping Island (Itu Aba), the largest feature in the Spratlys was occupied by a Chinese Naval Unit Some Philippine cabinet members suggested that Filipinos be encouraged to settle in Taiping Island in preparation of annexing the Spratly Islands. Chinese Legation in Manila asserted Chinese sovereignty over the Spratlys.	April 1949
PRC gets established	October 1949
In a press conference, Philippine President Quirino declared the Spratly Islands belonging to the Philippines	May 1950
Japan renounced all rights to the Spratly Islands and Paracel Islands (Treaty of San Francisco) but did not name to whom they would renounce them	September 1951
International Civil Aviation Organization conference in Manila, sixteen countries represented, including: Republic of China and the Philippines. Conference adopted resolution requesting China to provide weather report and forecast for the Spratly Islands	October 1955
Filipino businessman Tomas Cloma landed in some features of the Spratly Islands and asserted ownereship, calling them "Freedomland" (Kalayaan Islands)	March 1956
Tomas Cloma wrote a letter to Philippine Vice President Carlos P. Garcia, asking the Philippine government to support his claim.	May 1956

Through a letter, Tomas Cloma informed Chinese Embassy of his claim. PRC and the Republic of China-Taiwan protested.	May 1956
Republic of China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs summoned Philippine Ambassador in Taipei to talk about the Spratly Islands. The Ambassador said Philippines had no desire to foment tension in the area.	June 1956
Chinese nationalists intercepted and disarmed a Filipino fishing boat that sailed near the Spratly Islands	October 1956
Philippine forces attempted to land on Taiping Island, but was driven away by troops of the Republic of China	1971
Philippines sent a communique to Republic of China, after the latter allegedly fired at a fishing boat carrying Congressman Ramon Mitra that veered near Taiping Island. Philippines declared Chinese occupation of of the Island a "serious threat to national security." Philippine President Marcos appropriated Cloma's claims. Philippines proclaimed ownership of 53 islands. Republic of China sent a diplomatic protest; asserted sovereignty over the islands. People's Republic of China echoed the protests.	July 1971
Philippines officially placed Kalayaan Islands under the administration of its westernmost island of Palawan. Tomas Cloma made chairman.	April 1972
Philippines built Rancudo Airfield in Thitu Island	1975
Philippine established diplomatic relations with PRC. Philippines and PRC issued Joint Communique agreeing to settle disputes by peaceful means.	1975
Philippines formally annexed Kalayaan Island Group as part of Philippine territory, turned it into a district of Palawan, Philippines declared Kalayaan Island Group as within the EEZ of the Philippines	June 1978
1992 ASEAN Declaration on the South China Sea, encouraging parties to resolve the disputes through peaceful means.	July 1992
Filipino fishermen spotted stilts structures of the Chinese in Mischief Reef. Philippines sent diplomatic protest.	January 1995
Through the statement of Philippine Foreign Affairs Secretary, Philippines formally claimed the Scarborough Shoal as part of Philippine territory	1997
Philippine navy run aground a Philippine vessel in Second Thomas Shoal. People's Republic of China protested.	May 1999
Philippines and PRC issued Joint Statement between the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of the Republic of the Philippines on the Framework of Bilateral Cooperation in the Twenty-First Century	May 2000

State oil corporations of the Philippines, PRC, and Vietnam entered into a tripartite agreement called the Joint Marine Seismic Undertaking to explore certain areas in the South China Sea	March 2005
Philippines and PRC held a bilateral consultation on the SCS issue, among other matters. Philippines recommended areas to be classified as disputed and non-disputed areas; and for the claimant States to meet under the aegis of ASEAN. China rejected, and suggested bilateral consultation and establishment of a Philippine-China maritime consultation mechanism. Philippines rejected China's offer.	January 2012
Philippine coastguards tried to arrest Chinese fishermen from harvesting corals, giant clams, and even live sharks in Scarborough Shoal. Chinese surveillance ships arrived to prevent the arrest. Philippines responded by sending its biggest warship. A naval stand off ensued.	April 2012
Philippines unilaterally filed an arbitration case against PRC. PRC repeatedly expressed its intention not to honour the arbitral court.	January 2013
Arbitration decision got released. Philippines most of its claims; PRC's historical claim based on the 9-dash line declared incompatible with UNCLOS.	July 2016
Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte pursued a policy of rapprochement, and visited China. The Philippines and China issued a joint statement, which declares, among other things, that "contentious issues [on the South China Sea] are not the sum total of the Philippines-China bilateral relationship."	October 2016