

# THE ASEAN COMMUNITY AND THE CONCEPT OF SECURITY COMMUNITIES

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The Association of Southeast Asian Nations was established as a multilateral organization to solve common problems within a vision of international integration for the region. So, what is the reason that allow these countries to overcome differences in a markedly different group of states and conceive a common regional identity, reflected in an organization such as ASEAN? The answer to this question lies in the Constructivist paradigm of international relations and has to do with the following hypothesis: despite their marked political, cultural and economic differences, the ASEAN members that built a common identity is due to one pragmatic reason. Fostering interaction through a Security Community allows its member states to address threats coming from the international community, ensuring their survival in a complex regional and international context.

*Key words: ASEAN, Internacional integration, Security Community*

## LA ASOCIACIÓN DE NACIONES DEL SUDESTE ASIÁTICO (ASEAN) Y EL CONCEPTO DE COMUNIDAD DE SEGURIDAD

La Asociación de Naciones del Sudeste Asiático fue establecida como una organización multilateral para resolver problemas comunes dentro de una visión de integración internacional de la región. Entonces, ¿cuál es la razón que permite a estos países superar sus diferencias en un grupo de Estados diferentes y concebir una identidad regional común, que se refleja en una organización como la ASEAN? La respuesta a esta pregunta se encuentra en el paradigma Constructivista de las relaciones internacionales y tiene que ver con la siguiente hipótesis: a pesar de sus marcadas diferencias políticas, culturales y económicas, los miembros de la ASEAN que han construido una identidad común se debe a una razón pragmática. Fomentar la interacción a través de una Comunidad de Seguridad permite a sus Estados miembros hacer frente a las amenazas provenientes de la comunidad internacional, lo que garantiza su supervivencia en un contexto regional e internacional complejo.

*Palabras Claves: ASEAN, integración internacional, Comunidad de Seguridad*

Artículo Recibido: 25 de Marzo de 2016

Artículo Aprobado: 18 de Abril de 2016

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The Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) was born with the Bangkok Declaration on August 8, 1967 by its founding members and signatories from Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. ASEAN was established with the purpose of accelerating economic growth in the Southeast Asian area, working on social progress, aiding cultural development among its members, protecting peace and regional stability, and providing its member states with opportunities to discuss and resolve their differences peacefully<sup>1</sup>.

The definition of regionalism can be explained as the expression of a general sense of identity and principles combined with the conception and implementation of institutions that articulate a particular identity and shape collective action within a geographical region. However, as noted by Joseph Nye, one can make the distinction between an International region and regionalism. The former he refers to as, «as a limited number of states linked by a geographical relationship and by a degree of mutual interdependence» and the latter as «the formation of interstate associations or groupings on the basis of regions»<sup>2</sup>.

Representing more than just the Southeast Asian region, ASEAN therefore embodies the concepts of stability and development most predominantly.

## ASEAN

At first, Southeast Asian countries formed alliances with the goal of protecting their independence and safeguarding themselves against the Cold War (i.e. SEATO - South East Asia Treaty). These political-military coalition failed, but the idea of cooperating as a group was not discarded. Eventually, regional cooperation initiatives were renewed due to various historical events such as the separation of Singapore from the Federation of Malaya, the fall of Sukarno in Indonesia's government and the election of Ferdinand Marcos in the Philippines.

Subsequently, other that had been form fell apart, such as the Association of Southeast Asia (ASA), ASPAC (Asia Pacific Council) and MAPHILINDO (Malaysia,

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1 ASEAN Official Website, *The ASEAN Declaration (Bangkok Declaration)*, 8 August 1967, accessed November 15, 2015, <http://www.asean.org/news/item/the-asean-declaration-bangkok-declaration>

2 Nye, Joseph, «Introduction» in *International Regionalism: Readings*, ed. Joseph Nye (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1968), vii.

the Philippines and Indonesia). It is in this context that the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on August 8, 1967 was formed in Bangkok, with five founding member countries: the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand. With time, countries gradually joined, like Brunei Darussalam (January 8, 1984), Vietnam (July 28, 1995), Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar (both on July 23, 1997) and Cambodia (April 1999).

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations was established as a multilateral means to solve common problems within a vision of international integration for the region. As stated before, the areas of cooperation were and are today: economic, social and cultural development; political independence; solidarity among the nations of the Asia-Pacific region; respect for territorial and political sovereignty; diplomatic culture (especially for peaceful settlement of disputes); and respect for a common past.<sup>3</sup>

Some authors stated that ASEAN was born as a result of fear rather than idealistic convictions about regionalism. «Acharya views 'ASEAN regionalism as a process of interaction and socialization and focuses on the norms which underpin this process... Recognizing ASEAN's viability as a manifestation of regional stability is obvious when one sees that 'the organization's approach to regionalism has been geared to inducing cooperative behavior from its members through socialization, rather than «constraining» uncooperative behavior through sanctions.»<sup>4</sup>

In other words, in a historical context marked by regional isolationism and the bipolar conflict of the Cold War, its birth showed the desire to prevent the spread of communism from Vietnam to neighboring countries and the need for protection against the various territorial disputes. Such protectionism required a supranational international framework, because of its peaceful resolution abilities, as articulated in the Treaty of

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3 «As set out in the ASEAN Declaration, the aims and purposes of ASEAN are:

1. To accelerate the economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region through joint endeavours in the spirit of equality and partnership in order to strengthen the foundation for a prosperous and peaceful community of Southeast Asian Nations;
2. To promote regional peace and stability through abiding respect for justice and the rule of law in the relationship among countries of the region and adherence to the principles of the United Nations Charter;
3. To promote active collaboration and mutual assistance on matters of common interest in the economic, social, cultural, technical, scientific and administrative fields;
4. To provide assistance to each other in the form of training and research facilities in the educational, professional, technical and administrative spheres;
5. To collaborate more effectively for the greater utilisation of their agriculture and industries, the expansion of their trade, including the study of the problems of international commodity trade, the improvement of their transportation and communications facilities and the raising of the living standards of their peoples;
6. To promote Southeast Asian studies; and
7. To maintain close and beneficial cooperation with existing international and regional organisations with similar aims and purposes, and explore all avenues for even closer cooperation among themselves.» ASEAN Official Website, accessed November 15, 2015, <http://www.asean.org/news/item/the-asean-declaration-bangkok-declaration>

4 Acharya, Amitav and Buzan, Barry, eds., *Non-Western International Relations Theory. Perspectives on and beyond Asia*, (London: Routledge, 2009), 139.

Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TACSE) that was signed the same year of the founding of ASEAN.

It is interesting to explore the context in which the «Bangkok Declaration» was signed. Also known as the «ASEAN Declaration», the Bangkok Declaration outlined the objectives and purposes of this multilateral organization. ASEAN members sought to accelerate economic growth, the progress of their societies, and the cultural development of their region. The declaration also promoted peace and regional stability, respect for justice, and the rule of law in interstate interactions in the region. Consistent with the above principles, ASEAN affirmed its respect for the United Nations Charter.

*Based on the ASEAN Declaration, the countries internalized the fundamental principles of the organization.* This is also known as the ‘ASEAN Way’. According to Kripa Sridharan, the ‘ASEAN Way’ refers to «a regional political culture that stresses informality, consensus-building and non-interference in the internal affairs of member states. Consensus is the critical element in ASEAN’s decisional process.»<sup>5</sup>

These fundamental principles are the rules or precepts that govern relations between states that make up ASEAN. So, what are these principles?

First, respect for sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national identity of all nations.

Second, the law available to each State to carry out its public life, free from foreign interference, subversion or coercion acts.

Third, ASEAN member countries assume the obligation to not interfere in the internal affairs of other partner states. This principle is closely linked with that which asserts the urgent need to resolve disputes peacefully, the renunciation of the use of threats and / or force and effective cooperation between the member states.

Authors suggest that the coalition can be considered as a pluralistic security community. A pluralistic security community refers to a region that has shifted to regional and stable peace, increasing economic interdependence, and economic and political integration. This is not only because of the territorial status quo in the Asian Pacific region is stable peace, but also because of democratization, satisfaction with the territorial status quo, and a common normative basis to express the preference for peaceful means in international settlement of disputes.

It is clear that economic interdependence, cooperation and sub-regional integration are not just concepts when we look at the empirical base that gives welfare growth and unprecedented development in the region. In addition to the paradigm previously discussed, the study area is also close to a pluralistic security community, because ASEAN

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5 Sridharan, Kripa, *Regional Cooperation in South Asia and Southeast Asia* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2007), 131.

has a high degree of institutionalization and community identity, regional institutions, and high levels of economic interdependence.

The level of cooperation in diverse political regimes is, however, an anomaly that attracted the interest of scholars in the international relations field. This is because although the six nations of the World Trade Organization (WTO) has stated its firm intention (Bangkok Declaration, 1967) to be treated as equals, they are not in terms of population, territorial size, and religion.

Noting the internal situation of each country and the climate of political instability that existed in the region, it is important for this research to go deeper in the observation on each of the countries of ASEAN. For example, if we analyze the presence in the ASEAN countries like Indonesia, which has one of the largest extensions of territory and population, and the Sultanate of Brunei, it is clear that the nations in ASEAN are diverse. Years of life of every nation also gives a very uneven profile. Thailand, on the one hand, is one of the oldest states compared to the case of modern Singapore.

Another way to approach the reality of ASEAN, is examining the ethnic and religious differences. Namely, knowing that the territory in question is occupied mostly by Malays and Chinese, and culturally determined by several major world religions: Buddhism and Hinduism in Thailand; Islam in Brunei, Indonesia and Malaysia; Christianity, in the Philippines; among others.

Politically, ASEAN is also quite varied. There is the Philippine case, which went from authoritarian regimes (Marcos) to more democratic forms (Aquino and Ramos), there are also individualistic monarchies (the case of the Sultanate of Brunei), and constitutional monarchies, such as Thailand and Malaysia. There are also democracies with multiparty systems, functioning as republics or monarchies, as in the case of Indonesia; and multiparty and authoritarian systems.

Although the main motivation to promote the creation of ASEAN during the Cold War era was the collective sense of insecurity that sank the communist advance to the countries of the region, that ideal would not be enough to build a collective identity in ASEAN. *To carry out this process of multilateral cooperation channels and collective identity first required levels of interdependence.*

### **Security Communities: a Conceptual Framework**

The area of Non-Traditional Security (NTS) studies, one of the latent and frequent threats to the security of a State and organizations of countries or regions is receiving a high attention by ASEAN members. Non-Traditional Security is commonly defined as those which are termed in contrast to traditional security threats and refer to the factors other than military, political and diplomatic conflicts but can pose threats to the survival and development of a sovereign state and human kind as a whole. Examples of these

cases are transnational crime, terrorism, disaster relief, information security, climate change, and public health epidemics, among others.

As Mely Caballero-Anthony explains, «...these NTS threats have common characteristics: they tend to be nonmilitary in nature and transnational in scope (neither purely domestic nor purely interstate); they arise at very short notice and are transmitted rapidly due to globalization; they are difficult to prevent (though coping mechanisms can be devised) and resistant to national solutions, thus requiring regional and multilateral cooperation; and they are characterized by the fact that the object of security is no longer just the state (state sovereignty or territorial integrity), but also the peoples within and across states (involving survival, well-being, dignity), at both the individual and the societal levels.»<sup>6</sup>

For example, Disaster management is enclosed in the ASEAN Political-Security Community and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community. However, these two communities plus the ASEAN Economic Community constitutes the ASEAN Community, which has as its main purpose the creation of a real community in ASEAN, in which security and internal/external stability of its member states are the primary objectives.

Additionally, the condition itself of ASEAN, an association of states at the regional level that has been classified by some scholars as a *Nascent* Security Community, ensures a set of rules and prepare for a number of threats, both traditional and non-traditional (non-military), that puts at risk in the same way to states, individuals and societies. In fact, within these risks are two distinctive features of the security threats which, according to J. Peter Burgess «...surpass the boundaries of the nation states and they are interconnected through processes of globalization»<sup>7</sup>.

Burgess specifies that «no one state can manage the array of threats to its own security, nor can anyone state manage the threats to the security of its neighbors from both inside and outside its region.» To this, he adds that in a globalized world the security that a State provides to its nationals is not only related to military or foreign affairs policies. Today is not only traditional security that matters to a State, in fact «...security and insecurity are no longer considered as conditioned only upon geopolitics and military strength, but also on social, economic, environmental, moral and cultural issues.»<sup>8</sup>

This is why Disaster Management in ASEAN refers to an organization of countries that cares and prepares together against threats to internal and external security of the member states, which ultimately affects all as an association. The Security Community allows countries to fight together against these dangers and ensure regional security.

6 Caballero-Anthony, Mely, «Nontraditional Security and Multilateralism in Asia: Reshaping the Contours of Regional Security Architecture» in *Asia's New Multilateralism. Cooperation, Competition, and the Search for Community*, eds. Michael J. Green and Bates Gill, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 309 - 310.

7 Burgess, J. Peter, «Non-Military Security Challenges,» in *Contemporary Security and Strategy*, ed. Craig A. Snyder (New York: Routledge, 1999), 60.

8 Burgess, «Non-Military Security Challenges,» 60.

## A Constructivist Approach to Security Communities

The concept of Security Communities is associated with the theory of Constructivism. According to Acharya, «the concept of security community shares two of the fundamental premises of the constructivist theory of international relations, that the ‘key structures in the states system are inter-subjective, rather than material’; and that ‘state identities and interests are in important part constructed by these social structures, rather than given exogenously to the system by human nature or domestic politics’.»<sup>9</sup>

Security Communities according to this approach are constructed by states, in particular liberal ones, sharing similar identities. Raimo Väyrynen says in his work that «methodologically, the focus on common identities and norms created by social interaction makes them endogenous to the state and lead to overemphasize the harmony of social relations.»<sup>10</sup> Sharing common identities facilitate a security community whose existence proves that the members of this community reasonably share the same identities. According to Väyrynen, and in order to express the issue in a different way, «we are in trouble if the common identity is considered a necessary precondition for the emergence of a security community, while its existence is in turn regarded as an indicator of the shared identity and meanings.»<sup>11</sup>

The human tendency to group off with those who have our same interests and concerns lead us to create networks or organized groups around a desired feature or common goal. However, while we gathered, it come the immediate need to differentiate from the others and, in some way or another, to stand out in that group. Although ASEAN countries have produced a level of constant but uneven development, they have prioritized the construction of a community and a common identity that beyond promoting individual differences encourages cooperation and development between its members.

So, what is the reason that allow these countries to overcome differences in a markedly different group of states and conceive a common regional identity, reflected in an organization such as ASEAN?

The answer to this question lies in the Constructivist paradigm of international relations and has to do with the following hypothesis: despite their marked political, cultural and economic differences, the ASEAN members build a common identity is due to one pragmatic reason. Fostering interaction allows its member states to address threats coming from the international community, ensuring their survival in a complex regional and international context. For Acharya, «constructivism enhances the explanatory value of ‘community’ if one considers how structure and agency are co-constituted within

9 Acharya, Amitav, «Collective Identity and Conflict Management in South East Asia», in *Security Communities*, ed. Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 201.

10 Väyrynen, Raimo, *Stable Peace Through Security Communities? Steps Towards Theory-Building*, (University of Notre Dame: the Joan B. Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, 2000), 174.

11 *Ibid.*, 174.

ASEAN. Whenever an ASEAN member practices in the presence of another member state, or an extramural power, a specific trait of 'the ASEAN way' and the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation, the identity of both the member and its collective are reaffirmed.»<sup>12</sup>

Constructivism focus itself in the role of the ideas and how they shape the international society, and especially how they are integrated. Constructivism in international relations places the state as a unit of analysis and the international community is supported by the interaction of these actors.<sup>13</sup>

Although Constructivism gives great importance to the actors, the priority of the argument is that international relations should be observed and analyzed as a dynamic and fluid interaction based on social relationships. The essential thing is not that each stakeholder inputs different elements, but instead that the construction of the international reality agglutinates said elements. For Alexander Wendt, although the national interest guides the conduct of a State and insures its survival, the national interest is embedded in norms, values and relationships that shape their identities<sup>14</sup>.

These norms and shared values by the states form an international culture and a system of shared meanings, which leads to three types of anarchy: (a) Hobbesian anarchy, when States are seen as enemies; (b) Lockean Anarchy, when States are seen as rivals; and, (c) Kantean Anarchy, when States are seen as friends. ASEAN will be an example of a Kantean Anarchy<sup>15</sup>.

In short, the great value of the constructivist paradigm is not to accept the perpetuation of international relations in situations unrelated to the changing environment, but to argue that the identities and interests of states are constructed from interactions within social structures and can be modified as the relationships and perceptions of these actors vary over time.

### Definition, Origins and Renaissance of the Concept

So what is a Security Community? In simple words, it is defined as a region in which the use of large-scale violence (war, for example) has become something very rare. A Security Community is described also as «a group of people who had become integrated –that is, a group who had achieved a sense of community– and of institutions and practices strong enough and sufficiently widespread to convince people that necessary social, economic, and political changes could be brought about peacefully.»<sup>16</sup>

12 Acharya, Amitav and Buzan, Barry, eds., *Non-Western International Relations Theory. Perspectives on and beyond Asia*, (London: Routledge, 2009), 139.

13 Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

14 Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*.

15 Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*.

16 Sheehan, Michael, *International Security: An Analytical Survey* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2005), 27.



The most notable Security Communities academics from whose work were consulted for this paper includes, among others: Karl Deutsch; Emmanuel Adler and Michael Barnett; Amitav Acharya; Raimo Väyrynen; and, Andrej Tusicicnsy.

The Security Community concept was proposed in 1957 by Karl Deutsch and collaborators in *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area: International Organization in the Light of Historical Experience*. In their work, Deutsch and others concluded that a Security Community was «a group of people believing that they have come to agreement on at least this one point: that common social problems must and can be resolved by processes of ‘peaceful change’...»<sup>17</sup>

Stressing the early identification, Deutsch notes that people making up a community are bound or unified by a sense of community, identifying themselves as a particular group, different from the rest of the world thus associated with mutual sympathy, trust and common interests.

Almost forty years later, Emmanuel Adler and Michael Barnett with their *Security Communities* revived the concept designed by Karl Deutsch and others, and made new contributions. With the end of the Cold War, the notion of Security Communities was in vogue again, this time being adapted by Constructivist scholars from a more contemporary point of view, moving beyond the more Realist vision of the Cold War era. This can be also attributed «to developments in international relations theory that are exploring the role of identity, norms, and the social basis of global politics.»<sup>18</sup> The definition of constructivism today is closer to Security Communities. Adler and Barnett redefined Security Communities by shared identities, values and meanings, their interactions and reciprocal long-term interests.

An important point that the authors reiterated from Deutsch’s work is communication as the cement of social groups in general and political communities in particular. Deutsch himself said «communication alone enables a group to think together, to see together, and to act together.»<sup>19</sup> Accordingly, Deutsch tried to connect the development of the international community and the transformation of security policies. Adler and Barnett commented: «Specifically, he locates the dynamics for peaceful change as the result of a transformation at the international and the individual level.»<sup>20</sup>

At the international level, the formation of a community transforms the character of the state system. The authors say that by making this move, «Deutsch challenges international relations theory’s general reliance on atomistic models of interstate behavior, and

17 Deutsch, Karl W. et al., *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area: International Organization in the light of historical experience*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), 6.

18 Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett, eds., *Security Communities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 9.

19 Adler, *Security Communities...op.cit.*, p. 7.

20 *Ibid.*, p. 8.

forwards the central role of transnational forces in transforming the behavior, if not the very identities, of states.»<sup>21</sup> At the individual level, the individual formation, according to Adler and Barnett, leaves its mark on the development of a sense of ownership as a group, trust and mutual responsiveness, «suggesting that transnational forces have altered the identities of peoples.»<sup>22</sup>

Despite the great admiration of these academicians for the original work, their main contribution have been to highlight a number of shortcomings and criticisms of the concept given by Deutsch, implementing new changes and adapting it to the contemporary development of international relations. For them, the concept of Security Community did not generate at Deutsch's time more interest for future research and a strong foundation for its development. «Deutsch's conceptualization of Security Communities contained various theoretical, conceptual, and methodological problems that undoubtedly scared off future applications.»<sup>23</sup>

Also according to these authors, Deutsch overestimated the social relations that are linked together and generated by transactions as a source of new identifications. «His commitment to behavioralism, in these and other ways, overwhelmed the demand for a more interpretive approach at every turn.»<sup>24</sup>

Another reason that Adler and Barnett cite regarding why the concept did not prosper during the years after its inception and throughout the Cold War was because, «scholars began adopting new theories and concerning themselves with new research puzzles that shifted the ground away from it.»<sup>25</sup>

Adler and Barnett were attempting to overcome two drawbacks associated with Deutsch's operationalization of Security Communities. The authors are aware that they are not proposing a theory of Security Communities, but rather offering «one conceptualization of the mechanisms and conditions by which security communities develop to provide the basis for further research.»<sup>26</sup>

### How are Security Communities born?

In their book, Adler and Barnett presented the study of important concepts such as 'community' and 'dependable expectations of peaceful change', which are central to the research and understanding of the concept under study. They also included other items that add to Deutsch's original work by studying the emergence of Security Communities

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21 *Idem.*

22 Adler, *Security Communities...op.cit.*, p. 8.

23 *Idem.*

24 Adler, *Security Communities...op.cit.*, p. 9.

25 *Idem.*

26 *Ibid.* p. 10.

by three tiers: precipitating conditions; process and structural variables; and, mutual trust and collective identity.

In the authors' words, the first tier «consists of precipitating factors that encourage states to orient themselves in each other's direction and coordinate their policies.»<sup>27</sup> Examples of tier one include: change in technology, demography and environment, development of new interpretations of social reality, and, external threats.

The second tier consists of «the 'structural' elements of power and ideas, and the 'process' elements of transactions, international organizations, and social learning.»<sup>28</sup> We arrive at the third tier thanks to the positive interaction of the two variables above, which shed light on the development of trust and collective identity formation. Most important is the relationships between these three tiers, as it is responsible «for the production of dependable expectation of peaceful change.»<sup>29</sup>

Three conditions that lead a community to become a security community according to Sheehan, are the «1. primary political values of the component states needed to be compatible; 2. there needed to be established networks of political and other communication; and, 3. provided to a large extent by the dynamic interaction of the first two.»<sup>30</sup>

According to Amitav Acharya, despite the fact that governments do not seek to create a Security Community for this purpose, it can be triggered by a series of threats or forces that cause states to seek mutual cooperation and coordination (bilateral and multilateral exchanges) «such as threat perceptions, expected trade benefits, shared identity and organizational emulation (learning from the experience of other multilateral organizations).»<sup>31</sup>

We are left then with the question of how Security Communities developed? According to Adler and Barnett, they are socially constructed and «...that they have a history and, therefore, exhibit an evolutionary pattern that follows the direction of 'the arrow of time' (birth, growth, maturity, etc).»<sup>32</sup>

Among the mechanisms that would cause a security community include a normative basis (i.e. new ideas about cooperation) and material basis (i.e. common threat), for example, sudden changes in the distribution of military power; natural or man-made disasters that cause harm to people and structures; and, processes that generate transnational or international interests.<sup>33</sup>

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27 Adler, *Security Communities... op.cit.*, p. 29.

28 *Ibid.*

29 *Idem.*

30 Sheehan, *International Security... op.cit.*, 28-29.

31 Acharya, *Constructing a Security Community... op.cit.*, 34-35.

32 Adler, *Security Communities... op.cit.*, p.49.

33 *Ibid.* p., 52.

## Classification of Pluralistic Security Communities

In his work, Deutsch divides Security Communities in two types: *Amalgamated* and *Pluralistic*. The former is a rare phenomenon. The *Amalgamated* are created when two or more independent states form a single government or regime in common. The classic example is the union of the thirteen colonies that created the United States of America. These original colonies succeeded their powers in order to form a unified federal government. It can also occur as the result of imperialism, when a powerful and expansionist state absorbs a weaker state(s).

A *Pluralistic* security community, on the other hand, «retains the legal independence of separate governments».<sup>34</sup> The states participating in a *Pluralistic* security community generally match each other in their values, which are the product of common institutions, mutual responsibility, loyalty and identity, and reaching the position of having ‘dependable expectations of peaceful change’. ‘Dependable expectations of peaceful change’ is, according to Deutsch, «the resolution of social problems, normally by institutionalized procedures, without resort to large-scale physical force.»<sup>35</sup>

Adler and Barnett made it clear that they were only interested in delving into *Pluralistic* security communities and not the *amalgamated* type. They define a *Pluralistic* sec. community as «a transnational region comprised of sovereign states whose people maintain dependable expectations of peaceful change.»<sup>36</sup> They also add to the original concept of Deutsch et.al. the three phases of the development of a *Pluralistic* security community: *nascent*, *ascendant*, and *mature*.

In phase one, the *nascent* community meet all basic conditions for peaceful change. Governments do not seek to create a security community, at least not openly. «Instead, they begin to consider how they might coordinate their relations in order to: increase their mutual security; lower the transaction costs associated with their exchanges; and/or encourage further exchanges and interactions.»<sup>37</sup>

In phase two, the *ascendant* community is marked by the growth of complex networks, new institutions that reflect «tighter military coordination and cooperation and / or decreased fear that the other represents a threat; cognitive structures that promote ‘seeing’ and acting together and, therefore, the deepening of the level of mutual trust, and the emergence of collective identities that begin to encourage dependable expectations of peaceful change.»<sup>38</sup>

34 Deutsch, *Political Community... op.cit.*, p.5.

35 Deutsch, *Political Community... op.cit.*, p. 5.

36 Adler, *Security Communities... op.cit.*, p.30.

37 *Ibid.*, p.50.

38 *Ibid.*, p.53.

Finally, the third phase, the *mature*, has certain characteristics that distinguish it from its predecessors that according to Acharya are characterized by a greater institutionalization, supra-nationalism, and high confidence. The highlight of security communities is little or no probability of being involved in any armed conflict, and non-violence is central.

Adler and Barnett agree with the preceding paragraph, that the *mature* phase gives birth and represents the following: «a threshold has now been crossed; it becomes increasingly difficult for the members of this ‘region’ to think only in instrumental ways and prepare for war among each other.»<sup>39</sup>

This third phase is sub-classified into *loosely* coupled and *tightly* coupled security communities. According to Acharya, *loosely* coupled security communities are minimalist in nature. «They are ‘a transnational region comprised of sovereign states whose people maintain dependable expectations of peaceful change’.»<sup>40</sup> *Tightly* coupled communities on the other hand, «have more stringent standards, including a ‘mutual aid society’ providing for collective and cooperative efforts to help each other and offer joint solutions to common problems.»<sup>41</sup>

Among the indicators that allow us to distinguish between *loosely* or *tightly* security communities are «cooperative and collective security; a high level of military integration; policy coordination against ‘internal’ threats; free movement of populations; internationalization of authority; and, a ‘multiperspectival’ Polity.»<sup>42</sup>

## Features and Characteristics of a Security Community

The distinction that makes a security community unique is a stable peace tied to the existence of a transnational community. How then can we define a community? Through three characteristics as Adler and Barnett stated. The first one is that members share identity, values and similar purposes. Second, the members of that community maintain close relations and interactions between them constantly. And thirdly, communities exhibit a reciprocity that expresses a certain level of long-term interest, which can be almost altruistic.<sup>43</sup>

Characteristics of a security community –as Acharya argues– are the lack of armed conflict or war and «the absence of significant organized preparations for war *vis-à-vis* any other members.»<sup>44</sup>

39 Adler, *Security Communitie... op.cit.*, p. 55.

40 Amitav Acharya, *Constructing a Security Community in Southeast Asia: ASEAN and the Problem of Regional Order* (London: Routledge, 2001), p. 35.

41 *Ibid.* p. 37.

42 Adler, *Security Communities... op.cit.*, pp. 56-57.

43 *Ibid.*, p.31.

44 Acharya, *Constructing a Security Community... op. cit.*, p. 16.

But what really distinguishes a security community from other communities is that members who compose it advocate the expectations of peaceful change. «Peaceful change can be best defined as neither the expectation of nor the preparation for organized violence as a means to settle interstate disputes.»<sup>45</sup>

It is also important to note that Security Community should not be confused with the concept of **Security Regime**. Acharya mentioned this difference in his article *Collective Identity and Conflict Management in South East Asia*. According to him, a security community generally «...implies a fundamental, unambiguous and long-term convergence of interests among the actors in the avoidance of war», while in a **security regime** «...competitive arms acquisitions and contingency planning usually continue, although specific regimes might be created to limit the spread of weapons and military capabilities.»<sup>46</sup> It usually describes a condition in which the interests of the actors are neither completely attuned nor entirely competitive.

Indeed, a «Security Regime may develop within an otherwise adversarial relationship in which the use of force is inhibited by the existence of a balance of power or mutual deterrence situation.»<sup>47</sup> Another important feature of a Security Regime that differentiates it from a Security Community is the absence of the notion of a collective identity, of the feeling to belong to a group, in short, the «we feeling».

There are also differences between **Alliances** and Security Communities. Acharya says that one of the most notable difference is that the first is «geared toward war prevention and conflict-resolution within the grouping», by that, essentially inward-looking, while an **alliance** is «geared more towards common defense against external threats»<sup>48</sup>, therefore, outward-looking. Alliances can also exist bilaterally or multilaterally inside a Security Community, «and such arrangements usually indicate a mature security community with a fairly well-developed collective identity»<sup>49</sup>, says Acharya.

### Limitations and Disintegration of a Security Community

To conclude this section, we must consider the importance of distinguishing which factors can lead to the disintegration of a Security Community. It is rare, but certainly possible. Adler and Barnett argue that the same conditions that led to their formation can lead them to their destruction. They can disintegrate from the inside as well as due to external factors. A key factor for the authors is the loss of mutual trust. Without it,

45 Adler, *Security Communities... op.cit.*, p. 34.

46 Amitav Acharya, «Collective Identity and Conflict Management in South East Asia», in *Security Communities*, p. 201.

47 Acharya, *Constructing a Security Community... op.cit.*, p.19.

48 Acharya, «Collective Identity», p. 203.

49 Acharya, *Constructing a Security Community... op. cit.*, p.21.

all the processes that constitute its success leads to its deterioration. Only because of the fact that a war takes place between them is reason enough to terminate a Security Community.<sup>50</sup>

Amitav Acharya argues that in addition to other risks to security community are the effects of interaction and socialization among the community; the effects of globalization; and, processes of democratization.

Socialization among the community can be destabilizing mostly due to the social process; for example, when a new member is added to that particular community. A new actor means that others members need to adapt to the new member and face all of the issues related to security problems of the new actor. It is a new experience and challenge to the former actors in deciding how to evaluate and react to newly accepted members. Changing norms and ideas about cooperation in the international concert can affect a Security Community in its internal and external relations related to socialization processes.

All of these changes will eventually wear away the foundations in how a Security Community manages its internal decisions and external pressures. Acharya gives an example by saying that «... changing norms concerning sovereignty and the doctrine of non-interference in the internal affairs of states at the global level have affected the way many regional organizations have conducted intra-mural relations as well as relations with extra-regional powers in the past.»<sup>51</sup>

Globalization, on the other hand, can affect and eventually limit a Security Community because it can generate new forms of social and political divergences, «...including conflicts over the growth of socio-economic disparities between states, and accelerated movement of people (both legal and illegal).»<sup>52</sup> Globalization can affect the member states of a community due to the fact that some of them can benefit more than the rest, generating jealousy and increasing tensions or lack of trust among them, which ultimately leads to a rupture in their relations.

Additionally, another effect of today's globalization that can cause damage to security communities is «...the spread of transnational crime, terrorism, and cross-boundary environmental degradation.»<sup>53</sup> This negatively affects the coalition because it can trespass the boundaries of the state affected. The most notorious examples related to Non-Traditional Security issues like the spread of infectious diseases; financial crisis like the great Asian Crisis of 1997 (originated in Southeast Asia and then expanded all around the world); the Indian Ocean Tsunami disaster of 2004; the proliferation of terrorist groups in Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines; etc.

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50 Adler, *Security Communities...* op. cit., p.58.

51 Acharya, *Constructing a Security Community...* op. cit., p. 39.

52 *Ibid*, p. 40.

53 Acharya, *Constructing a Security Community...* op. cit., p. 40.

Finally, an extra outcome described by Acharya is Democratization as a limiting and triggering factor to the cessation of a *nascent* or *ascendant* security community. He explains by saying that «newly democratic regimes may seek to export their ‘revolution’, either actively or passively (they may show sympathy for pro-democracy struggles in their neighborhood), which would make their authoritarian neighbors fearful and hostile.»<sup>54</sup> Democracy, especially when moving from an authoritarian to a democratic regime or vice-versa may be dangerous by creating an atmosphere of strong nationalism that can affect the relations of the country with other members of the community, creating resentment and hatred toward their neighbors.

Ethnic tensions within a community can also affect a Security Community due to authoritarian governments suppression that may revive their claims for a more aggressive stance, threatening the national and transnational security within the the Security Community. «Newly democratic rulers, preoccupied with domestic consolidation, may have less time for regional projects, or collective norms and practices for collective Management.»<sup>55</sup>

Another important issue with regards democratization is that some new governments can question the legality or functionality of regional norms, challenging the agreement within the members of a Security Community, how they deal with an important factor such as the practices for pacific settlement of disputes. This means that the principle of non-interference in the member states internal affairs and other political issues like human rights that will be questioned and emphatically rejected by an authoritarian regime among the community. «The non-democratic members are likely to resist strongly any policy proposals for pro-democracy changes coming from the democratic camp.»<sup>56</sup>

### The ASEAN Community

Acharya mentioned that community building is connected with identity building in a group of countries, or in this case in ASEAN. He gives four points that it might be relevant to the constructivist project:

«(1) Community building is a self-conscious exercise in learning and collective identity formation; (2) that this learning process may begin in an illiberal domestic and regional political-economic setting; (3) it may proceed despite cultural and other differences and may help obscure, if not fundamentally override, these differences, (4) it can be promoted through the deliberate creation of, and adherence to, norms, symbols, and habits, and (5) it may not require the presence of a commonly perceived threat from an external source.»<sup>57</sup>

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54 *Ibid.*, p. 41.

55 *Idem.*

56 Acharya, *Constructing a Security Community... op. cit.*, p. 42.

57 Adler, *Security Communities... op. cit.*, p. 218.



He also commented that the fact of joining to a collective identity in ASEAN has involved «a conscious attempt at differentiating itself from a variety of competing actors and processes.»<sup>58</sup> An example of this is how ASEAN (instead of copying the European Community model) directly defined its own terms and ways to deal with several issues. Not to ‘copy-paste’ the European model of success was groundbreaking. But ASEAN leaders discovered early that their identity, position and perspective were not quite applicable for such a complicated Southeast Asian region during the Cold War. All throughout that period of history, «ASEAN has sought to define its approach to conflict management in direct opposition to the security institutions and practices in Europe.»<sup>59</sup>

For ASEAN this has worked extraordinarily well: since its inception, ASEAN member states have never been involved with each other in a major conflict, something unexpected for a region with large differences in the political, economic and cultural area. «Such exceptionalism has become a key aspect of the ASEAN security discourse, and has facilitated community-building.»<sup>60</sup>

When addressing the question of if ASEAN being a mature community, we can’t deny that the association already shows characteristics of a mature security community in the *Deutschian* sense such as multilateralism, discourse and language of community, a cooperative security and policies of mutual coordination against internal and some external threats. However, «to describe ASEAN as a mature security community will be inaccurate in the absence of a high level of military integration, common definition of external threat, and unfortified borders.»<sup>61</sup> Instead, we can only consider for the moment ASEAN as a nascent security community as explained by Adler and Barnett’s conceptual framework in their revealing work *Security Communities*.

### Collective Identity in ASEAN

Acharya questioned himself why there has been so little interest developing countries by theorists and scholars of Security Communities. When Deutsch and associates proposed the concept, they never considered the possibility of existence of a Security Community in under-developed countries. Of course, they have not yet met the proper conditions for the birth of a Security Community in the Third World since the vast majority of conflicts and wars post-World War II have taken place in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

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58 *Ibid.* p. 219.

59 *Ibid.*, p. 218.

60 *Ibid.* p. 219.

61 *Idem.*

Furthermore, it is highlighted that another essential requirement for the creation of a Security Community is the convergence of states with liberal democratic tendencies, with a strong economic interdependence and political pluralism.<sup>62</sup> Again, the Third World is immune to this problem because mostly of its political systems are authoritarian or communist governments. «Illiberal politics tends to be the hallmark of Third World states. Regional economic interdependence and integration in the Third World, as one study concludes, had been ‘much more rudimentary than in Europe, more obscure in purpose and uncertain in content’.»<sup>63</sup>

With regards to the latter, Acharya argues that from a liberal view and with the previously exposed evidence, the emergence of Security Communities in the Third World would be virtually impossible. However, against all adverse projections (and largely sharing features not conducive to the development of a Security Community) it is rare what ASEAN has been able to establish. Moreover, since its inception, ASEAN (1967) has not fought any war or engaged in a major conflict with any of its participants (over 40 years). Acharya is emphatic in saying that «...while ASEAN may not appear to be a full-fledged security community in the classic Deutschian sense, the absence of war among the ASEAN members since 1967 poses a challenge to the liberal conception of security communities and deserves careful scrutiny.»<sup>64</sup>

He emphasizes the fact that ASEAN is very close to becoming a Security Community, despite the fact that they do not share liberal-democratic values, as demonstrated by the peaceful coexistence of different states politically different speaking such as Myanmar and Singapore. «...Acharya has furthered this area of research in his constructivist exploration of ASEAN as a distinct security with an ‘ASEAN Way’ of diplomacy.»<sup>65</sup> The peculiarity is that ASEAN is often seen as only possible in a non-democratic environment as a Security Community. ASEAN has also been considered a developing Security Community, on the way to its full status.

The case of ASEAN is unique within Security Communities because does not follow the series of requirements first set by Deutsch and later by Adler and Barnett. However, there are many features in the founding of ASEAN that identify with the *Deutschian* spirit of Security Communities, such as promoting regional security, preventing conflicts and violence among its members, grouping as an association to jointly cope with the internal and external threats, and disaster management, among others. «Not only were internal threats more pressing, but mutual cooperation against the transborder movement of

62 Amitav Acharya, «Collective Identity and Conflict Management in South East Asia», in *Security Communities*, ed. Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 198.

63 Acharya, «Collective Identity», 199.

64 *Ibid.*, p. 200.

65 Amitav Acharya and Barry Buzan, eds., *Non-Western International Relations Theory. Perspectives on and beyond Asia*, (London: Routledge, 2009), 139.

communist guerrillas, including intelligence-sharing, mutual extradition treaties, and joint border patrols and counter-insurgency operations served as an important basis for intra-ASEAN solidarity...»<sup>66</sup>

ASEAN was not designed to promote supra-nationalism. It was created to preserve the independence of each member and thus make progress in their national interests. The concept of non-interference is one of the most valuable to ASEAN, which is why they originally tried not to copy the model of the then European Community. As explained by Acharya, «Instead of pursuing EC-style trade liberalization which might have involved major national sacrifices on the part of its economically less-advanced members..., ASEAN's economic objective was to improve its external economic climate through collective bargaining with its major trading partners.»<sup>67</sup>

The case of regionalism in Southeast Asia is of particular interest. The region itself was described by several authors as an area of conflict, different races and languages, traditions and religions, etc. «A number of western scholars have attempted to re-imagine a modernizing Southeast Asia in terms of a 'region of revolt'. Southeast Asian states are explained as prone to conflict because they are insufficiently modernized along Westphalian lines.»<sup>68</sup> With this background in common, regionalism is difficult to explain in SEA. The creation of an association, like the creation of a collective identity is vital to its implementation. That mixture of races and tongues and «...the exogenous variables in ASEAN regionalism were not conducive to the development of a collective identity.»<sup>69</sup>

The formation of a collective identity and community building are the pillars of a future security community. «Community-building involves a certain convergence of values, although... these need not to be liberal-democratic values.»<sup>70</sup> There are three major indicators that points out the existence of a collective identity according to Acharya, namely, «a commitment to multilateralism; ...the development of security cooperation; and, «...identity formation can be sensed from the boundaries and membership criteria of the group.»<sup>71</sup>

According to Christopher Roberts, author of *ASEAN's Myanmar Crisis*, there are three key components that lead to the birth of a community: the existence of a collective identity (the identity may be socially constructed), the interaction within a community should be direct and large (i.e. International trade, Student Exchanges, etc.) and the

66 Acharya, «Collective Identity», p. 203.

67 *Ibid.*, p. 204.

68 Acharya and Buzan, eds., *Non-Western International Relations Theory... op. cit.*, p. 123.

69 Acharya, «Collective Identity», 206.

70 *Ibid.*, p. 207.

71 Amitav Acharya, *Constructing a Security Community in Southeast Asia: ASEAN and the Problem of Regional Order* (London: Routledge, 2001), p. 29.

existence of the practice of reciprocity among its members.<sup>72</sup> As he sees it, the most important ideational attributes that lead us to identify with a Southeast Asian state include, « (a) political ideology, (b) religion..., (c) culture, (d) nationalism and patriotism (particularly if they breed a culture of superiority), (e) an inferiority complex..., (f) the degree of xenophobia evidenced by a given society, and (g) a vast range of norms – such as norms of cooperative behavior and of peaceful coexistence.»<sup>73</sup>

In the case of collective identity in ASEAN, Amitav Acharya highlights four factors that play a crucial role in the development of this identity, namely: 1. practice of multilateralism; 2. development of the ground rules of inter-state relations within the ASEAN community (norms); 3. the creation and manipulation of symbols, like the «ASEAN Spirit» and «ASEAN Way» (by the avoidance of formal mechanisms and procedures of conflict resolution and the principle of consensus)<sup>74</sup>; and, 4. the principle of regional autonomy<sup>75</sup>.

It is very difficult to talk of a common identity in ASEAN, especially when it is classified as a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-religious and multicultural region. Their member countries are dissimilar in their government regimes (from military or based on the total leadership of a political party, to the monarchy); in their systems and economic development (some with high levels of development and focused on the production of goods and services, such as Singapore, and even countries with very low levels of development and engaged in small farming scale like Laos); ethnically, (only Indonesia has ethnic groups that communicate in more than 350 languages) and regarding cultural issues.<sup>76</sup>

But in this context, the value of ASEAN lies in the fact that despite their differences, they seek to create a community in Southeast Asia (i.e. a common identity) through cooperative instance, where closer relations are developed among its members through the definition of common interests, the social construction of shared knowledge and the creation of special regional identity. Kusuma Snitwongse claims that, «while ASEAN might not have realized its goal of security self-reliance, its most notable achievement has been community building.»<sup>77</sup>

72 Christopher Roberts, *ASEAN's Myanmar Crisis: Challenges to the Pursuit of a Security Community* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2010), pp. 11-12.

73 *Ibid.*, pp. 29-30.

74 Acharya, «Collective Identity», p. 211.

75 *Ibid.*, pp. 208-213.

76 Acharya and Buzan, eds., *Non-Western International Relations Theory... op. cit.*, p.124.

77 *Ibid.*, p. 214.

## Building an ASEAN Community

On October 7, 2003, the Declaration of the ASEAN Concord II (or Bali Concord II)<sup>78</sup> redefined the need to accelerate economic growth, progress of their societies, cultural development in the region, peace and stability, and respecting justice in the regional interaction. The relevance of norms, shared values and identity are again emphasized for the creation of an ASEAN Community that «...aims to achieve a standard of common adherence to norms of good conduct among member states of the ASEAN Community; consolidating and strengthening ASEAN's solidarity, cohesiveness and harmony; and contributing to the building of a peaceful, democratic, tolerant, participatory and transparent community in Southeast Asia.»<sup>79</sup>

From this, the areas of focus of the organization were established, called the «three pillars», that will enable ASEAN to fully become a community in the next few years:

1. ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC).
2. ASEAN Economic Community (AEC).
3. ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC).

## Limitations for the development of an ASEAN Community

Among some factors that can affect the perpetuation of a Security Community in ASEAN, Acharya distinguishes that a change in the regime of a government of a member state can eventually change their promise to regional cooperation and collective identity building. This will directly affect the «we-feeling» described by Deutsch.

The acquisition of arms and military technology by ASEAN members states as well the related interactive military planning among them is also a crucial factor that can delay the dream of an ASEAN Security Community. Acharya asserts that «...the persisting tendency among ASEAN members to engage in contingency-planning and

78 «The Bali Concord II, named after the Declaration of ASEAN Concord, or The Bali Concord, which was produced at the First ASEAN Summit in Bali in 1976, consists of three pillars, namely an ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC), an ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) and an ASEAN Socio-cultural Community (ASCC) among ASEAN member countries. Also, through the Bali Concord II, ASEAN has subscribed to the notion of democratic peace, which means all member countries believe democratic processes will promote regional peace and stability. Also, the non-democratic members all agreed that it was something all member states should aspire to. The Concord presented the broad outlines for economic integration among the member countries of the organization. Of the three pillars of the Bali Concord II, the AEC is much more advanced in its end-goal, that is, to establish both a single market and a single production base by 2015 (originally planned for 2020, then moved forward to 2015), so as to enhance ASEAN's credibility and economic weight. The Bali Concord II with the three envisioned communities as its pillars was necessitated by the challenges posed by globalization and by the economic and security situations after the 1997 financial crisis and the terrorist attacks with their severe impact on the region and worldwide.»

79 ASEAN Official Website, «ASEAN Political-Security Community Blueprint», 3, accessed November 15, 2015, <http://www.asean.org/archive/5187-18.pdf>

war oriented resource mobilization against each other suggests important benefits to community-building.»<sup>80</sup>

Another factor that can delay the advancement towards an ASEAN Community is the inclusion of a new member state. Essentially, the new member will have little or no experience in the ASEAN Way and multilateral approach, and could bring in their own internal or external problems (bilateral or multilateral disputes). Having a new member can put in risk the image of ASEAN collective identity and can also challenge the association «to stay united in the face of...»<sup>81</sup>

Finally, if compared with other functioning Security Communities in the world, it is clear that ASEAN, regarding to defense matters does not comply with its own practice of multilateralism. «Despite the proliferation of overlapping bilateral security ties, such as joint exercises and training, ASEAN members are reluctant to make a serious attempt at military integration.»<sup>82</sup>

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80 Adler, *Security Communities... op. cit.*, p. 216.

81 *Ibid.*, p. 217.

82 *Idem.*, p. 216.

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