

The Future of ASEAN-Korea Partnership Vol.3

ASEAN's Contribution for Peace
on the Korean Peninsula

Forging Towards a Prosperous
ASEAN Economic Community

Unity in Diversity: Building
an ASEAN Identity

A Cooperation Model for ROK's
New Southern Policy

The Future of ASEAN-Korea Partnership Vol.3

YOUNG
PERSPECTIVES

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Young Perspectives

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This year, ASEAN and Korea gained international attention as a number of historical events have taken place in the region. The Korean Peninsula was at the centre of the global attention with the significant development of inter-Korean relations. The tensions between the two Koreas began to thaw in the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic & Paralympic Winter Games, leading to the 3rd inter-Korean Summit at Panmunjom on April 27. On June 12, the world eyed to Singapore as the ASEAN Chair for 2018 hosted the first DPRK-U.S. Summit in June. This was another manifestation of the ASEAN centrality playing an important role in the region.

ASEAN and Korea have become important strategic partners since their sectoral dialogue partnership began in 1989. ASEAN is now Korea's 2nd largest trading partner and 3rd largest investment destination while Korea is the 5th largest partner for ASEAN in the respective areas. To highlight and further deepen this partnership, Korea has announced the New Southern Policy which seeks to elevate the ASEAN-Korea relations to a new dimension.

Since 2016, the ASEAN-Korea Centre has been organising the ASEAN-Korea Academic Essay Contest to provide opportunities for the youth of ASEAN and Korea to study the development the ASEAN-Korea relations and search for the ways to further expand and strengthen this partnership. This year, the 2018 ASEAN-Korea Academic Essay Contest was hosted

together with the ASEAN University Network [AUN](#), with cooperation from Seoul National University Asia Center [SNUAC](#) and Chulalongkorn University ASEAN Studies Center. The Contest suggested 4 themes: (1) ASEAN's Contribution for Peace on the Korean Peninsula; (2) Forging Toward a Prosperous ASEAN Economic Community; (3) Unity in Diversity: Building an ASEAN Identity; (4) A Cooperation Model for Korea's New Southern Policy. From around 170 submissions by the youth of ASEAN and Korea, 15 essays were selected as winners. Among the winning essays, 9 papers are included in this volume.

This book could not have been published without the continuous support from the co-organiser and supporters of the Contest. My sincere appreciation goes to each member of the evaluation committee who have carefully reviewed the submissions and provided valuable comments.

It is my pleasure to present you the young perspectives of the youth of ASEAN and Korea.

Oh Myeong-Seok

Director of Southeast Asia Center, Seoul National University Asia Center
Chair of the Evaluation Committee
of the 2018 ASEAN-Korea Academic Essay Contest

In the 3rd ASEAN-Korea Academic Essay Contest, we received a favourable response from undergraduate and graduate students from both Korea and ASEAN member states. There was a total of 169 essays that were submitted, with a majority of the entries submitted by students from ASEAN member states. The four themes of this year's contest addressed the core issues facing both ASEAN member states and Korea specifically in the area of enhancing cooperation and development.

As a judge for this year's contest, I realised that despite the majority of participants being undergraduate and graduate students in their twenties, they possessed critical discernment and a depth in analysing and understanding the pertinent issues and challenges faced by ASEAN and Korea. Some of the suggestions proposed by these youth also provided a fresh insight and outlook regarding ASEAN-Korea relations and reflected their young perspectives and values, which is something that should be well considered by the governments and experts in this relevant field.

The essays tried to convince readers about the importance of having a regional community and touched upon practical approaches on how to have mutual cooperation between ASEAN and Korea, specifically with regards to socio-cultural, economic and political aspects.

The younger generation suggested that ASEAN could play a more

dominant role in helping to achieve peace in the Korean Peninsula by engaging in cordial diplomatic relations with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, serving as a mediator between the two Korea. Moreover, in the area of national security, it has also been suggested that ASEAN could utilise the ASEAN Regional Forum and its unique geographical position to help resolve conflicts through a diplomatic approach. The ASEAN Way has also been cited as a way in which these conflicts could be resolved.

In addition, under Korea's New Southern Policy, participants felt that while the importance of people-to-people and cultural exchange was emphasised, there still needs to be a focus on building mutual cooperation between ASEAN and Korea. Furthermore, in light of the prevalence of the Korean Wave, participants felt that a balanced approach in the exertion of soft power is required, moving away from a Korea-centred Hallyu to that of more consumer – ASEAN youth – oriented Hallyu. In the area of tourism in Southeast Asia, actively utilising the existing Community-Based Tourism has been mentioned. Participants also felt that the issue of international marriages between people from ASEAN member states and Korea could be addressed by safeguarding the rights of these immigrants and educating the people from both ASEAN and Korea in this area.

I feel that these suggestions not only show fresh insights of ASEAN and Korean youth and reflect the deepened exchange between the two, but also show prospects of change. The ASEAN-Korea Academic Essay Contest is providing ASEAN and Korean youth with a functional platform to share their ideas, and I wish to express my thanks to all the participants who took part in the contest this year.

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Lee Hyuk, Secretary General of ASEAN-Korea Centre 004

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Oh Myeong-Seok, Director of Southeast Asia Center,
Seoul National University Asia Center 006

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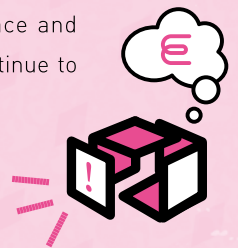


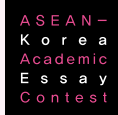
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ASEAN's Contribution for Peace on the Korean Peninsula



On 27 April 2018, the leaders of the Republic of Korea and Democratic People's Republic of Korea announced the Panmunjom Declaration as a result of the 3rd inter-Korean Summit. This was followed by the first ever DRPK-U.S. Summit held on 12 June 2018 in Singapore, the ASEAN Chair for 2018. How has ASEAN contributed for the peace and stability of the Korean Peninsula and how will it continue to maintain its roles?





Mediation on the Korean Peninsula: A Chance to Assert ASEAN Centrality

—Nguyen Phuong Hong Ngoc Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam

Abstract

At the third inter-Korean Summit, President Moon Jae-in of the ROK Republic of Korea and Chairman Kim Jong-un of the DPRK Democratic People's Republic of Korea declared an “era of no war”, vowing to eradicate all military threats on the Korean Peninsula and establish permanent peace. While this development is the first step to officially end the Korean War, the formal peace treaty is yet to be actualised. The long process to achieve peace needs to be secured by a joint effort not only from the two Koreas, but also from the international community, and the current positive situation has created a golden chance for ASEAN to offer its assistance and assert its ambitious

principle of ASEAN centrality. This paper argues that ASEAN has the greatest potential to become a mediator on the Korean Peninsula, but its contributions so far have not made a significant impact. Therefore, ASEAN should embrace a more active role in the future by proposing new initiatives to help usher the Korean Peninsula into an era of mutual peace and prosperity, hereby affirming ASEAN's centrality in the regional architecture of the Asia-Pacific region as envisioned by the ASEAN Charter and the ASEAN Political-Security Community.

1. ASEAN Centrality and the Prospects for Peace on the Korean Peninsula

The ASEAN Charter states that the purpose of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations is “to maintain the centrality and proactive role of ASEAN as the primary driving force” (Article 1, section 15) in the regional architecture. Since then, ASEAN centrality has become a profound principle that is often discussed in Southeast Asian studies. According to Amitav Acharya, the concept of ASEAN centrality defines ASEAN as the anchoring “leader” or the “institutional hub” of Asia-Pacific’s dynamic regionalism, which can be witnessed through institutions such as the ASEAN+3, ARF [ASEAN Regional Forum](#) and the EAS [East Asia Summit](#). In other words, ASEAN is the provider of an institutional platform that serves as a foundation for other Asia-Pacific and East Asian regional bodies (Acharya, 2017). In addition, Carlyle Thayer associates the notion of ASEAN centrality with Southeast Asia’s autonomy from external powers in regional security affairs. He considers the establishment of the three pillars of the ASEAN Community, notably the ASPC [ASEAN Political-Security Community](#), as a major turning point in ASEAN’s attempt to maintain its centrality (Thayer, 2015). The APSC Blueprint 2025 restates the purpose of reinforcing ASEAN’s centrality in the regional architecture and even beyond, envisioning a reality in which ASEAN plays a responsible and constructive role on a global scale.

While positive in theory, reality shows that the relevance of ASEAN centrality has been facing serious challenges in the recent years. ASEAN appears to be quite inefficient in solving its own major regional security issues, for instance the matter of territorial disputes on the South China Sea. Furthermore, ASEAN is highly subjected to the push and pull of

major powers in its exposure to various regional forums, in particular the rivalry for influence between China and the United States. Not to mention, the declining U.S.-led world order is giving way to the growing presence of China in Asia-Pacific, as illustrated by China-led institutions such as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the Belt and Road Initiative (Acharya, 2017). This can potentially undermine both ASEAN’s unity and neutrality. Considering this context, should ASEAN wish to uphold its ambitious endeavour of centrality – which is inherently a foreign policy that places ASEAN at the heart of regional multilateralism – the organisation needs to showcase its role as an active facilitator in regional affairs and extend its influence well beyond Southeast Asia.

Within Asia-Pacific’s rapidly changing security architecture, the conflict on the Korean Peninsula is a particularly critical flashpoint that has just witnessed a vital milestone. With the adoption of the Panmunjom Declaration, the DPRK-United States Summit and the three inter-Korean Summits in 2018, the prospects of peace on the Korean Peninsula are now more promising than ever. However, high expectations come along with equally high scepticism and an extraordinary amount of effort. The path to achieve all the goals set by the declaration, including complete denuclearisation and reunification, will not be easy. A formal treaty to end the war needs not only the goodwill of the two Koreas, but also agreement from the United States and China. There are upcoming negotiations expected between the DPRK and the U.S. which may lead to further conflicts. While the notion of peace is highly appreciated, the actual process and final outcome remain uncertain. That’s why a catalyst, in this case an international mediator, is necessary to assure the process of attaining peace.

As countries become more and more interdependent, international

organisations and other non-state actors have gained significant advantages over single states in global governance. Consequently, international institutions are expected to be active participants in mediating disputes and pursuing peace in the modern international system (Bercovitch, 1992). On a theoretical perspective, ASEAN is the ideal peace broker to offer its mediation services to parties involved in the Korean conflict, due to its status as a regional intergovernmental organisation whose principles and policies are based on the value of mutual peace, security and prosperity. Peace on the Korean Peninsula is not simply a matter of regional but of global importance, and if ASEAN successfully moderates peaceful interactions between the conflicting parties, it will gain a larger voice and a greater stance in the international community. Hence, promoting and contributing to the process of building peace on the Korean Peninsula is a singular opportunity unlike any other for ASEAN to reinforce its centrality and relevance in international politics.

2. ASEAN – The Most Suitable Mediator in the Current Context

The concept of international mediation is further elaborated by Jacob Bercovitch as a flexible approach to make impacts on the dynamics of international relations. The benefits offered by mediation significantly outweigh the harms because not only can the conflict be resolved but the mediator can also secure its own interests. The strategy and effectiveness of international mediation are dependent on the wider political landscape on which the conflict happens, as different contexts lead to diverse structures

and outcomes of international mediation. The means of influence vary greatly among mediators, ranging from rewards and benefits, mutual identity and desires between the mediator and related parties, to coercion and pressure in some cases (Bercovitch, 1992). Therefore, the international context and the mediator itself are the main variables in determining the behaviour of both the mediator and disputing parties, as well as the final results of the mediation. In this section, the paper will analyse ASEAN's potential based on three criteria: current context, ASEAN's impartiality, and finally, its available resources.

2.1. A time of détente

The current context of the Korean Peninsula is a thaw in diplomatic relations, which points to the global tendency of cooperation and mutual benefits. Thus, an effective strategy for mediation would be one that is built on that cooperative tendency. Since its foundation, ASEAN has been exceptionally vocal in promoting its collective desire of long-lasting peace and mutual prosperity, always advocating for peaceful methods to settle disputes. Therefore, in correspondence with the current context, an organisation based on peace and collaboration like ASEAN has the most potential to employ effective mediation strategies.

Depending on the situation, a mediation strategy can focus on either cooperation or coercion. The international context before 2018 was generally characterised by conflicts and non-cooperation due to the DPRK repeatedly carrying out nuclear tests and refusing to negotiate. In that context, great powers like the United States, Russia or China, and international organisations like the United Nations had far more influence and resources than ASEAN in dealing with the Korean conflict. Threats and pressure were used by the United States and the United Nations to

condemn the DPRK's actions; on the other hand, ASEAN does not possess the resources to create and impose sanctions on other countries nor does the organisation endorse suppression, as it favours diplomacy instead (Hô, 2017). Previous attempts at mediation, including various sanctions on the DPRK and the Six-Party Talks, barely involved ASEAN.

This explains why right now ASEAN is even more reliable at peace-making, since its strategy to solve conflicts is purely based on peace talks and appeasement. Only in the current context can ASEAN use its peace-based strategies, because during periods of tense confrontation, the organisation cannot adopt a more prominent role than other mediators like the United States and the United Nations. As the world reaches a milestone in history, it is high time for ASEAN to seize this golden chance to embrace a more positive role in easing tension and promoting peace on the Korean Peninsula.

2.2. An impartial stakeholder

Aside from the international context, it is crucial to take into consideration the nature of the mediator, as well as the relationship between the mediator and the disputing parties. In the modern international system, regional organisations are the ideal mediators because they possess certain traits of impartiality that make it easier to settle disagreements, thanks to the common interests and beliefs among member states. Impartiality is a concept related to the neutral and unbiased attitudes of the mediator toward the conflicting parties (Kleiboer, 1996). ASEAN itself is a relatively neutral area, with many diverse civilisations co-existing and cooperating peacefully. While this notion of neutrality has been greatly challenged in recent years with the rise of China and occasional internal conflicts, it still remains as a key principle of the organisation.

First and foremost, ASEAN is mostly neutral in its relations with major powers. Even though Southeast Asia is a common zone of great-power rivalry, ASEAN refuses to take sides in the China-U.S. competition for influence and opts for multilateralism instead. This is especially important, since the conflict on the Korean Peninsula is closely affected by the influence of the United States and China on the ROK and DPRK, respectively. Second, ASEAN is neutral in its relations with the directly involved parties, as both the ROK and DPRK enjoy a particularly warm relationship with ASEAN and its member states. All 10 member states of ASEAN have official diplomatic relations with the two countries, while eight out of the 10 members host a DPRK Embassy. Pyongyang has been historically involved in the region, sharing longstanding ties with ASEAN countries. The bloc also has a good business partnership with the DPRK, there being only a few countries in the world that do so.

For instance, Viet Nam does not follow a policy of isolating the DPRK. In the past, Viet Nam was the host of reconciliation talks between the DPRK and Japan (Clark, 2017). Recently in the meeting with President Moon Jae-in in April 2018, Chairman Kim Jong-un was quoted as saying he wanted the DPRK to follow Viet Nam's economic reforms (Takahashi, 2018). Malaysia also had good ties with the DPRK, sharing a rare bilateral visa-waiver agreement signed in 2009 before the diplomatic crisis in early 2017. The country has expressed its readiness to normalise relations, with Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad saying that the Embassy in Pyongyang will be reopened and that Malaysia should try to establish a trade relations as well as get the DPRK to join international negotiations (Chu, 2018). Other ASEAN countries, particularly Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Singapore, also have good relationships and trading ties with

the DPRK (Mathur, 2017). Likewise, ASEAN's relationship with the ROK is flourishing. The ROK became a full Dialogue Partner of ASEAN in 1991, and the 13th ASEAN-Korea Summit in 2010 transformed the relationship from comprehensive cooperation to a strategic partnership (ASEAN, 2012).

Overall, ASEAN is the only organisation in the world that is on friendly terms with both the ROK and DPRK, while managing to stay independent from great-power influence. Furthermore, ASEAN consists of mostly developing and newly industrialised countries with a closer development level to the DPRK than that of other regions. These are unique traits that can serve as a great advantage for ASEAN to offer its mediation to settle conflict on the peninsula. The DPRK and many other countries are prevented from cooperation by mutual distrust, but that is not the case with ASEAN. If ASEAN were to extend its assistance, the DPRK would be more willing to accept. ASEAN abide by international laws as well as its core values of mutual peace and prosperity, therefore, impartiality enables ASEAN to focus on the collective interests of the region and for all parties involved without being biased towards any single country.

2.3. The heart of regional multilateralism

One crucial resource of regional organisations is the ability to host forums for formal and informal dialogues. Regional organisations share a commitment to maintain the regional security architecture, creating a greater incentive to manage the dispute so that it does not escalate further, since conflicts affect not only their member states but also the whole region. Another advantage for regional organisations over international organisations of global scale is their local proximity, both geographically and socially, that provides a better familiarity with the parties in conflict (Skau, Bercovitch, & Elgström, 2003). ASEAN

possesses all of these beneficial qualities, as it shares a close connection with both Koreas and is a major player in regional multilateral forums.

It is important to recognise ASEAN's role in helping the DPRK to integrate, for the DPRK is a member of the ASEAN Regional Forum and it also joined the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia TAC in 2008. The ARF is a venue for dialogue between the DPRK and the international community and the only multilateral forum the country participates in (Yong, 2018). The ARF has provided an important channel of communication to connect the DPRK and the rest of the world, despite facing criticism for not delivering an effective mechanism. Regardless, ASEAN is the most prominent regional organisation in Asia-Pacific with its available resources consisting of various ASEAN-led multilateral forums, as well as high potential in providing a cooperative platform for the DPRK to engage with the world.

3. Assessment of ASEAN's Current Contributions

3.1. Certain successes

Acknowledging ASEAN's importance in the region, especially on the matter of the Korean Peninsula, President Moon Jae-in's administration has launched the 'New Southern Policy' to further develop ROK's relations with Southeast Asia. His state visit to Singapore in July also signified the active implementation of this policy, covering not only issues concerning the DPRK but also the ROK's ties with ASEAN and its bilateral relationship with Singapore, especially after Singapore successfully hosted the recent Trump-Kim summit (Parameswaran, 2018). It is undeniable that the DPRK-United States Summit is one of the most historic milestones in the quest for peace, and a

large part of its success has been achieved thanks to the courtesy of Singapore.

President Moon has many times hailed ASEAN's constructive role in solving the Korean conflict, most recently in his highlight lecture 'Republic of Korea and ASEAN: Partners for achieving peace and co-prosperity in East Asia' held in Singapore on July 13, 2018. He complimented ASEAN's peaceful approach to settling conflicts and its endeavour to create regional prosperity, as the organisation repeatedly encourages the DPRK to abide by international laws and abandon its ambitious nuclear programs. Before international sanctions were imposed on the DPRK, it enjoyed a mutually beneficial economic relationship with ASEAN. ASEAN also supported economic exchanges between the ROK and DPRK. He expressed his hope that ASEAN will continue to include the DPRK in many ASEAN-led regional bodies and strengthen the bilateral cooperation between ASEAN and the DPRK (Yong, 2018).

3.2. Challenges remain

While it is undeniable that ASEAN has consistently contributed to promoting peace in the region, the exact extent and effectiveness of its involvement is still much in question. When it comes to solving conflicts, including the situation on the Korean Peninsula, the best ASEAN has ever done is to voice its concern and encourage all sides to respect international laws. This is a pattern that repeatedly appears in most of ASEAN's statements concerning the matter. In the ASEAN-Australia Special Summit on March 2018, ASEAN expressed its "grave concern" over rising tension and released a joint declaration with Australia, which "strongly urges" the DPRK to follow its obligations under United Nations Security Council Resolutions (Reuters, 2018). The official statement from ASEAN Foreign Ministers in March 2018 restated how ASEAN officials "support" complete

denuclearisation and "hope" for a peaceful solution. In the past ASEAN had called for revival of the Six-Party Talks (Calica, 2006), but even this practice is also no different from its usual broad and general statements. While these responses are necessary and accurate, in the end they still remain repetitive rhetorical devices that are not too far from wishful thinking. There are no directions for specific actions, let alone binding mechanisms, for ASEAN to create any influence to alter the DPRK's policies. Even if the situation did improve, it would rely purely on the DPRK's willingness and not on ASEAN's actions. At best, ASEAN's proclamations only reflect the organisation's stance on the matter, and it will take a lot more than words for peace to be achieved.

For a long time, the United Nations and the United States have reinforced strict sanctions on the DPRK, creating direct pressure for the country to revamp its policies. Since his election, ROK President Moon Jae-in has showed his steadfast resolve in bringing the DPRK to peace talks while actively encouraging other countries to embrace the DPRK. He announced his intention for Seoul to be at the "driver's seat of the Korean Peninsula" and offered DPRK's participation in the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics, despite scepticism and criticism from both South Korean citizens and American onlookers. For the inter-Korean and Trump-Kim summits to happen, President Moon has managed to persuade the DPRK to accept denuclearisation and convince the U.S. to enter dialogues with Pyongyang instead of implementing a preventive strike (Park, 2018). Compared to these stakeholders, ASEAN's role as a mediator is inarguably lacklustre in terms of practicality.

Regarding ASEAN's current strategy for settling conflicts on a theoretical perspective, the organisation's behaviour would be classified as nondirective. Nondirective behaviour is defined as minimum help from a mediator

that serves to boost the chance of the disputing parties to reach a mutual solution by themselves. Examples of nondirective behaviour include controlling the public, managing the conflict environment or choosing a neutral location for mediation (Kleiboer, 1996). The most monumental opportunity for any ASEAN member state to engage with the Korean conflict is the Trump-Kim summit hosted in Singapore, which is a neutral location suitable for both countries. However, this is mostly down to Singapore's efforts as an individual state, not ASEAN's joint efforts as a bloc. While ASEAN member states enjoy good bilateral relationships with the two Koreas, the ties between the DPRK and the bloc as a whole remain mediocre. As explained in the previous paragraphs, ASEAN's collective voice mostly consists of general statements and encouragements, which is even more nondirective. Nondirective mediation strategies do not guarantee a successful outcome, nor do they prove much credit to the mediators.

Another challenge that ASEAN faces is its fractured unity, as there are numerous internal conflicts within the organisation that prevent the group from settling its own security issues and thus, raise concerns about whether ASEAN can actually help mediate for outsiders. For years disinterest and contradicting benefits have created a lack of consensus regarding territorial disputes in the South China Sea, undermining ASEAN's responses to the problem. When it comes to brokering peace on the Korean Peninsula, there is also division within the organisation. Thai Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha lamented the fact that Singapore was chosen to be the destination for the Trump-Kim summit and not Bangkok, instead of congratulating the city-state. This reaction was received as ill spirit that shows a lack of mutual solidarity among member states (ASEAN Today, 2018).

Besides certain successes, it is clear that ASEAN is facing several

difficulties that will hinder the bloc's attempt to emerge as an influential mediator. While ASEAN has been exceptionally vocal in promoting peace and stability, the organisation's current contributions appear to be quite limited due to its lack of unity and conflict resolution mechanisms. The situation on the Korean Peninsula is moving in a more positive direction, but it does not show much involvement by ASEAN, despite the organisation having greater potential to be a mediator than many others. ASEAN centrality is yet to be enforced, and it will require more initiatives from the organisation to assert its influence as a peace-bringer.

4. Potential Actions in the Future

The third inter-Korean Summit has shown a promising path to peace, ending with a highly symbolic visit of the two Korean leaders to the spiritual Baekdusan Mountain. Following the summit, Donald Trump's administration has also agreed to resume denuclearisation talks with the DPRK (Haas, 2018). The current situation raises the question: Where does ASEAN fit into all of this? If the bloc does not change its tactics and persists with assisting in the form of broad statements, then it will not create any other practical impact. At best, ASEAN still retains its reputation as a pacifist organisation that always advocates for peace, but that is certainly not enough to place ASEAN in a leading position in the Asia-Pacific region's security architecture. Taking a more realistic outlook, ASEAN can continue to offer help by hosting peace talks and meetings, as Singapore did with the Trump-Kim summit during its 2018 ASEAN Chairmanship.

However, as explained in previous sections, ASEAN has the most

potential to strive towards peace-making on the peninsula and affirm its centrality in the process. ASEAN needs to take on a more serious role to create the foundation for cooperation between the DPRK and the rest of the world, in particular the ROK and the United States. In other words, the organisation needs to offer direct initiatives instead of nondirective actions as it is doing now. Directive mediation behaviour is described as active encouragement or specific solutions to help the conflicting parties end the dispute, namely proposals, recommendations or direct pressure (Kleiboer, 1996).

Considering ASEAN's geopolitical advantage and close relationship with the DPRK, the most effective direct mediation method the organisation can take is to introduce the DPRK to many of its regional forums and trade agreements, boosting the country's economic growth and international integration. The DPRK is already a member of the ARF, an ASEAN-led multilateral forum. Following this, ASEAN should actively support or invite the DPRK to join other pan-Asian groupings such as the East Asia Summit, in which ASEAN plays the central role of agenda-maker. The EAS is also usually attended by the U.S., China and the ROK, creating the ground for engagement with the DPRK on political and security issues in Asia-Pacific. Furthermore, ASEAN can invite the DPRK to participate in the ADMM-Plus [ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus](#) in order to moderate the nation's behaviour, as well as to oversee its commitment to denuclearisation.

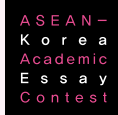
APEC [Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation](#) is another globally significant multilateral forum that focuses on free trade and economic interdependence, both of which can greatly benefit the DPRK. Interdependence between countries increases the level of cooperation and reduces conflicts, creating incentives to foster peace. In fact, ASEAN can even encourage the DPRK's participation in international bodies beyond Asia-Pacific, such as the World

Trade Organization and the World Bank.

Nonetheless, in order to actually implement these solutions, ASEAN member states must stay united and supportive of each other, maintaining a high level of consensus. Moreover, ASEAN needs to forge a deeper relationship with its current partners, especially the ROK and DPRK, and further develop its multilateral forums. With all of ASEAN's unique potential and advantages, the organisation should not hesitate from seizing its chance to be an effective international mediator. Only then can ASEAN successfully help broker peace on the Korean Peninsula and demonstrate to the world that it can be the central driving force in upholding peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region's security structure.

Conclusion

Compared to other countries and organisations, ASEAN is the most suitable to be a peacemaker on the Korean Peninsula because of the current context, ASEAN's neutrality with all parties in conflict and its geopolitical advantages in hosting multilateral platforms. ASEAN has consistently advocated for peace and gained recognition for its contribution, but great challenges remain for the organisation. However, ASEAN has high potential to take action and should actively propose specific solutions to both Korean governments to foster mutual prosperity on the Korean Peninsula. This requires ASEAN to be united and determined, so that it can truly promote peace on the peninsula as an international mediator and assert its centrality in the growing regional architecture and even beyond.



ASEAN as the Driving Force for a Peaceful Korea

—Vo Quang Tri University of Social Sciences and Humanities -
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Abstract

The assassination of Kim Jong-nam at a bustling Malaysian airport in 2017 has unveiled a certain degree of closeness between the DPRK and Malaysia, as well as ASEAN. Further details revealed the breadth of the ASEAN-DPRK relationships in diplomatic and economic terms, and in the DPRK illegal activities within the bloc. Although ASEAN has taken concrete steps to stymie such operations, the bloc remains relatively friendly toward the DPRK.

However, such cordiality does not mean that ASEAN can afford to ignore the simmering tension on the Korean Peninsula. The first reason is that the

ROK is an important economic partner with the bloc, and a conflict in Korea could ruin the economy of the ROK and possibly the Asia-Pacific region, thus harming ASEAN. Secondly, a conflict in Korea could drive member states of the bloc into war or could unleash the DPRK's nuclear arsenals for terrorists, creating security problems for the globe as a whole. As a result, ASEAN needs peace and order in the Korean Peninsula to safeguard its existence. Thus far, ASEAN has contributed to peace in the region by punishing the DPRK for its transgressions and condemning the DPRK's actions when it goes too far. Yet, the bloc's responses to the DPRK's behaviour have been relatively moderate.

Nevertheless, this paper argues that ASEAN could contribute in more concrete ways by utilising its cordiality with the DPRK to keep the country at the negotiating table. Also through the ASEAN Regional Forum, ASEAN could also co-opt other major powers in the region to add substance to the peace process. The first step toward peace on the peninsula would be to retain the sanctions on the DPRK, while ASEAN and the United Nations preside over general demilitarisation and denuclearisation of the peninsula to convince the DPRK of the sincerity of the peace process. Then, after tension on the peninsula has fallen, ASEAN could be a nonpartisan referee in a peace treaty to end the Korean War.

Once the two Koreas reach a peace treaty, both Koreas could grow closer to the point of reunification. ASEAN, with its existing ties with the DPRK, could open the country to the world without too many disruptions, preparing the country for eventual reunification with the more modern ROK. In the end, peace could come to the Korean Peninsula, and the stature of ASEAN would be enhanced as a result.

I. Introduction

In February 2017, the assassination of Kim Jong-nam, brother of the DPRK's supreme leader Kim Jong-un, rocked the international stage due to its utter audacity, as the murder was carried out in broad daylight with thousands milling about the scene. After the shock of the killing had subsided somewhat, many started to look deeper into the incident than just the mere headline-grabbing brazenness, and what emerged was shrouded in mystery regarding the true motives of this act. However, who did the killing and where the murder took place were far from unclear. The world found that Vietnamese and Indonesian citizens were the perpetrators and Malaysia was the crime scene. Connecting these dots, a Southeast Asian connection became manifest. In the end, the incident shed light on the relations between Southeast Asian nations with the DPRK, bilaterally or with ASEAN as a whole (Boydston, 2017).

However, this paper does not delve into the details of the assassination itself, but rather, the connections between ASEAN member states with the DPRK. Indeed, from the poisoning of Kim Jong-nam, the extent of this special relationship became clearer in that it facilitated and granted the DPRK a sense of disregard for possible diplomatic comeuppances when carrying out such a deed. Yet, this special relationship is more meaningful than the assassination itself. As a matter of fact, the close ties between the DPRK and ASEAN member states could serve as more than just facilitators for assassination; these ties could be utilised as leverage with which ASEAN could nudge the DPRK to participate in a neutral forum for lowering tension on the Korean Peninsula. This measure, in turn, could contribute significantly to the prospect of peace and stability on the peninsula and the

world in general.

This paper will expatiate the nature of the relationships between ASEAN and the DPRK as well as its member states. Then, after establishing the extent of the ties between the parties in question, it will explore the threat to peace and why ASEAN should maintain peace in Korea, what ASEAN, as a whole, has done to facilitate such an outcome, and the limits of the bloc's initiatives up till now. Finally, the factors and venues with which ASEAN nations could find a way to contribute to peace and order in Korea and the specific measures the bloc should take to realise this will be discussed.

II. Relations between ASEAN, Its Member States, and the DPRK

The DPRK has been dubbed the "Hermit Kingdom" due to its purported isolation from the world. A closer look, nevertheless reveals that the DPRK has 47 embassies in the world. Among the 47, the DPRK has eight embassies in eight ASEAN member states, with the exceptions being Brunei and the Philippines. This number means that the DPRK maintains one-sixth of its 47 embassies in the ASEAN region. This fact demonstrates a certain degree of closeness existing between ASEAN member states and the DPRK. Yet, the presence of embassies does not manifest the true breadth of the DPRK's involvement in the bloc. In truth, besides regular diplomatic intercourse, the DPRK also engages with ASEAN in more substantial ways as evident in the presence of a visa-free regime for DPRK citizens in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Malaysia and Singapore, nevertheless, ceased

the exemption in 2017 after the killing of Kim Jong-nam (Haggard & Boydston, 2017). More than that, ASEAN also maintains a commercial partnership with the DPRK, albeit a small one in absolute terms. The trade volume between ASEAN and the DPRK stands at \$184.6 million. Surprisingly, the Philippines, a country that the DPRK has no embassy in, is the third-largest trade partner of the DPRK only behind China and India (Boydston, 2017). More remarkable, still, is the fact that the DPRK has had a trade deficit with ASEAN nations for years. This phenomenon manifests a certain degree of economic accommodation on the part of ASEAN member states toward the DPRK.

Nevertheless, such accommodation is even extended to illicit activities of the DPRK. One notable example of this nefarious pattern could be seen in the case in which DPRK citizens were apprehended for trying to smuggle \$450,000 to the DPRK embassy in Malaysia. The case was dropped eventually, and the embassy retrieved the cash. This incident is just one in many incidents that have emerged. These incidents all have a similar pattern in which DPRK embassies in Southeast Asia act as conduits for illegal activities like smuggling, weapons proliferation and even assassination, as with the poisoning of Kim Jong-nam (Lewis, 2017). What is most problematic is that such illicit activities had existed for a while, but there had been few actions on the part of ASEAN Member States to curtail them until last year. The former U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson urged ASEAN nations to stymie such behaviour during the 2017 Special ASEAN-U.S. Foreign Ministers' Meeting but to mixed results (Brunstrom, 2017). In fact, Le Luong Minh, then-Secretary-General of ASEAN even declared that the bloc was "not for unilateral [actions] and largely not for sanctions" (Watts, 2017).

Be that as it may, however, many member states have started to put

pressure, albeit mildly, on the DPRK. Thailand started to cut trade with the DPRK in accordance with the UN sanctions (Watts & Otto, 2017). Singapore, meanwhile, fined a shipper with ties to the DPRK for alleged arms trafficking. The assassination of Kim Jong-nam also angered many member states; Indonesia and Malaysia decreased the level of their economic activities with the DPRK after the killing (Suzuki & Kikuchi, 2017). But according to Thailand's Foreign Minister, despite such punitive actions, Thailand, and by extension, other ASEAN member states "Are not going to completely cut ties."

In short, the relations between ASEAN member states and the DPRK are characterised by relative accord or at least accommodation regarding the DPRK's transgressions, with only moderate punishments when the pressure is high and the DPRK's actions are too blatant to be ignored.

III. The Threat to Peace on the Korean Peninsula

Nevertheless, the paramount issue concerning ASEAN and the DPRK is not about illicit activities, but about the threat of war in Korea. Ever since the armistice in 1953, the two Koreas have been in a state of de jure war, due to the absence of a peace treaty. Today, the area around the DMZ *Demilitarised Zone* that bisects the peninsula is strewn with millions of troops facing each other, anticipating total war. Yet, the peril against order and peace stems mostly from the controversial nuclear weapons program, which, from its inception, has become a destabilising force in the region, threatening to push Northeast Asia onto a war footing with a possible nuclearisation of the ROK and Japan, thus destabilising further the already

precarious situation in Northeast Asia (Lee, 2007).

The DPRK's nuclear weapons program began in the 1985 and then intensified after the collapse of its Communist allies in Europe and the rise of the ROK as a force to be reckoned with (Jager, 2014). The DPRK regime felt threatened and feared for its survival due to the disappearance of its allies and a diplomatic offensive by the ROK known as Nordpolitik that, in the end, accorded Seoul with diplomatic relations even among the DPRK's long-time friends. Even after several attempts to impede the program, from the Agreed Framework in 1994 to the Six Party Talks from 2003 to 2007, the pace of the DPRK's program did not slacken, but only reached new heights. In 2006, the DPRK shocked the world with its first underground nuclear test, then followed by a second one in 2009. The nuclear programs continued to conduct another test in 2016. In 2017, the DPRK conducted further tests and even launched ballistic missiles with increasing level of advancement from April to July of that year.

It is apparent that the DPRK's nuclear weapons program, after 32 years of development, has become a reality. Consequently, President Trump of the U.S. threatened the DPRK with "fire and fury" for its ballistic missile tests. Although the threat of war was somewhat dampened after the Panmunjom Declaration in April 2018 and the Trump-Kim summit in Singapore in June 2018, the endurance for peace is far from a foregone conclusion with further negotiations between the U.S. and DPRK mired in mutual distrust (Pickrell, 2018). The summit's gains are also proving to be elusive, due to its lack of binding agreements, timetable and details on the concrete verification of the DPRK's denuclearisation (The Economist, 2018). In short, the menace of war and chaos on the Korean Peninsula is still a clear and present danger.

IV. Why ASEAN needs Peace and Stability in Korea

Though thousands of miles away from the powder keg on the Korean Peninsula, ASEAN could hardly afford to turn a blind eye when the peninsula is on the brink of war.

To begin with, ASEAN, despite its warm ties with the DPRK, is more economically connected with its nemesis, the ROK. As a matter of fact, the ROK is the bloc's fifth-largest trading partner, with a total trade volume of \$118.8 billion in 2016. However, it is not only trade that makes the economic ties between the ROK and ASEAN substantial, but also the fact the ROK is also the fifth-largest investor in the bloc, with \$8.8 billion investment in 2016 (Astriana, 2017). Beyond such figures, the partnership between ASEAN and the ROK will be further enhanced with the unveiling of the 'New Southern Policy' of President Moon Jae-in. In July 2018, Moon travelled to Singapore to further improve the ties not just with Singapore, but with the bloc as a whole (Parameswaran, 2018). It is unequivocal that the ASEAN and Korea are being brought to a higher level of cooperation. As a result, a deadly conflict on the Korean Peninsula could be devastating to this cooperation. It is estimated that a second Korean War could deprive the Korean economy by 50 percent of its GDP. The impact of this calamity would be felt among many nations trading with or invested in by the ROK, including ASEAN member states. And this does not take into account the economic costs due to the participation of the U.S. and even China or Japan in the war. If this is the case, then the Asia-Pacific region would be shut down economically, causing tremendous reverberations toward distant shores (Fensom, 2017).

Yet, the security dimension of the possible conflict could be as

devastating. A second Korean War could expand into something more significant with China and the DPRK on one side and the U.S. and its allies on the other. Consequently, the war could potentially plunge the world into a tumultuous time and given the relative proximity of ASEAN region to the war zone, there is nothing far-fetched in the prospect that the bloc could be drawn into the deadly fray, divided between the U.S. and China camps, with unforeseeable consequences. However, a more probable scenario is that the second Korean War would end with the collapse of the DPRK. Such an event, even if does not entail a nuclear holocaust, could unleash the DPRK's nuclear arsenal onto the black market, creating a “nuclear leakage” that provides a bonanza for terrorist organisations worldwide (O'Hanlon, 2009). This less pessimistic outcome, albeit more subtle, could destabilise global security in profound ways.

As such, ASEAN needs peace in Korea because the opposite alternative could plunge the bloc and the globe into uncertain times with grave consequences.

V. How ASEAN has Contributed to Peace in Korea

In July 2017, President Moon Jae-in stated that: “It is necessary to create opportunities for the DPRK to fulfil its role as a responsible member of the international community” and ASEAN would be an important player in this process (Yong, 2018). The assertion professes the potentials of ASEAN in catalysing and cementing further peace on the peninsula.

Yet, the role of ASEAN is more than just one creating a cordial environment for the DPRK to integrate into the global community.

Singapore, a member state of the bloc, facilitated the Trump-Kim summit by hosting the meeting. The choice of Singapore as the location for the summit stemmed from the fact that the city-state has close ties with both involved parties (Kurlantzick, 2018). The balance that Singapore and ASEAN have demonstrated in relations with both parties could be a conduit for compromises and negotiations that would prevent further conflagrations.

But more than a balancing act, ASEAN could also carry out concrete endeavours when the behaviour of the DPRK threatens peace and security. The intensification of ASEAN member states in complying with the UN sanctions mechanisms have demonstrated that the bloc is far from an indifferent bystander to the DPRK's transgressions. As mentioned before, the bloc has started to clamp down on the DPRK's illegal activities within its borders through a series of punitive economic actions in conjunction with the UN sanctions.

Nonetheless, such actions could not shroud the truths regarding the extent of ASEAN's initiative for the sake of peace and stability. The bloc's efforts up until the intensification of the DPRK's antics in 2017 were mute. In 2017, ASEAN issued a strong statement that urged countries to abide by the United Nations Security Council's resolutions (ASEAN, 2017). The bloc later called for the “complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation” in Korea (ASEAN, 2018). However, it seems that such a stern approach is likely to be an exception than a new rule, for ASEAN leaders, after one year, have begun to tone down their rhetoric and instead, opt for more conciliatory language (Iwamoto, 2018). Such a stance is compatible with the bloc's record on moderate and conciliatory tones expressing “grave concern” and urging the parties involved to exercise restraint.

This pattern has raised grave concerns regarding ASEAN's viability to truly

contribute to peace and security on the Korean Peninsula given its usual feckless responses and a dearth of real actions to fulfil its design for peace on the peninsula. Nonetheless, it would be wrong to assume that the innocuous record of ASEAN would never be able to contribute meaningfully to the eventual denuclearisation of the DPRK and peace in Korea.

VI. How ASEAN can Bring about Peace and Stability on the Peninsula

Indeed, the track record of ASEAN as the alleged enabler of the DPRK could hardly give a complete picture of the relationship between ASEAN member states and the DPRK (The American Interest, 2017). In other words, though it is clear that the ties between the two parties can be close, such relations do not preclude the possibility that ASEAN could do more than expressing “grave concern” about the DPRK’s provocative stance on the peninsula.

Paradoxically, the close ties between ASEAN and the DPRK that have been decried recently and the relative neutrality the bloc has displayed could be a firm starting point with which ASEAN could initiate talks with the DPRK without the taint of partisanship or favouritism. One notable example of this pattern is the DPRK diplomats’ visits to the Philippines in 2017. The Philippines hosted ASEAN-related summits and ARF ASEAN Regional Forum as the ASEAN Chair in 2017. . The alleged motive of this visit was to nudge ASEAN to act as a counterweight to the punitive measures of the U.S. and to urge ASEAN to take a more moderate line toward the DPRK (Mogato, 2017).

This event occurred despite the escalation of ASEAN’s punitive actions

against the DPRK in accordance with the UN’s resolutions. More than that, the visit also manifests a certain degree of trust or at least a willingness to cultivate the favour of ASEAN on the part of the DPRK. Such behaviour shows that the DPRK finds the bloc confident not just because ASEAN has maintained a relatively neutral stance toward the situations transpiring on the Korean Peninsula, but also because ASEAN’s neutrality and relatively non-threatening nature could act as a mediator to strike a compromise between different spectra of interests from divergent parties.

Given the trust that the DPRK has and its existing diplomatic proximity with ASEAN, the bloc could act as a referee to facilitate peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and to integrate the DPRK to the international community, thus obviating the possible relapse of the country into an international pariah. The initial step before these possibilities could be realised would be to de-escalate the tension in the region. This endeavour could only be carried out with the participation of the great powers in the region including China, the U.S., and Japan. Without their participation, the peace initiative of ASEAN could amount to nothing more than a concept.

With the collapse of the Six Party Talks, the ASEAN Regional Forum is a viable platform due to the presence of major actors involved in the Korean Peninsula. As the ARF bring together both Koreas, all 10 ASEAN member states along with the great powers including China, the U.S., Japan, and Russia, the Forum could facilitate a multilateral initiative to incubate necessary conditions for peace. Nevertheless, it must be noted that if such an endeavour is conducted within the ARF, then ASEAN must maintain its centrality. The reason is that, without such centrality, the ARF could be torn asunder by the conflicting interests of the great powers. The maintenance of

this centrality is upheld not through brute force, which ASEAN lacks, but rather through careful balancing that combines and compromises existing and conflicting viewpoints. Most importantly, however, the maintenance of ASEAN centrality must come from within the bloc. ASEAN, as a result, must settle upon a certain course of action before conducting the peace initiative. This course could comprise of ASEAN's moves in certain phases of the peace process on the Korean Peninsula and the measures that the bloc could work with to achieve eventual peace. Through the ASEAN Summit, the bloc could determine and unite around a collective stance. Granted, the relatively loose cohesion of the bloc makes it susceptible to outside influence, but this could be a blessing in disguise for ASEAN. By insisting on a centrist course of action to satisfy the divergent interests of member states, ASEAN could present the parties involved with an approach that has been excised of the most partisan aspects, thus presenting the bloc as an impartial referee that would facilitate the peace program evenhandedly. The bloc's resulting approach may not be radical, but what count more are ASEAN's unmistakable desire for peace on the Korean Peninsula and the palatability of ASEAN's move in the eyes of actors in the region. The first factor grants ASEAN with a clear goal to attain within the framework that the bloc has devised. The second factor lends credence and the possibility of success to the bloc's initiative because ASEAN's course of action will be constituted of nothing too partial to render it unacceptable to the consequential players in the Korean affairs.

In conclusion, ASEAN member states should remain unified regarding the bloc's course of action to avoid being dragged into different camps with divergent methods in dealing with the DPRK, thus rendering the bloc's centrality as mere words and sully the goodwill that the DPRK has in

ASEAN. In the end, the presence of ASEAN centrality could convince the DPRK that the negotiations are handled by a nonpartisan and trustworthy player or at least conducted in an approach that has been winnowed of all the partiality to pass ASEAN's divergent interests, thus persuading the country to stay on the negotiating table. Finally, with a platform in place, the next step for ASEAN would be to formulate the specific measures to ensure peace in Korea.

The primary threat to peace is the presence of nuclear weapons on the peninsula. This issue has been the flashpoint of tension in recent decades. However, the nuclear weapons of the DPRK are only a means to an end of preserving the current regime. Thus the eradication of nuclear weapons could only be achieved along with an assurance of the survival of the Kim regime. Consequently, the incremental efforts to dismantle the nuclear program have proved futile up until now. This is because the concessions in exchange have been meant to stave off short-term threats to the DPRK regime, and when the crisis passes the regime would relapse to its usual bellicose disposition (Zelikow, 2018). This could be seen with the willingness of the DPRK from 1994 to 2006 to discuss peace and denuclearisation with the ROK and the U.S. When the Great Famine was ravaging in the DPRK, Pyongyang came to the table to attain aid, but when the worst of the disaster had passed, the regime terminated the peace initiatives and continued its nuclear program in earnest.

As such, in order to meaningfully tackle the issue of nuclear weapons of the DPRK, the lingering justification for the nuclear program, i.e., the unresolved state of the Korean War, must first be terminated. Without a definite peace treaty, the DPRK's existence could still be threatened by its adversaries, the U.S. and the ROK, and thus the DPRK would still have to

retain its nuclear arsenal as a mean to survive. Although the Inter-Korean Summit in September 2018 has clearly produced a promise on the part of the DPRK to reduce tension and accept international inspection, the real peace process, undoubtedly, would be a complex and challenging problem, confounded more by the interests of the U.S. and China (Klug & Foster, 2018). Yet, through the ARF, with ASEAN as the arbiter and the ARF as the platform to co-opt and compromise divergent viewpoints, a peace treaty could be negotiated. Even so, the eventual peace could be painful, as the DMZ demarcating the two Koreas must become a permanent boundary, thus cementing the legitimacy of both Koreas as separate sovereign nations (Zelikow, 2018). This measure would require both Koreas to recognise each other and to abandon the concept that only one regime could be the legitimate entity representing Korea as a whole. Withal, like the concept of “two German states in one German nation,” this measure does not exclude the final reunification of Korea. Rather, the intention is to reduce tension, thus facilitating interactions between the two regimes, but not full integration and free movement of people between the two states to obviate the risk of humanitarian and political crises, such as people from the poorer North pour into the more prosperous South in search of opportunities. Gradually, the increasing closeness, economic and political, of both nations could facilitate a loose “Korean Confederation” with existing regimes in place and then, if possible, full reunification (Lankov, 2013).

In this phase, ASEAN, for its part, would be the conduit through which the DPRK, using existing economic ties, could reform itself economically by integrating itself with the wider world, thus preparing the country for eventual reunification. Additionally, Viet Nam, an ASEAN member state could be a template for the DPRK, with its similar past

as a Stalinist country emerging from economic moribund to become relatively prosperous. The DPRK could learn from Viet Nam to jump-start its economy while avoiding social and political disruptions (Takahashi, 2018). In short, throughout this transition period, ASEAN, together with the ROK, will act as a cushion, through capital and expertise, that allows the DPRK to introduce economic reforms incrementally, thus providing the country with the means to change itself, while at the same time, boosting its economic potential in preparation for a future with the more advanced ROK. The result would be peaceful unification and the issues of nuclear weapons and war could be rendered moot by this point.

Though the Kaesong Industrial Complex could be cited as a cautionary tale for investors as the project was vulnerable to political vicissitudes and was shut down in 2016, this instance should not prevent ASEAN and the ROK to engage economically with the DPRK. Instead of banking on the example of Kaesong to deprive the DPRK of economic rejuvenation, investing countries could try a different approach. To counter the possibility of another Kaesong, the economic program should be conducted by ASEAN and the ROK, with the possible participation of China, Russia, and many more, as a joint venture. This measure would compel the DPRK not to take drastic moves that could prove inimical to the program so as not to antagonise so many of its already few and far between international partners.

In the short term, nonetheless, the DPRK would have to be induced to take action through economic sanctions. Though ineffective, this move could act as a brake on further escalation and could be enhanced by incorporating an incremental common status of forces agreement on the Korean Peninsula between the U.S., ROK and DPRK to further prove that the U.S. and the ROK are sincere about peace and are non-threatening to

the DPRK. The U.S., as an external power should be the one to withdraw military units from the ROK first. Yet, there should be a token U.S. force of a few regiments to act as a “tripwire,” drawing the U.S. back to react to probable security vicissitudes and to serve as a reminder of American stake in its ally’s sovereignty.

Requiring America to take the initiative to leave might be a drastic but necessary move. This is because the DPRK, despite its constant demonstration of strength and provocation is the weaker party on the peninsula. In fact, since 1989, the DPRK has encountered tremendous travails: Its allies deserted it and its economy unravelled with famine plunging the country into the depths of desperation. At the same time, America emerged as the world’s most powerful nation and the ROK roared ahead in terms of national strength. Inevitably, the DPRK trailed behind its two adversaries in every aspect, be it economy, military or diplomacy. The presence of thousands of U.S. troops and an increasingly advanced ROK Army on its border poses a serious threat to the DPRK’s survival. No matter how much the U.S. and ROK’s leaders ensured the DPRK of their peaceful intention, the fact remains that the ROK and the U.S. have enough power to overwhelm the DPRK. The withdrawal of U.S. troops, in this case, would be a welcome change to the DPRK’s disadvantageous situation, alleviating a constant threat to its regime.

To further ensure the compliance of the parties involved, however, a supervising board comprising of ASEAN member states and United Nations representatives would appraise progress on the ground. Sanctions could be lifted for the DPRK if there is satisfactory evidence demonstrating the quantifiable and measurable compliance of the country concerning denuclearisation and demilitarisation. For ASEAN, the bloc must remain

fair and firm toward the parties involved. This stance means condemning on the international stage and participating in international punitive measures toward any violating party.

VII. Could there be Peace in Korea?

The prospect of peace in Korea is, at the moment, dim despite the recent developments in inter-Korean and DPRK-U.S. relations. Mutual antagonism is still present, thus debilitating the necessary trust to further peace on the peninsula.

ASEAN, however, is well-placed to bring about such an outcome in Korea due to the bloc’s closeness to the DPRK and its neutrality toward the country. However, ASEAN alone could hardly bring about peace on the peninsula. As such, the ARF, a broader regional forum with the participation of major powers in the region and both Korean states, buttressed by ASEAN could be the conduit for peace and stability. Such a platform leaves no relevant major players out of the negotiating table, while at the same time, guaranteeing the centrality of ASEAN, a neutral, nonpartisan force that could be more than its modest stature by balancing the conflicting parties to reach a compromise ameliorating the simmering tension in Korea and forging peace in the future.

Peace on the Korean Peninsula is difficult, but not so evasive as to be unattainable, and ASEAN could be a considerable force behind the peace process. The result would be stability in the Asia-Pacific region, even for the wider world, and, inevitably, the increased importance of ASEAN on the international stage as a successful peace broker.



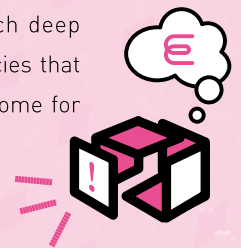
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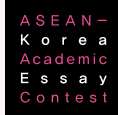
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Forging Towards a Prosperous ASEAN Economic Community



Among the three pillars of the ASEAN Community, the ASEAN Economic Community is arguably the most important pillar with aims to achieve the vision of regional economic integration which collectively becomes the third largest economy in Asia and the sixth largest in the world. How can the ASEAN Economic Community achieve such deep economic integration? What are the visions and policies that can be utilised, and what are the obstacles to overcome for ASEAN to achieve this goal?





ASEAN Economic Community: Inclusive Economic Growth

—Yang Monyoudom Ohio University

Asia and the sixth-largest in the world today if it was to be considered as one single nation. This paper looks into key strategies that the AEC has taken as well as key challenges facing the AEC on its road to achieving equitable economic development.

Abstract

Southeast Asia is viewed as a very dynamic and diverse region. Since its inception in 1967, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations ASEAN has united 10 Southeast Asian countries together to strive for economic, political, and social progress. By the end of 2015, the ASEAN Community was established. It has three community pillars: the APSC ASEAN Political-Security Community, AEC ASEAN Economic Community and the ASCC ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community. Among the three, the AEC is arguably the most important. With its visions and policies in place, the AEC brings about inclusive economic growth in the region such that ASEAN would become the third-largest economy in

1. Introduction

Although constructing regional integration is not an overnight, effortless process, the AEC [ASEAN Economic Community](#) has managed to narrow the economic gap between the ASEAN member states and achieve enormous economic growth. Southeast Asia is arguably a very diverse and dynamic region. Such an accomplishment by the AEC, therefore, is beyond admirable and deserves some undivided attention from scholars, policy-makers, and other related stakeholders. A critical analysis of the achievement can identify success factors and hurdles for the community in achieving inclusive economic growth. This insight serves as an enriching lesson which the community can utilise to sustain further growth.

The region of Southeast Asia is in a strategic location bounded by the Indian subcontinent to the west, China to the north, and the Pacific Ocean to the east (Columbia Encyclopedia, 2018). It encompasses two major trade routes: the Straits of Malacca and the South China Sea (Nakasone, 2014). It also has plenty of natural resources and a growing working population, making it one of the world's potential economic hubs. However, it is prone to fierce competition and conflict because it comprises countries of impressive diversity in terms of economic, political and social aspects. In particular, economies of Southeast Asian countries are not at the same level of development. Southeast Asian nations maintain different governance systems and political ideologies. Even though the countries share the same region, they have different histories, languages, customs, traditions, cultures, religions and ethnic groups. These differences are of paramount concern if the region cannot harness them to power its economic prosperity.

Since its inception in 1967, ASEAN has united 10 Southeast Asian

countries in their diversity to become a solid community that works together for shared economic, political, and social goals. With the AEC as one of its main components, the world has witnessed the economic success of the community at large. According to the World Bank, the estimated GDP [Gross Domestic Product](#) of all 10 ASEAN member states combined rose from \$614 billion in 2000 to \$2,767 billion in 2017, which was about 8 percent growth from the year before (see Figure 1). It is important to recognise that this rise in the combined GDP is inclusive in a way that one can observe economic convergence in the whole community. As illustrated in Figure 2, the decreasing line shows that the standard deviation of logged GDP in ASEAN gradually declined over time. The decline represents the reduction in dispersion of GDP across all ASEAN member states, indicating that they tend to reach the same economic size at some point in the future. Collectively, the ASEAN economy is currently the third-largest in Asia and the sixth-largest in the world (ASEAN, 2016).

FIGURE 1. ASEAN Economic Growth

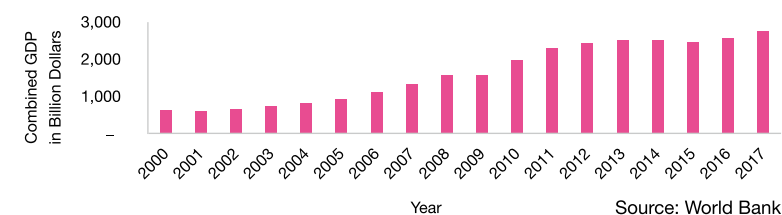
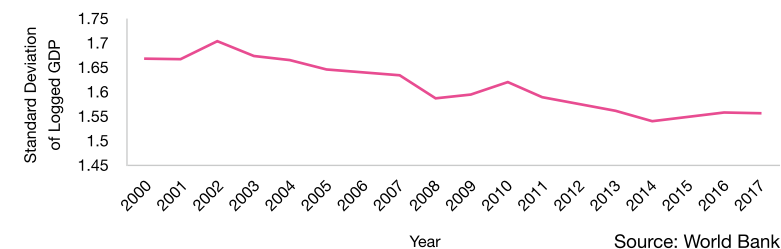


FIGURE 2. ASEAN Economic Convergence



This paper investigates the aforementioned economic phenomenon in ASEAN, particularly how the AEC achieves such deep economic integration and the obstacles that it has to overcome. Besides the introduction narrated in Section 1, the paper discusses the background of ASEAN and the AEC in Section 2. Section 3 is devoted to key strategies that the AEC has taken to achieve inclusive economic growth. Section 4 covers key challenges facing the AEC. The last section is the conclusion.

2. About ASEAN and the AEC

In order to make sense of the AEC's approaches and difficulties regarding its economic triumph, it is better to first understand ASEAN and the AEC. ASEAN stands for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, which was established on 8 August 1967 when Ministers from the five founding member states [Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand] signed the ASEAN Declaration in Bangkok, Thailand. At the time, Southeast Asian countries were plagued with many similar issues including poverty, unemployment, food insecurity, and political conflicts, which severely disrupted their development in a broad sense. That situation instilled in the founding member states of ASEAN the belief that they could collaborate to address the regional concerns together through their unique Southeast Asian model of regional architecture. The establishment of ASEAN indeed provided the member states with solid foundation and framework to accelerate their economic, political and social progress as a group in a way that would not deviate from their national interests.

The dynamic of the global economic system since then was seen to push

ASEAN to turn their aims articulated in the ASEAN Declaration into action and keep emboldening their economic integration for economic resilience. In 1997, ASEAN adopted the ASEAN vision 2020, in which “[ASEAN will be transformed] into a stable, prosperous, and highly competitive region with equitable economic development and reduced poverty and socio-economic disparities.” This vision was not implemented in full force until Cambodia became the last member of the bloc in 1999 after Brunei Darussalam (1984), Viet Nam (1995), Lao PDR, and Myanmar (1997). The coming together of the 10 member states later inspired ASEAN to launch the Initiative on ASEAN Integration in 2000 for the goal of narrowing economic gap between the old and the new member states. By 31 December 2015, ASEAN was able to formally build the ASEAN Community, including the AEC in addition to the ASEAN Political-Security Community and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community.

The three aforementioned components of the ASEAN Community are significant in their own distinctive ways, but the AEC can be viewed as the most important one to make ASEAN at large soar in the global arena. Technically speaking, the AEC serves as an engine to deepen and broaden economic integration among the ASEAN member states in accordance with a set of practical initiatives and timelines. As embedded in the 2015 Blueprint of the AEC, it has four major pillars with which ASEAN is envisioned to be a single market and production base, a highly competitive economic region, a region of equitable economic development, and a region fully integrated into the global economy (ASEAN, 2017c). All the pillars have their own core elements and concrete policies that the AEC has strictly implemented in order to turn their visions into reality as seen in Table 1.

Table 1. ASEAN Economic Community

Pillar	Element	Policy
1	Free flow of goods; free flow of services; free flow of investment; free flow of skilled labour; priority integration sectors; food, agriculture, and forestry	Eliminating tariff, non-tariff, and other barriers; facilitating/promoting trade and investment; standardising customs and other procedures; monitoring and evaluating relevant processes; enhancing cooperation; etc.
2	Competition policy; consumer protection; intellectual property rights; infrastructure development; e-commerce	Encouraging capacity building; creating relevant agencies; enforcing regulations, building infrastructure; facilitating connectivity; focusing on technology; etc.
3	SME development; Initiative on ASEAN Integration	Promoting business networking and best business practices; developing integration policies; etc.
4	Coherent approach towards external economic relations; enhanced participation in global supply networks	Enhancing coordination; adopting international best practices and standards in production and distribution; providing technical assistance to the less developed member states; etc.

Source: ASEAN Secretariat

3. Key Strategies

This paper acknowledges that all the policies in Table 1 do contribute to the realisation of the AEC’s visions, or in other words, help the AEC attain inclusive economic development. Nonetheless, the paper argues that the three points below are the most effective driving forces.

3.1. Narrowing Human Capital Gap

The economic divide among the ASEAN member states is a hindrance to the growth of the AEC. Their different economy-specific factors require the

AEC to formulate and implement policies that do not alienate any member, but provide them with positive net benefits. Otherwise, the economic integration in ASEAN would remain as just a dream. However, this is not an easy task as it requires a lot of effort in terms of innovation, consultation and negotiation. In order to soften this hardship and allow the regional grouping to easily cooperate for their economic progress, the AEC focuses on narrowing the human capital gap among all member states to narrow the economic divide by promoting human resources development, mainly in the less developed member states and with great support from external partners, including Korea, China and Japan. Some concrete examples can be found in the Plan of Action to Implement the Joint Declaration on ASEAN-Republic of Korea Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity from 2011-2015 and from 2016-2020, the Plan of Action to Implement the Joint Declaration on ASEAN-China Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity from 2011-2015 and from 2016-2020, and the ASEAN-Japan Plan of Action adopted by ASEAN in recent years. The economic partnerships addressed in the mentioned frameworks between ASEAN and its foreign counterparts cover a wide range of activities where necessary, such as capacity building projects, workshops and training, on top of many other educational and professional qualification opportunities. These efforts can be translated into economic convergence in the region because human capital is a very important factor of production such that an economy needs practical skills and knowledge in order to achieve productivity growth.

3.2. Capitalising on Industry 4.0

The world is constantly changing at an unprecedented rate through a series of industrial revolutions. The first revolved around steam power and

machines that replaced our ancestor's work. The next came electricity, the assembly line, and mass production. After that, there were computers and automatic robots and machines working on behalf of humans. Today, we enter the fourth industrial revolution, which is also known as Industry 4.0. In this current revolution, remote computers have the ability to learn and control robotics connected to them with machine learning algorithms. The revolution has also introduced the "smart factory" into the corporate world. The result is that physical processes now have less human involvement because the processes can be solely directed by cyber-physical systems which can communicate among themselves via the Internet (Marr, 2016).

In ASEAN, SMEs *Small and Medium-sized Enterprises*, including micro enterprises, play a major role in enhancing the economic development of the member states. Such businesses make up the largest number of businesses and benefit the labour force in the region a great deal. Particularly, between 88.8 percent and 99.9 percent of businesses in the ASEAN member states are SMEs, accounting for between 51.7 percent and 97.2 percent of aggregate employment. SMEs also contribute 30 percent to 53 percent of total GDP and between 10 percent and 29.9 percent of exports to each ASEAN member state (ASEAN, 2018). In ASEAN, almost half of the population is aged under 30, and they are tech-savvy (Duchatellier, 2017). These characteristics of ASEAN make Industry 4.0 a compelling opportunity for the AEC to tap into. In fact, the AEC uses a technology-driven approach to digitalise business environment and promote technological knowledge in the region, expecting ASEAN to be "a digitally-enabled economy that is secure, sustainable, and transformative; and to enable an innovative, inclusive and integrated ASEAN Community" as set out in the ASEAN ICT Masterplan 2015 Completion Report. Some notable measures are incentivising

technological organisations, creating technology-related programmes, and connecting with relevant ministries in the region, to name a few (ASEAN, 2015b). This paper argues that by capitalising on Industry 4.0 as such serves as a big part of robust economic growth in ASEAN because technology has a multiplying effect on productivity, and it will never stop developing.

3.3. Improving Infrastructure

The ASEAN region is comprised of 650 million people, making it bigger than the European Union or North America in terms of total population. Its size of labour force is also impressive, standing behind only that of China and India. Today, ASEAN is one of the largest markets in the world. In the region alone, there are already about 67 million households which can be categorised as the "consuming class" and have enough income to make voluntary purchases. By 2025, that number is predicted to increase to 125 million households, which is almost twice of the number to-date. For global trade, ASEAN is ranked as the fourth-largest exporting region in the world after the European Union, North America, and China/Hong Kong, accounting for 7 percent of global exports. Approximately 25 percent of the region's exports are traded within the bloc of 10 member states (Thomson et. al, 2014). In 2016, more than 60 percent of ASEAN's trade was conducted in Asia. In a more specific detail, around one-quarter with the ASEAN member states, 16 percent with mainland China, 9 percent with Japan, 6 percent with the ROK, and 4 percent respectively with Taiwan and Hong Kong (Tsui, 2017). Regarding investment, intra-ASEAN investment went up from just over \$15 billion in 2015 to \$24 billion in 2016. In the same time period, FDI flows from the European Union rose by 46 percent to \$30.5 billion, those from China rose by 44 percent to \$9.2 billion, those from

the ROK rose by 3 percent to \$6 billion, and those from Australia rose by 77 percent to \$3.4 billion (ASEAN, 2017a). All these would not be possible with just the reduction of tariff/non-tariff barriers and other promotion policies. Improving digital and physical infrastructure in the region is both a necessary and sufficient factor that contributes to the described positive outcomes. Not only it facilitates small or large economic transactions, but it also expands connectivity regionally and beyond. The Asian Development Bank points out in its Infrastructure Series Report on Understanding Infrastructure Opportunities in ASEAN (2017) along this line that, “[More spending on infrastructure development] has a direct positive correlation with GDP growth. A higher investment in infrastructure enables a country to increase its output, which then leads to a higher GDP growth rate.” It is important to know that, with the AEC’s visions and policies in place, the same report says the total infrastructure spending in Southeast Asia was estimated to be around \$55 billion in 2015 and is expected to grow in the coming years.

4. Key Challenges

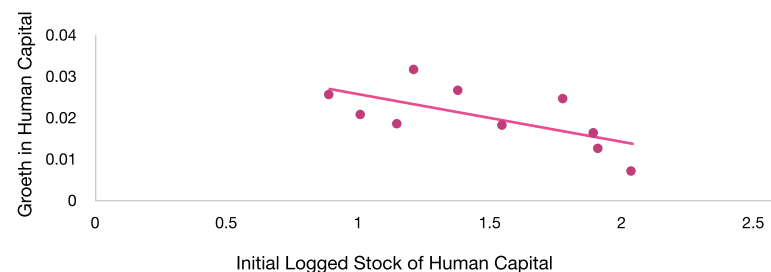
Obstacles are inevitable in any kind of policy implementation. This paper finds three key challenges that the AEC has to handle in order to successfully work towards its objective of becoming one of the biggest economies in Asia and even the world.

4.1. Inequality in Education

First, there is persistent inequality in education in ASEAN. Even though

the AEC’s efforts to equitably develop human resources in the region, in some sense, have yielded some positive results, it still has much work to do. Figure 3 illustrates the statistical evidence of human capital convergence in ASEAN. Here, the sample consists of a yearly dataset of logged stocks of human capital of the 10 ASEAN member states, where human capital is measured by average years of schooling. The initial logged stock of human capital is the logged stock value in 1990, and the last is that in 2017. The growth in human capital is calculated by the difference between the initial and the last logged stocks of human capital divided by the total number of time periods. The downward-sloping curve indicates a negative relationship between the initial logged stock of human capital and the growth in human capital. The relationship means that the growth gets smaller as the stock gets larger, and vice versa. When this process continues from time to time, stocks of human capital in ASEAN tend to reach the same level. However, if one dives deeply into the data, one can clearly see that disparity in education in ASEAN shows a lot of persistence. For instance, since 2012, average years of schooling in Singapore and Malaysia have been more than 10 years, but those in Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Myanmar have been merely around 5 years. The latter three countries are home to extreme poverty, social discrimination, a lack of educational resources, and many other stumbling blocks to schooling. These characteristics make it more difficult to obtain higher education in the countries than in the more developed countries in ASEAN, especially for girls and rural residents. Interestingly, for people who are fortunate enough to receive opportunities to further their education abroad, they do not want to come back to help develop their home countries. This education issue makes equitable human capital and economic development in ASEAN very hard to achieve.

FIGURE 3. ASEAN: CONVERGENCE IN HUMAN CAPITAL



Source: United Nations Development Programme

4.2. Undesirable Consequences of Technology

Industry 4.0 may bring about economic success for the AEC. Technology, however, is a double-edged sword. It is not surprising that Industry 4.0 has some unanticipated consequences. One of them is the occurrence of issues concerning data security, and they become more likely when combining many new technological systems and allowing many people to access those systems. These issues include but are not limited to invasion of private data and secrecy for selfish interests that disturb regional peace and stability. Another drawback is related to the internet. Most communications in the age of Industry 4.0 are online. This requires reliable and stable internet connections which can be tough to maintain. Moreover, human jobs are gradually replaced by automation in the digital world. Such a transition can cause social unrest, because the loss of jobs may ignite negative sentiment from the public, and it takes time for people to navigate through the transition by learning new skills. Last, but not least, technological problems such as technical errors cannot be avoided, and they can be very costly in terms of time and money (Marr, 2016).

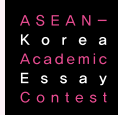
4.3. Corruption

The AEC suffers from severe corruption in the region, making its road

to economic success very difficult. Based on the World Bank's corruption indicators, corruption is deeply rooted within ASEAN in a way that eliminating it seems impossible. In the last six years, corruption has stayed at very high levels in the majority of the ASEAN member states. It is also important to note that corruption has inspired many illicit activities and transitional crimes in the region. Every year, roughly \$100 billion is generated from illegal schemes, including transporting illegal drugs, human trafficking, and selling fake products. This corruption scenario negatively affects the AEC in two ways that can potentially hold it back from succeeding economically. First, it demotivates investments that flow into the region due to the weak rule of law and poor quality of services caused by corruption. Second, the increase in economic activities as well as manoeuvre of people and capital in the region initiated by the AEC may have the unintended effect of aggravating corruption (Checchi, 2017).

5. Concluding Remarks

In conclusion, the AEC has taken many actions to achieve inclusive economic growth in the region, and it has turned out to be very successful. Among the actions, the paper identifies three important strategies for the economic achievement of the AEC. They are narrowing human capital gap, capitalising on Industry 4.0, and improving infrastructure. Along with these activities, the AEC needs to overcome a few challenges that prevent it from turning its visions into reality. That is, the AEC faces persistent inequality in education, undesirable consequences of technology, and serious corruption in the region. Hopefully, the AEC will continue to win over obstacles and become a major economic player in the global arena.



Overcoming the Domestic Political Economy Challenge to Regional Economic Integration

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Abstract

At the core of ASEAN's regional economic integration efforts is the ASEAN Economic Community. Yet, the implementation of many AEC initiatives has been rather slow moving. This is attributed to political opposition from political oligarchies that do not benefit from greater economic integration. The successful populist movement in Southeast Asia has provided a strategy to overcome the political challenges presented by political oligarchies. However, the success of this strategy is dependent on two factors: whether groups that benefit from economic integration are convinced and aware of the benefits of the AEC and whether these groups are effective in lobbying for their stance politically.

1. Introduction

Regional economic integration has always been part of ASEAN efforts since the 1990s. As regional trade blocs such as the European Single Market became more prevalent, ASEAN member states began integrating markets of their own to retain their competitiveness (Chia, 2017). This economic integration has induced global economies to widen their cooperation with ASEAN. An example would be the ASEAN-Korea Free Trade Agreement that has given Korean companies in an ASEAN country greater market access to other ASEAN member states (Astriana, 2017). With such benefits reaped from greater economic integration, ASEAN has decided to intensify its integration efforts with the AEC [ASEAN Economic Community](#) which aims to produce “an integrated market and production base with a free flow of goods, services and skilled labour” (MITI, 2016, p. 1).

According to the ASEAN Annual Report 2013-2014, more than 80 percent of the 229 prioritised key deliverables within the AEC blueprint would have been implemented (Menon & Melendez, 2015). ASEAN leaders have thus pushed forward the deadline for AEC realisation from 2020 to 2015. The general opinion across the academic field is however a more pessimistic one, with sceptics questioning if ASEAN member states could meet the deadline (Basu Das, 2017; Menon & Melendez, 2015). These concerns are not unwarranted, with many ASEAN business groups not experiencing for themselves their envisioned regional economic integration (Lok, 2011; Basu Das, 2017).

For the flow of goods, while ASEAN has made great progress in reducing intra-ASEAN tariff rates with the AFTA and extra-ASEAN tariff rates

through ASEAN+1 FTAs, non-tariff barriers in the form of sanitary and phytosanitary measures, customs regulations, and rules of origin persist (Chia, 2017; Menon & Melendez, 2015). ASEAN businesses have talked about incidences where the sudden introduction of a new non-tariff barrier has stalled goods at immigration checkpoints. One way the AEC has attempted to eliminate non-tariff barriers and the “flexible” way they are implemented is to define non-tariff barriers formally across all ASEAN member states through the ASEAN Single Window [ASW](#). The ASW, a collation of each state’s National Single Window [NSW](#), harmonises data regarding customs clearances and product regulations across all cities and provinces in ASEAN (MITI, 2016). However, during the ASW pilot test, it faced problems of coordination with various agencies and lack of compatibility across NSWs. (Basu Das, 2017). Another initiative that facilitates trade under the AEC is the Self-Certification Scheme that simplifies the administrative process of applying for preferential trade access for certified exporters. The Self-Certification Scheme however has only been piloted in Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia and Brunei (MITI, 2016).

For the flow of services, ASEAN has the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Services [AFAS](#) that aims to remove limitations on market access and national treatment on service delivery in 128 sub-sectors. Across all sectors, up to 70 percent of foreign equity participation should also be allowed (Chia, 2017; Tham, 2015). However, the AFAS conditions are less preferential than some of those offered in the individual ASEAN member states. An example would be in Malaysia, where some sub-sectors have already been allowed 100 percent foreign equity ownership. Thus, the “impact of AFAS is more in ensuring certainty of regional policy rather than delivering

additional preferential service liberalisation” (Chia, 2017, p. 574). With the AEC, liberalisation is pushed for in some sectors that were formerly more restrictive. In addition, the AEC also builds on former AFAS commitments on MRAs *Mutual Recognition Agreements*, a key initiative in ensuring the seamless flow of skilled labour. MRAs for eight professions have already been signed but domestic regulations and licensing standards can easily override MRAs (Chia, 2017; Hill & Menon, 2014; Menon & Melendez, 2015).

Overall, ASEAN regional economic integration still has a long way to go to become a single market and production base with a free flow of goods, services and skilled labour. In order to understand why greater economic liberalisation under the AEC has yet to be realised, we will need to understand the underlying challenges to regional economic integration. Following the introduction, Section 2 discusses the theoretical literature on the possible reasons for the failed realisation of regional economic integration, specifically focusing on domestic political economy reasons. A strategy based on the populist rise in Southeast Asian political history is discussed in Section 3 and the challenges to this strategy are raised in Section 4. Section 5 concludes this paper with possible recommendations to overcome the challenges.

2. Challenges to Regional Economic Integration

Dominant explanations for the challenges to regional economic integration have focused on institutionalist or normative explanations.

Scholars have pointed out how the agreements under the AEC have been designed with a clause for “flexibility”, giving member states too much autonomy to carve out sectors immune to these regional regulations (Hill & Menon, 2014). There are thus many loopholes in the actual implementation of economic integration initiatives. Apart from the design of AEC agreements, the ASEAN Secretariat, which acts as the “regional regulator” does not have the mandate to exert pressure or enforce consequences on member states that do not abide by the agreements (Jones, 2016). The ASEAN Secretariat is also understaffed, with only one official per member state responsible for “the entire field of standards and conformity, managing and co-ordinating the harmonisation of technical regulations as well as any logistics required for testing processes” (Ong, 2011; Martin, 2011, p. 100). The severe lack of manpower in the ASEAN Secretariat undermines the regulator’s ability to effectively monitor the progress of implementing AEC in each member state. Another institutional problem would be the monitoring mechanism that the AEC uses. Currently, member states have a scorecard where they self-assess their performance in each of the four pillars of the AEC. Its criterion uses generic phrases such as “where appropriate and possible” or “establish good practices”, allowing member states to get away with giving themselves high scores without any concrete measures to liberalise their markets (Menon & Menendez, 2015). It is thus unsurprising that most AMS score more than 70 percent on their AEC scorecards — a result far off from reality.

Normative explanations focus on the “ASEAN Way”, a set of principles that describes the quotidian interactions among member states and diplomats. These principles include decision-making by consensus, upholding the principle of sovereignty and a preference for quiet diplomacy

that engenders an aversion to legally enforcing or sanctioning member states' behaviour (Nair, 2015). Critics have argued that the ASEAN Way has retarded the effectiveness of the AEC monitoring schemes and the ASEAN Secretariat's capacity as regulator (Jones, 2016).

While these explanations are valid in explaining the hobbled progress of AEC implementation, they are not helpful in providing a solution. Abruptly changing norms or habits can cause great instability in the way ASEAN member states conduct diplomatic relations with each other. Should a member state or the secretariat behave in a manner that deviates from the ASEAN Way, major disruptions in the diplomatic kinship and practices within ASEAN may occur. This does not mean that norms and habits can never change, but they occur gradually and are inspired by domestic, demographic and international shifts over decades (Nair, 2015). Revamping the habitual behaviour of a regional organisation would most probably require a long-term strategy. If the primary obstacle to regional economic integration were flawed institutional design of the ASEAN Secretariat, AEC agreements and its monitoring mechanism, then reforming them at the next AEC summit would simply resolve the problem. However, this is unlikely to be the case. It is difficult to produce legally binding agreement to strengthen the secretariat's mandate and empower AEC. This suggests that there is another underlying reason for the institutional design of ASEAN and the AEC.

Critical political economists suggest that the primary underlying challenge to ASEAN economic integration lies in the domestic political economy of the ASEAN member states. Resistance from the political oligarchies that

do not stand to gain from economic liberalisation has effectively opposed the implementation of regional integration policies (Jones, 2016). Political oligarchies range from large state-owned enterprises or government-linked companies to large firms controlled by bureaucratic or military elites. They are characterised by their close relations with political elites, a synergy developed since the industrialisation of ASEAN economies (Basu Das, 2017; Juego, 2015).

In the early days of industrialisation and economic growth, political leaders promoted state-led development where protectionist policies and government financing allowed selected firms to remain competitive in the domestic market and grow. The form of this state-led development varies, with some political leaders proffering contracts in exchange for political support for the regime. In other states, relatives of key leaders of business conglomerates or crony capitalists run for political positions, forming an economic-political class (Jones, 2017). The economic strength of political oligarchies is significant for governments, as they contribute to fiscal revenues or kickbacks. Thus, interdependent and symbiotic relationships between political oligarchies and governments developed (Jones, 2017; Juego, 2015). Seen in this light, the institutional design of the AEC and the ASEAN Secretariat could be deliberate, as governments whose interests are tied with those of political oligarchies are unwilling to commit to binding enforcements of regional initiatives. Political oligarchies have made use of these political connections to lobby for more protectionist stances (Juego, 2015). An example of this would be large automobile companies in Malaysia and the Philippines, who have pressured the governments to delay the liberalisation of the automobile market. Despite AFTA commitments, the

automobile industry had retained high tariff rates on car imports. Should cross-border tariffs be eliminated, automobile assemblers would retract their operations in Malaysia and the Philippines, moving them to Thailand to lower costs (Jones, 2016). Such a move would adversely impact large local auto components and parts manufacturers.

If the primary reason for ASEAN's limited success in implementing AEC objectives is the interdependent relationship between political leaders and their oligarchies, a solution would be to decouple the interests of government and political oligarchies. One way to do this would be to strengthen the political power of groups who will benefit from economic integration so that political leaders are compelled to take their interests into consideration.

3. The Political Power of Small Business Groups and Citizens

The groups who will benefit from economic integration are varied. There are large government-linked companies in Singapore and Brunei taking up more economic opportunities when the economy opens up (Juego, 2015). However, many groups are often SMEs *Small, Medium-sized Enterprises* in peripheral or non-capital cities and provinces (Cordenillo, 2011). When economic integration generates national economic growth, the citizens also benefit from economic integration. What political power do small business groups and individual citizens have to challenge the political agenda of large political oligarchies?

A study of the political trajectories of Southeast Asian countries proves the political potential of small socio-economic groups and citizens. Southeast Asian political history has swung between reformism and populism. Political leadership in Southeast Asia is dominated by “reformist” groups. These reformists are technocrats, independent professionals, students and intellectuals who played a significant role in “the non-violent urban-base uprisings against hard-line dictatorships” against Suharto in Indonesia, and Marcos in the Philippines (Thompson, 2007, p. 7). Over the years, they have become political-economic classes that dominated political oligarchies and governments. However, reformist governments have come under threat since the rise of populist leaders who pledge during their campaigns to fight for small business groups and the “common man” on the streets. Populist groups portray reformist groups as leaders that prioritise the interests of their cronies at the expense of the rest of the population. They attribute the slow economic growth and poverty of the country to the clientelistic behaviour of reformist leaders. They then make promises to economically redistribute resources that were once held by corrupt government regimes or political patrons of leaders and use these resources to generate inclusive economic growth (Thompson, 2007).

Populist leaders can successfully bring down reformist government regimes because they appeal to the majority of the population — the SMEs and the common man in the street. These groups make up 85-90 percent of the population and are geographically spread out across the entire region (Thompson, 2007). They have the advantage when it comes to majoritarian voting. Furthermore, since they are spread out across various provinces and cities, in voting systems where parliamentary representatives are voted

from a geographical constituency, they win most of the parliamentary seats. Examples of immensely popular populist leaders would include Thaksin in Thailand and Estrada in the Philippines, whose regimes proved so threatening that reformist leaders staged coups to bring these leaders down.

While not every populist leader has been successful when implementing policies that jeopardised the interests of political oligarchies, the rise of populist regimes illustrates how the interests of political oligarchies and the government can be decoupled. The government's political survival and electoral victories are at stake when their policy decisions, aligned with political oligarchies' interests, clashed with the interests of small business groups and the citizenry. Governments thus have the incentive to consider policy decisions such as economic liberalisation that will coincide with the populist interests of SMEs and citizens.

The recent rise of populist leaders is testament to the current political climate in Southeast Asia. In Malaysia, the Pakatan Harapan defeated former Malaysian premier Najib Razak and the dominant political party UMNO in recent elections. Malaysia's citizens and smaller business groups had expressed fatigue at clientelistic networks between government-linked companies and political leaders. The loss of the political incumbent in the 2018 elections reveals how the "common man" and small business groups in Malaysia can be effective when they tap their political potential. The incumbent Indonesian President Jokowi's electoral victory can be attributed to his anti-corruption stance and distance from traditional political elites and business conglomerates that made him popular with the Indonesians.

The electoral success of populist regimes in Southeast Asia proves to us that ASEAN SMEs and citizens have the political potential to compel governments to take their interests into account. As the current political climate becomes increasingly populist, ASEAN SMEs and citizens should tap on their political potential to push forth agenda like greater regional economic integration that benefits them. Such a situation can resolve the domestic political economy challenges to AEC implementation. However, ASEAN SMEs and citizens face some challenges of their own in campaigning for greater economic integration.

4. The Challenges of Small Business Groups and Citizens

First, while ASEAN SMEs and citizens have the potential to push for their agenda, they might not place regional economic integration on their agenda in the first place. ASEAN citizens and SMEs may remain unconvinced and uninformed of the benefits of regional economic integration. SMEs might be wary of economic liberalisation. An example would be the small sub-contractors within the Thai logistics industry. These service providers are anxious about Thailand's implementation of AFAS that will permit up to 70 percent of foreign equity participation of logistic sub-service providers. Multinational companies such as DHL or DB Schenker, with the benefits of more capital and economies of scale, may put local companies in these sub-sectors out of business (Sermcheep & Chirathivat, 2015). ASEAN citizens also remain sceptical of the benefits of economic integration, as the opening up of labour markets might cause greater

competition for employment opportunities. For example, Thai nurses are against the signing of MRAs for healthcare professionals, as they might lose out to other ASEAN nurses for job opportunities in private hospitals or hospitals along the Thai borders. In private healthcare centres or centres at the Thai borders, nurses would need to be able to speak English proficiently to cater to medical tourists. Most Thai nurses however cannot speak English and might lose these higher-paying jobs to nurses from other ASEAN member states (Sermcheep & Chirathivat, 2015).

In addition, some ASEAN SMEs remain unaware of how to apply or use the AFTA and thus do not reap the benefits of the free trade agreement. This could possibly be due to the complex conditions of the rules of origin that exist across different trade agreements. Across all the ASEAN+1 bilateral trade agreements, there are more than 22 different kinds of rules of origin that goods must meet in order to qualify for tariff waivers (Menon & Menendez, 2015). With so much administrative information surrounding the use of these trade agreements, some SMEs do not have the expertise required to make use of these benefits (Ong, 2011). In Viet Nam, private enterprises also do not see a need to prepare themselves to comply with AFTA requirements. According to a 2014 survey by the Vietnam National University, only 30 percent of enterprises displayed some understanding of the AEC (Vo, 2015). This signals some form of indifference and apathy towards regional integration efforts, further dampening the possibility of small business groups calling for more liberalisation within ASEAN.

Second, even when ASEAN citizens or SMEs are aware of the benefits of economic integration, they may not be able to effectively campaign

for economic liberalisation policies. While ASEAN citizens and SMEs are effective in getting their voice heard during elections, they are not as effective in making their voice heard prior to policy implementation. The Thai medical council and hospital associations in peripheral Thai cities were unable to mobilise a united political front to campaign for a more liberal MRA for healthcare professionals (Sermcheep & Chirathivat, 2015). For these groups that benefited from a more liberalised labour movement policy, they had to travel far distances to the capital city to participate in policy consultations or were perhaps even uninformed of the issue. On the other hand, the Thai medical council made up of doctors and nurses in Bangkok, who stood to gain from a more restrictive arrangement on the movement of healthcare professionals, mobilised effectively. The Thai government as a result retained the major qualifying examination for healthcare professionals — a de facto non-tariff barrier (Sermcheep & Chirathivat, 2015). This incident reveals that when it comes to policy implementation, it is the political lobbying outside of non-election season that matters. During non-election seasons however, ASEAN citizens or SMEs, though large in numbers, might not have the resources to lobby and campaign for a united stance.

Furthermore, groups that lobby for more regional economic integration have a tall order when economic protectionist policies have been framed in a racial or cultural manner for decades. An example would be Malaysia's New Economic Policy that stipulated bumiputeras to hold up to 30 percent of corporate equity, non-bumiputeras another 40 percent and foreigners up to 30 percent only. Since the New Economic Policy is regarded as a policy that protects the rights of indigenous locals, these restrictions on FDI are tied to the bumiputeras' cultural and national identity. Removing these

restrictions would result in great dissatisfaction among Malaysians. This is evident when, 19 years after the dissolution of the New Economic Policy, the government still has to explain how economic liberalisation policies in the computer and related services sector do not jeopardise bumiputera interests so as to appease these “sons of the land” (Tham, 2015). With trade restrictions deeply tied to the cultural and racial ties of ASEAN citizens, removing these restrictions is deeply unpopular, making it even harder for SMEs who benefit from such integration to effectively mobilise for their cause.

5. Conclusion

The success of populist leaders over reformist government regimes and political oligarchies presents us with an opportunity to overcome the domestic political economy challenge that underlies AEC implementation. Governments can be swayed to consider the interests of groups that benefit from economic liberalisation as opposed to groups that do not when the interests of political oligarchies are decoupled from the interests of political leaders. This occurs when the political support of groups that benefit from economic liberalisation matters to governments and when they effectively lobby for their neo-liberal policy stance.

Unfortunately, these groups are yet to successfully push for greater AEC implementation and trade liberalisation. This is attributed to two reasons: They remain doubtful or unaware of the benefits of trade liberalisation and they do not have the political resources to lobby during non-election

seasons, when policy decisions are made. To resolve these issues, solutions are suggested as followed.

To address the doubts SMEs may have towards trade-liberalising policies, governments can cooperate with academic institutions to produce studies that not only report on the positive implications the AEC has on the national economy but also its benefits for specific industries. Currently, econometric research based on CGE [Computable General Equilibrium](#) modelling has proven how the AEC could bring about national welfare gains (Chia, 2017). These gains are however too macro in scale to pertain to SMEs’ specific concerns, leaving SMEs unconvinced of how the AEC can specifically benefit them.

SMEs and ASEAN citizens also need to be educated on how they can reap benefits from regional economic integration. The Strategic Plan for ASEAN SME development has initiatives such as the ASEAN SME Guidebook, which provides information on financing facilities and market opportunities or adopting international standards of quality and certification for export (ASEAN, 2015). However, it is through digital platforms and technological innovations that SMEs can overcome their disadvantages in economies of scale and other constraints on financing and investment. Examples include Borneoethnic, an Indonesian SME producing locally produced rattan bags, which used e-commerce platform Shopee to generate revenue, and Lenddo, a company that uses non-traditional data to provide financing for small business owners that do not qualify for credit at banks (ADB, 2017). Currently, SMEs can learn about these digital innovations at ABINet [ASEAN Business Incubator Network](#) conferences (ASEAN, 2015). However, many

ABC [ASEAN Business Advisory Council](#) and ABINet meetings are held in capital cities, making it geographically inaccessible for SMEs in peripheral cities to participate. ASEAN can look into diversifying the locations with which they hold such conferences.

After being informed about the economic benefits AEC proffers, SMEs also need platforms through which they can lobby. Since SMEs do not have the resources to campaign for a united stance, neoliberal NGOs [Non-Governmental Organisations](#) and CSOs [Civil Society Organisations](#) can play a complementary role in calling for trade-friendly policies. One way for SMEs and NGOs to push for a neoliberal agenda is through the ABC and the GO-NGO [Government Organisation-Non-Government Organisation](#) meetings (Gerard, 2015). Currently the members at BAC and GO-NGO meetings are ASEAN-affiliated organisations that are often supported by large companies that do not support greater regional economic integration. This is due to the stringent membership requirements for ASEAN affiliation. For an enterprise or a CSO to be affiliated, it must have activities conducted across all member states and not have extensive links with non-ASEAN organisations or governments. These requirements favour organisations backed by political oligarchies which favour economic protectionism (Gerard, 2015). ASEAN could consider loosening the membership requirements for ASEAN affiliations or opening up these meetings to SMEs and NGOs with neoliberal stances. This will make political lobbying easier for SMEs and CSOs that share its trade-friendly stance.

Tackling the challenge of political oligarchies' resistance to deeper economic integration will require greater efforts on the part of the small

business groups and SMEs. The strengths of these groups are that they are the majority in terms of numbers. What is then lacking is the ability to make use of this advantage in quantity and tap on this political potential to lobby for more liberalised policies. Empowering the political potentials of ASEAN SMEs could lead to overcoming the challenges for regional economic integration and success of the ASEAN Economic Community.



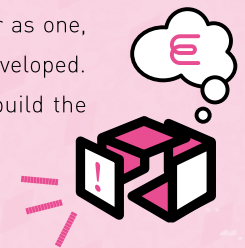
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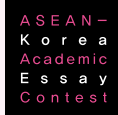
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Unity in Diversity: Building an ASEAN Identity



As the phrase “Unity in Diversity” suggests, ASEAN showcases true diversity with more than 300 ethnic groups, 700 languages, numerous religions and folk cultures within its 10 Member States. Although ASEAN has developed as a regional community over the past 50 years, there is yet to be an ASEAN identity that brings its people together as one, as the perception of ASEAN identity is still underdeveloped. How should ASEAN Member States cooperate to build the sense of an ASEAN identity? How can ASEAN truly achieve “One Vision, One Identity, One Community”, as reflected in its motto?





Unity in Diversity: Building an ASEAN Identity

—Eng Hoo Lee University of Brunei Darussalam

Abstract

Working as a united front despite stark differences on many levels, ASEAN has made great strides in peacekeeping and the stabilisation of the region, economic integration and trade, and establishing a significant presence on the world stage, thereby improving the lives of the people of ASEAN as a whole.

However, despite ASEAN being in existence for over five decades, and being such a boon that its presence was to the region, there persists a lack of a common ASEAN identity to unite the citizens of each member state. The reasons for this include: the inherent demographic diversity in the

region, the lack of a regionalist attitude among the citizens of ASEAN and the deficiency in awareness and understanding of ASEAN. These issues are further exacerbated by the elitist impression of ASEAN among the citizens of the region, a lack of emphasis towards advancing the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community, and the lack of involvement by the general public in ASEAN activities.

To reinforce the sense of an ASEAN identity, ASEAN countries can cooperate in several areas to increase awareness and promote the inclusiveness of ASEAN, which are: promoting ASEAN education in order to imbue the youth with an idea of ASEAN identity; increasing the media coverage of ASEAN matters to areas beyond summits and meetings, such as displays of culture and interviews with people in order to improve awareness of what ASEAN truly is; a multicultural and welcoming society; and putting a greater concerted effort towards increasing greater participation by the citizens of ASEAN in working for the betterment of ASEAN as a whole, rather than the usual top-down approach to handling ASEAN affairs.

It is hoped that these suggestions can contribute in the making of a strong ASEAN identity that will pave the way for the betterment of the lives of the people of the region as a whole.

Introduction: ASEAN so far

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations has played an important role in shaping the history of the region ever since its formation by Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand in 1967. Originally planned as a peacekeeping and conflict prevention mechanism against the backdrop of the Cold War, the cooperation between ASEAN member states has evolved and branched out into many other aspects, mainly in economic and political-security cooperation (Acharya, 2009).

Little did anyone know that ASEAN would evolve to become much more than just another regional bloc in Southeast Asia. The ten ASEAN member states, with the additional five members being Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Viet Nam, now gather around the roundtable of ASEAN, discussing issues and going beyond boundaries to reach out to the world, as shown by great gatherings like the East Asian Summit [EAS](#) aiming to promote peace, stability and economic prosperity in East Asia (Chairman's Press Statement, 2006), the ASEAN-EU Summit, and the establishment of the ASEAN-Korea Centre. These initiatives have brought global recognition to each of its member states and given each of them a valuable identity, a member state of the successful regional community that is ASEAN.

However, despite decades of ASEAN's existence in the region, and the harmonious relations that member states have with each other, numerous challenges still lie on the path to truly realising its ambitious vision of creating "One Vision, One Identity, One Community", the ASEAN Community motto. This issue is made apparent by the fact that a strong ASEAN identity is still absent among the citizens. This paper will first

examine the current state of the ASEAN identity, discuss the factors hindering its development, and detail the areas where member states can work together in promoting it.

Current State of the ASEAN Identity

To begin, let us first examine the current state of ASEAN awareness and identity using a 2017 study conducted by the ERIA [Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia](#). It revealed that a great proportion of respondents were at least "somewhat familiar" with ASEAN, which stood at 87 percent. However, those at least "moderately familiar" with ASEAN stood at an average of 59 percent, with the highest being Indonesia, having 77 percent at least moderately familiar, and the lowest Viet Nam, with just 36 percent at least moderately familiar with ASEAN. (Intal, Ruddy, Setyadi, Suhud, Hapsari, et al., 2017). It was also emphasised that the familiarity of ASEAN was limited to economic aspects, likely due to the formation of the AEC [ASEAN Economic Community](#) in 2015 (Intal et al., 2017), a rather concerning find as ASEAN had been active in areas other than its economic pillar, such as in the AUN [ASEAN University Network](#), the ASEAN Children's Forum and the Southeast Asian Games. The takeaway from this is that basic knowledge and understanding about ASEAN is still lacking among the majority in ASEAN.

Referring to the same study, 78 percent of participants felt "moderately" to "very much" as ASEAN citizens, indicating that a sense of belonging to ASEAN was shared by a majority of respondents. There was only 3 percent who did not consider themselves ASEAN citizens, showing that the ASEAN identity can be considered to be at least present on a surface level.

Surprisingly, it was observed that on one end, 71 percent of Bruneian participants felt “very much” as ASEAN citizens, which was the greatest in the region, whereas on the other end, the figure was a worrying 13 percent for the Thai people. This great disparity in the sense of an ASEAN citizenship between member states indicates that a strong uniform ASEAN identity is not yet present in the region. The study further adds that it was not a sense of a shared identity among the peoples, but geographical proximity that primarily contributed to the sense of belonging with ASEAN (ibid, 2017). Arguably, the majority of ASEAN citizens perceive their ASEAN “citizenship” as a “status identity”, defined as a belonging to a group without an emotional attachment and a sense of “belonging together” (Kaina & Karolewski, 2013).

To sum up, it is thought that an ASEAN identity based on cooperation, togetherness and mutual understanding between the citizens is not yet present throughout the region. The identity is only present on the surface, with ASEAN peoples in general most likely basing their belonging to ASEAN by virtue of their country’s membership in the association, geographical proximity, and belonging in the region of Southeast Asia. This can be attributed to several causes outlined below.

Issues facing the Formation of an ASEAN Identity

There are many possible reasons why a lack of a common identity persists among the ASEAN citizens. Three main reasons are believed to be: the inherent diversity within ASEAN itself causing a lack of homogeneity conducive to identity formation; the general lack of a

regional attitude in the citizens of ASEAN precipitated by historical factors and an inward focus to living life; and the lack of understanding and awareness of ASEAN due to the ASCC ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community pillar not being prioritised enough; and non-involvement of regular citizens in most ASEAN activities, exacerbated by a prevailing elitist perception of the organisation.

Diversity in general

The numerous diversities in the ASEAN citizens’ ways of life can make it hard to find common ground to base their identity on. Diversity is not only found in culture and religion, but also in their modes of governance, stages of development, core societal values and past history (Severino, 2006). Religions in ASEAN include Islam, Christianity, Buddhism and Hinduism, along with other animistic practices, their adherents being hundreds of different ethnic groups (Thanawat, 2013), each also having their own unique cultural practices. In governance, ASEAN itself officially has four democracies *Indonesia, Myanmar, the Philippines and Singapore*, two socialist republics *Lao PDR and Viet Nam*, three constitutional monarchies *Cambodia, Malaysia and Thailand* and an absolute monarchy *Brunei*. Significant variations are even found in measures of development. For instance, in 2017, Singapore had a per capita GDP of \$55,235, whereas the figure was \$1,484 for Myanmar (Trading Economics, 2018). Urbanisation was 100 percent in Singapore whereas only 30 percent of Myanmar’s population lives in urban areas (The World Bank, 2018). These facts only cover the tip of the iceberg when it comes to diversity in ASEAN. One can consider ASEAN to be too deficient in homogeneity for its citizens to easily adopt a single common identity.

Lack of a Regionalistic Attitude

To start, “regionalistic” is defined as “pertaining to the loyalty to the interests of a particular region” (“Regionalistic,” n.d.) and will be used interchangeably with “regional outlook”. One factor toward the lack of a regionalistic attitude is the “inward focus” of many ASEAN citizens’ living. To illustrate this point, three issues will be presented.

Firstly, loyalties of the ASEAN citizens are mostly towards the institutions immediately familiar to them, leading to a reduced regional outlook in most ASEAN people. There is greater emphasis on ethnic, religious, clan, language and village ties rather than intra-regional relationships (Desker, 2017). Although not inherently a bad thing in itself, this general attitude reduces the potential for communication and cultural exchange between citizens of different member states. Secondly, most ASEAN member states are still preoccupied with their internal affairs, evidenced by a great number of internal upheavals within various member states over the past years. Myanmar has been burdened by a refugee crisis over the last few years; the war on drugs has shaken the Philippines and is still going on to this day; Thailand came under military rule in 2014 after the ousting of its previous government; the citizens of Malaysia and its new leadership are devoting their efforts to internal reforms associated with major changes the country saw in 2018. Such major national matters keep the leaders and citizens busy and focused on resolving them. Considering both the past and present, these facts are only a few drops in the ocean of the internal happenings in most ASEAN member states, just like the diversity within ASEAN. Thirdly, ASEAN’s colonial past had played a role in impeding intra-regional cooperation and understanding. The decades of domination by colonial powers of the past had divided the peoples and countries of

Southeast Asia, resulting in them being unfamiliar with one another (Severino, 2006) — the French had their occupation of a major part of Indochina, where Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam now stand; the Dutch used to control significant parts of what is now known as Indonesia; and the lands of Malaysia and Brunei were under the administration of the British in the past.

These three factors contribute to keeping the attention of the citizens more on their immediate environment and less on matters outside of their own countries, while reinforcing their inward focus on living life.

Lack of ASEAN Awareness

Aside from the regional attitude, lack of awareness and basic understanding of ASEAN can be attributed to two other factors. One is the focus of ASEAN policies on the political-security and economic pillars instead of the ASCC and the other is the lack of involvement of ASEAN citizens in ASEAN matters, leading to a perception of ASEAN as elitist.

Of the three pillars of ASEAN, the Socio-Cultural pillar is most closely associated with the notion of ASEAN identity. As the ERIA survey earlier showed great disparities in the sense of ASEAN citizenship among people of different ASEAN nations, it is perhaps inferable that there is either a lack of focus on developing proper ASCC policies or that its policies are not promoting an ASEAN identity effectively at the grassroots level. This may be possibly due to ASEAN policymakers not being designed to target the majority well, or because their objectives were too vaguely-defined to follow. The ASCC lies in stark contrast to the Political-Security and Economic pillars which have shown substantial progress so far, marked by

the abundance of military exercises and security-related advancements such as the establishment of a new ASEAN police database in 2017 (Parameswaran, 2017); and the reduction of intra-ASEAN trade tariffs by 98.7 percent by 2018 (“ASEAN steps up to the plate,” 2018). Arguably, ASCC may not be a particularly high priority on ASEAN’s agenda from the start. It was suggested that the conception of a Socio-Cultural aspect of ASEAN in the Bali Concord II appeared to occur at the last minute – at the Philippines’ suggestion (Severino, 2006). Furthermore, the concerns that the ASCC Blueprint released in 2017 had stated, such as social welfare and development, rural development and poverty eradication, and women and gender, to name a few, are considered responsibilities of the individual countries. Although these issues are discussed in forums, the member states would usually tackle their own national issues internally, not in the name of ASEAN or part of any official ASEAN initiative. The ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community is just a platform to share “best practices” among the member states (Severino, 2006) and not a regional body that can directly help with domestic issues on the grassroots level. These issues with the ASCC lead to a lack of engagement between ASEAN and the people that it serves, well-meaning but still unknown at large.

In addition to that, regional activities and decision-making in ASEAN do not involve the citizens enough and it is more of a forum for discussion between high-level bureaucrats or government entities, therefore reducing awareness and promoting the skewed idea that ASEAN is elitist. This is evidenced by general public unfamiliarity with ASEAN despite the existence of discussions involving non-governmental entities like the ASEAN Civil Society Conference or the ASEAN People’s Forum being held annually. Furthermore, the way that ASEAN is generally portrayed in the media gives

ASEAN a “government feel”, likely due to the reporting and coverage of high-level ministerial meetings and regional summits by the state media in the member states (Loh & Ong, 2015). These factors have played a part in generating an impression of ASEAN being exclusive and elitist, out of reach for the common people who are generally not involved in governmental matters and lacking regional awareness.

Moreover, a platform for engagement between the general public and the management in ASEAN is mostly absent, leading to a disconnect between the two. As stated in the report by the UNCTAD [United Nations Conference on Trade and Development](#), “lack of institutional mechanisms in ASEAN that allow for direct or indirect public participation in ASEAN discussions is complicated by the diversity of the political governance arrangements of ASEAN members, which enable varying degrees of domestic public participation and civil society activism” (ASEAN, 2018, p. 7). The lack of involvement of regular citizens in ASEAN actions impedes the recognition of the association as an open, inclusive and welcoming space that hears the concerns and accepts the contributions of all. Even though the goals of ASEAN are necessarily people-centred, the factors explained above have hindered the development of a sense of community-building for all. This explains the strong regional identity but weak citizen identity that ASEAN has.

In summary, the core problems facing the adoption of a concrete ASEAN identity on the citizen level are the diversity among the peoples, the lack of regional outlook and a general lack of awareness about ASEAN. Therefore, ASEAN member states should work together to promote regionalistic attitudes, increase knowledge and awareness of ASEAN, reduce the perception that ASEAN is an elitist and exclusive governmental

organisation, and improve the ASEAN presence and inclusion in people's daily lives, along with public involvement in ASEAN matters. This can be achieved with cooperation from member states in improving education, media representation of the organisation and public inclusiveness in ASEAN initiatives.

Solutions for the ASEAN Identity

Education

If diversity hinders identity, education is the solution. Promoting ASEAN education can increase ASEAN awareness and inspire regionalist thought among the peoples of ASEAN. ASEAN member states can cooperate in investing greater amount of effort in ASEAN youth education and cultural exchange. For youth education, it can be achieved through the establishment of a common ASEAN curriculum in all schools or educational institutions in the region. Current ASEAN education is currently lacking and has to be stepped up, to evolve beyond simply glossing over the organisation in history lessons, or placing too much emphasis on the history of ASEAN (Intal et al., 2017).

The common curriculum should aim to educate the people early about ASEAN, build an emotional foundation for an ASEAN identity, improve intercultural understanding, and promoting the idea of ASEAN as an organisation that is always relevant to the people's daily lives. With this, general awareness and understanding of ASEAN can be formed at an early age. At the same time, the curriculum can introduce ASEAN values and goals for the citizens to follow and base their cooperation on, while encouraging participation in ASEAN activities among the youth. Effective

education of ASEAN youth can be accomplished by using materials like the ASEAN Curriculum Sourcebook to bolster regional awareness, holding more student exchange programs and cultural workshops exhibiting the traditions, histories, religions and practices of other member states in order to encourage culture-sharing and appreciation of the great socio-cultural diversity of the region.

The curriculum also needs to create commonalities between young ASEAN students to foster a sense of a common destiny, a common goal and common history. To supplement the curriculum, more singing of the ASEAN Anthem *The ASEAN Way* in all ASEAN schools can be encouraged. This is in order to instil a sense of "ASEAN patriotism" and establish an emotional foundation for the ASEAN collective identity, as emotional attachment is important in the making of a collective identity (Melucci, 1995). Additionally, it is also important to have regular monitoring of the curriculum's progress in order to better fine-tune the program to accelerate the process of identity-formation. This can be done through discussions such as the ASEAN Education Ministers Meeting, where findings can be reported.

Proper ASEAN education is important as it is for the youth who will become future leaders of ASEAN. Planting the seeds of ASEAN in their thinking and instilling the region's values in them will ensure that ASEAN plays a major part in their decision-making and leadership in the future, so that they can be effective role models of the peoples whom they lead – the people of one ASEAN. The importance of youth education is underscored further by the fact that people below 35 years old make up nearly 65 percent of ASEAN's population (ASEAN, n.d.). Therefore, education authorities of ASEAN member states should strive to encourage a sense of

togetherness, increase regional awareness and promote regionalism from a young age. Education will build the foundation of the youths' ASEAN identity, overcome diversity and increase their regional awareness and outlook.

Media

The media is a powerful tool for dissemination of information in the modern age that can be utilised to promote a better image of ASEAN to the public. With that, ASEAN member states should aim to effectively employ the media in not only promoting ASEAN awareness, but also in bringing ASEAN to the hearts of the public, and in promulgating the idea that ASEAN is open and inclusive to all.

The current state of ASEAN media is shown by a study conducted by ERIA: 72 percent of the respondents were of the opinion that media coverage of ASEAN was insufficient. Furthermore, participants found the media placing too much attention to sensationalised stories or conflicts. There were even concerns that ASEAN content in the media was not significant enough to make the news (Intal et al., 2017).

In order to improve ASEAN media coverage, there needs to be increased featuring of ASEAN in traditional media outlets like the television and newspapers, as well as other media technologies: such as mobile and social media for effective dissemination of news and information about ASEAN to a wider range of people — as mobile internet connectivity in the region currently stands at about 63 percent, and the trend is increasing (Bahla, 2018). ASEAN presence should be increased in social media in order to take advantage of the massive mobile internet connectivity in the region to promote itself.

As for ASEAN news content, there has to be a focus on what new policies and advancements in ASEAN can bring to the citizens' lives, rather than simply documenting what goes on during ASEAN events. The media has to promote the image of ASEAN as a helpful organisation that is relevant to their lives and something to be grateful for. Also, it is important that voices of the ASEAN people are heard all over the region to ensure a better understanding of ASEAN and that a more realistic view of the region can be attained (Intal et al., 2017). The achievements of ASEAN that have helped bring a direct positive impact to the its people should be highlighted. For instance, the establishment of the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity in 2005, that began as the ASEAN Regional Centre for Biodiversity in 1998, whose efforts have played a part in the continued protection of wildlife treasures till the present (ASEAN, 2015). There are also cooperative efforts to keep the people safe from extremism and terrorism, like Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines' patrolling of the Sulu Sea, which was followed by the Manila Declaration to Counter the Rise of Radicalisation and Violent Extremism (Gutierrez, 2017). Additionally, there needs to be increased featuring of interviews and perspectives from the common people, in order to show ASEAN as an organisation that is directly connected to the people and cares for its multicultural community. ASEAN member states can also encourage greater presence of ASEAN celebrities and influential public figures in the regional entertainment scene, and to have them endorse ASEAN initiatives as a means for public outreach. The ASEAN Anthem can also be played more often in the media.

A concerted effort by all member states in promoting ASEAN media in their countries will tremendously advance ASEAN awareness, cultural inclusiveness and better public perception of an ASEAN identity.

Inclusivity of Citizens

Next, the ASEAN member states should work together to pursue greater direct involvement of the citizens in working to achieve goals that benefit the region, in order to inspire teamwork and cooperation in the region's community-building. This also serves to increase grassroots involvement in the ASCC and reduce the perception of ASEAN as an elitist and exclusive organisation.

Inclusion of the citizens is vital, as collective identity is a process that constitutes an active relationship involving negotiation, decision-making and interaction between individuals or groups; and the emotional investment of the participants in the process (Melucci, 1995). Teamwork is apparent in higher levels of the ASEAN hierarchy but not at the citizen level, as evidenced by cooperative efforts in certain fields like regional security and economic integration, such as the SEANWFZ [Treaty on the Southeast Asian Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone](#) and the AFTA [ASEAN Free Trade Agreement](#). Most of these can be said to have been achieved by actors working at the governmental and regional level, and not by the regular people of ASEAN.

To quote Acharya (2017), "true socio-cultural communities need to be bottom-up, rather than top-down" (p. 33). In essence, activities or institutions that promote collectiveness and increase people-to-people contact between different ASEAN member states will facilitate the formation of an ASEAN identity by fulfilling the active relationship aspect of collective identity. Melucci (1995) had stated that in collective action, there is recognition of symbolic orientations and meanings, and that a sense of belonging comes with it. In the context of ASEAN identity, the symbolic orientation would be being oriented with ASEAN itself.

An example of such an institution is the AHA Centre [ASEAN Coordinating Centre](#)

[for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management](#). ASEAN member states should actively encourage public participation in disaster aid, promoting volunteerism. ASEAN people and non-governmental organisations' support for the victims affected by disasters such as the dam collapse in Lao PDR in 2018 and the yearly typhoons that strike the Philippines will increase solidarity and bonding between the peoples of different member states. One idealistic suggestion for another institution, would be an ASEAN Employment Centre where citizens of ASEAN can apply to work anywhere in the region. This would help address the issue of unemployment and skills shortages in individual ASEAN member states, as well as possibly fulfilling infrastructure needs. A good first step in this avenue would be to establish a functioning framework for overseeing workers from ASEAN member states within ASEAN. Both examples of institutions can reduce ASEAN elitism and create the feeling that ASEAN is helping the people directly, working towards the betterment of the region as a whole – things conducive to identity formation.

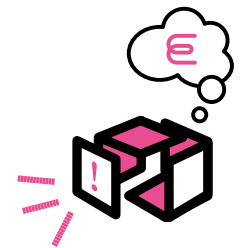
Decision-making in other areas which directly affects lives of the people, especially those covered in the Socio-Cultural pillar such as health, education and the environment should see greater public participation to strengthen cooperation on the citizen level. As Acharya (2017) emphasised, more effort has to be put into areas such as arts, tourism and education in order to increase mutual understanding and a feeling of togetherness. More public involvement in these areas will further enhance the sense of working together for the betterment of ASEAN and create a true Socio-Cultural Community.

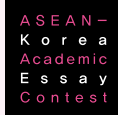
All in all, community and identity-building truly begin from the most basic element, which is the people themselves. Letting the people play

a greater role in shaping the future of the region, and delegating more decision-making to the people will be a great advancement for the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Pillar and the common ASEAN identity.

Conclusion

In conclusion, truly achieving One Vision, One Identity, and One Community may be a daunting task for the ASEAN member states for the years to come, especially with the existing obstacles in the way of ASEAN identity formation, namely diversity, lack of awareness and a deficiency in regionalistic thought among the people. It is hoped that a renewed approach to ASEAN education, improved media representation and greater ASEAN citizen participation in activities can help in the building of a strong ASEAN identity to bring the citizens closer together, to support each other in a world that is ever growing more uncertain. A more united ASEAN is for the greater good of the people. With that, it is important that the advantages of having a single ASEAN identity be highlighted to the governments of each member state in order to hasten adoption, and to gradually introduce the measures so that the diverse peoples of ASEAN may adapt to and gradually accept them, so to increase the likelihood of positive reception. The future of ASEAN is that of strength, prosperity and success, and it will be built in the unity of its diverse and multicultural peoples, grounded in a common ASEAN identity and loyalty, forging ahead together for a better tomorrow.





Building an ASEAN Identity: Understanding the Economic Salience of a Transnational Identity

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Abstract

The liberal international order is in peril as political realist agendas endorsing stronger state sovereignty and protectionism are gaining public support. The true value of multilateralism is constantly being questioned by some of the major countries who once contributed to the genesis of it. Against this growing trend of regressive pressure towards nationalistic protectionism, there is a need for a strong sense of transnational identity shared by the members of intergovernmental organisations. A transnational identity can serve not only as a buffer against the wave of realism but can

also create momentum to further advance intergovernmental activities. However, various attempts by stakeholders to create a transnational identity have been unsuccessful. State officials and relevant actors approached in a top-down manner, merely stressing the merit of a globalised world and imposing transnational identities on their people. In light of the limitations of current efforts in building a transnational identity, this article aims to provide a theoretical framework on specific ways to create a transnational identity that can ultimately be applied to the building of a regional identity in Southeast Asia, the ASEAN identity. First, starting in a broader sense, this paper examines on what basis individuals identify themselves with certain social identities by drawing ideas from the Self-Categorisation Theory, which explains humans' psychological tendency to identify themselves with a single social identity. Second, the criteria for the assessment of a transnational identity's economic salience is deduced from a case study of the U.S. and U.K., where recent political campaigns espousing nationalistic protectionism were successful. From the two approaches taken sequentially, this paper highlights the importance of an equitable division of advantages accrued from intergovernmental activities for a transnational identity to remain economically salient. Intergovernmental activities must be complemented by redistributive policies reflecting the domestic economy of each member state in a way that ameliorates actual living standards so that the people are convinced that holding a transnational identity is more beneficial than just holding national identity alone. However great the level of economic growth prompted by intergovernmental activities is, intergovernmental activities and transnational identities are not considered salient unless the actual standard of living of the people is ameliorated.

1. Introduction

Amid the prolonged wave of economic globalisation, our world is facing growing demand for protectionism. Currently, the United States is deeply embroiled in this fight as Americans elected President Donald Trump, who publicly defies the order and norms set by the international community and various intergovernmental organisations in the name of his “America First” policy. The U.K. had already lost this battle in 2016, the year the Brexit referendum took place. The results are symbolic since the two nations were traditionally the biggest champions of multilateralism and economic liberalisation, and played a major role in establishing the liberal international order. The recent resurgence of realism and protectionism can be largely attributed to the nationalistic political campaigns successfully stimulating xenophobic sentiments. It is undeniable that there are now higher public demands for stronger state-sovereignty and less support for joint endeavours with different states. This prevalent adversity towards global integration is the biggest challenge intergovernmental organisations are currently facing.

Over the last decade, ASEAN officials have been highlighting the importance of a “common regional identity,” which transcends national identity (ASEAN Vision 2020, 1997). At the 1997 ASEAN Summit which took place in Malaysia, the ASEAN Vision 2020 was announced, and one of the goals presented was forming “an ASEAN community conscious of its ties of history, aware of its cultural heritage and bound by a common regional identity” by 2020 (ASEAN Vision 2020, 1997). The concept of a common regional identity is further explained by Rodolfo C. Severino, the previous secretary-general of ASEAN, who characterises it as a “cohesive mass that can

come only from geographical propinquity” (Severino, 1997, cited in Jones, 2004, p. 141). However, despite the constant emphasis on the formation of a transnational identity stemmed from intergovernmental activities, the discourse on identity has remained elusive and ambiguous. Acquiescing to the abstract nature of identity, scholars have avoided the challenge of providing a theoretical framework answering the question of how a transnational identity can be created. Government officials promoting intergovernmental activities have taken a top-down approach to this matter, merely attempting to impose a transnational identity on their people by advertising the merit of a globalised world. This ambiguity is inviting criticisms from sceptics, undermining its integral role in the prospect of intergovernmental activities. Thus, the intent of this paper is to answer the question of how a resolute ASEAN can be built. In a broader context, it will look into what it takes for individuals to prioritise transnational identity derived from intergovernmental activities over their national identity when identifying themselves. Referring to psychological theories explaining how individuals identify themselves with a particular social identity, this article suggests the basis on which people decide to perceive themselves as belonging to a transnational identity, which can ultimately be applied to the formation of an ASEAN identity.

2. Main Hypothesis

ASEAN’s integration ought to be complemented by each member state’s intervention through redistributive policies reflecting local economies to enable the formation of an ASEAN identity. Although

greater state-sovereignty is traditionally understood to be antithetical to intergovernmental activities, domestic politics should still play a role in bringing about an equitable distribution of wealth created by ASEAN activities and ameliorate the standards of living for citizens of each member state. The reason is that the formation of an ASEAN identity is contingent upon how well ASEAN nationals are convinced that intergovernmental activities are more beneficial to them than each state functioning alone.

This hypothesis consists of two sub-arguments arranged in a serial order which are separately dealt in the paper: (1) individuals identify themselves with the identity that proves to be the most salient; (2) the economic salience of a transnational identity is determined by its impact on the standard of living rather than on national macroeconomic growth. Argument (1) is examined by drawing ideas from psychological theories on identity formation. Argument (2) is analysed by looking into how salience of a transnational identity has recently deteriorated in the U.K. and U.S.

2.1. How individuals identify themselves with a particular social identity

I. Definition

Prior to discussing the formation of identity, it is necessary to understand the concept of a group and social identity. A group is conceptualised as a collection of individuals who share a collective belief on their belonging to the same social category (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Being part of a group, one creates a self-image from the group or social category to which one perceives oneself as belonging, and this self-generated image is one's social identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Hence, transnational identity can be defined as people's

self-image derived from their nation's membership of intergovernmental organisations.

II. Assessment of the salience of social identities

A broad consensus has been made on the notion that individuals are capable of simultaneously holding multiple social identities derived from their sense of belonging to various social groups. These multiple social identities “become psychologically real only when defined in comparison to other groups” (Hornsey, 2008, p. 207). Thus, self-evaluation of one's multiple social identities constantly takes place attaching positive or negative value connotations to one's membership of different social groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Hornsey, 2008). The result of these assessments shows the salience of different social identities which eventually determines how much one feels attached to a certain social identity. According to the Self-Categorisation Theory, individuals closely associate themselves with the most salient social identity and enhance their affinity to it, thereby identifying themselves with the most salient social identity (Tajfel & Wilkes, 1963). However, because the process of determining the most salient identity is “highly variable and context-dependent,” the standard of identity's salience varies in accordance to the given situation (Onorato & Turner, 2004, p. 257).

III. Application of Self-Categorisation Theory to Transnational Identity

The two social identities all ASEAN nationals hold are their respective national identities *nationality* and their ASEAN identity *common regional identity/transnational identity*. Both identities are constantly subject to ASEAN nationals' evaluation of their salience in comparison to each other. Thus, if the Self-

Categorisation theory is correct, an ASEAN identity *transnational identity* must be recognised as more salient than one's national identity in order for ASEAN nationals to identify themselves with the ASEAN identity. In other words, building an ASEAN identity can be achieved through the prioritisation of ASEAN identity over national identity based on the former's superiority in terms of salience.

2.2 Economic salience of transnational identity

As mentioned above, self-assessments of the salience of social identity aren't based on a fixed standard. It's highly contingent upon the given situation. Thus, in order to add specificity to the discussion on the formation of a transnational identity, I intend to define the salience of identity in strictly economic terms by addressing following questions: Does macroeconomic growth achieved by intergovernmental cooperation suffice for a transnational identity to be more salient than national identity? If not, what economic indices are taken into consideration when one assesses the salience of one's transnational identity? The U.K. and the U.S., which are facing growing public demands for stronger state-sovereignty and protectionism, provide a case study of an economic explanation for their transnational identity's loss of salience.

I. Assumption

This approach is premised on the significance of a transnational identity in gaining public support for intergovernmental activity. Hence, I will attribute the recent growing adversity faced by intergovernmental activities in the U.K. and the U.S. to the loss in the salience of a transnational identity. Because holding a transnational identity has been considered

by citizens of the U.K. and the U.S. to be unprofitable, the economic salience of a transnational identity has diminished. Thus, the support for intergovernmental activities has lessened and demand for stronger state-sovereignty endorsed by protectionist agendas is on the rise.

Secondly, this case study implies that U.S. and U.K. citizens intuitively draw a correlative link between the macroeconomic growth both countries have achieved so far and both nations' commitment to multilateralism. Since the end of World War 2, the U.S. and the U.K. had coordinated transnational efforts to establish multilateralism and achieve economic liberalisation until recently. There is a vast body of literature on the history of how they have collaborated in constructing a more liberal international order; thus, I will not further elaborate on this. As the world becomes more integrated and globalised under the framework of multilateralism, the U.S. and U.K. have experienced unprecedented rates of economic growth, so citizens would naturally presume a correlation between the two courses of events. The question of how much credit intergovernmental activities deserve for the countries' macroeconomic growth is irrelevant in our discussion of building social identity. The reason is that the self-assessment of a social identity mostly relies on one's subjective judgement of the salience of the identity rather than on concrete, objective data. Thus, insofar as people are cognisant of the two variables, the assumption that they will intuitively assume a correlation between them meets the purpose of our study regardless of the actual validity of it.

II. Method

This study looks into two kinds of dataset measuring the growth of economy in the U.K. and the U.S. from the 1970s to the recent present:

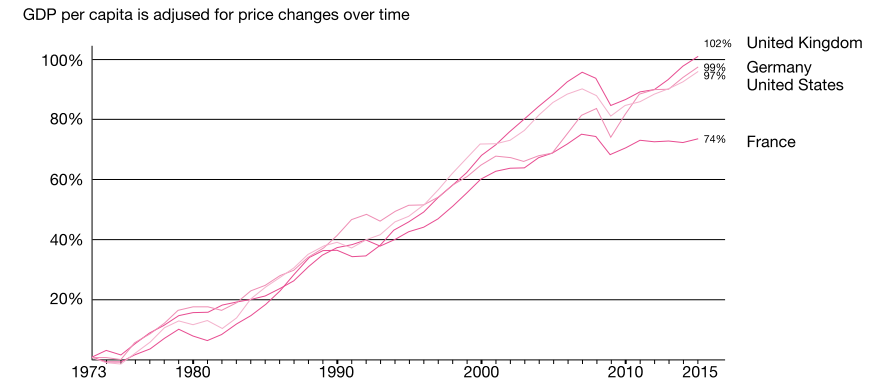
Per Capita GDP (Data A) and 3 indices for Standard of Living which are Gini coefficient of disposable income inequality, wealth shares of top 10% and bottom 10% of the net wealth distribution, and the NEET rate (Data B). Per Capita GDP is used as the index for nations' macroeconomic growth. For people's living standards, income inequality measured by the Gini coefficient, the level of disproportionate distribution of wealth measured by wealth shares of top 10% and bottom 10%, and youth employment rate measured by the NEET rate, which is the percentage of people aged 15-29 who are neither employed nor in education or training, are used. By separately examining each nation's macroeconomic growth and improvement in living standards, this case study strives to analyse the impact of each variable on individuals' assessment of the economic salience of a transnational identity.

3. Case study of the U.K. and the U.S.

I. Data A: Per capita GDP - Macroeconomic growth

As shown in Table 1, both the U.K. and the U.S. experienced an alarming rate of macroeconomic growth since 1973. Since 1973, the year the U.K. joined the EU, per capita GDP of the U.K. has grown by 103%, exceeding the rate of increase of other developed countries. Even though per capita GDP dipped in the face of 2008 financial crisis, the U.K. has fully recovered from the recession and started doing even better in 2015 than the year before 2008 crisis. Likewise, the U.S. has experienced a similar level of growth. U.S. per capita GDP has soared by 97% since 1973.

Figure 1. Growth of GDP per capita in the UK and the U.S.



Source: Institute for New Economic Thinking at the Oxford Martin School

II. Analysis of Data A

As political and economic integration intensified by extensive intergovernmental activities, both countries experienced a substantial increase in U.S. per capita GDP. Although more data would have to be studied in order to determine whether there is a causal relationship, most U.K. and U.S. citizens would readily infer a correlation between the two.

Nevertheless, the results of the Brexit referendum and the U.S. presidential election in 2016 demonstrate reduced public support for intergovernmental activities, demonstrating the loss of salience of their respective transnational identities. Citizens of both nations have chosen their national identities over transnational identities despite the macroeconomic growth that they experienced alongside the increase in intergovernmental activities. Thus, Data A shows that the macroeconomic growth of a nation in terms of per capita GDP has an insignificant impact on one's assessment of the salience of one's transnational identity.

III. Data B: Improvement in living standards

a) Gini coefficient of disposable income - Income Inequality

As shown in Table 2 and Table 3, income inequality has exacerbated in the U.K. and the U.S. The Gini coefficient of disposable income has risen by 0.047 from 0.309 in 1980 to 0.356 in 2014. (OECD, n.d.-a). Likewise, in the U.S., Gini coefficient has increased 0.05 in approximately 20 years — from 0.43 in 1990 to 0.48 in 2016. Although the increment is lower than that of the U.K., the absolute level of income inequality in the U.S. is far greater than that of the U.K., also showing its failure to attenuate income inequality.

Figure 2. Gini coefficient in mid-1980s and 2014 in the U.K.

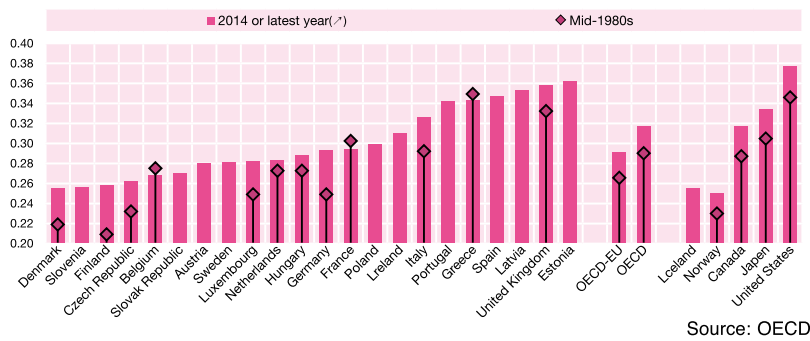
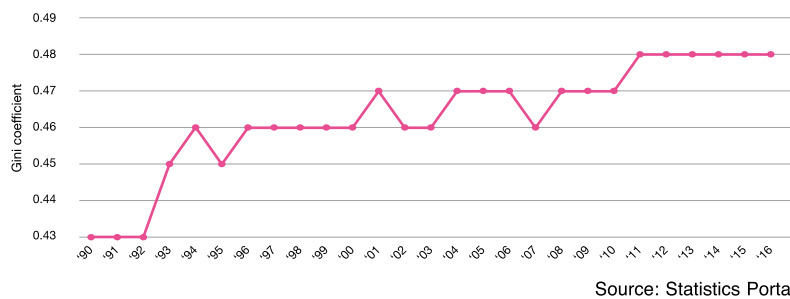


Figure 3. U.S. Household Income Distribution from 1990-2017(Gini-coefficient from 1990 to 2017)



b) Income held by 1st decile and 9th decile - Disproportionate distribution of Wealth

As shown in Figure 4 and 5, wealth has been disproportionately distributed, and the disproportionate distribution has intensified over time in both countries. In the U.K., the difference in income between the 1st decile (bottom 10% and below) and 9th decile (top 10% and above) was 34.36 in 1991. In 2014, however, the income gap has worsened to 34.69. In the U.S., the difference in income was 18.72 in 1991. The difference almost doubled in roughly 10 years to 30.27.

Figure 4. Real Disposable Household income by Decile in the U.K.

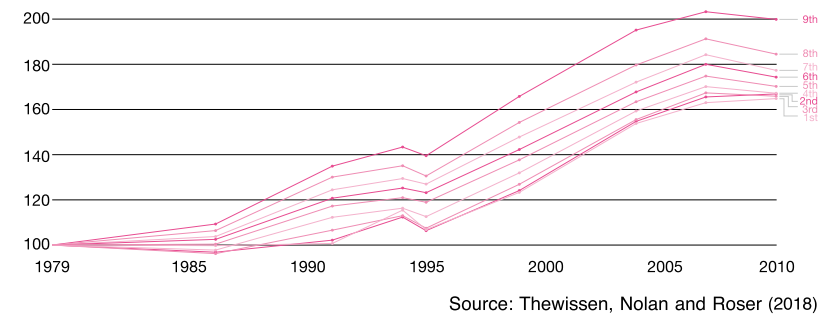
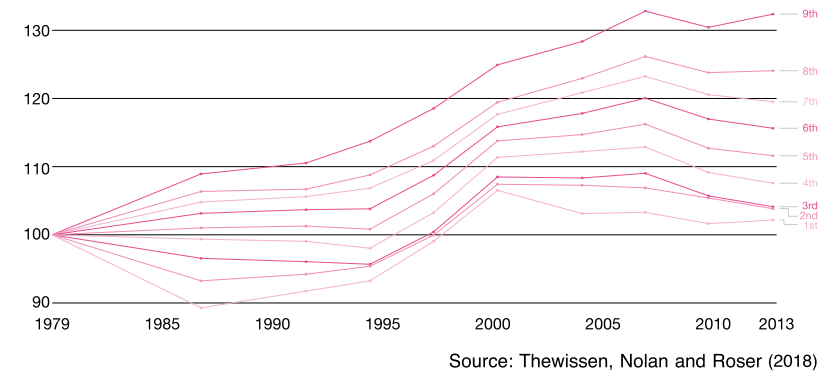


Figure 5. Growth of Real Disposable Household income by Decile in the U.S.



c) NEET Rate - Youth unemployment rate

An increase in youth unemployment rate over time is found in both the U.K. and the U.S. In the U.K., the NEET rate has risen by 0.42 from 13.32 in 2000 to 13.74 in 2015 (OECD, n.d.-b). In the U.S., the NEET rate has risen by 1.81 from 12.57 in 1997 to 14.38 in 2015 (OECD, n.d.-b).

III. Analysis of Data B

According to the 3 measures representing living standards in both countries, the quality of U.K. and U.S. citizens' lives hasn't improved but has actually worsened over time. This result is to some extent counterintuitive when taking into account of the unprecedented level of macroeconomic growth achieved by both nations within the same time frame. Thus, the loss of economic salience of a transnational identity in the U.K. and the U.S., demonstrated by the resurgence of protectionism and political realism, can be attributed to the failure of intergovernmental activities to improve people's actual living standards. Despite the economic growth prompted by intergovernmental activities, U.K. and U.S. citizens do not consider their transnational identity to be salient because the quality of lives hasn't actually been ameliorated. This prevalent discontent about the low quality of life has been easily mobilised by protectionists who constantly attempted to make the current multilateral system a scapegoat for the problem.

4. Conclusion

The importance of building a transnational identity to further advance

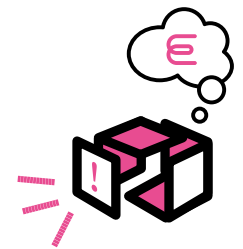
intergovernmental activities has been highlighted in the face of the growing wave of protectionism and political realism. Nevertheless, the effort to actualise the goal of building a transnational identity has remained relatively weak due to the obscurity of the idea of identity. However, the recent growing adversity towards intergovernmental activities in the U.K. and the U.S. has shed light on the issue of building a transnational identity by suggesting the economic basis for one's transnational identity to be considered salient. Although increasing intergovernmental activities have contributed to the macroeconomic growth of both nations shown by the huge increase in per capita GDP, the economic growth hasn't brought about the improvements in individuals' living standards as shown by Gini coefficients of disposable income inequality, wealth shares of top 10% and bottom 10% of the net wealth distribution, and the NEET rate. Therefore, holding a transnational identity given by intergovernmental activities is assessed to be of no profound merit, prompting growing demand for stronger state-sovereignty and protectionism. In other words, unless the additional benefits accrued by intergovernmental activities are fairly distributed to the people through redistributive policies unique to one's community and eventually ameliorate the qualities of their lives, nationals aren't inclined to adopt transnational identities.

The findings of the case study can be applied to the context of ASEAN identity. Learning from the experience of the U.K. and the U.S., ASEAN nationals would be more sensitive to the actual improvements in their living standards than their nations' macroeconomic growth. When they experience noticeable enhancement in their living standards as ASEAN states become more integrated, their regional identity as part of ASEAN would matter more than their respective national identity. Therefore, ASEAN activities

must be complemented by implementations of appropriate redistributive policies for each state, resulting in a more equitable division of advantages created by ASEAN activities. This way, the value of ASEAN integration and the economic salience of ASEAN identity will be truly appreciated by ASEAN nationals who will then begin to identify themselves with their ASEAN identity *transnational identity* rather than their national identity.

5. Discussion

The self-assessment process of a social identity ought to be a continuous interplay between multiple factors and socio-economic considerations, so it is not the intent of the paper to constrain the discussion of building a transnational identity to a single economic index. Instead, the application of the Self-Categorisation theory and the comparative case study of the U.K. and the U.S. are attempts to unravel such a multi-faceted issue of creating transnational identity by suggesting a single theoretical account of the process. The greater leverage the index for the standard of living has than nations' macroeconomic growth when one evaluates the salience of one's transnational identity is bound to be offset by other determinants. Nonetheless, this paper hopes to lay grounds for more lively discussions striving to develop comprehensive theories on the building process of transnational identity which incorporate various intergovernmental institutions.





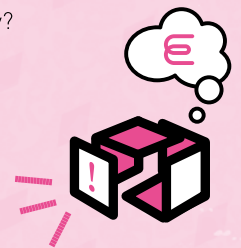
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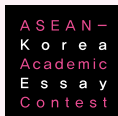
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A Cooperation Model for Korea's New Southern Policy



Since its inauguration in May 2017, Korea's Moon administration announced the New Southern Policy which promised to elevate its diplomatic ties with ASEAN to the level of four major powers around the Korean Peninsula. What should the Korean government do to effectively promote the ASEAN-Korea relations, and how can ASEAN Member States contribute for the success of the New Southern Policy?





Enhancing the Network of ASEAN-Korea Partnership through Korea's New Southern Policy under Thailand's 2019 ASEAN Chairmanship

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opportunities to be a leader with the ROK to ensure “mutual centrality” in promoting and intensifying their partnership. As a result, some implications and suggestions for future engagements between ASEAN and the ROK will be presented. Efforts in Korea-Thailand relations will be exemplified as a case study under the New Southern Policy, such as enhancing people-to-people contacts through a cultural approach, seeking resolutions for peace and security through regional forums and soft power, and increasing economic growth and prosperity through trade and investment.

Abstract

This paper aims to raise awareness and understanding of the New Southern Policy and its three core visions, implemented by President Moon, which can serve as a role model for ASEAN member states. On commemorating the 60th anniversary of the diplomatic relations between the Republic of Korea (ROK) and Thailand in 2018, and in light of upcoming 30th anniversary of ASEAN-Korea relations and its Thailand's assumption of ASEAN Chairmanship in 2019, Thailand should take these auspicious

1. Thailand's Initiatives towards the ASEAN Community

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations **ASEAN** has played an instrumental role among other global associations, serving as a forum for constructive dialogue and consultation with objectives to promote preventive diplomacy and boost confidence-building in this strategic region. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand (2014) suggests that prior to its successful inception in 1967, several Southeast Asian nations had striven to form a series of organisations such as the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization **SEATO** in 1954, the Association of Southeast Asia **ASA** in 1961 and **MAPHILINDO** in 1963. Most significantly, Thanat Khoman, a former Thai Minister of Foreign Affairs, recognised the necessity and importance of inclusive and integrative processes to create an official regional association, inviting his counterparts from Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Singapore for an informal gathering to seek agreement to establish the Association of Southeast Asian Nations with the signing of the Bangkok Declaration on August 8, 1967. As stipulated in the declaration, ASEAN was established as an attempt to strengthen the member states' relations by actively promoting and providing mutual assistance on common interests in economic, social, cultural, agricultural, industrial, scientific and transport areas. Over the years, ASEAN has gradually evolved and expanded to include Brunei Darussalam (1984), Viet Nam (1995), Lao PDR and Myanmar (1997), and finally Cambodia (1999) (Royal Thai Embassy in Washington D.C., 2015) to have the current association of 10 member states.

2. Understanding New Southern Policy and Leveraging 3P Pillars

It is important to note that the ROK has so far made various efforts to diversify its diplomatic and economic partners. One of the main actions previous ROK presidents said they would take was to improve its partnership with Southeast Asian countries. However, those Korean leaders had not managed to make significant progress. The conflicts on the Korean Peninsula seemed far too persistent and unceasing and the ROK government became distracted from and eventually oblivious to its policies toward ASEAN. Since Moon Jae-in came to office in May 2017 as the new president of the ROK, things have been notably and significantly different when compared to other presidential administrations. The ASEAN-Korea relations has been prominently and gradually promoted and intensified through Moon's New Southern Policy, aimed at elevating and strengthening relations with India and particularly with the ASEAN (The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Republic of Korea, 2018). The emphasis on the New Southern Policy has been considered more significant in the history of Korean diplomacy, since the ROK government has decided to expand its strategic autonomy and compete against major powers by forming coalitions with countries of common interests in other neighbouring regions (Lee, 2017). The initiative of strengthening ties with ASEAN was initially unveiled during the presidential election campaign by the liberal-minded Moon and its significance for diplomatic diversification has contained explicit attempts to minimise its reliance on traditional trade partners such as the U.S., China and Japan, and, instead, improve ties with ASEAN member states, whose geographical proximity makes a new strategic and instrumental space for

both regions (Lee, 2017).

Progress on the New Southern Policy has continued in recent months. Moon's intentions and commitment to the strengthening of ROK ties with ASEAN and India have been demonstrated through the following diplomatic, economic and sociocultural activities. Special envoys were appointed and dispatched to Southeast Asian countries and India to signal Korea's vision for enhancing relations with those countries. Moon himself has also made official visits to the respective countries, attended the ASEAN-related summits which has been considered significant (Anantasirikiat, 2018). Similarly, other key activities for ASEAN-Korea youth promotions, such as the Startup Idea Competition, Short Film Competition and Academic Essay Contest organised by the ASEAN-Korea Centre [AKC](#) have gained more attention and wider popularity among Southeast Asian and Korean youths.

More specifically, during his official presidential visit to Indonesia and participation in the Indonesia-Korea Business Forum held on November 9, 2017, in Jakarta, Moon unofficially outlined for the first time the concept of the "3P" pillars comprising People, Peace and Prosperity. Moon's leadership vision always recognises and prioritises "people" as one of the main focuses of his policies, as originally illustrated on his presidential election campaign "People First, Korea" in 2012. Likewise, after winning the election in 2017, Moon's administration has mainly addressed and carried out citizen-centred concerns and a people-oriented approach. Secondly, "Peace" is another key factor creating a meaningful space and a peaceful environment within the Indo-Pacific region. Based on the historical incidents after the Korean War, there's no doubt Seoul has sought to see peace and unification despite long-lasting contradicting tensions on the peninsula. In the same manner, owing

to its ethical diversity and cultural divergence, ASEAN's population has been compromising and reconciling in search of peace and security amid South China Sea tensions. On the "Prosperity" pillar, the last of the New Southern Policy's 3Ps, economic progress and technological advances in ASEAN and the ROK have made much positive development. ASEAN, an economic bloc with a population of 650 million, is Asia's fourth-largest economy grouping and the ROK's second-largest trade partner, with bilateral trade volume of \$149.1 billion in 2017, rising from \$118.8 billion the previous year. As a result, there is an accurate and reliable prediction that bilateral trade and investment will escalate and multiply in the near future (ASEAN-Korea Centre, 2018).

3. Implications and Suggestions for Future Engagements between ASEAN and Korea: Korea and as a case study

After Moon's statement about his 3P vision under the New Southern Policy, a number of diplomatic actions and academic activities, such as presidential and ministerial visits and academic forums and conferences have been carried out. In addition, this paper intends to explain in detail on how ASEAN-Korea relations can be closely strengthened by the New Southern Policy. On commemorating the the 60th anniversary of the diplomatic relations between Korea and Thailand, and in light of the upcoming 30th anniversary of ASEAN-Korea relations and Thailand's assumption of the rotating ASEAN chairmanship in 2019, Thailand should take these auspicious opportunities to be a leader with the ROK to ensure

mutual centrality in promoting and intensifying their partnership. The policymakers and committees from both regions are encouraged to review and leverage the relevant strategic and prominent policies between the New Southern Policy and the ASEAN Community's 3P framework. The New Southern Policy pursued by Moon's administration can serve as a role model for ASEAN member states, as illustrated in the following paragraphs.

3.1 Enhancing people-to-people contacts through a cultural approach

One of the public policies that stands out most and should be firstly addressed is "Soft Power." The Korean Wave or "Hallyu" has obtained global popularity in music and movie products. Such a popular phenomenon has fascinated the international public and passionate followers, whose obsession with K-Pop has become more profitable and generated greater revenue for the country. People around the world are likely to acknowledge and value the existence of Korean culture through the Korean cinematographic productions aired on some local channels (Astriana, 2017). On the other hand, ASEAN-Korea Centre (2018) reports that the Korean people's perception on the sociocultural understanding and awareness toward the ASEAN Community is considered relatively minor and inconsequential. A Thai proverb says "Ao-Jai-Khow-Mai-Sai-Jai-Rao", equivalently translated in English as "Put yourself in someone else's shoes." This may suggest that when people from different backgrounds or with different identities live together and share common interests in the same community, they may need to learn how to adapt to live with each other and always value other's cultures and perspectives by imagining as if they were in the position or circumstance of someone else. This solid understanding might be applicable

to the Southeast Asian and Korean citizens, who should be encouraged to become more familiar with each other's sociocultural identities and backgrounds. Since Korea has accomplished in branding itself and introducing various cultural products such as music and films into the global market, the ASEAN Community should take the Korean Wave into account in their public policies to advertise and raise awareness on their cultures toward Korea and other neighbouring countries (Anantasirikiat, 2018). As many talented Thai artists are members of famous K-Pop groups, namely Black Pink's Lisa, NCT's Ten, GOT7's Bambam and 2PM's Nichkhun, they are widely welcomed and appreciated by K-Pop fans. As such, Thailand is one of the ASEAN nations successfully leveraging such "soft power". In this context, Nichkhun's popularity in Thailand and Korea can be exemplified as follows. According to the news report from the Royal Thai Embassy in Seoul (2018), Nichkhun has been appointed as a Goodwill Ambassador on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the diplomatic relations between Thailand and the ROK, and recently has carried out several activities to promote his country to the Korean people. As a Goodwill Ambassador, Nichkhun is currently featuring as a taste judge in the variety show "The Team Chef," a very first cooking competition TV program which is co-produced by the ROK and Thailand and aired in both countries on JTBC and GMM One TV (Park, 2018). Similarly, the "Experience Thailand and more" Facebook Fan Page, administered under the Tourism Authority of Thailand, also has actively featured Nichkhun and his younger sister Cherreen enjoying their journey from Bangkok to Yangon. This project is aimed at promoting not only Thailand as a strategic touristic hub in ASEAN, but also neighbouring countries such as Lao PDR, Myanmar and Cambodia (Experience Thailand more and more, 2018). Both TV productions and

tourism promotions starred in by K-Pop idol Nichkhun have enticed the international public and particularly Korean people to add Thailand as their next destination. Therefore, Fabrian (2017) suggests that it is our duty and need for ASEAN's opportunity to raise awareness and understanding about ASEAN toward Korean neighbours through numerous cultural activities and events, including promoting typical gastronomy tourism as demonstrated above in Thailand's case.

Furthermore, in the academic and professional contexts, youth empowerment in ASEAN member states and Korea is the key factor to enhance further inter-regional cooperation, since young people will become future leaders on a domestic or international level, who will dedicate and contribute significantly for our communities. Young participants engaged in youth exchanges or youth summits have attained skills for the digital era and have become more vigorous in demonstrating growth and maturity academically and professionally.

Investment in youth should be aimed not only at development of economic and political perspectives, but also for social changes in the near future as well. Millennials, including ASEAN and Korean ones, challenge themselves in the digital era, whose perception and awareness should be guided in the right direction. When the young generation is empowered and oriented by good education standards, they will acknowledge that mutual sociocultural awareness can improve their perception of neighbouring countries and differentiate wrong from right, defending the path of better understanding and valuing and respecting other cultures. In this context, youth promotion should not be limited only to governments but should be done in cooperation with each country's entire private sector. To illustrate, the ASEAN-Korea Centre is an exemplary case pushed by the governments

of ASEAN and Korea. to the Centre organises exhibitions, lectures, and youth programs throughout the year. According to the ASEAN-Korea Centre (2018), the Centre actively provides several youth exchange sessions such as meetings, forums or visits with an aim to promote ASEAN-Korea relations and understanding among young participants. The ASEAN-Korea Centre also encourages ASEAN citizens and diplomats residing in Korea to promote their respective countries and cultures.

3.2 Seeking resolutions for peace and security through regional forums and soft power.

Under the "Peace" vision of the New Southern Policy, peace and security are the ROK's main concerns and the country has been so far searching for sustainable assistance from its ASEAN partnership to resolve the long-standing disputes on the Korean Peninsula and in the South China Sea through diplomatic means and peaceful strategies, as Hoo (2018) comments in the following.

“Following the Singapore Summit, the world starts to pay attention to the positive role of Southeast Asian region as a positive platform for global diplomacy, contributing to the ongoing efforts to achieve peace and stability of the Korean Peninsula.”

In this sense, both ASEAN and Korea should be committed to exercising its power and providing a channel for multilateral dialogue through regional forums and discussions under the ASEAN Regional Forum [ARF](#) — the only regional mechanism of which the Democratic People's Republic of Korea [DPRK](#) is a full and current member. The ARF is a key forum for official consultations focused mainly on peace and security issues in the Asia-Pacific region, complementing the various bilateral alliances and dialogues.

The current member states are 27 countries, and consist of the 10 ASEAN member states, the 10 ASEAN dialogue partners *Australia, Canada, China, the European Union, India, Japan, New Zealand, the ROK, Russia and the United States*, one ASEAN observer *Papua New Guinea*, as well as the DPRK, Mongolia, Pakistan, Timor-Leste, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. The ARF is considered as a setting for discussion and diplomacy where members can develop cooperative measures to respond to regional problems. Foreign ministers of each member state participate annually in the ARF meetings, which are held in line with the Post-Ministerial Conference in July. The ARF is characterised by its renowned consensus decision making, and frank, open and substantive dialogues, which allow the free-flowing exchange of views for respective leaders or delegates who gain more trust and confidence to express their opinions and discuss relevant matters. Moreover, the use of both “first track” *official* and “second track” *non-official* diplomacy is also worth mentioning. Normally leading officials discuss security measures during first-track meetings, meanwhile other issues such as preventive diplomacy and confidence-building measures are addressed traditionally by scholars, private sectors, individuals and also government individuals not acting in their official capacity during second-track sessions. Moon (2018) also emphasises second-track procedures as a central role which distinguishes the ARF from most other international organisations, which generally treat non-official diplomatic measures as residual and peripheral.

Recognising the significance of peace and security issues under the New Southern Policy, the Moon Jae-in administration has struggled to uplift the status of ASEAN to be on par with other traditional major powers on the Korean Peninsula, namely the U.S., China, Japan, and Russia. During his visit to Singapore in July 2018, Moon affirmed his engagement

in collaborating with ASEAN on the DPRK's nuclear and missile provocations, which means ASEAN is placed on board in one of the major regional security issues with global implications

Fortunately, both Koreas have started to approach each other at the beginning of 2018, after a phase of strong tensions due to the tests of missiles and bombs carried out by the DPRK. As many Southeast Asian countries have maintained economic and diplomatic relations with the DPRK, the ROK has inevitably resorted to regional cooperation with ASEAN to pressure the DPRK to complete its denuclearisation.

Apart from being a neutral and safe space in communication and discussion arrangements on inter-Korean peace and security issues as featured from the first DPRK-U.S. Summit held in Singapore, ASEAN could collaborate with the ROK for future initiatives towards the DPRK. For example, Thailand, one of the 10 ASEAN member states benefiting from the agricultural farm project promoted by the ASEAN Residents Committee in Pyongyang, has already increased bilateral trade in agriculture with the DPRK. Since the DPRK is facing food security as its critical issue and ASEAN member states have potential human resources in agriculture, the DPRK is traditionally more sensitive and shunned by big economies, and eventually would become more open-minded and receptive towards assistance and mutual cooperation from other developing economies like ASEAN (Hoo, 2018).

On the other hand, the disputes between the two Koreas have been declining, thanks to the K-pop used as moderator of the policy in the DPRK. In an effort of reconciliation between both countries, music stands as a channel of communication to restore diplomatic relations. The girls of Red Velvet and the singer Cho Yong-pil led the concert attended by the

DPRK's leader Kim Jong-un with his wife, Ri Sol-ju. After the concert, Do Jong-hwan, Minister of Culture of the ROK called for resuming joint projects and stressed the importance of cultural and sports exchanges for a peaceful coexistence of the two Koreas (Baynes, 2018).

3.3 Increasing economic growth and prosperity through trade and investment agreements

According to a report by the ASEAN-Korea Centre (2018), the significant growth in trade and investment volume between ASEAN and the ROK has been recognised over the past decades. ASEAN has become Korea's second-largest trading partner after China, surpassing the U.S., the EU and Japan, while the ROK is ASEAN's fifth-largest trading partner. In response to the "Prosperity" pillar, both the ROK and ASEAN Economic Community aim to expand their bilateral trade to meet the target of \$200 billion by 2020 as agreed by the leaders during the 2014 Commemorative Summit through various existing trade and investment agreements such as ASEAN-Korea Free Trade Area **AKFTA**, ASEAN-Korea Trade in Goods Agreement, ASEAN-Korea Trade in Services Agreement and ASEAN-Korea Investment Agreement (Astriaana, 2017). Despite increasing protectionism and global economic stagnation, ASEAN and Korea have to cooperate and intensify their trade partnership under the regionalism benefiting of significant tariff reductions from the trade and investment agreements as previously stated. However, the utilisation of such FTA agreements of the two regions is still considered minimal and insignificant and this has been attributed to two main difficulties. The first reason leading to a low usage of tariff liberalisation refers to the administrative process under FTA agreements, which Southeast Asian and Korean companies find really complicated.

The second reason is due to the lack of understanding and appropriate information on the agreements among both business and private sectors. Hence, ASEAN and Korean governments should emphasise on minimising these obstacles and informing of the existence of FTA agreements and their relevant trade protocol to the business and private sectors, whose economic activities and involvement can contribute to positive economic growth for both countries. In this context, the ASEAN-Korea Business Council **AKBC** can play a bigger role in further strengthening trade cooperation and developing business ties among ASEAN and Korean companies.

With regard to the investment, a number of Korean multinational companies, such as Hyundai, Lotte Group, LG and Samsung have been established in many Southeast Asian countries and have led a significant increase of Korea's outward Foreign Direct Investment **FDI** to ASEAN. As the ASEAN region is renowned for its low labour cost and abundance of natural and human resources, it's undoubtedly true that there are several Korean manufacturing firms interested in establishing themselves in this region. On the contrary, ASEAN's outward FDI to Korea is smaller and rather limited. The report by Astriaana (2017) indicates that the number of ASEAN companies operating in Korea is relatively small, and among other ASEAN branding companies, Indonesia's Bank Negara Indonesia **BNI**, Singapore's DBS bank, and Thailand's Doi Chaang Caffé have so far gained business achievement in Korea. Consequently, the ASEAN-Korea Investment Agreement should also be acknowledged as a tool for ASEAN companies to make investment and expand their businesses in Korea.

After World War II, Korea was divided into two and both countries were similarly considered agriculture-based economies. However, the ROK's economy has rapidly developed and transformed itself from a poor

country to become more prosperous and affluent with dependency on the industry sectors. The ROK became the 11th-largest economy in the world in 2016 (Santacreu, 2018). Much research has pointed out that opening the country to foreign markets and strengthening the export-oriented policies have contributed to such an impressive economic transformation. Apart from the improvement in the business environment, the ROK has so far implemented its policies mainly aimed at innovation and technology. Since China has taken the same role model in economic development as its human resources are more plentiful and lower cost, the ROK has opted for reliance on other sectors and its principal revenue-generating sectors are tourism, business, infrastructure and technology. For example, Korea is experienced and capable in promoting infrastructure and internet connectivity in Southeast Asia, to avoid a disparity in the levels of development among those countries. In this regard, Korea should share its successful economic development story as an inspirational lesson or even role model for those ASEAN member countries that are struggling with economic recessions.

Lastly, as ASEAN and Korea will celebrate their 30th anniversary in 2019 with Thailand assuming the ASEAN chairmanship. Thailand must mobilise its attempts to draw global superpowers to cooperate more with the bloc. According to Changsorn (2016), the Industrial Estate Authority of Thailand developed a piece of land in Chon Buri Province to facilitate and accommodate investment from Korean companies under a new “S-curve” industries project on the Eastern Seaboard. In this sense, neighbouring CLMVT countries [Cambodia](#), [Lao PDR](#), [Myanmar](#), [Viet Nam](#) and [Thailand](#), whose annual GDP has grown around 6-8 percent over the past decade, will also economically benefit from “S-curve” industries. As these states are located

near the Eastern Seaboard, they will become an attractive location for trade and investment in the region.

4. Conclusion

The friendly and robust cooperation between ASEAN and Korea can be attributed to the Korea’s geographical proximity in Southeast Asia. Not only are Korean cultural products such as its music, dramas and movies are well appreciated in ASEAN, but also its history after World War II also inspires other ASEAN leaders to take actions and policies previously implemented by ROK leaders. Among the increasing protectionism and global economic slowdown, ASEAN and Korea should intensify their regional partnership to become a strong foundation under the New Southern Policy’s 3Ps set out by Moon’s administration. Such closer engagement and commitment to “people, peace and prosperity” would allow ASEAN and Korea to diversify their diplomatic and economic interdependence.



ASEAN-Korea Cooperation in Mainstreaming Community-based Tourism

—Kim Min-jae Yonsei University

Abstract

In the ASEAN Economic Community, tourism plays a critical role in helping to drive economic growth through attracting foreign investment and resources. As the tourism industry grows, a dependency on the local labour market and local economy also increases. However, increased tourism and economic growth has not provided benefits for all. Evidence have found that in some circumstances it has in fact harmed the local economy and proven to be unsustainable in certain situations. Problems of mass tourism in many popular ASEAN tourist destinations has created serious environmental troubles, as was seen recently in Boracay, the Philippines.

CBT *Community-based Tourism* has recently emerged as an alternative to traditional tourism models. CBT has been widely discussed as a more useful tool for implementing the SDGs *Sustainable Development Goals*. However, CBT has not found much momentum as mass tourism in ASEAN member states continues to dominate the region's tourism trend. This paper argues that the Korean government and organisation in cooperation with partner ASEAN member states can help to mainstream CBT in helping to improve the sustainability of tourism practices.

This paper also examines debates around CBT that have been identified as impediments to its effectiveness. According to Isaac and van der Sterren, CBT's major limitations include low access to market data, which end up with many tourists' disappointment. The ASEAN Community has established its own shared standards for CBT that can help local communities deal with these issues. This include empowering local capacity towards tourism and lowering dissatisfaction and information gap between locals and tourists to make CBT sustainable. This paper suggests that, Korean tourism ODA should also be aligned with the standard that ASEAN had established. Moreover, following new trends is important in tourism. One such trend is the concept of smart tourism which helps lower the information gap between a local community and tourist. This paper aims to provide practical insight in evaluating policy implications of a CBT approach for Korea's ODA program. Which is an important discussion as CBT has the potential to also impact the ASEAN community within a development context.

지역기반관광(CBT) 주류화를 위한 한-아세안 협력방안

1. 서론

관광은 전세계적으로 빠르게 성장하고 있는 산업분야이다. 유엔세계관광기구UNWTO에 따르면, 관광산업은 지난 8년 동안 연 평균 4%씩 꾸준히 성장해왔으며, 2017년 여행자 수는 전년도보다 7% 증가하였다(UNWTO 2018). 아세안은 그 중에서도 가장 두드러진 성장을 보이는 지역으로, 2015년 약 1억 6백만명이 아세안 국가를 방문하였으며, 이에 따른 국제관광객지출 international tourist receipts도 2012년부터 매년 증가하고 있는 추세이다 (UNWTO 2017). 뿐만 아니라 관광은 아세안 회원국 간에서도 중요한 경제적 교류를 차지하는 분야 중 하나로, 아세안 회원국들의 연간 관광객 중 절반 정도가 다른 아세안 회원국에서 여행한 관광객이다 (ASEAN, 2017, p. 15). 아세안 경제공동체ASEAN Economic Community, AEC에서 관광은 외국자본과 자원을 유치하는 수단으로 경제성장의 핵심 역할을 수행하고 있다

최근의 관광은 지속가능성과 밀접하게 연결되어 있으며, 새로운 패러다임을 중심으로 사회 경제적 진보의 핵심 동인으로 작용하고 있다. 전지구적으로 의미 있는 관광에 대한 논의가 활발하게 진행되면서 생태관광eco-tourism, 친-빈곤관광Pro-poor tourism, 윤리관광ethnic tourism, 책임관광responsible tourism 그리고 지역기반관광community based tourism 등이 등장하였다. 이러한 종류의 관광형태는 궁극적으로 종래에 발생하던 대규모 관광mass tourism의 문제를 개선하고, 나아가 지역사회 및 미래세대를 위한 지속가능한 관광sustainable tourism, ST을 목표로 하는 대안으로 여겨지고 있다.

그중 지역기반관광CBT은 지난 20년 동안 아세안 국가들의 관광 전략에 포함되어 개발 수단으로 활용되어왔다. 특히 지역기반관광은 소외된 시골 지역을 중심으로 빈곤감소를 꿈꾸며, 관광을 통해 지역 주민들이 핵심 이해관계자로 활동하면서 의사결정과 리더십, 민주주의와 공동체적 가치 실현까지 기대해 볼 수 있기 때문에 많은 NGO와 개발기구에서 지역발전 수단으로 각광받았다(Isaac & van der Sterren, 2004). 지역기반관광이 과연 지역의 지속 가능한 경제 수입을 보장할 수 있을지에 대해서는 여전히 논란이 있지만, 아세안 회원국들은 지리적, 문화적 유사성을 바탕으로 지역기반관광 사례를 공유하고 공동의 표준standard을 만드는 등 정책적으로 지역기반관광을 장려하고 있다. 한국도 이러한 흐름에 따라 아세안과의 관광협력의 형태로 다양한 문화 활동 및 홍보 프로그램과 공적개발원조Official Development Aid, ODA를 진행하고 있다.

본고에서는 지역기반관광 주류화mainstreaming를 위한 한국과 아세안간 협력방안에 대해 다루고, 아세안 지역에서도 증가하고 있는 지역기반관광CBT의 추세와 맥을 같이하며 실제 활용도가 높은 정책적 함의를 전달하고자 한다. 2절부터는 선행 연구를 바탕으로 지역기반관광에 대한 이론적 논의들을 살펴보고, 어떠한 비전을 가지고 나아가야 하는지 고찰해볼 것이다. 3절에서는 아세안 국가에서 지역기반관광이 어떤 형태로 이루어지고 있는지 그 특징과 대표사례를 살펴보고 아세안 회원국이 공유하고 있는 지역기반관광 표준ASEAN CBT Standard을 알아보고자 한다. 4절에서는 지역기반관광을 촉진시키기 위한 한-아세안 관광 협력 정책이 나아가야 할 방향을 모색할 것이다. 끝으로 결론에서는 앞선 내용을 요약하고, 상호 협력과 평화의 측면에서 관광이 갖는 중요성에 대해 언급하고자 한다.

2. 지역기반관광의 등장과 전개: 이론적 논의를 중심으로 증가하는 아세안 관광 수요와 대규모 관광의 문제점

아세안 경제공동체AEC는 아세안을 구성하는 10개 회원국의 단일 시장 및 단일 생산기지 형성을 주요 목표로 2015년 12월 31일 정치-안보공동체, 사회-문화공동체와 함께 3개 아세안 공동체ASEAN Community 중 하나로 공식 출범하였다. AEC에 있어 관광은 지속가능발전 목표를 달성함과 동시에 회원국의 통합을 통해 관광의 긍정적인 효과를 균형 있게 나누고, 안전과 안보 문제의 해결, 국경을 넘는 절차의 간소화 및 비용 경감, 교통과 관광지 시설에서 발생하는 혼란을 최소화하는 것을 목표로 하고 있다(ASEAN, 2015, p. 26)

〈표1〉 아세안 회원국 내 국제 관광객

아세안 회원국	(단위: 천 명)				전년 대비 증가율(%)		
	2010	2014	2015	2016	14/13	15/14	16*/15
브루나이	214	201	218	219	-10.6	8.6	0.3
캄보디아	2,508	4,503	4,775	5,012	7.0	6.1	5.0
인도네시아	7,003	9,435	9,963	-	7.2	5.6	-
라오스	1,670	3,164	3,543	3,315	17.2	12.0	-6.4
말레이시아	24,577	27,437	25,721	26,757	6.7	-6.3	4.0
미얀마	792	3,081	4,681	-	50.7	51.9	-
필리핀	3,520	4,833	5,361	5,967	3.2	10.9	11.3
싱가포르	9,161	11,864	12,052	12,913	-0.3	1.6	7.1
태국	15,936	24,810	29,923	32,588	-6.5	20.6	8.9
베트남	5,050	7,960	7,944	10,013	5.1	-0.2	26.0
합계	70,431	97,288	104,181	96,784			

출처 : World Tourism Organization (2017) 재구성 (p. 9)¹

관광은 전세계적으로 빠르게 성장하고 있는 산업분야이다. 유엔세계관광기구UNWTO에 따르면, 관광산업은 8년 동안 연 평균 4%씩 꾸준히 성장해

왔으며, 2017년 방문객 수는 전년도보다 7% 증가하였다(UNWTO, 2018). 그 중 아세안 국가가 포함된 동남아 지역은 두드러진 증가율을 보이고 있으며, 동남아시아 국가를 방문하는 관광객의 증가율은 전세계의 관광인구 유입 증가율보다 더 높을 것으로 전망된다. 아세안 회원국을 방문하는 관광객 수는 해마다 증가하고 있으며, 〈표1〉에 따르면 베트남(+26%)과 필리핀(+11%)은 그 중에서도 두드러진 증가율을 보이고 있다(WTO 2017, p. 9). 방문객들이 늘어남에 따라 관광산업에 대한 아세안의 경제 의존도도 점차 증가하고 있는데, 2016년 동남아시아 지역에서 발생한 직접관광수익¹은 1,197억 달러, 전체 국내총생산GDP의 약 4.7%를 차지하고 있다. 절대적인 관광 수익액은 유럽, 북아메리카, 동북아시아 및 라틴아메리카 보다 낮지만, 국내총생산에서 관광이 차지하는 비율은 카리브해 지역과 함께 1위를 차지한다(WTTC 2018 p. 8).

관광객이 증가하면서 종래에 일반적인 형태의 관광은 여러 가지 문제들을 야기했고 소위 대규모 관광mass tourism은 개발과 성장에만 초점을 맞춘 나머지 더이상 관광을 할 수 없는 환경을 형성했다(김철원, 2016). 대표적으로 관광객의 집중 현상과 지역 경제의 소외 현상을 주목해볼 수 있다. 관광객들이 과도하게 집중되면 지역의 물리적 수용력physical carrying capacity을 초과하게 되고, 결국 경제적 비용이 발생하여 관광산업이 지속되기 어렵다(제주관광공사 2017, p. 67). 아세안 회원국 중 이러한 문제가 발생한 대표적인 지역이 바로 필리핀의 보라카이Boracay이다. 보라카이는 많은 관광객들이 유입되면서 지역 오폐수 처리용량을 초과해, 오랜 기간 정화되지 않은 하수를 바다로 흘

1 직접관광수익 분야는 호텔, 여행사, 항공사 또는 기타 관광운송서비스 산업, 레저 및 음식점과 같이 관광객들에 의해 직접적으로 창출되는 분야를 말한다.

려 보냈고, 결국 복구 작업을 위해 2018년 4월 26일 폐쇄되었다. 보라카이에 36,000개의 관광 관련 일자리가 있는데, 필리핀 사회경제계획국장 Socioeconomic Planning Secretary **얼네스토 펠니아(Ernesto Pernia)**에 따르면 앞으로 6개월의 폐쇄 조치 기간 동안 약 1,960억 페소(Peso), 한화 약 5조 500억 원의 손해가 발생할 것으로 전망하였다(Chrisee Dela Paz, 2018). 또한 관광이 지역 주민들의 소득창출에 악영향을 미치기도 하는데, 대만 관광지를 대상으로 진행한 한 연구에 따르면, 관광과 직접 연계되지 않은 전문 서비스 직종, 예컨대 재단 소나 원단 상점, 혼례 물품 판매점(dowry shop), 금세공소, 보석상점들은 문을 닫았으며, 관광과 직접적인 연관이 있는 사업이더라도 다국적기업들에 의해 잠식당해 지역 관광을 통해 발생하는 수익의 일부를 포기해야 했다(Chi Wen Liu, 2012, p. 310). 뿐만 아니라 지역관광산업이 발달하면서 지역생활을 뒷받침 하던 자발적 행동들(아침에 집 앞 거리를 쓸거나 지역주민들의 정기 모임 등)도 사라졌다. 위와 같은 사례들은 지역 경제와의 상생과 장기적으로 지속가능한 관광산업을 위해서는 대안적 형태의 관광이 필요하다는 점을 시사하고 있다.

지역기반관광CBT의 이론적 정의와 비판

한 지역으로 집중되는 관광 인구를 분산시키고 낙후된 지역의 균등발전에 적합한 대안관광(alternative tourism)의 한 형태로 지역기반관광CBT 모델이 주목 받고 있다. 지역기반관광이란 지역의 고유자원(인적 및 물적 자원 등)을 활용하여 경제 발전을 추구하는 지역 주도형 관광산업을 말한다(Reid Mair & George, 2004). 대규모 관광은 지역주민들을 관광산업에서 소외시키는 형태로 진행되었다. 종래에 상업 경쟁력이 부족한 지역주민들은 관광 시장에서 밀려났고, 지역의 토지는 외부인들에 의해 관리되고 사용이 제한되면서 정작 주민들

이 지역의 소유권을 주장하기 어려웠다(Marina, Nia, Claudia 2017). 지역기반관광은 지역 공동체가 관광산업에서 토지와 자원에 대한 권리를 되찾는 소극적인 의미도 담고 있지만, 지역에서 소외된 계층 예컨대, 여성이나 아이들을 관광산업의 주요 이해관계자로 참여시킴으로 기존에 하향적 의사결정 권한을 상향식으로 전환한다는 적극적인 의미로도 해석될 수 있다(Mearns, 2003; Tosun, 2000). 궁극적으로 관광산업을 통해 주민들 스스로가 기술을 습득하고 지역 환경을 개선하는데 앞장서며 경제적, 사회적, 정치적 수준에서 지역 전반의 역량을 강화하는 것이 지역기반관광의 주요 목표라고 할 수 있다(Scheyven, 2002).

지역기반관광의 가치는 AEC에서 제시한 ‘비전 2025와 경제공동체의 미래’에 명시된 바와 같이 ‘사람 기반(people oriented), 사람을 중심으로 한 공동체(people-centred community)’에서 찾을 수 있다(ASEAN, 2015, p. 9). 오랜 기간 지역발전 전략을 수립하면서 현재까지 많은 개발기구들이 간과하고 있었던 한가지는 가난한 사람들을 재원으로 활용하는 것이다. 지역기반관광은 지역 주민들로부터 모든 사업이 시작된다는 점에서 ‘사람을 기반’으로 하고 있고, 그 경제적 효과가 지역 내부로 흘러가 대규모 관광 기업이나 다국적 기업들이 성장하는 것이 아닌 열심히 일한 주민들이 성장하는 ‘사람을 중심으로’ 하고 있다.

하지만 지역기반관광에 대한 개념은 20년 전부터 등장하고, 여러 국가에서 활용되어 왔음에도 불구하고 주류 관광 형태로 발전하지 못하고 있다. 여기에는 여러가지 요인들이 작용하지만, 근본적으로는 지역이라는 주체가 갖는 시장 접근성의 한계가 핵심 요인으로 작용한다. 소외된 지역 공

동체는 대부분 가난하여 관광에 필요한 시설이나 기반설비를 구축하기 위한 자본이나 자원을 유치하기 어렵고, 국제개발기구(International Development Agency, IDA)나 비정부기구(NGO)의 재정 및 기술에 의존적인 구조를 띠고 있다(Marina, Nia, Claudia, 2017, p. 276). 지역은 여전히 시장 및 관광 정보에 대한 접근성과 대외적 영향력이 부족한 주체로, 시장 경쟁력이 낮아 관광객들의 수요를 충족하기 어려운 환경에 놓여있다(Scheyven, 2002). 예컨대 모로코(Morocco)의 셰프야우엔(Chefchaoun) 지역을 중심으로 관광객들이 지역기반관광(CBT)에 어떤 불만을 가지고 있는지 조사한 연구에 따르면, 관광객들은 기반시설의 측면에서 공공시설(공원, 정원 등)과 유흥거리(박물관, 라운지, 클럽 등) 부족, 낮은 숙박시설의 질, 교통수단 부족, 그 밖에 서비스의 질, 입에 맞지 않는 음식 및 지역 관광 가이드에 대한 낮은 신뢰도를 문제로 지적하였다(Fathi, Hafssa, Wang, Jun-Hui, Hak-Jun, 2018).

3. 아세안의 지역기반관광과 표준 정책

아세안 지역기반관광의 전개와 특징

아세안의 지역기반관광은 20년전인 1990년대 중반부터 시작되었다. 초기 지역기반관광은 여러 국제개발기구(IDAs)와 NGO에서 진행한 농촌개발 프로젝트의 일부로 여겨졌다. 대표적으로 네덜란드 개발기구인 노비브(Novib)의 지원으로 필리핀, 인도네시아, 태국에서 프로젝트 형태로 진행되었으며, 당시 지역이라는 주체는 지속가능한 관광에 기여할 수 있는 행위자로서의 미를 갖고 있었다(CBT-I 2013). 1990년대 말에는 대부분의 아세안 국가에서 지속가능한 관광, 생태 관광, 및 지역기반 관광과 관련된 이니셔티브가 등장하기 시작했으며, 지역기반관광은 타 분야와 연계되어 전개되기 시작했

다. 2000년대 초반 라오스, 캄보디아, 베트남 등에서 지역사회 발전과 자연 보호를 동시에 추구하는 생태관광을 중심으로 진행되다가, 2000년대 중반부터는 그 포커스와 접근방식이 친-빈곤관광, 책임관광 및 빈곤감소로 전환되었다(CBT-I 2013).

지역기반관광과 연계되는 분야도 다양하지만 이를 지원하는 기관도 다양하다. 초기 지역기반관광은 개발 프로젝트의 일환으로 NGO를 기반으로 진행되었으며 일부는 아시아 개발 은행(ADB)이나 유럽연합(EU) 등의 대규모 재정 지원 프로젝트로 일부는 정부 차원에서 주도되었다(CBT-I 2013). 다양한 이해관계자들의 참여는 지역기반관광이 주류 관광산업으로 발전하기 위한 밑거름이 될 수 있다. 하지만 다수의 개발 프로젝트에서 나타난 바와 같이, 다양한 이해관계자들이 참여하게 되면 비슷한 사업들에 중복적인 투자가 이루어지면서 실질적인 관광 효과로 연결되지 못할 수 있기 때문에 지역기반관광 이해관계자들간 긴밀한 협력과 관리가 요구되고 있다(강신걸, 정삼철, 박행구, 심진범, 2010).

지역기반관광은 지역마다 고유한 특성이 있기 때문에 각 지역에 따라서 다른 관광전략을 세워야 한다는 한계가 있다. 하지만 아세안은 유사한 지역적 특성을 공유하고 있어 지역기반관광을 주제로 협력하기에 유리한 조건을 가지고 있다. 대표적으로 미얀마 캄보디아, 라오스, 태국 그리고 베트남은 메콩강을 중심으로 형성된 대메콩지역(Great Mekong Sub-region)으로 유사한 자연환경과 불교문화권, 수변 생활 문화권, 다양한 인종에서 비롯된 문화적 다양성 등의 특징을 공유하고 있다(ADB, 2001). 또한 아세안 회원국들 중 절반에 해당하는 6개 국가가 중-저소득국가인데, Robertico Croes(2012)

의 연구에 따르면, 관광이 빈곤감소에 주는 영향은 경제적으로 발전한 지역보다 빈곤율이 상대적으로 높은 지역일수록 더 효과가 있었다(World Bank Group, 2018).

대표적인 지역기반관광 사례로 라오스 남하 생태관광 프로젝트(Nam Ha Ecotourism Project, NHEP)를 들 수 있다. 남하는 라오스에서 가장 가난한 루앙남타(Luang Namtha)주에 위치했으며, 생태자원 지역관광에 접목시켜 소득을 창출한 사례이다. 남하 생태관광 프로젝트(NHEP)는 기존의 일자리보다 적은 노동시간으로 높은 소득을 창출할 수 있는 양질의 대안적 일자리 제공하였으며, 관광 수익을 지역과 직접적으로 연결시켰다. 대표적인 예로 마을기반 숙박 시설 운영, 지역주민들이 운영하는 교통수단 활성화, 지역 인적자원을 활용한 가이드, 수공예 기념품, 관광 서비스 등의 분야를 통해 직접 수입을 창출할 수 있도록 도왔다. 또한 여성과 소수민족 등 소외계층을 주요 관광 이해관계자로 참여시켰는데, 그 예로 지역기반관광 가이드는 여성과 소수민족 공동체를 중심으로 고용하여 소외된 집단에게 소득이 돌아가도록 하였다. 2006년 전체 지역가이드 중 20%는 여성 가이드였으며 95%는 소수민족 출신으로 구성되었다(Equator initiative, 2012).

아세안 지역기반관광 표준 ASEAN CBT Standard

아세안은 개별 지역의 다양성과 아세안 회원국 간 유사성 사이에서 공동의 경제성장을 목적으로 지역기반관광 표준을 만들어 아세안 회원국 안에서 이루어지는 지역기반관광 사업을 관리하고 있다. ASEAN CBT Standard는 아세안 관광 전략(ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan 2012-2015) 따라 '관광객들에게 지속가능한 형태로 공동체 생활 양식, 자연자원, 문화유산을 활용

한 양질의 관광 경험을 제공'하기 위해 모든 아세안 회원국이 준수하는 기준이다(ASEAN, 2016).

ASEAN CBT Standard는 8개 카테고리, 182개의 세부 지표로 구성되어 있다. 이중 95개 지표는 지역기반관광을 위한 최소 요구사항, 57개는 고급 요구사항, 30개는 모범 요구사항에 해당한다. 이러한 요구사항들은 체크리스트의 형태로 국가관광공사(National Tourism Organisation)에 의해 관리되며 인증이 이루어진다. 관광객들은 인증 받은 지역기반관광 상품을 이용할 때 일관된 관광 품질과 서비스 수준을 기대할 수 있고 아세안 공동체는 이를 보장한다. 인증 결과를 바탕으로 지역의 이니셔티브는 스스로 학습하고 개선하는 것을 주요 골자로 하며, 평가의 주된 목적은 조건을 만족하지 못하는 지역을 관광산업에서 배제하기 위한 것이 아니라 자체평가를 통해 스스

〈표2〉 아세안 지역기반관광 표준

No.	지역기반관광 표준 내용
기준 1	지역사회 오너십과 관리 표준 Standard for community ownership and management
기준 2	사회적 웰빙에 대한 기여 표준 Standard for contribution to social well-being
기준 3	환경보호 및 개선을 위한 표준 Standard for conserving and improving the environment
기준 4	지역공동체와 방문객간 교류 증진을 위한 표준 Standard for encouraging interaction between the local community and guests
기준 5	양질의 관광과 가이드 서비스를 위한 표준 Standard for quality tour and guiding services
기준 6	양질의 음식과 음료 서비스를 위한 표준 Standard for quality food and beverage services
기준 7	양질의 숙박시설을 위한 표준 Standard for quality accommodation
기준 8	지역기반관광 친화적 (인-바운드) 관광 업체 확보를 위한 표준 Standard for ensuring performance of (in-bound) CBT Friendly Tour Operator(FTO)

출처 : ASEAN (2016)

로 지역의 역량을 강화하기 위한 것임을 강조하고 있다(ASEAN, 2016).

이제 <표2>에 제시된 각각의 기준들에 대해 자세히 살펴보기로 한다. 기준 1, '지역사회 오너십 및 관리 표준'은 관리의 측면에서 효과성과 투명성을 강화하고 지역 거버넌스를 구축하고, 국가적 수준에서 지역기반관광이 운영되도록 제도적 적법성을 보장, 이해관계자들과의 파트너십에 관한 내용을 담고 있다. 기준 2, '사회적 웰빙에 대한 기여 표준'은 지역 경제와 관광산업을 연결시켜 소득이 지역으로 돌아가게 하고, 소득을 공정하게 분배할 뿐만 아니라 관광산업이 지역 문화와 전통 그리고 인간 존엄성을 증진하는데 기여하는지 평가한다. 기준 3, '환경보호 및 개선을 위한 표준'은 전통적인 생태관광^{eco-tourism}에 관한 내용으로, 지역의 천연자원을 보존하고 자연환경을 개선하기 위한 보존 활동이 포함되어 있는지 평가하는 기준이다. 기준 4, '지역공동체와 방문객간 교류 증진을 위한 표준'은 방문객과 지역공동체간 교류 과정에서 지역의 문화에 대해 설명하고 안전과 안보를 보장하며, 소통을 통해 양질의 지속가능한 지역기반관광 상품을 개발하는 일련 내용들을 포함한다. 기준 5부터 7까지는 관광객의 수요를 반영한 양질의 관광과 관광 가이드⁽⁵⁾, 음식과 음료⁽⁶⁾, 숙박시설⁽⁷⁾을 확보하기 위한 기술을 개발하는 등의 질 관리 프로그램에 관한 내용이다. 마지막으로 기준 8은 '지역기반관광 친화적 인바운드 관광 업체 확보를 위한 표준'에는 주요 행동 주체로서 관광 업체들이 지역기반관광의 이념을 중시하고, 자연 보호 및 지역경제 지원의 가치를 준수하고 있는지를 평가한다. 부수적으로 관광객의 만족과 안전한 여행 보장에 관한 내용을 포함하고 있다(ASEAN, 2016).

다만 ASEAN CBT Standard가 지역기반관광 산업을 평가하기에는 이르다는 의견도 있다. Marina 등⁽²⁰¹⁷⁾에 따르면, 자체평가라는 방법이 편향된 결과를 유발할 수 있기 때문에, 지역 공동체와 민간부문, NGO 사이에 협력만이 지역기반관광 산업을 유치하는 지역의 강점과 약점을 파악할 수 있는 유일한 수단이라고 보고 있다(p. 270). 뿐만 아니라, ASEAN CBT Standard는 관광 지역과 해당 공동체의 서로 다른 환경과 특성에 따라 표준 내용이 융통성을 가지고 변경될 수 있어야 하기 때문에, 아직 자격을 평가할 수준은 아니며, 평가의 측면보다는 자기 점검을 통해 지역의 역량을 강화하는 수단으로서 의미를 가진다(p. 271). 아세안의 다양한 지역적 특성을 포괄하는 표준을 만들기 위해서는 몇가지 개선이 필요한 사안들이 남아있다. 하지만 지역기반관광이 관광객과 지역이 모두 만족하는 지속가능한 형태로 발전하기 위해 아세안 공동체가 함께 노력하고 있다는 사실은 의미 있으며, 이와 같은 맥락에서 ASEAN CBT Standard는 주류 관광산업으로 발전시키고자 하기 위한 초석이라고 볼 수 있다.

4. 지역기반관광 주류화를 위한 한국의 협력 방향

한국과 아세안, 양 지역간 인적교류는 관광산업을 중심으로 활발하게 이루어지고 있다. 한국과 아세안의 연간 교류인원은 2017년 기준 약 1,000만명에 달할 정도다. 이중 한국에서 아세안을 방문한 인원은 약 760만명으로 아세안은 한국인의 제1위 해외방문지역이며, 이 수치는 아세안 6개 주요 관광 국가만 해도 이미 680만명을 넘겼을 정도로 그 인기가 높아가고 있다. 한국을 찾는 아세안 관광객도 약 230만명을 기록했다.

이는 전체 국내관광객의 약 20%를 차지하는 수준이다(대한민국 외교부, 2017: 한국관광공사, 2018).

관광분야를 중심으로 하는 한국과 아세안간 협력은 여러 조직에 의해 이루어져왔다. 대표적인 한국의 협력기관으로 문화체육관광부와 한국관광공사 그리고 한-아세안센터(ASEAN-Korea Centre, AKC)를 들 수 있다. 문화체육관광부와 한국관광공사는 공적개발원조(ODA)를 중심으로 협력하고 있으며 한-아세안센터는 지역사회 관광역량강화, 지역기반관광 교류 프로그램과 각종 포럼, 전시회 등을 통해 홍보 및 옹호(advocacy) 활동을 수행하고 있다. 한국과 아세안 회원국 사이에서 이루어지는 관광 협력 분야는 다양하지만, 아직까지 아세안 관광 안내원을 대상으로 진행하는 한국어 교육 및 교통, 관광 및 기타 기술분야 교환연수사업, 관광 하드웨어(기자재 및 인프라) 사업과 관광 정보 교류 등에 한정적으로 나타나는 것이 현실이다(한국관광연구원 2000). 한-아세안 관광 협력 방안은 단순히 관광 안내원에게 한국어를 교육하고 한국 사람들이 아세안 관광에서 무엇을 바라는 알리는 대에서 벗어나, 아세안 공동체에서 수립한 중장기 목표인 ASEAN CBT Standard에 입각하여 포괄적으로 협력 방식을 재구상해야 한다. 앞서 살펴본 바와 같이 관광산업이 지속가능한 방향으로 발전하기 위해서는 대안적 형태의 관광이 요구되며, 지역기반관광은 아세안 공동체에서 정책적인 방향까지 제시한 핵심 산업이다. 이러한 아세안의 필요에 입각하여, 한-아세안 관광 협력의 행동 주체의 차원에서 정부적 차원의 협력 방안과 한-아세안센터를 중심으로 하는 국제기구적 차원의 협력 방안을 제시하고자 한다.

정부적 차원의 협력 방안: 관광 공적개발원조 ODA

아세안은 한국의 전체 ODA 규모의 30%를 차지하는 주요 국제개발협력 지역이다. 전체 26개 중점협력국 중 6개 국가가 아세안 회원국이며, 이 중 4개 국가(베트남, 인도네시아, 필리핀, 태국)가 문화관광 ODA 중점협력국에 해당한다(윤진표, 이충열, 최경희, 2016; 한국정책홍보연구원, 2014). 관광 ODA는 관광을 지역발전 수단으로 활용하는 원조유형을 말하는데, 한국은 무상원조기관인 한국국제협력단(KOICA)과 유상원조기관인 대외협력기금의 자금을 기반으로 문화체육관광부와 한국관광공사가 이를 추진하고 있다. 문화체육관광부에서 2002년부터 2014년도까지 관광 ODA 사업으로 '개도국 관광발전 지원(2008)', '저개발국 관광지도자 벤치마킹 사업연수(2014)'가 진행되었고(정보람 2016), '관광 ODA 추진 협의회' 설치, 한국관광공사와 함께한 '관광 노하우 나눔 프로젝트(Tourism Sharing Program)'를 추진하는 등 지속적으로 관광 ODA에 대한 관심을 보이고 있다.

현재 한국 관광 ODA는 한국식 원조 모듈을 개발하기 위해 노력하고 있다. 관광 ODA 원조 모듈을 개발하기 위해서는 정보람(2016)이 주장한 바와 같이 전략적으로 ODA 중점국가를 분석하는 작업이 선행되어야 한다(p. 113). 이 같은 맥락에서 진행된 대표 사업으로는 지역 커뮤니티를 기반으로 생태관광 모델을 제시하고 원주민관광을 통한 빈곤감소와 소득증대에 적용가능한 사업발굴을 목적으로 수행된 "동북부지역 원주민 관광 ODA 전략연구"를 들 수 있다. 아세안은 지역기반관광에 대한 공동의 표준 통해 회원국의 관광 사업을 관리하고 있다. 국제개발협력 분야에서 수원국 국가발전전략에 맞춰 한국의 강점분야를 중심으로 협력하는 국가별 협력전략(Country Partnership Strategy)을 수립하듯 관광 ODA에서도 아세안 회원국과 협력할

때 ASEAN CBT Standard를 고려한 중점협력국가 분석이 필요하다. 즉, 한국식 관광 ODA 모델을 수립하기 이전에 회원국의 수요에 맞게 중점 협력 분야를 체계화하는 작업이 선행되어야 한다.

국제기구적 차원의 협력방안: 지역과 관광객의 정보 격차 해소

지역기반관광의 주류화 전략에서 국제기구의 주요 역할로 홍보와 옹호 활동을 들 수 있다. 한-아세안센터는 산하의 문화관광국을 통해 국내적으로 아세안 회원국 홍보를 위해 행사 개최 및 관광정보를 제공하고, 국제적으로 아세안 국가 관광 역량강화를 위한 지원 및 문화교류 활동, 관광 역량 강화 워크숍을 통해 CLMV 캄보디아, 라오스, 미얀마, 베트남를 대상으로 기술 역량 강화 프로그램을 진행하는 등 지역기반관광 홍보 및 발전의 핵심 허브로 활동하고 있다 (한-아세안센터b, 2018). 특히, 한-아세안센터는 직접 아세안 지역기반 관광 프로그램을 운영하여 미래 세대들에게 지역기반관광을 알리고 있다. 한-아세안센터에서 진행하는 지역기반관광 프로그램은 아세안 관광 전략 계획 2016-2025에 입각하여 지역 규모에서 추진하고, 기획하고, 관리되는 관광 프로그램으로 2018년 1월에 태국 치앙마이 Chiang Mai에서 진행되었다 (한-아세안센터c, 2018).

정보 격차를 해소하는 방식도 4차 산업혁명의 영향으로 변하고 있는 추세이다. 최근 관광 트렌드는 스마트 관광으로, 사물인터넷 Internet of Thing, IoT을 기반으로 한 정보 공유가 중심이 되고 있다 (한-아세안센터d, 2018). 관광객들이 실시간으로 지역의 정보를 사진이나 동영상을 통해 공유하기도 하며, 간접적으로 생성되는 위치 데이터, 거래정보 등 전기신호적 정보도 관광산업에서 그 활용 가능성이 높게 평가받고 있다. 특히 지역기반관광의 경우 기

반정보가 부족한 소지역인 경우가 많은데, 스마트 관광은 지역과 관광객을 연결성을 증진시키는데 핵심이 될 수 있다. 대표적으로 2011년 출시된 “ASEAN Travel Mobile Application”은 모바일 아세안 여행 플랫폼으로, 아세안 국가에서 인기있는 지역의 관광정보를 한국어로 제공함으로써 지역과 관광객을 연결하고 새로운 관광객을 유치할 수 있는 사례로 들 수 있다 (한-아세안센터c, 2018). IT 기반 기술은 아직 비용적 측면이나 인프라 측면에서 지역적 수준의 보편화 단계까지는 도달하지 못했지만, 빠르게 변하는 정보화 속도에 힘 입어 지역기반관광의 정보격차를 해소하는데 핵심 역할을 수행할 수 있을 것으로 기대된다.

5. 결론

관광은 성장하고 있는 경제 분야이며, 아세안 경제의 큰 부분을 차지하고 있다. 관광 분야가 성장함에 따라, 인력 시장을 포함한 지역 경제도 관광에 의존적 형태로 전개될 것이며, 그 영향력은 아세안 전체 전반에 걸쳐 나타날 것으로 전망된다. 본고에서는 모든 형태의 관광이 지역 경제 성장으로 이어지지 않는다는 점은 다시 한번 되짚어 보았다. 지역의 물리적 수용력의 한계를 초과하여 관광인구가 집중되면 발생할 수 있는 경제적 손실과 지역경제를 잠식하는 대규모 관광의 부작용은 관광이 오히려 발전을 저해할 수 있으며, 대안적 관광이 장기적 경제성장을 위해 필요하다는 점을 시사한다. 지역기반 관광은 개념적으로 지속가능성을 내포하고 있지만 주요 관광 분야로 자리잡기 위해서는 시장 접근성이라는 문제

는 여전히 주요 관광산업으로 활성화되기 위해 해결해야 할 과제로 남아 있다.

관광 분야는 한국과 아세안 사이에 중요한 교역 분야이며, 본고에서 제시한 두가지 주체에 따른 협력방안은 지역기반관광을 주류화하기 위한 다양한 활동들 가운데 하나이다. 사실, 지역기반관광이라는 주제는 한국보다 아세안 공동체에서 더 많은 연구가 진행되었고 공동의 표준을 만드는 등 정책적인 측면에서도 더 발전했다. 2018년 한국에도 도입된 ‘한국 관광 품질인증제’는 ‘ASEAN CBT Standard’와 유사한 인증제도로, 이번과 같은 사례에서는 아세안 공동체의 정책적 제언을 통해 상호 관광 정책의 발전을 도모할 수 있는 협력의 기회로 활용해볼 수 있다. 관광은 원조와 달리 상호 간의 교류이다. 관광객은 지역의 문화를 배우지만 이러한 경험을 제공하는 지역도 관광객으로부터 그 문화를 습득하는 것처럼, 한국과 아세안 회원국 간 지역기반관광 협력은 한국의 발전경험을 공유하면서, 한국 관광에 적용 가능한 지속가능한 발전 방법을 모색해볼 수 있다. 뿐만 아니라 관광은 평화에 민감한 *peace sensitive* 산업으로, 평화가 전제되지 않는 관광은 존재할 수 없고, 관광은 양 국가 간 인종과 문화에 대한 이해와 교육 효과를 통해 분쟁을 예방할 수 있다(Werner Wintersteiner, 2014). 두 국가가 단순히 무기를 내려놓고 평화를 만들어내는 ‘부정적 평화 *negative peace*’가 아닌 화합과 사회적 정의 *social-justice*를 표방하는 ‘긍정적 평화 *positive peace*’로서 관광은 현 정부의 신남방 정책과 함께 한국과 아세안 간 발전된 외교 관계를 구축하는데 함께 고려해야 할 사안이다.

다가오는 2019년은 아세안의 관광 대국인 태국이 의장국에 오르는 해이다. 앞으로 관광산업이 어느 방향으로 전개될지 예측하기 어렵지만, 한

국과 아세안 관광 협력 과제들의 초점을 지속가능성에 맞춘다면 두 국가와 공동체 모두 바람직한 해결책을 도출하고 이를 주요 정책 흐름으로 반영할 수 있을 것이다.



ASEAN-Korea Cooperation Model through Prior Education of Marriage Immigrants from ASEAN

—Choi Young-gyun Soongsil University

Abstract

This paper suggests that cooperation model through the prior education of marriage immigrants from ASEAN in Korea is essential to drive the success of New Southern Policy proclaimed by President Moon Jae-in. To achieve this, this paper critically reviews current state of international marriage between ASEAN member states and Korea and hardships arisen during process of marriage. Root-cause of such tragedies is the lack of prior education for women who emigrate to Korea through marriage to Korean men. Most of international marriage between peoples of ASEAN and

Korea are conducted through the mediation of firms and acquaintances, and these actors often do not offer women enough information. Lack of information heavily affects life after immigration since marriage immigrants usually experience cultural adaptation through a new family before receiving governmental aids. Hence, getting information about new family and society is important to marriage immigrants. Current Korean government policy aimed at protecting marriage immigrants neglect prior education conducted before marriage and immigration. Moreover, cooperation between ASEAN and Korea in prior education is not made between central government departments but between local governments, NGOs and committees without jurisdiction. This paper suggests specific way to build cooperation model between ASEAN and Korea in prior education for marriage immigrants, and stresses that such process is critical for the continued development of relations between the two sides. It is blessing for both sides that marriage is widespread between ASEAN member states and Korea, for no investment nor alliance is more solid than bond of family. If ASEAN and Korea cooperate to remove obstacles in the way of becoming one family, people of both sides will truly feel that they are bound together, and it will be a great foundation for the New Southern Policy.

아세안 출신 결혼이주여성의 사전교육을 통한 한-아세안 협력 모델

I. 머리말

오늘날 한국과 아세안 사이의 교류는 국가 혹은 기업 간의 협력을 넘어 양측 국민들이 실감할 수 있는 일상까지 영향을 미치게 되었다. 한-아세안 교류·협력에서 가장 중요하고 장기적으로 양측의 관계를 규정할 만한 사안은 아세안 출신 여성들의 '결혼이주'다. 인간이 관계를 맺는 공동체 중 가족보다 더 깊은 공동체는 없으며, 결혼이주로 인해 한국과 아세안의 국민들이 한가족이 되고 있기 때문이다. 한국인 남성과 외국인 여성과의 결혼은 2016년 기준 15,176건이며, 이중 결혼이주여성의 국적은 중국(35.25%)에 이어 베트남(31.50%)이 두 번째로 많은 비율을 차지할 만큼 아세안 국가들의 비중이 높다(통계청, 2017).

한국의 문재인 대통령은 갈수록 관계가 밀접해지는 아세안과의 협력을 강화하기 위해 2017년 11월 신남방정책을 천명했다. 신남방정책에서 주로 강조된 것은 중국 중심의 교역에서 벗어난 아세안과의 무역 증대와 한반도 평화로, 경제적·외교적 과제였다. 하지만 한국 정부가 한-아세안 국민들 사이에 이미 상당한 규모로 만들어지고 있는 '가족 공동체'의 과제에 보다 관심을 기울이지 않으면, 장기적 관점에서 거시적인 외교와 경제에도 부정적인 영향을 끼치리라 추측된다. 실제로 캄보디아 정부는 자국민과 한국인의 결혼을 전면 금지하기도 했는데, 이는 한국인 남성들이 '인신매매'의 형태로 캄보디아 신부를 사간다는 인식에 따른 조치다. 아세안 중 한국인과

의 국제결혼이 가장 큰 규모로 행해지는 베트남은 한국인의 비윤리적 맞선 방식을 지적하며 한국인에게 특히 까다롭게 국제결혼 심사를 강화했다. 아세안 국가의 정부와 국민들 사이에 한국인과 가정을 꾸리는 것이 인신매매로 널리 여겨지는 것은 어떤 경제협력이나 한류(韓流)스타보다도 한-아세안 관계에 큰 변수로 작용할 것이다.

따라서 한-아세안 가족 공동체의 핵심인 아세안 출신 결혼이주여성들의 한국 정착을 지원하는 것은 국내 다문화 인구정책을 넘어 외교적 사안으로 관점의 확장이 필요한 사안이다. 그리고 외교 사안에 걸맞게 결혼이주에 관해 아세안 각국과의 협력모델이 구축되어야 한다. 본 연구의 요지는 결혼이주여성들이 직면하는 문제점들 대부분의 근본 원인(root-cause)이 결혼·입국 전에 결혼이주여성들이 상대 남성과 한국에서의 결혼생활에 대한 충분한 정보를 현지에서 교육받지 못한 데 있다는 것이다. 또한 한국의 국제결혼 정책에 아세안 국가와 공조하여 진행되는 현지 사전교육이 부재하며, 신남방정책의 지속적인 발전을 위해서는 결혼이주여성의 성공적인 정착을 위한 한-아세안 협력모델의 개발이 필수적임을 고찰할 것이다.

이 글은 총 5장으로 구성되어 있으며, 2장에서는 한-아세안 국제결혼의 현황과 문제점을 고찰해보고자 한다. 3장에서는 결혼이주여성 보호를 목적으로 한 한국 정부 정책의 보완점을 살펴보고, 4장에서는 3장에서 살펴본 정책의 개선 방안과 여성 대상의 현지 사전교육을 위주로 한 아세안 국가와의 협력 방안을 제안하고자 한다. 마지막으로 5장에서는 본 연구의 시사점을 제시하며 글을 마무리하고자 한다.

II. 한-아세안 국제결혼

한국의 국제결혼은 대략 세 가지 방식으로 이뤄진다. 연애결혼, 종교를 통한 결혼, 지인·업체의 중매를 통한 결혼이다. 한국 남성과 외국인 여성의 결혼은 여성의 국적에 따라 결혼이 이뤄지는 방식이 큰 차이를 보인다. 아세안 국민과의 국제결혼에서 가장 많은 상황인 한국 남성과 베트남 여성 사이의 국제결혼은 65.8%가 중개업체를 통해 성사된다(통계청, 2015). 정부의 실태조사는 중 베트남·필리핀, 그리고 그 외 아세안 국민이 한국인 배우자를 만난 경로를 다음과 같이 제시한다.

〈표 1〉 한국인 배우자의 상대방 만남 경로

	결혼중개업체	가족친척소개	친구동료소개	종교기관	스스로	기타	합계
베트남	65.8%	12.2%	18.1%	0.8%	3.0%	0.1%	100%
필리핀	29.6%	14.3%	20.5%	23.1%	12.6%	0.0%	100%
그 외 동남아	43.9%	13.6%	16.7%	7.7%	16.6%	1.5%	100%

출처: 2015 다문화가족 실태조사 (현재 배우자와의 만남 경로)

결혼이주여성이 한국인 배우자를 만난 경로에서 소개·중개의 비율이 압도적으로 높다는 통계는 다른 외국인 집단과 비교해 결혼이주여성 집단이 가진 독특한 성격과 맞물려 시사점을 드러낸다. 결혼이주여성들은 다른 외국인 집단과 달리 한국인과 가족 관계를 맺게 된다. 이 점은 이주여성들의 문화적응 과정을 규정한다. 문화적응은 “서로 다른 문화적 배경을 가진 사람들이 지속적으로 접촉하면서 서로의 문화적 경계를 좁히고 바뀌어 가는 과정”(Alba & Nee, 2009, p. 59)이다. 결혼이주여성은 매우 사적인 영역인 가족

관계 안에서 초기 문화적응을 거친 후에야 한국 정부의 제도적 지원을 받아 가족 밖으로 사회적 관계를 넓혀 나간다. 제도적 지원이 거의 없는 상태에서 개인적인 사회적 관계를 먼저 형성한다는 점이 결혼이주여성이 지닌 고유한 특징이다. 따라서 결혼이주여성들은 한국과 결혼 상대에 대한 정보를 주로 결혼중개업체나 소개를 맡은 지인에 의존하는 경우가 많고, 그렇기 때문에 향후 결혼·정착생활에 있어서 이들의 역할은 매우 중요하다.

그러나 중개업체를 통한 경우가 많은 한-아세안 국제결혼 과정에서 결혼이주여성들의 충분한 사전 교육과 자유로운 의사결정이 보장되지 않는다는 지적, 그리고 여성들에 대한 인권침해가 심각하다는 지적이 끊이지 않고 있다. 국제사회는 이를 심각하게 인식해 2007년 8월 유엔 인종차별철폐위원회는 결혼중개업체를 통해 한국에 이주하는 여성의 급증, 그리고 그 과정에서 인신매매적인 인권침해가 발생하기도 하는 한국의 상황에 대해 깊은 우려를 표하였다. 2010년대 들어서 결혼중개업체들은 유튜브 플랫폼에 광고를 게재하였는데, 2018년 지금 시점에서도 해당 광고들은 “19살 달콤한 소녀”, “처녀 몸매보다 잘 가꾸어진 재혼녀” 등 극단적인 성상품화 문구를 포함한 사례가 빈번하다. 지인의 소개 역시 결혼 관련 브로커들과 밀접한 관계를 맺고 있는 경우가 많기 때문에 결혼 과정에서 발생하는 문제는 유사하다(박신혜, 2016).

III. 한국 정부의 결혼이주여성 보호 정책과 보완점

결혼이주여성에 대한 한국 정부의 정책지원은 크게 여성가족부가 간사로 있는 다문화가족정책위원회의 <다문화가족지원정책>, 법무부가 간사로

있는 외국인정책위원회의 <외국인정책> 두 가지 경로로 이루어진다. 그런데 이 중 <외국인정책 기본계획>에서 제시된 결혼이주여성 대상의 정책은 모두 <다문화가족지원정책 기본계획>에 포함되어있다. 본 단락은 결혼이주여성 보호 정책에 대해 논하고 있으므로 <다문화가족지원정책>의 내용을 살펴보고 그 내용이 결혼이주여성이 겪는 정보의 부족과 인권침해를 해소하는 데 실질적인 기여를 하는지를 분석할 것이다.

<다문화가족지원정책 기본계획>에는 5개 분야, 20개 중점과제, 62개의 세부과제들이 제시되어 있는데, 중점과제 중 결혼이주여성의 보호를 위한 과제로는 중점과제 3-1 “입국 전 결혼의 진정성 확보”와 3-4 “피해자 보호”가 있다. 입국·결혼 이후 삶을 보호하는 것 역시 매우 중요하나, 본 연구는 아세안 국가와의 협력 모델을 다루고 있으므로, 아세안 국가와의 협력이 용이한 현지 사전교육 내용이 포함된 중점과제 3-1이 연구의 대상이다.

중점과제 3-1의 내용은 다음과 같다.

<표 2> <다문화가족지원정책 기본계획> 중점과제 3-1

중점과제 3-1 입국 전 결혼의 진정성 확보	
세부과제 1	국제결혼 사증심사 강화 - 결혼이민자 사증심사시 초청자의 실질적 피초청자 부양가능여부 심사 - 개별 인터뷰 실시 등 혼인의 진정성, 혼인경력, 신체·정신적 건강상태, 범죄경력 등 실질적 심사 강화
세부과제 2	국제결혼 이민관 파견 검토
세부과제 3	국제결혼 전 신상정보 제공 제도 정착화 - 신상정보 제공 제도의 운영실태 분석 등 규제의 재검토를 통한 신상정보 제공 제도의 실효성 제고 방안 검토
세부과제 4	국제결혼중개업체의 불법행위에 대해 현장 점검·단속활동 및 불법·탈법 혐의 국제결혼중개업체에 대한 통합조사 강화

출처: 제2차 다문화가족정책 기본계획(2013~2017)

이러한 정부의 결혼이주여성 보호정책은 지속적으로 제기된 국제사회의 경고에 다문화가족정책위원회라는 책임 있는 컨트롤타워를 세워 대응했다는 데 의의가 있다. 그러나 실질적인 정책 추진 상황은 낙관적이지 못하다. 원인으로는 다문화가족정책위원회의 낮은 위상, 여러 부처의 정책들에 대한 총괄 및 조정 기능의 미흡함 등 다양한 문제점들이 꼽힌다. 그러나 본 연구는 입국 전의 심사·감독 단계에서 이주여성이 국적을 가진 상대 국가와의 협력·공조 내용, 그 중에서도 이주여성에 대한 현지 사전교육이 전혀 포함되지 않은 것에 주목한다. 기본계획의 세부정책은 대부분 한국 정부 소관으로 한국 남성을 심사하는 데 초점이 맞춰져 있으며, 이주여성에 대해서는 ‘교육’ 목적으로 현지에서 시행되는 조치가 전혀 없이 진행되는 개별 인터뷰만 포함되어있다.

2018년 9월 기준으로 베트남, 몽골, 캄보디아, 필리핀 4개 국가에서는 결혼이주 예정자를 대상으로 현지 사전교육이 여성가족부의 위탁용역으로 운영되고 있다(여성가족부 2016). 그러나 한국 정부는 현 시점까지 직접적인 정부부처 간 공조를 통한 현지 사전교육이라는 개념에 큰 관심을 두지 않았으며, 기본계획에도 사전교육 관련 내용이 누락되어 있다. 실제로 현지사전교육은 8시간에서 24시간이라는 매우 짧은 시간동안 이루어진다. 다문화가족정책위원회가 역점을 둔 사업은 결혼 초청 남성의 신원 확인과 관리였다. 정부는 ‘국제결혼 건전화 조치’로 자평하는 결혼중개업체 관리와 2014년 4월부터 시행된 결혼비자심사 강화정책을 통해 국제결혼이 건전화 되어가고 있다는 인식을 가졌다. 정부가 추진한 결혼비자심사의 강화정책 내용은 다음과 같다. 결혼비자 발급 규정으로 첫째, 결혼이민자가 기초 이상의 한국어 구사 능력을 갖추고 있는지 심사하고, 둘째, 결혼이민자의

안정적인 정착을 위해 초청자가 일정 수준 이상의 소득과 주거지를 보유하고 있는지를 심사하고, 셋째, 결혼이민자 초청 제한 기간을 강화하며, 넷째, 국적 및 영주자격 취득 후 3년 이내 다른 외국인을 결혼 목적으로 초청하는 것을 제한한다.

하지만 일련의 정책들의 시행을 정작 경각심을 가지고 있는 상대 정부에서는 관리·감독을 할 방법이 전무하기 때문에 아세안 국가가 실제로 체감하는 바는 크지 않으리라 추측된다. 2012년에 기본계획이 발표된 이후의 여성가족부와 다문화가족정책위원회의 결혼이주여성 관련 자료에서도 관련 당사국과의 공조를 검토·추진하겠다는 언급은 존재하지 않는다.

그 결과로 다문화가족정책위원회의 과제는 대부분 실질적인 효력을 갖추지 못하게 된다. 가장 대표적인 사례로, 결혼중개업법에 의거하여 결혼이주여성들은 상대 남성에게 대한 신상정보와 통역을 제공받을 권리와 의무가 있지만, 실질적으로 결혼 과정에서 제대로 된 설명을 받지 못하는 여성이 대부분이다(박신혜, 2016, p. 41). 이와 같은 이주과정을 거친 여성은 대개 입국 후의 정착과정에서도 완전히 새로운 환경에서 상당한 어려움을 겪게 된다. 또한 어려움에 대처하기 위해 지원을 받을 수 있는 네트워크가 부족하고 한국의 제도와 법률에 대한 이해를 어려워하며 이들은 무방비한 상태에 놓이게 된다. 이런 상황에서는 국제결혼의 많은 측면들이 은폐되어 오직 여성 개인의 인내로 이겨내야 한다(김현미, 김민경, 김정선, 2008, p. 140).

IV. 아세안 국가들과의 결혼이주여성 보호 협력모델

본 연구에서 다루는 결혼이주여성 보호 협력모델은 이주여성의 한국 입

국, 혼인관계 성립 이전 상태에서 이주여성을 대상으로 진행되는 현지 사전교육을 의미한다. 그리고 현지 사전교육은 해당 개념을 국내에 처음 도입한 한국의 비정부기구 단체인 유엔인권정책센터의 정의를 따른다. 유엔인권정책센터는 2007년 베트남 호치민에서 ‘베트남 결혼이주여성을 위한 출국 전 정보제공 프로그램(Pre-Departure Orientation Program for Korea-Bound Vietnamese Spouses)’을 통해 현지 사전교육을 처음 실시했다. 유엔인권센터는 교육의 목적을 한국 입국비자 발급을 기다리는 여성들에게 인신매매적 국제결혼의 문제점, 한국의 사회문화와 언어, 각종 지원프로그램에 대한 정확한 기본 정보들을 미리 제공함으로써 안전한 이주를 돕고 자신의 삶을 스스로 준비할 수 있는 역량을 강화하고 한국에서의 생활에 적응할 수 있도록 기본적인 생활 정보 및 문화, 관습에 대한 정보를 제공하고 한국 생활에 도움이 될 수 있는 복지 관련 정보를 제공하는 것으로 정의했다(유엔인권정책센터 2009).

교육의 주체는 한국과 아세안의 책임 있는 정부 산하 기구가 되어야 한다. 현재 다문화가족정책위원회는 단지 연간 1~2회의 회의만 할뿐 실질적인 활동이 극히 미흡한 조직이다. 이와 같은 상태에서 다문화가족정책위원회가 외국 정부와 적극적으로 협력하기는 불가능하다. 따라서 정부는 제일 먼저 다문화가족정책위원회의 위상과 권한을 확보하는 것이 아세안에서 한국의 국가적 이미지 재고에 매우 중요하다는 것을 인식해야 한다. 현재 다문화가족정책위원회는 위에 상술한 것처럼 여성가족부가 간사를 맡고 있는데, 이는 결혼이주여성 관련 정책이 국내 인구·가족정책의 일부에 불과하다는 의식에 머물러 있기 때문이다. 정부는 현재 다문화가족정책위원회에 참여하는 여성가족부와 법무부 이외에도 외교부 인사를 위원에 임명함으로써 위원회가 외국 정부와 협력하기 용이하도록 지원할 필

요가 있다.

또한 다문화가족정책이 국민 다수가 아닌 특정 소수를 대상으로 한다는 측면에서 각 부처의 관심도가 낮을 수 있으며, 상술한 대로 외교부 등 위원회 참석 부처 수가 늘어난다면 현재보다도 위원회가 방치될 가능성은 더욱 커진다. 그렇기 때문에 정부는 위원회의 규모와 위원의 다양성을 확보하면서도 정책위원회와 실무 소위원회의 역할에 있어서 명확한 역할 구분과 책임을 제시해야 할 것이다.

현재 여성가족부의 위탁 운영으로 시행되고 있는 현지 사전교육은 절대적인 교육 진행 시간도 짧을 뿐더러, 제한된 시간 안에서 교육의 완결성을 확보하기 위해 지나치게 다양한 정보를 제공하려 하는 바람에 오히려 그 구체적인 역할이 모호해졌다(박신혜, 2016, p. 46). 이주여성의 사회적·경제적 위치와 초청 남성의 이력을 고려하여 교육의 방향과 내용을 다양하게 분화할 필요가 있다. 교육의 목적을 어떻게 설정하느냐에 따라 교육의 초점은 두 갈래로 나눌 수 있다. 첫째, 결혼이주여성의 인권에 중점을 두어 이주의 안전을 위한 정보제공이 있고, 둘째, 사회통합에 중점을 두어 결혼이주여성의 한국 사회에서의 문화적·경제적 정착을 돕는 방식이 있다. 어떤 경우에서든 현지 사전교육의 최우선 목적은 이주 전 과정에서 여성의 알 권리와 선택할 권리를 보장하고, 자율적으로 문제를 헤쳐나갈 수 있는 힘을 기르도록 돕는 데 있다는 것을 인지해야 한다.

현지 교육에 있어 아세안 국가와의 협력 단계는 지금보다 격상시켜야 한다. 한국 정부의 현지 사전교육은 몽골, 베트남 하노이, 베트남 호치민, 캄보디아, 필리핀 등 5개 지역에서 운영된다. 베트남의 결혼이민자 현지 사전교육은 베트남 지방정부인 베트남 켄터(Cần Thơ)의 여성연맹과의 협력으로

24시간 길이의 교육 프로그램이다. 필리핀에서의 교육은 필리핀 정부의 필리핀해외이주위원회가 진행하는 16시간 프로그램에 한국이 일부를 맡는 형식이다(박신혜, 2016, p. 51). 자세한 내용은 다음 표와 같다.

〈표 3〉 베트남과 필리핀의 결혼이민자 현지사전교육

분석대상	결혼이민자 현지사전교육(2012.1.1.~2014.12.31.)	
교육대상	한국인과의 결혼을 통해 한국으로의 이주를 준비중인 자	
국가	필리핀	베트남
교육주체	필리핀해외이주위원회	켄터(Cần Thơ)여성연맹
참여형태	의무	선택
교육시간	16시간	24시간
참가자 수	3,987	3,820

출처: 여성가족부 (2015)

필리핀과 베트남의 사례는 현지 사전교육이 큰 구속력이나 영향을 가지고 있지 않음을 보여준다. 필리핀은 정부 산하 위원회가 주체가 되고, 교육이 의무사항이며, 실제 정부부처 간 협력이 다소 이루어지고 있지만, 절대적인 교육시간이 짧다. 베트남은 중국에 이은 제2의 국제결혼 대상국임에도 현지 사전교육에서의 정부부처 간 협력과 공조가 이루어지고 있지 않다. 여성가족부는 위탁으로 베트남 지방정부 산하 여성연맹과 합작하고 있으며, 참여는 의무가 아닌 선택이다. 교육 시간 역시 24시간으로 필리핀보다는 길지만 여전히 결혼과 외국 정착이라는 이주여성 삶의 중대한 과제를 돕기에는 다소 부족하다. 참가자 수도 3년 동안 3,820명으로 1년에 약 15,000건 정도의 한국-베트남 국제결혼이 성사되는 것에 비해 소수의 결

혼이주여성이 교육을 이수함을 알 수 있다.

그러므로 정부는 베트남, 필리핀, 캄보디아 등 우리 국민과의 국제결혼이 주로 이루어지는 아세안 국가와의 현지 사전교육 협력 주체를 위탁이 아닌 책임 있는 정부부처의 직접 운영으로 전환하는 것이 바람직하다. 상술한 대로 다문화가족정책위원회에 외교부 위원이 참가한다면 현지 사전교육의 위상과 영향력을 증대시키는 데 용이할 것이다. 참여 형태를 의무로 하고, 교육 시간을 이주여성들의 배경과 한국에 대한 지식 수준을 고려해서 단계화하며, 교육 방향 또한 다양화하는 것도 바람직하다.

V. 맺음말

아세안은 분명히 저성장 시기에 접어든 한국 경제의 새로운 희망이며, 아시아 평화를 함께 도모할 파트너이다. 문재인 정부는 이런 아세안의 중요성에 주목하여 신남방정책을 천명하고 협력을 한반도 주변 4강(미국, 중국, 일본, 러시아) 수준까지 끌어올리겠다고 선언하였다. 그러나 어쩌면 경제나 거시적인 평화 담론보다도 더 중요한 것은 양측 국민이 가족이라는 공동체로 묶였을 때 과연 이질적인 환경과 문화를 접한 해당 개인들이 행복한가의 여부이다. 1990년대 아세안 국민과의 국제결혼이 본격적으로 시작된 이래 20여년이 흘렀지만 여전히 한국과 아세안의 국제결혼 사례에서는 인권 침해가 빈번히 보고되고, 결혼이주여성들의 안전과 권리는 위험한 상태다. 이와 같은 모순을 해결하려는 공동의 노력을 기울이지 않는다면, 양측 간의 협력은 일정 수준 이상을 바라기 힘들 것이며, 한국은 아세안 국민들의 마음을 살 수 없을 것이다.

한국 정부는 그동안 상대적으로 경시했던 결혼이주여성을 대상으로 한 현지 사전교육을 현재보다 상위의 권한과 위상을 지닌 정부부처에게 위임해야 하며, 결혼이주여성 보호정책이 다문화·복지 차원을 넘어 국가의 이미지에 중대한 영향을 끼치는 외교적인 사안임을 명확히 인식해야 한다. 현재 미흡한 현지 교육의 운영 주체·방향·시간·형태·협력 방식을 모두 전면적으로 쇠신해야 한다.

한국과 아세안의 국민들이 결혼이라는 인연을 맺어 가족이 된다는 것은 의심의 여지 없이 양측 모두에게 축복이다. 어떤 투자나 제후도 가족 간의 유대감을 뛰어넘을 수는 없기 때문이다. 한국과 아세안의 정부가 힘과 지혜를 모아 결혼 과정에서 나타나는 문제들을 개선하려는 적극적인 의지를 보여준다면, 양측의 국민들도 서로를 가족이라 느낄 수 있게 되어 양측은 진정한 동반자의 길을 걸어갈 수 있을 것이다.

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ASEAN-KOREA CENTRE

The ASEAN-Korea Centre was established as an intergovernmental organisation mandated to promote economic and socio-cultural cooperation among the ASEAN Member States and Korea. The Centre was officially inaugurated on March 13, 2009, the year that marked the 20th anniversary of the Dialogue Partnership between ASEAN and Korea, in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding signed at the ASEAN-ROK Summit in November 2007.



The ASEAN University Network (AUN) was officially established in 1995 as an autonomous organisation under the auspices of ASEAN. AUN conducts programmes and activities to encourage and promote higher education cooperation and capacity building within ASEAN and with dialogue partners and to enhance regional integration in achieving global standards.



The Korea Herald

The Korea Herald, founded in 1953, is the nation's largest English-language daily. It is a member of the Asia News Network.

ASEAN-Korea Academic Essay Contest

With the beginning of sectoral dialogue partnership in 1989, ASEAN and Korea have become strong partners in all aspects of political-security, economy and socio-culture. Recognising this special relationship, the Government of Korea has announced the New Southern Policy aimed at further deepening its partnership with ASEAN.

ASEAN and Korea also gained international attention in 2018 with thawing of inter-Korea relations. The two Koreas signed the Panmunjom Declaration in April, and the first-ever DPRK-U.S. Summit was held in Singapore, the ASEAN Chair for 2018. ASEAN also continues to strive for economic integration of the 10 member states to strengthen the ASEAN Economic Community. Its community-building initiatives also promote the unity of the bloc, as reflected in its motto "One Vision, One Identity, One Community."

Against such backdrop, the ASEAN-Korea Centre, an inter-governmental organisation mandated to promote economic and socio-cultural cooperation between ASEAN and Korea, has organised the 2018 ASEAN-Korea Academic Essay Contest inviting students of ASEAN and Korea to share their perspectives and knowledge on ASEAN and ASEAN-Korea relations. The young perspectives of the youth of ASEAN and Korea will contribute toward building a true, genuine and lasting partnership.



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