CHAPTER-1

INTRODUCTION
"If the last decade of the 20th century, to whose final death throes we are now the unhappy witnesses, can be termed the Age of Nationalism, then the 21st century, whose pale dawn is visible over the horizon, can be aptly described as the Coming Age of Regionalism."

ASEAN The Way Ahead by S. RAJARATNAM
[Singapore 1 September 1992]

N.B: The name of the country Burma was the UNION OF BURMA till 1988. After 1988, the name changed to UNION OF MYANMAR. In this chapter, therefore, the country is addressed as Burma till 1988, and Myanmar after 1988.

The dawn of the twenty-first century was indeed about the prosperity and prospects mutually shared by the nation states, envisaging into the concept of the new millennium. Rising hopes of peace through overall prosperity and human development sounded familiar and natural as part of the so-called 'new order'. However, destructive incident of 9/11/2001 has indeed set forth a forced acknowledgement of the probable doom and gloom, which may also colour the century. In this backdrop of rapid changes, sweeping world politics pose an enormous challenge to policy makers, scholars. Thus, there is not a single overriding issue like the Cold War, or the continuing threat of global terrorism, which can be identified as the stumbling bloc. Regional relationship, integration, and new visions of regional groupings are to be addressed through this dissertation.

Since World War - II, global politics have witnessed the emergence of a new political phenomenon, viz., cooperation and integration of states on 'regional' or in other words 'continental' scale. One of the prime example among these regional groupings is the European Union [in short EU], but all

over the globe states seek to institutionalize cooperation in different ways. The example of EU is exceptional because it has gone furthest in terms of the transfer of power from its member states to the central institutions. Regional alliances of states elsewhere in the world were still essentially about cooperation among states rather than, as in Europe their integration and the resultant creation of a new polity. Thus, while the global aspect of the regional cooperation is important, it also equally important to emphasize the similarities as well as the differences between individual cases, as in this case will be done regarding ASEAN [Association of South East Asian Nations]. In all probabilities, this process ushers in interesting and to some extent fundamental questions about the nature of inter-state politics of the twenty-first century.

Some of the most intriguing and pertinent questions regarding the integration of states through regional groupings are as follows:

a] to what extent states are willing to submit themselves to the system of 'collective rule'?;

b] what are the dynamics that could explain the emergence and evolution of regional blocs?;

c] how the relationship of states and its processes through regional integration and cooperation integrate with the wider phenomenon of globalization?.

In other words, are the nation states willing to surrender to a system of 'collective rule' for the sake of 'collective gain'? If yes, then what will be the proposed course of integration. Does the integration is having any political agenda?, Will it serve any particular country as whole? or will it be a holistic approach towards the region. The fine lines of integration of two most successful regional grouping, that is., EU and ASEAN tells us two different stories with two different approaches.

With ambiguity and amorphousness in defining Asia itself, which incidentally spreads from Bosphorus to Pacific Ocean, it is but natural to understand that with the formation of ASEAN, often, loosely, the whole of South East Asia refers to it. In the whole study of South East Asia, it can be perceived that, often, the infatuation of South East Asia through ASEAN
brought forth the idea of the 'Asian Way', enthusiastically defined by the political observers as 'one of the most successful experiments in regionalism in the developing world'\(^5\), which would provide a model for emulation by other states in Southeast Asia\(^36\). The governing assumption pervading much commentary upon ASEAN during the 1980s and 1990s was that the grouping had been making steady progress towards the achievement of a 'security community'\(^3\). ASEAN had, it was contended, developed shared norms of diplomatic behaviour that were 'operationalized into a framework of regional interaction' based on 'a high degree of discreetness, informality, pragmatism, expediency and non-confrontational bargaining styles'\(^\) . The ASEAN model thus, till date was seen to offer 'the prospect of long-term stable peace in the region'. That in itself had provided the platform for the 'spectacularly successful' economic growth that so mesmerized the scholarly community\(^\) .

Going by the simplest way of defining 'regionalism', it can mean development of institutionalized cooperation among states and other actors on the basis of regional contiguity as a feature of global politics\(^4\). Integration, on the contrary means creation of a new polity bringing together a number of different constituent parts [members states]\(^42\). Thus, both concepts may sound quite contrary to each other when it comes to regional integration of states through regional groupings as a complete concept. Apart from these two ideas, the most indispensable idea embedded in the concept of integration is Cooperation, which may be defined as regular and sustained interaction among

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Ibid.,
states on one or more policy issues, possibly leading to and making use of common institutions set up to facilitate deepening of such exchanges. Theoretically speaking, it can be said that there are various influences, which interacts, leading to the creation of a regional grouping. Ideally speaking, this leads to the creation of a nucleus of supranational governance through regional groupings. This incidentally has not happened in the case of ASEAN. Increasingly today, criticism, and biased attitude, coupled with looming military tension of the South China Sea has put on hold the very basic of ASEAN formation. This research will also look into that angle too.

Regional institutions through regional integration are today constantly challenged by the evolving changing world order, which are an integral facet of an anarchic international system. The changing world order demands change, adaptation and adjustment as important factors, to maintain its significance and reliability. As observed, some regional institutions have weathered the test of time, while others have faltered and withered away into the background of global politics. Throughout history, there have been numerous regional groupings with dissimilar goals but often mostly centred around political and economic objectives only. Of the many regional integration plans or initiatives that have surfaced over the course of history in various parts of the world, only handfuls have materialized into well-established institutions.

The two most successful ones are being the European Union (EU) and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). In Asia, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is one of the best examples of a regional integration scheme. The creation of ASEAN was initially for the reason of security. It was neither formed to integrate member economies nor to build up a supranational institution. While it is an undisputed fact that ASEAN and the EU have very different orientations, both were originally created for the preservation of peace and security in their respective regions. The Europeans realized that a new European institution was needed to constrain Germany.

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43 Ibid.,
44 Ibid.,
Similarly, ASEAN was formed to constrain Indonesia, locally and 'Communism', globally.

The Confrontation [or Konfrontasi] of Indonesia was a clear indication of the powerful military might, which at that point of time, stood to destabilize the Asian region. Thus, the establishment of ASEAN was a direct response to this intra-regional stimulus of Indonesian President Sukarno's [may spell as Soekarno] Konfrontasi. Drawing a somewhat similar analogous line to the downfall of Germany under Hitler, ASEAN became viable and visible only after a change in the leadership of Indonesia occurred. While the European community moved closer towards economic integration through the Treaty of Rome (1957), ASEAN has, to some extent, strengthened its foundation in security cooperation; first, with the 1971 declaration of a Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN) and second, during the 1976 Bali Conference, which produced the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC). Economic cooperation was visibly minimal for sure. The economic attainment of the members of the ASEAN were the makings of individual policies and their dealings with the broader international economy and had very little to do with ASEAN as an organization.45

That in itself explains the reason as to why there have been rather limited complimentary economic policies due to the low intra-ASEAN trade. While ASEAN was focusing more on the security issues throughout the Cold War period, movements toward economic integration became more visible only in the post-Cold War era. Indeed, 1992 was seen as the year that 'launched' the economic integration of ASEAN. A series of economic-related proposals and adoptions have been made since then.

The economic integration effort of the ASEAN includes the following:
a] the Common Effective Preferential Tariff (CEPT) scheme for the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) in 1992;

b] the Framework Agreement on Services and agreement on Intellectual Property in 1995;
c] the Protocol on Dispute Settlement Mechanism in 1996;
e] the e-ASEAN framework in 2000 and to a certain extent the
f] ASEAN Tourism agreement in 2002.  

Many of these agreements are legally binding documents, which indeed show the growing realization of the ASEAN for the need to have a legally binding foundation, if integration is to become successful. According to Takeuchi, there are four factors which contributes to the increased interest of the ASEAN in regional economic integration. The **four factors** are as follows:

1] the need to balance China's, as well as the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe's, competition for foreign investment;
2] the fear of future exports being affected by the formation of NAFTA and the closely integrated EU;
3] the perceived convergence of regional economic relationships among member states; and
4] the necessity 'to keep regional liberalization one step ahead of the WTO and APEC at all times'.

Apart from the above mentioned four factors, the 1997 Asian financial crisis also surely is a contributing factor to faster and foster closer economic cooperation among the members of the ASEAN community, in order to build a regional resilience against the external economic volatilities. For much of the 1990s, political scientists extolled ASEAN for its successful management of regional affairs. It was maintained that ASEAN had done much to promote stability, which, in turn, underpinned the impressive economic growth rates in the region during the period that extended from the 1970s until the Asian

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The Asian Financial Crisis can be termed as a setback for the ASEAN community. The pensive mood was first expressed officially in the informal Hanoi Summit of December, 1998, where the ASEAN leaders in a mood of apparent depression, lamented how far they have fallen and mourned their loss of clout in regional and international affairs. Indeed, the primary victims of the Asian Financial Crisis, besides South Korea are, Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia, and to a lesser extent, the Philippines and Singapore - all founding members of the ASEAN. Each of these countries were affected, in varying degrees, by a shrinking economy, a weaker currency, and a reduced purchasing power. Thus, since all the countries were individually weakened, it did affect the ASEAN as an organization, on the whole. It certainly gave a perception to both inside and outside the region that ASEAN is now in a much weaker position in dealing with the outside world, in particular while dealing with China on disputed islands on South China Sea. The deepening of inter-ASEAN trading links has proved more symbolic than real, illustrated by the failure of the purported Batam-Johore-Singapore growth triangle and the continual renegotiating, notably by Indonesia and Thailand, of 'sensitive' trade items that will require protection after 2010. Indeed, despite the impressive growth rates sustained by the ASEAN economies in the period 1985-95, it became increasingly apparent that, in their haste to industrialize, the mounting foreign debt incurred by Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia, together with their uncertain futures as low-cost/low-value added manufacturing bases for the Japanese keiretsu and South Korean chaebol (industrial conglomerates), left them highly exposed to the vagaries of the world market, especially the financial market in the globally traded derivatives. Subsequent exposure to the electronic herd of globalized finance culminated in the economic meltdown of 1997 from which these economies have yet to recover and whose causes are not yet fully addressed by the various forums of ASEAN. 

The 1977 ASEAN currency swap arrangement, for example, was resuscitated and extended under the 2000 Chiang Mai Initiative (CMI). Furthermore, it was during the onslaught of the Asian meltdown that ASEAN members reaffirmed their commitment for regional solidarity, producing the ASEAN Vision 2020 statement. This is a step higher than the 1967 Bangkok Declaration, with 'closer cohesion and economic integration' clearly spelled out, as compared to the thirty year old ambiguous two-page declaration. As a result, ASEAN as a regional organization has gradually shifted from merely a loose security arrangement to one that is working towards being a fully integrated community. Under this notion, it is possible to gauge if an ASEAN community bound by a common regional identity as stated in Vision 2020 could be achieved or not, based on an analytical framework of the determinants of the success and failure of regional integration.

Clearly, it was against the backdrop of the Cold War and the tumultuous transition to independence occurring in many Southeast Asian states, that the objective of ASEAN at its founding, was "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 South-East Asian Nations".

The primary mode of activity of ASEAN is inter-governmental meetings among the representatives of the ten member states. ASEAN institutions do not include any sort of assembly representing the people of ASEAN, although various ASEAN institutions maintain contact with civil society organizations in the region and the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly. The latter is not officially a part of ASEAN as on date, only eight member countries' political systems incorporate representative legislative bodies.


50 ASEAN Charter, Copyright ASEAN Secretariat, Printed in Indonesia, 2008
The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was formed in 1967 by Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand to promote political and economic cooperation and regional stability. Brunei joined in 1984, shortly after its independence from the United Kingdom, and Vietnam joined ASEAN as its seventh member in 1995. Laos and Burma were admitted into full membership in July 1997 as ASEAN celebrated its 30th anniversary. Cambodia became the tenth member of the ASEAN in 1999.

The ASEAN Declaration in 1967, considered ASEAN's founding document, formalized the principles of peace and cooperation to which ASEAN is dedicated. The ASEAN Charter entered into force on 15 December 2008. With the entry into force of the ASEAN Charter, ASEAN established its legal identity as an international organization and took a major step in its community-building process.

The ASEAN Community is comprised of three pillars, viz, the 1] Political-Security Community; 2] Economic Community; and 3] Socio-Cultural Community. Each pillar has its own Blueprint approved at the summit level, and, together with the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Strategic Framework and IAI Work Plan Phase II (2009-2015), they form the Roadmap for and ASEAN Community 2009-2015. The three pillars are elaborated in brief in the following:

1] the Political-Security Community; - The objectives of the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) are to ensure that the peoples and Member States of ASEAN live in peace with one another and with the world at large in a just, democratic and harmonious environment. Activities in this community include cooperation on building norms of peace and security, strong relationships with external partners, the promotion of political development in areas such as good governance and human rights, as well as specific sectoral meetings on defence, law, and transnational crime. Traditionally the APSC also includes the ASEAN Foreign Ministers, who serve core coordinating and decision-making functions in ASEAN. As the first ministerial body created at ASEAN's founding in 1967, the Foreign Ministers' meeting was termed the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting.
In 2009 with the implementation of the ASEAN Charter, the Foreign Ministers functions were separated into their roles as the ASEAN Foreign Ministers (which retains the acronym AMM) and the ASEAN Coordinating Council.

2] Economic Community - The objective of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) is to transform ASEAN into a region with free movement of goods, services, investment, skilled labour, and freer flow of capital. The AEC envisages a single market and production base making ASEAN more dynamic and competitive with new mechanisms and measures to strengthen the implementation of its existing economic initiatives; accelerating regional integration in the priority sectors; facilitating movement of business persons, skilled labour and talents; and strengthening the institutional mechanisms of ASEAN. Initiatives under the AEC include the ASEAN Free Trade Area, ASEAN Investment Area, and sectoral cooperation in the specific areas of energy, finance, agriculture and forestry, minerals, science and technology, telecommunications and IT, tourism, and transport.

Enabling economic development throughout ASEAN is also an important objective of the AEC[ASEAN Economic Community]. With the enlarged membership of ASEAN came a new set of challenges. Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam were the last four members to join and were acknowledged to have a significant development gap with the first six members. "Narrowing the Development Gap” thus became an additional priority of ASEAN. Projects under the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) are designed to enable new ASEAN members to accelerate the pace of economic growth, and to enable them to participate on a similar level with the first six members.

3] Socio-Cultural Community - The ASEAN Social-Cultural Community (ASCC) contributes to realising an ASEAN Community that is "people-centred and socially responsible with a view to achieving enduring solidarity and unity among the nations and peoples of ASEAN by forging a common identity and building a caring and sharing society which is inclusive and harmonious where
the well-being, livelihood, and welfare of the peoples are enhanced." Areas of cooperation in this community include culture, arts and information, disaster management, education, environment, health, labour, rural development and poverty eradication, social welfare and development, youth and civil service cooperation.

Apart from these three pillars, ASEAN is also engaged in External Relations, which forms today an essential aspect of the activities of ASEAN. This has assisted ASEAN in forging close partnerships with other countries. The simultaneous engagement of many important countries with an interest in South East Asia forms part of ASEAN's strategy to remain in the driver's seat in regional developments - ensuring that the region is stable and prosperous, and free from domination by any single external power. The main instruments of ASEAN’s relations with its partners are the promotion of norms of peace and conciliation, and the creation of a network of economic agreements in the region.

Today, ASEAN has established official dialogue relations with ten external partners including Australia, Canada, China, the European Union, India, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, Russia, and the USA. ASEAN also has relations with the United Nations and a sectoral partnership with Pakistan. At the regional level, ASEAN is the driving force for forums including the ASEAN Regional Forum, ASEAN+3 (with China, Japan and Korea) and the East Asia Summit (with Australia, China, India, Japan, Korea and New Zealand).

Some of the earliest ASEAN initiatives were those that pertained to norms of peace and security in the region, includes: 1] the 1971 Declaration on the Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN) and 2] the 1976 Treaty of Amity and Cooperation. This was later supplemented by the 3] 1995 Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (SEANWFZ) and the 4] 2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea.

Interestingly, in the early years, ASEAN also initiated cooperation on economic and cultural projects, which were seen as means to enhance regional stability. Some early initiatives were in the areas of preferential trading
agreements, industrial complementation, agriculture, tourism, cultural and media cooperation, and the promotion of Southeast Asian studies. ASEAN commands far greater influence on Asia-Pacific trade, political, and security issues than its members could achieve individually. This has driven the community building efforts of the ASEAN. This dissertation will also focus on it. Incidentally, it is largely based on consultation, consensus, and cooperation.

The objectives of ASEAN were broadened with the notion of an "ASEAN Community" encompassing security, economic, social and cultural cooperation. The idea of the ASEAN Community was seeded in the 1976 Declaration of ASEAN Concord (also known as the "Bali Concord"), and further developed into the three specific areas of security, economic and socio-cultural cooperation in the 1997 ASEAN Vision 2020, and the 2003 Declaration of ASEAN Concord II (Bali Concord II). ASEAN continues to work towards the attainment of these goals, guided by a series of specific targets and work plans for each of the three communities. ASEAN's official work plans include the Hanoi Plan of Action 1997-2003 (HPA), Vientiane Action Programme 2004-2010 (VAP), and now the Roadmap for an ASEAN Community (2009-2015) comprising the ASEAN Political-Security Blueprint, ASEAN Economic Blueprint, ASEAN Socio-Cultural Blueprint and the Initiative for ASEAN Integration Work Plan II.

In terms of the U.S. relations with ASEAN, it can be described as having an excellent relationship since its inception. The United States became a Dialogue Partner country of ASEAN in 1977. Dialogue partners meet regularly with ASEAN at the working and senior levels to guide the development of our regional relations. In July 2009, Secretary Clinton signed the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) which has greatly enhanced U.S. political relations with ASEAN. Every year following the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, ASEAN holds its Post-Ministerial Conference (PMC) to which the Secretary of State of USA is invited. In 1994, ASEAN took the lead in establishing the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), which now has 27 members and meets each year at the ministerial level just after the PMC. Latest on
November 15, 2009, President Obama met with ASEAN leaders in Singapore. This was the first meeting ever between a U.S. President and all ten ASEAN leaders. The meeting of the President has greatly advanced U.S. relations with ASEAN and the East Asia region.

By and large it can be argued that as one of the strongest founding member of ASEAN, Thailand has envisaged to achieve this goal, keeping in mind the initial contesting arguments. The unfortunate aspect of the ASEAN community is that most of its member states 'lack under strong feelings of insecurity generated by their lack of legitimacy; the product of fake elections or military coup d'etat their unrestrained power does not rest on the loyalty of those whom they rule' (Kedourie 1975, p. 351). Such insecurity, translated to a regional level, it may be contended, also produces imitative institutions that are essentially rhetorical shells that give form but no substance to domestic and international arrangements. This hypothesis can be translated into praxis, at the ASEAN formation stage. According to admiring commentators in the early 1990s, ASEAN's successful experiment in regionalism had enabled Southeast Asia to attain unparalleled levels of stability. The basis of the apparent success of the organization resided in its identification as one of the pillars of Pacific stability that had facilitated the impressive economic growth rates witnessed in the region after its formation in 1967. By managing relations among a highly disparate set of states and preventing the outbreak of conflict, it was claimed, ASEAN enabled its members to devote their attention and resources to both nation building and economic development. 'The achievement of ASEAN is all the more impressive', according to one political analyst, 'because it was born thirty years ago, out of conflict', and yet 'peace has been maintained throughout its existence'. Subsequently, enthusiastic proponents extolled the 'uniqueness'


of the ASEAN way in diplomacy whereby 'norms were operationalized into a framework of regional interaction' that 'contrasted with the adversarial posturing and legalistic decision-making procedures in Western multilateral negotiations’ . With the seemingly inexorable economic growth of the Asia-Pacific littoral after 1975, many analysts conceived that a prosperous and confident region would increasingly occupy a dominant place in the global trading order and lead to the 'ASEANization' of Australia and East Asia. By the mid-1990s ASEAN commentators perceived that the Association had a 'major opportunity . . . for re-shaping the regional order' in the evolving Pax Pacifica.

Arguable, it is called as incoherent on the part of ASEAN on its post-1993 attempt to promote the notion of both regional stability and autonomy in the new world order, by encouraging the assimilation of former communist states in the region, the threat of those in the 1960s constituted the raison d'etre for the basic formation of the organization. In a landmark event, however, for the Association, Vietnam joined the grouping in 1995. The culmination of the vision of a stable region united through ASEAN was timetabled to occur at the thirtieth anniversary of the meeting of foreign ministers of the Association at Kuala Lumpur in July 1997, when the organization formally embraced Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar in an 'ASEAN-10'. The attempt to establish this expanded regional group, however, was particularly to reveal the implausibility of the philosophy of the ASEAN.

Apparent contradictions in the ASEAN related to its idea of security in Southeast Asia were observed, according to some scholars, through the dealings of the Association of the then State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) regime in Burma/Myanmar and the Cambodian People's Party's (CPP) under Hun Sen's de facto government of Cambodia after July 1997. In the

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early 1990s, ASEAN predictably employed its non-interventionist and non-confrontational style in dealing with Burma. ASEAN consistently refused to condemn the military junta in Rangoon and, instead, followed a path of 'constructive engagement' through dialogue and economic investment ('Asian help for Burma weakens sanctions', 1996). Accordingly, Burma was inducted into the ASEAN fold at Kuala Lumpur in July 1997. The entry of Burma/Myanmar into ASEAN was premised on the desire to fulfill the founder members' vision of a politically stable Southeast Asia encompassing the region from Indochina to Indonesia. Central to this endeavour was, of course, the principle of non-interference and territorial integrity, which SLORC, naturally, found agreeable and willingly respected. The pragmatic vindication of the principles of constructive engagement and non-interference, however, were almost immediately overturned by the ASEAN member states themselves when, at the same meeting, they refused to countenance the entry of Cambodia. The Association had, of course, taken a keen interest in the resolution of the Cambodian crisis and member states had contributed significantly to the interim UN peacekeeping force in Cambodia prior to elections in 1993. In the aftermath, Hun Sen overthrew the unhappy coalition, of which he had formed as a key part, in 1997. ASEAN in particular felt it had 'lost face' as a consequence of the coup. ASEAN's response to the coup and its call for new elections in Cambodia violated its own often stated principle of non-interference which, if applied to other member states, would have required the expulsion of both Burma and Indonesia from the organization. Subsequently, new elections held in 1997, characterized by a mixture of vote buying and intimidation, afforded a facade of respectability to Hun Sen's regime that enabled Cambodia to meet the increasingly flexible criteria necessary for ASEAN membership in 1998.

In certain respects some ASEAN statesmen implicitly appreciated the limits of ASEAN's role in an age of uncertainty prior to 1997\textsuperscript{57}. The very formation of the ARF, for example, recognized that the Association was by itself

insufficient to promote regional security. By creating a broad dialogue group encompassing states with an interest in Pacific affairs, the ARF is intended primarily, according to Michael Leifer, 'to educate an irredentist China in the canons of good regional citizenship and to sustain the active engagement of the US in regional affairs'. The ARF, however, mirrors its ASEAN progenitors' emphasis on a consensual 'step by step' approach to regional problems. In other words, despite being more inclusive, the ARF simply projected ASEAN uncertainty into the wider Pacific basin. In its formal meetings the ARF has spent its time avoiding confrontation. Moreover, even in its informal South China Sea workshops where ASEAN was slightly more outspoken in its dialogue with China, China seemed notably reluctant to learn the lessons of 'good regional citizenship' when it affected issues of irrefragable sovereignty. Indeed, the fact that China refused to address issues of sovereignty within a multilateral framework rendered confidence-building measures limited in effect.

Most surprisingly of all, in January 1996, Indonesia surprised its ASEAN colleagues by concluding a security treaty with Australia, much to the consternation of pan-Asianists like Mahathir. Although the treaty committed both countries only to consult each other in the event of a crisis and to explore avenues to enhance joint security, indicated considerable underlying skepticism towards the ARF, and by implication ASEAN. Subsequent events, as we shall show, rendered the treaty effectively stillborn. Nevertheless, this departure in ASEAN relations suggests that Southeast Asian states were somewhat aware of the underlying frailty of regional structures and were, as a result, reluctant to place all their faith in Asian values as a path to security. In fact, what was particularly notable about the security debate of the early 1990s in the ASEAN region was its striking resemblance to the debate nearly three decades earlier.

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decades earlier when the US faced its Vietnamese nemesis. In 1968, Coral Bell observed that the 'characteristic pattern of American policy in Asia is one of ambivalence, of swinging between what may be called the assumption of an American protectorate in Asia and a reassessment of the costs of implementing that assumption' 65. Over 35 years later the security equation has remained largely unchanged, illustrated in the 1990s by anxiety about a dwindling US presence in an era of superpower retrenchment, and fear that the declining credibility of the American security commitment would create a political vacuum, thereby abandoning the region to an unknown fate 66. What this fate might entail necessarily raised questions about the emergence of China and its hegemonic aspirations. As one regional commentator asked, 'will it [China] become a country that values harmony within the international community, or will it emerge as a major power seeking primacy, if not hegemony in the Asia Pacific?' 67. Analogous questions were being posed in the late 1960s 67.

Moreover, the continuing speculation about regional structures, which over three decades ago were, it was believed, set to evolve 68, but probably not to a level where any collection of Asian states would be able to afford their own security, demonstrated that the position of the US remained crucial as the 'only country that can function as a power balancer' 69. The 'question Asians are asking today,' declared former Thai Foreign Minister, Thanat Khoman, in 1976, is, 'what do you think the United States can and will do in Southeast Asia?' 70

This pertinent question, over so many years later, today, however,

65 Ibid.
68 Darby, Philip, 'Stability mechanisms in South-East Asia: II. Balance of power and neutralisation', International Affairs, April, 1973, p. 208.
70 Khoman, Thanat, 'The new equation of world power and its impact on Southeast Asia', Orbis, 20 (3), 1976, p. 313.
interestingly, remain the same, and pose serious questions regarding the relationship of the individual states and the ASEAN.

Gerald Segal has perhaps come closest to explaining the intrinsic difficulty of a multilateralist arrangement like ASEAN in post-Cold War Asia. The problem resides in the very notion of the 'Pacific' as a geo-political entity\textsuperscript{72}. The Pacific area is not a unitary bloc. The 'Asia-Pacific', and sub-regions like Southeast Asia, are essentially Eurocentric geographical contrivances\textsuperscript{73}. Pacific Asia, as understood thus, encompasses a huge diversity. There is no common or dominant cultural, religious or ethnic identity and, as a consequence, no shared set of social, political or security values. This, together with the globalization of finance, information and technology, which the ASEAN economies must necessarily embrace, further inhibits the maturation of cohesive regional identities like ASEAN\textsuperscript{74}.

In 1973, Michael Leifer considered the development of ASEAN at that time to be distinguished 'by resolutions rather than resolve' and 'a general, if unstated, recognition that the association has neither the sense of common interest nor the resources to shape the future pattern of regional order'

Although the pretensions of ASEAN grew exponentially in the subsequent two and a half decades, the organization remained beset by the absence of common interests beyond survival or in organizing the resources available in a combined manner for a sustained regional order and growth.

Despite this inability to develop the joint force structure necessary to give its enhanced regional status credibility, ASEAN has nevertheless maintained, across three decades, a number of in-coherences. Some of them can be prescribed as: a) it is committed to regional neutrality, symbolized by the

\textsuperscript{74} N. 38., opp cit., pp. 414-17.
declaration at the fifth ASEAN summit (1995) of a Southeast Asian Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (SEANNWFZ), and yet this non-aligned neutralism requires the semidetached presence of the United States; b] ASEAN believes in the inviolability of territorial boundaries and the refusal to comment upon the internal politics of member states, but any attempt to deepen or widen the Association necessarily entails political or economic 'interference', as illustrated by events in Cambodia and Myanmar.

Interestingly, here a paradox remains as to why, given its contradictory character of many ASEAN initiatives since 1971, ASEAN as an organization has succeeded in the promotion of itself as a regional solution to regional questions rather than a regional delusion. This paradox is easily resolved if one reflects that at various times ASEAN has served as a convenient front for the needs of external actors. After 1971, it served the interests of the Nixon doctrine. In the run-up to the Cambodian settlement it served both United States and Chinese interests. And in the early 1990s, it served as the focus of an emerging Japanese regional foreign policy. It has, moreover, been in the interest of both external actors and ASEAN itself to conceal these facts.

By 1997, the fundamental difficulty confronting the Southeast Asian states, therefore, was that, while they were increasingly unwilling to accept US hegemony and the liberal post-Bretton Woods trading order it facilitated, there were insufficient indigenous resources to uphold a *pax Asiana*, which, in turn, condemned ASEAN to continued dependence upon either the US hegemon or some more complex arrangement that involves a balance of Chinese, US and Japanese interests (*The Pacific needs pax Americana*, 1996). Prior to 1997 sustained economic growth, which induced a large degree of complacency about the efficacy of regional structures to resolve security problems, obscured this paradox at the core of ASEAN. Nevertheless, the unwillingness to recognize

that this paradox existed indicated the disjointed nature of both security and economic relationships in the region. Indeed, the Association's raison d'etre has been to obscure fundamental differences of view between its members under the guise of consensus and non-interference. In achieving this somewhat limited goal it has been mostly successful, particularly during the Cold War. In the post-Cold War era, however, the underlying ambiguities became increasingly exposed.

**Literature Preview**

Scholars of ASEAN hold basically two dominant interpretations regarding the organizations.

1] that the ASEAN forms the basis of a regional community of South East Asian states. According to this idea ASEAN is an embodiment of fundamental norms, values and practices. These norms, values and practices, over the passage of time, have socialized the ASEAN member states. This voluntary acceptance/submission has assisted in the creation of a *shared regional identity*.

2] the second interpretations argues that ASEAN as a regional grouping is an *instrument* of its member states. Thus, from this hypothesis, any sense of community in South East Asia, is illusionary, at best.

Today, amidst immense criticism ASEAN lies between these two contradicting interpretations. Going by the present situation surrounding ASEAN, the second argument/interpretation, in fact, is quite closer to reality. ASEAN toady is the basis of religious identity, which is one of the many that define the member states. Further some scholars also analyze ASEAN from a sociological perspective, and argued that the creation of ASEAN has created a "regional community". This community consists of states, which shares common norms and value. The processes of political and economic integration of the member states into ASEAN have made these norms as part of their self-identities.

The followings are the literature previews of some selected articles and books on this topic. The main content of each article pertaining to the topic is summarized and the review of the study is also given.

1. Thai Foreign Policy Towards ASEAN: A Case Study of Chuan Leekpai Government

The research reveals that, as a result of Thai foreign policy towards ASEAN during the Chuan Leekpai Government, there were potential advantages to the internal security of its members. For example, by pushing the idea of Troika, ASEAN established the means to solve any conflicts rapidly. In this respect, Thailand sent Armed Forces to comply with United Nations peacekeeping units in East Timor, partly under the leadership of the Chuan Government, during the ASEAN Regional Forum, which was held in Thailand, a meeting which was attended for the first time by North Korea. This was achieved despite the fact that Thailand was facing economic problems at that time. Throughout the Chuan period, Thailand was facing an economic crisis that had hit the country particularly hard since the end of the Gen. Chavalit Yongchaiyuth Government. In response, the Chuan administration employed a policy of flexible engagement to recover its economic stability. At the same time, the Thai Government asked for financial aid from the USA and China; meanwhile, Chuan made continuous adjustments to foreign policy to cooperate with the members of ASEAN according to their agreements. However, the Chuan regime played an active economic role in forming an ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) and ASEAN Investment Area (AIA), for example, by the establishment of joint in Economic Co-operation in the Greater Mekhong Sub region (GMS), the development of transportation systems, and the acquisition of capital support from outside ASEAN, the establishment of international organizations, and the creation of agreements regarding the ASEAN economy. In addition, the Thai Government also supported the improvements in the standard of living, including education, health, income and other variables in

Ithichai Naichit, *Thai Foreign Policy Towards ASEAN: A Case Study of Chuan Leekpai Government*, Ramkamhaeng University, 1997
social development, namely science and technology, culture and information, the environment, the war against narcotics etc by cooperating to form the ASEAN Human Resource Development Fund. Regarding the foreign policy of the Thai Government to work within the framework of ASEAN in terms of creative, beneficial ideas and support for agreements between Thailand and the other members, the Chuan Government contributed to the stability and political and economic unity of the region.

2. Legal Problems of Obstacles of Economic Integration on Regional Level: Case Study on ASEAN

The brief summary of the book is as follows:

1. It was found that even though the number of the ASEAN members has risen to 10 nations, cooperation in political, economic and social aspects remains uncoordinated since most of them are developing countries. Political cooperation in particular leaves much to be desired owing to the difference in their governmental systems. Economic cooperation among the member countries is unfortunately absent because of their economic disparity. ASEAN is socially characterized by racial, religious and cultural diversity. The want of cooperation and coordination, the difference and the diversity above may have an impact on the joint security of ASEAN in the future.

2. The powers concerned namely the U.S., the EU, Japan, and the People's Republic of China have so far played major roles in this region in terms of national security and economic aids. Their roles, so played, may affect the ASEAN region for they may possibly exert their influence on ASEAN's foreign policy design and formulation. Thus ASEAN may lose its latitude.

3. In terms of ASEAN's political, economic and social cooperation, its members are inevitably dependent on those powers particularly for their financial aids. For instance, the financial crisis in Asia was indicative that the ASEAN countries were hardly able to stand on their own feet alone if without the assistance and aids form those powers, namely the loans from the IMF, the

Païsañ Seritanont, Legal Problems of Obstacles of Economic Integration on Regional Level: Case Study on ASEAN, Ramkamhaeng University, 1996
World Bank or the ADB wherein those powers have considerable influence and strong voice. Such aids and assistance may at the same time have an impact on the national policy formulation and independence of the recipient countries and their survival may consequently be affected.

4. Recommendations on certain issues are in the interests of ASEAN, which should be made to continue while some have posed problems and obstacles which much of course be addressed and resolved by ASEAN. Significantly, a desirable form of relationship between ASEAN and the powers concerned should be one where the prevailing form of relationship in the manner of a recipient country and a donor country is best changed into the relationship between the countries of equal position and standing on the basis of a stable political, economic and social potential of both parties sufficient to fairly benefit each other. Notwithstanding, if ASEAN is able to resolve some, if not all, of the problems and obstacles discussed above, it may be more secure in the future.


6. The security relationship between the People's Republic of China (PRC) and ASEAN in the post-cold war era was explained. The emphasis is to explain why the PRC joined the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)—a multi-lateral meeting. Previously, the PRC had emphatically refused to adopt a multilateral method for solving security problems in the region, because she believed that she could have an edge over lesser states through bi-lateral negotiations. If the multi-lateral method is applied, the PRC thought that she would be in an unfavorable position because she must deal with a group of states. In making this study, the concept of international regime is used to explain why the PRC changed her position and joined the ARF. It is found that the PRC participated in the ARF because she wanted to reduce the level of distrust which ASEAN members had on her. The distrust was a result of the aggressive stand which the PRC had on the sovereignty disputes over of the Spratly Islands and the enlargement of the

Varaporn Promrat, Sino-ASEAN security relation : a case study of the People's Republic of China's participation in the ASEAN Regional Forum, Chulalongkorn University, 1996
PRC's military strength. Furthermore, the PRC wanted to prevent some ASEAN members (at that time) and Vietnam to consolidate their position on the Spratlys issue. In addition, the PRC needed to reduce the level of influence that other powers increasingly had on multi-lateral security forum in the region. After joining the ARF, it is found that the PRC gained access to information on regional security and was largely able to steer the ARF into a venue for discussion of security issues, not a mechanism in solving security problems. As for ASEAN, the participation of the PRC in the ARF has contributed to the development of the ARF. Moreover, ASEAN as a core group of the ARF gained from the participation of major powers.

4. Title Alternative Common ASEAN currency

The author explains ASEAN came to a crashing because of the financial crisis that hit the region in the second half of 1997. This ASEAN crisis has demonstrated the tendency of flexible exchange rates to overshoot, resulting in perfectly viable enterprises bankrupt and pushing their economies into recession. Thus, ASEAN needs to devote to establishing a better monetary framework. Prime Minister of Malaysia proposed to study the use of single currency in ASEAN. This thesis is aimed at studying the possibility of using a common ASEAN currency by assessing whether ASEAN is an optimum currency area (OCA) when compared with Europe Union, and observing the nature of shock. The data set was obtained from international financial statistics of five ASEAN countries, namely: Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand, covering the period from 1990 to 1999. According to OCA theory, the study detects a higher degree of product diversification, although some impediments remain in the mobility of labor, the inflation similarity, and degree of openness. Concerning the nature of shock, both ASEAN and Europe have permanent shock. However, the permanent shock of the ASEAN is more symmetric than as it is for Europe. The study concludes that the use of a common currency in ASEAN is supported by product diversification and the

81 Gorngaran Kangpanichkul, Title Alternative Common ASEAN currency, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand, 1997
nature of shock. On the other hand, the problems from the differences in inflation as well as the low level of labor mobility and the openness could be the major obstacles to the ASEAN common currency.


Inconsistency, or perhaps simply an overarching pragmatism, has been a recurrent feature of Siam/Thailand's dealings with the wider world. Such pragmatism was perhaps most explicitly seen during World War II, when the Phibun Songkhram government formed an alliance with Japan and declared war on the United States. However, Seni Pramoj, then ambassador to Washington, failed to deliver the declaration. When the Allies emerged as victors, Thailand was quick to claim that the pro-Allied "Free Thai" resistance movement had represented the real stance of the war-time nation, an argument which was broadly accepted by the Americans. In other words, Thailand succeeded in being on both sides during World War II, a rare feat of foreign policy flexibility. Not for nothing has the Thai Foreign Ministry traditionally prided itself on a mastery of "bamboo diplomacy". By the 1980s, however, such diplomacy was coming under strain. Whereas both the pre-1932 absolute monarchy and the military-dominated post-1932 regimes were characterized by the concentration of power in the hands of a tiny elite, with elite diversification came a new form of inconsistency: the pursuit of different policies by different ruling groups. This was most clearly seen during the ill-fated Chatichai Choonhavan government of 1988-91, which saw a struggle for control of foreign policy towards Indochina. An elected prime minister with a group of well-educated and iconoclastic advisers - the so-called Ban Phitsanulok team - sought to engage with Vietnam and end the isolation of Cambodia, turning the former battlefield of Indochina into a marketplace. Meanwhile the Foreign Ministry remained wedded to the American influenced ASEAN orthodoxy of punishing Vietnam for the "crime" of invading Cambodia in 1979, while the Thai military took matters a stage further by actively supporting residual elements of the Khmer Rouge. Three
Thai government agencies, three Cambodia policies. As the first elected head of a Thai government for over a decade, Chatichai sought to wrest policy decisions out of the hands of the Foreign Ministry bureaucrats; meanwhile, the military continued to assert the right to pursue its own regional agenda, invoking the trump card of "national security".

The Chatichai government was ousted by a military coup in February 1991, but the army won only a pyrrhic victory. Within a couple of years, a UN intervention had restored Cambodia to a tentative normalcy, the ASEAN blockade was lifted, and soon afterwards President Bill Clinton restored America's diplomatic relations with Vietnam. Chatichai's team had demonstrated that Thailand's diplomats and soldiers were behind the times, failing to think creatively and to rise to the challenges of a post-Cold War environment. New ideas came from elected politicians and a team of smart advisors who were willing to think "outside the box". In the event, attempts by the leaders of the 1991 coup to assume power through civilian means ended in failure following the bloody Bangkok street clashes of May 1992. The extended 1991-92 political crisis led to the crafting of the 1997 "reformist" constitution, opening up liberal space for elected politicians to play the lead role in Thailand's governance.

Into this space stepped a new style of Thai politician: Police Lieutenant-colonel Dr. Thaksin Shinawatra. A former police officer with an American doctorate, Thaksin had become fabulously rich through winning a series of government concessions in the telecommunications sphere. While his competitors were badly hit during the Asian financial crisis of 1997, Thaksin had walked through the storm unscathed, emerging as the dominant player in Thailand's booming mobile phone business. His Thai Rak Thai Party won electoral victories on an unprecedented scale in 2001 and 2005. Like Chatichai, Thaksin sought to shake up the sluggish Thai bureaucracy and the war of words between the Abhisit Vejjajiva government and Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen, dangerously put Thai diplomacy to the test.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is regarded by many as one of the most successful examples of regional cooperation in the developing world. In the post-Cold War era, however, ASEAN faces serious challenges, not least from an expanded membership and the rising power of China. This book examines whether ASEAN can cope with these challenges and contribute to peaceful change in Southeast Asia, or whether it will crumble under the weight of its burdens, sparking a new spiral of regional conflict. Developing new theoretical insights into the rise and decline of security communities in international relations, Constructing a Security Community in Southeast Asia offers the first serious investigation into the prospects for a security community outside the Euro-Atlantic region. It examines several key issues which will determine the future stability of the Southeast Asian and Asia Pacific region, including:

• the effect of expansion on ASEAN's intra-mural solidarity;
• whether the ASEAN model of conflict management can be applied to the wider Asia Pacific region;
• the threat posed by territorial disputes in the South China Sea;
• domestic instability in Myanmar and Cambodia ;
• the impact of military acquisitions on intra-regional relations;
• recent debates over ASEAN's non-interference doctrine and calls for a 'flexible engagement' approach;
• the impact of the Asian economic crisis on regionalism and ASEAN's response to the crisis.

This book contains the most comprehensive and critical account available of the evolution of ASEAN's norms and the viability of the ASEAN Way of Conflict management.
Globalization is one of the most important phenomena in the current international arena. It can be defined as the processes and activities that promote interdependence and interconnectedness between peoples and societies throughout the world, together with their acceleration and intensification. Globalization is variously seen as a challenge, a result of technological change, or a largely inevitable process that we have to live with and make work with. In the current globalized world, events taking place in one place can have an increasingly direct and profound influence on events in geographically distant locations, and in an increasingly short time. This pervasive globalization has been produced by a combination of factors: the falling cost of transport, thanks to the deregulation of air transport, the arrival of wide-bodied jets, and the container revolution in the shipping industry since the 1970s; the global acceptance of liberal capitalism, leading to free movement of people, goods, capital, and services, especially since the end of the Cold War in the late 1980s; and the rapid evolution in information and communications technologies in the 1990s. Globalization has had a significant influence on a wide range of state and non-state actors at the local, national, regional, and global levels. It presents a major challenge to the cohesion of both local communities and nation states. Communities are affected by migration and the spread of new technologies, goods and values, while national governments seek to respond to their increasing inability to control flows of information, capital and people through developing new forms of regionalism, as seen most dramatically in Europe. Meanwhile, transnational corporations, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and local governments are increasingly forming their own cross-border linkages and networks that have a significant influence on the interests and behavior of the state. The multidimensionality and complexity of globalization require politicians, technical specialists, administrators and researchers to examine its causes, processes, and consequences from plural, multi-disciplinary
perspectives. The chapters in this book thus form a cycle: they begin and end with the movement of highly-skilled migrants across the globe, leading the revolutions in technological development and mega-urbanization. In between, they take in the lives of ordinary people coping with the strains and tensions within households, trying to assimilate and adapt to often difficult migrant situations, and trying to keep things going at home as well as abroad through their remittances and investments. These movements have been made possible by the technological developments also taking place: the information technology which allows the global integration of production processes, and the technical advances and cost reductions in shipping and air transport. Mediating the flows are the nation states, increasingly powerless to control the flows of information, capital and people across their frontiers. They try hard to regulate migration, but their efforts are constantly circumvented by the desperate, the traffickers, and corruptable agents of the state. They try hard to regulate the movement of goods, but their efforts are frustrated both by the smugglers and the need to engage in free trade agreements and/or the World Trade Organization if they are to remain players in the global economy. And as the location of production shifts to the developing countries with their cheaper supplies of labor, they try to boost their economies by attracting investment through developing infrastructure and participating in the global competition for prestige and mega-events such as the Olympics, World Expos, and the World Cup. How long these trends will continue into the 21st century is an interesting question. As this book goes to press, the economic crash of the property bubble forecast by Yuchengco (Chapter 2) has already happened, and we are in the middle of a global economic recession. If the economic growth of China and India can bring the world economy back onto the rails, it is possible that these kinds of trends can continue for some time to come, though the spectres of climate change and rising energy costs also loom on the horizon. But whatever happens, people will still be on the move, their movements will be shaped by changes in technology and the location of capital, and states will still try to control their movements. These chapters play an important role both in describing the directions and
extent of these changes in the last few decades, and providing insights into the possible shapes that they may take in the future.


This monograph focuses on the impact of the emerging trend of new bilateralism on international relations, based on a case study of EU-Thailand relations. In effect, EU-Thailand relations stand for relations between a regional organization and a third country outside that region, so that with the emergence of new bilateralism, they can bring into play the dynamics of inter-regionalism relevant for the policy orientation between multilateralism and bilateralism in international relations. To start with, the main puzzle is why the policy trend of 'new bilateralism' has been pursued despite the widely accepted views on the political and economic advantages of 'multilateralism'. From an economic viewpoint, the international trade literature mostly reaches a general agreement that free trade - defined briefly as 'a situation in which there are no artificial barriers to trade' strengthens market mechanisms and so increases the efficiency of the production to benefit consumers. In short, the international trade theory, as postulated by Ricardo almost a century ago suggests that whenever countries trade with each other they are always better off because of the logic of relative comparative advantage between any two traded goods. Since all of the parties involved can always optimize their welfare gains by specializing in the production of goods where they have a comparative advantage, international trade should exist in the interest of all countries and is desirable for them as a policy orientation, at least, in the long run. Likewise, in the political sphere, the positive impact of multilateralism was earlier recognized in the Madisonian tradition of federalism where the government's strategy of governing at a higher level of interaction may actually strengthen the collective character of itself and improve the flows of information both domestically and internationally. Following the arguments of constitutional democracy, the commitments of states to multilateral institutions can then also contribute to "the limitations of special
interests”, "the protection of individual and minority rights" and "the promotion of collective deliberation".

Against this background of the merits of multilateralism, it is often argued that a state's foreign policy decision to strive for new bilateralism merely serves as a second-best solution while the best one, the multilateral approach, has proved not viable. In response, this book argues that this statement of new bilateralism as a second-best policy is only partially convincing because of the continued relevance of multilateral institutions and the emerging interplay between new bilateralism and multilateralism. Focusing on the case study of EU-Thailand relations, the phenomenon of new bilateralism shall be investigated here more thoroughly, in terms of the two parties’ foreign policy motivations that have led to it and the systemic implications of their new bilateralism for international relations. Accordingly, this book seeks to address two sets of research questions in particular: The first set of questions focuses on identifying the factors that underlie foreign policy decisions in favor of new bilateralism and thus explain how each of them shapes the recent developments in EU-Thailand relations. The second set of questions focus on EU-Thailand relations as such as the unit of analysis and initiate an essential debate on the functions that new bilateralism performs, and is expected to perform, with regard to the structures of international relations.


The research paper argues that ASEAN may have been overlooked following the financial crisis of 1997 and amidst the rise of China and India, but it has much to offer to the world and should be getting more attention than it currently receives. The main arguments of the monograph are : a] ASEAN-5 is a region of promising potential.; b] The ASEAN-5 area is undoubtedly diverse, bringing synergies and opportunities which have not been fully realized.

In short, the ASEAN-5 region holds good promise as a base for manufacturing and services activities, supported by its abundant labour force, reasonable wages, fairly high human capital and extensive infrastructure.
**Rationale/Significance of the research:**

Since from the above analysis it is apparent that almost all the countries under ASEAN are today encounter various problems, all of them are unique to that country and the region, per say. As a regional grouping, the ASEAN is expected to address, and finally a resolution, whether political, political, economic, or social may be formulated to contain the same. While most of the problems are basically related to the global financial crisis, and the aftermath of the Asian financial Crisis, there are certain territorial issues which are to be addressed too.

As one of the founding member of ASEAN, Thailand enjoys a strong position, more so, due to her close proximity with the USA. However, as the course of this dissertation will reveal that under the regime of each Prime Minister of Thailand, the relationship headed towards a tumultuous journey. On some issues Thailand used the ASEAN platform to its advantage, and on other issues it made the ASEAN platform a strong one to deal with by the other world organizations. The non-binding duties of the members, however, have made a negative impact, and thus the relationship among members often does not work affectively. This causes weakness in bargaining, protecting and extending the interests of the members in the region. It also thus failed to implement ASEAN as a true balancer against the powerful countries of the world.

The concept of the nation state as prescribed by the western politicians may not work fruitfully in the society of multi-ethnic people since they differentiate their identity and open fire to separate the land. The Nation States in ASEAN mainly involve the ethnical and tribal problems so that they cannot focus on developing economics and society. To subdue the multi-ethnics, there arises the dictatorship such as does in Myanmar where military government opens fire with multi-ethnics especially the Karen Union Unity and the Shan State Army. This causes a long-run civil war and drives its citizen to be refugees in Thailand.

Nevertheless, the powerful countries need to investigate natural energy in developing countries and interfere the home affairs of them. They seem to
cooperate with the related governments to run the political affairs and offers various interests which never reaped by people.

The proposed work thus intends to study the Relationship and Development between The kingdom of Thailand and ASEAN member countries, focusing on Thai government's foreign policies toward ASEAN during the four cabinets under the leadership of Prime Ministers: Chuan Leekpai, Thaksin Shinavatra, Surayuth Chulanonda, Samak Sunthoravej and the present one, Somchai Wongsawad. The policies cover the implementation, action plan, achievement and development of political, economic and social aspects.

**Objectives of Research**

*To Study*

1. A new form of idea related to the formulation of foreign affairs policy of Thailand. Incorporation of Thailand into ASEAN in a symbiotic relation, development efforts taken by Thailand through ASEAN for the member countries.

2. The role of ASEAN towards the BRICs (Brazil, Russia, India and China) nations, especially towards China and India, which will become the most powerful countries in terms of goods and service by 2050.

3. The relationship of Thailand with two specific countries, Cambodia and Myanmar.

*To analyse*

1. The policies and practices of the successive Thai government vis-a-vis ASEAN.

*To su2eest*

1. The outcome of this work will lead to path-breaking ideas, which may be considered by the Thai Foreign Ministry for policy decisions.

2. That emphasizing the solidarity among member countries of the ASEAN will lead to an overall development of the region.
3. That ASEAN as a regional organization need to be strengthened in order to turn it to be a force to reckon with.

**Research Questions:**

1. How far does ASEAN fruitfully work for mutual understanding among member countries and create its economic and political strength as to be a showcase in the world forum?
2. How does ASEAN play an important role in solving political crisis, natural disasters and human right?
3. How does Thailand play an active role toward the ASEAN Charter?
4. Can Thailand and ASEAN take action toward problems happening in the surrounding neighbouring countries: Laos, Cambodia, Malaysia and Myanmar?

**Importance of the Research Question**

The questions raised above critically investigate the status and practical role of ASEAN in implementing its fundamental principles and charter among member countries. The ASEAN population are about 570 millions and vary in their income ranging from 209 USD to 50,000 USD per head per year, in political system ranging from Democracy, Republic, Socialism, and Dictatorship which bring about varied problems such as human right abuse, education, low health standards. How does ASEAN harmonize and response to these different gaps as to create peace, stability, security, and maintain cultural diversity and social harmony? How does Thailand response to ASEAN and learn to be a leading member in the region?

**Hypothesis of Research**

Thailand having the Secretary-General and Chairman of the ASEAN will play a major role in implementing the ASEAN Charter and encouraging the member countries to adjust foreign policy leading to a close relationship as to share more national interests and balance of power in the world forum. In addition, ASEAN member countries will abide by the ASEAN charter, i.e. the principles of sovereignty, equality, territorial integrity, non-interference, consensus, and unity in diversity.
Research Methodology

Research refers to the scientific and systematic search for information on a specific topic. In fact, research is the art of scientific investigation. The purpose of research is to discover answers to questions through the application of scientific procedure. There are few of the various types of Research adopted by Researchers all over the world (i) Historical, (ii) Descriptive, (iii) Applied vs. Fundamental, (iv) Quantitative vs. Qualitative, (v) Conceptual vs. Empirical.

The study aims at:

- Documentary research collected through historical and analytical methods. Primary sources such as official documents, speeches and papers
- Secondary data such as books, articles, magazines, journals, newspapers, technical researches and various website etc.

Interviewing the government personnel at the operational levels.

The present research thus, will be carried out partially by Empirical methodology and partially by using motivational approach. The dependence will be on experience or observation on one hand, and discovering the underlying motives and desires on the other.

Scope of the study

- The study will focuses on the Thai-ASEAN relationship both from positive and negative angles.
- The data will be collected mostly from primary and secondary sources.

Theoretical Framework: This research work will use many of the modern theory and theorists of international relation. Functionalism as a hypothesis will be tested, however not fully since functionalism cannot fully explain the praxis of foreign policy and relation between a nation-state and a regional grouping. Having argued in details the various facets of ASEAN, and numerous vies and ideas in favour and against the regional organization ASEAN of Southeast Asia, and the detail of justification of the present research in this chapter, the next chapter will explicitly deal with the theoretical hypothesis used for this dissertation.

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