



THE ASEAN DRAMA

HALF A CENTURY
AND
STILL UNFOLDING

edited by
EDNA E.A. CO
and
CARLOS C. TABUNDA, JR.

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EDITORS: Edna E. A. Co and Carlos C. Tabunda, Jr.
WRITERS: Sayeeda Bano, Herman Joseph S. Kraft, Orlando S. Mercado,
Temario C. Rivera, Jose P. Tabbada, Jorge V. Tigno, and Filemon A. Uriarte, Jr.
EDITORIAL CONSULTANT: Ben-Oliver M. Matias
PUBLICATIONS OFFICER: Lea Marie F. Diño
PUBLICATIONS ASSISTANT: Shechainah A. Pacariem
COPYEDITOR: Ramon L. Fernan III
LAYOUT: Shechainah A. Pacariem
PROOFREADER AND COVER DESIGN: Lea Marie F. Diño

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UP Center for Integrative and Development Studies
UP Bahay ng Alumni Building
1101 Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines
TEL 435-9283 FAX 929-3540
EMAIL cids@up.edu.ph WEBSITE <http://cids.up.edu.ph>
FACEBOOK PAGE [facebook.com/upcids](https://www.facebook.com/upcids)

DAP Building, San Miguel Avenue,
Ortigas Center, Pasig City P.O. Box No. 12788
Ortigas Center, Pasig City
TEL 631-0921 to 30 FAX 631-2123
EMAIL academy@dap.edu.ph WEBSITE <http://www.dap.edu.ph>
FACEBOOK PAGE [facebook.com/dap.edu.ph](https://www.facebook.com/dap.edu.ph)

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Message

I am one with the UP Center for Integrative and Development Studies (UPCIDS) and the Development Academy of the Philippines (DAP) in the publication of *The ASEAN Drama: Half a Century and Still Unfolding*, a remarkable contribution to the field of ASEAN studies and affairs.

The ASEAN Drama: Half a Century and Still Unfolding is the fruit of the dynamic partnership of the UPCIDS and the DAP. These esteemed institutions sought the valuable insight of experts and academics who shed light on the longstanding and emergent issues involving the region and the Association. These issues and the possible resolutions for such are indeed worth exploring.

This book comes at a very opportune time as well: the Philippines is at the helm of the Association at the golden anniversary of its establishment. I hope that with this book, we can continue to foster unity and solidarity among member states. Let us not be hindered by diversity; rather, let us take our differences as strengths, as a driving force for the stability, success, and longevity of the Association.

I extend my warmest congratulations to the writers, editors, and the team that brought life to this book that is certainly significant to ASEAN scholarship. With this book, we heed the theme of the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the ASEAN: we partner for change and engage the world.

Mabuhay at padayon!



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Danilo L. Concepcion'.

Atty. Danilo L. Concepcion
President
University of the Philippines

Message

Greetings from the Development Academy of the Philippines!

I wish to extend my felicitations to the editorial team and to the contributing writers to the book *The ASEAN Drama: Half a Century and Still Unfolding*. The DAP, through its Council of Fellows, is honored to participate in this project together with the University of the Philippines Center for Integrative and Development Studies (UPCIDS). I consider the book as our institutions' joint contribution to the country's historic hosting of the 2017 ASEAN Summit and the commemoration of the ASEAN's 50th anniversary.



It was only nine years after the establishment of the ASEAN in 1967 when the First ASEAN Summit was held in Bali, Indonesia in 1976. The most important piece of document arising from this summit was the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia. Signed by the national leaders of the founding nations, future member states would have to accede to it, prior to or upon joining the regional organization. Although the treaty was exclusive to members, it was open to accession by nations outside of Southeast Asia.

As of 2013, there had been 34 states that had acceded to the treaty, including the ASEAN member states, Russia, China, the United States, and the European Union. What could be deduced from this development is the importance placed by non-Southeast Asian countries on the ASEAN and its commitment to regional peace and stability. The harmony and cooperation that have transpired through the years have fruitfully resulted in the establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community in 2015.

With this economic integration, the Southeast Asian Region is expected to reap the benefits of having a single market for investments, trade, and services. This would provide opportunities for Filipino businesses, including small- and medium-scale enterprises, as well as migrant workers. Ultimately, the benefits should result in inclusive growth and a better quality of life for the Filipino people, most especially those in poverty-stricken areas of the country.

Indeed, the last 50 years since its founding as an organization that aimed to tackle common security concerns have seen the ASEAN metamorphose into an organization that now stands on three pillars: economic, sociocultural, and political security. In the midst of it all, national policies, priorities, and

commitments have all drastically changed. The ASEAN would now have to tighten the interdependence and cooperation among its member states in the face of globalization and its accompanying concerns to ensure that the gains made by the organization over the last half century would not be negated.

This book aims to look back and analyze the developments that have taken place in the ASEAN as an organization, as well as the contributions that the Philippines has made to help bring the ASEAN to where it is now. To this end, think tank institutions, including the DAP and UPCIDS, are challenged to craft more meaningful and innovative research and policy recommendations that will further enhance the ASEAN as the leading regional organization this side of the world.

Rest assured that under my leadership and the guidance of President Rodrigo Duterte, the DAP shall continue its active partnership with the UP in such noteworthy collaborations.

Maraming salamat po. Mabuhay tayong lahat! Mabuhay ang ASEAN!



Dr. Elba S. Cruz
President and Chief Executive Officer
Development Academy of the Philippines

Foreword

At the launching of the book *ASEAN Integration: Status, Issues and Prospects* at the Development Academy of the Philippines (DAP) in 2016, an event which was attended by embassy officials from some ASEAN member states, Philippine government officials, and ASEAN experts, a consensus emerged on the need for an in-depth and comprehensive study on ASEAN. The approaching 50th anniversary of ASEAN made the proposed study all the more timely. Thus, the idea for this book on ASEAN was born.

Earlier, the University of the Philippines (UP) and DAP had entered into a Memorandum of Understanding that would allow the two institutions to collaborate on research and other undertakings. With this arrangement already in place, it was thus relatively easy for the UP, through the Center for Integrative and Development Studies (CIDS), and the DAP to organize a team of ASEAN experts to write what was now envisioned to be another book on ASEAN, one specifically timed to coincide with the Association's 50th anniversary in 2017.

Agreeing to write a book to mark an anniversary is one thing; coming up with a common theme is another. The initial title of the proposed book, which was *ASEAN at 50*, reflected the lack of a common theme to guide the paper writers. (As it turned out, most of the other book writing projects also carried that title, so it was junked.) Nothing seemed to unite the prospective writers except the need for a book that would question the official pronouncements, the smug assumptions, and even the conventional scholarship on ASEAN. Is there really such a thing as "ASEAN centrality?" Does centrality make sense with the Chinese dragon looming so large in the ASEAN horizon? Do member countries actually benefit from economic integration? (Brexit, or Britain's exit from the European Union, was the current topic on regional integration in mid-2016, when this book writing project started.) Is there a role for nongovernment organizations in what has so far been an intergovernmental organization? Is a people-centered ASEAN at all possible, even feasible? Is the search for an ASEAN identity an exercise in futility? These were some of the questions and issues that were tossed around and discussed animatedly in the almost weekly initial meetings of the team. The book reflects the critical, almost nihilistic, perspectives taken by the authors.

This is not to say that there was no consensus among the members of the team on certain issues that are deemed important by and to ASEAN. There was consensus on the need to take a close, hard look at the alleged superiority of consensus decision-making to decision by majority rule, putting into question the time-honored "ASEAN Way." There was also consensus on the need to review the structure, functions and role of the ASEAN Secretariat—which has

so far remained relatively lean—in view of the expansion of ASEAN (from the original five to the present 10 members) and the advent in 2015 of the ASEAN Community. There was also consensus, albeit limited, on the need to take a close look, and if possible to examine as rigorously as current methodology allows, the assumption that regional economic integration (a form of free or preferential trade agreement) is always economically beneficial to the members, even if some members may benefit more than other members. There was less consensus on which among the three pillars ASEAN has advanced farthest—whether it is on political, economic or sociocultural cooperation—and whether the advance on one front (say, the economic) can be sustained while the others (say, the political and sociocultural) lag behind.

The book reflects all these nagging issues, and more. Inverting a popular phrase, the book reflects diversity in unity.

As stated earlier, the writing and launch of this book have been timed to coincide with this year's hosting of ASEAN by the Philippines. But the more important justification for yet another book on ASEAN, or for that matter any book on any other subject, is that it is useful. Though generally critical in its tone and perspective, this book also informs and, it is hoped, enhances awareness makes the Philippine public in particular more aware of ASEAN among Filipino students, policymakers and the general public. and its actual as well as potential role in their daily lives. It was not very long ago that a survey found awareness of ASEAN in the Philippines to be the lowest among the ten member states, some of which had joined ASEAN barely a decade earlier. That finding is quite shocking, considering that the Philippines was one of the five founding members of ASEAN when the latter was established in 1967. No single book can of course aspire to fill that wide information and awareness gap, but it is hoped that by coming out with this book, we can make a modest contribution to closing it.

The Editors

CHAPTER 1

ASEAN Secretariat: Symbolic or Syndetic?

FILEMON A. URIARTE, JR.

Abstract

Fifty years after its founding ASEAN is still struggling to make up its mind on what kind of a secretariat it would like to have—a symbolic secretariat to function as the name implies or a syndetic secretariat that binds the ASEAN Community together. In 1967 the founding members deemed it unnecessary to establish a central secretariat. It was not until the first ASEAN Summit Meeting in 1976 that the ASEAN Secretariat was established. Since then, its organizational structure has undergone a three-phased development with the ASEAN Charter of 2007 ushering in the third phase. It is evident that there is support for the strengthening of the ASEAN Secretariat at the highest levels. Summit after summit, the ASEAN leaders have expressed this desire. Yet progress has been slow and incremental. The problem lies in the ambivalence of member states on the questions of to what extent, in what manner, and how soon should the strengthening of the secretariat take place. This ambivalence is viewed as a consequence of the reluctance of some member states to give away part of its sovereignty to a regional institution. But the time has come for ASEAN to come out of its ambivalence and firmly decide to significantly strengthen the ASEAN Secretariat to enable it to function not in a mere symbolic way but in a syndetic manner to help bind the member states together as an ASEAN Community with one vision and one identity.

Keywords: ASEAN Secretariat, Secretary-General, strengthening, ambivalence, sovereignty

CHAPTER 2

The ASEAN and the Politics of Major Powers: Impact on the Quest for a Regional Order

TEMARIO C. RIVERA

Abstract

The confluence of the administrations of President Barack Obama of the United States and President Xi Jinping of China has been marked by more aggressive projections of power in the region. For the United States, this power projection is best seen in the pivot or rebalance strategy to Asia. China's new level of aggressive confidence is dramatized by its massive island building and fortifications in the contested South China Sea areas as well as its ambitious projects around the "China Dream," including the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and the Silk Road initiatives. These developments have weakened the ASEAN's projection of its own centrality in helping create a rules-based order and socializing other players in the region to a multilateral framework in addressing common problems. China's preference for bilateral negotiations in addressing territorial and maritime problems in the region has also gained headway among the major ASEAN claimant states, including the Philippines and Malaysia. All these developments challenge not only the claim of "ASEAN Centrality" but also the association's own goal of heightened integration and community building.

Keywords: ASEAN, President Obama, pivot/rebalance to Asia, President Xi Jinping, China Dream, South China Sea

CHAPTER 3

Down the Rocky Road to Building ASEAN Identity and Citizenship

JORGE V. TIGNO

Abstract

Since the 1990s there have been initiatives both at deepening and broadening the extent of regional integration systems and agreements in Europe and the Americas. In Southeast Asia, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has embarked on a master plan to foster and initiate an integration process for the ten countries comprising the sub-region. A key component of this master plan is a vision towards the creation of “an ASEAN community conscious of its ties of history, aware of its cultural heritage, and bound by a common regional identity.” In 2009 the member states of ASEAN envisioned an integration blueprint for the region grounded on three community pillars—the political-security community; the economic community; and the sociocultural community. Of the three, it is the sociocultural community that has received relatively little serious attention and critical examination. The general presumption is that given the fact that all of the countries are situated in the region the cultural dimension would come naturally. There is certainly more to the goal of the third pillar to realize “an ASEAN Community that is people-centered and socially responsible” and “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.” This chapter examines the nature and dynamic of regional political socialization and integration among the societies and peoples of ASEAN. It describes the extent to which

Keywords: ASEAN, regional identity, citizenship, regional integration

the countries of ASEAN have managed to forge ahead with building a common identity and regional citizenship. A key context for this regional integration project is the magnitude and dynamism of population movements among the ten member countries of ASEAN. This chapter also examines the relationship between an emerging regional identity (fostered by a sociocultural community perspective) and the notion of regional citizenship and identity in the context of cross-border population movements. The association still has a long way to go towards fostering a collective regional identity. At the very least, ASEAN needs to reconfigure itself beyond simply an intergovernmental organization, which is what it has become in the last 50 years of its existence, towards a truly integrated sociocultural community.

CHAPTER 4

The Ebb and Flow of Regional Civil Society Involvement in ASEAN

HERMAN JOSEPH S. KRAFT

Abstract

One of the most important but least understood aspects of ASEAN Community building is the role played by regional civil society. This is of particular significance to understanding the role played by the Philippines in ASEAN. Philippine civil society groups have been instrumental in initiating and building networks of civil society groups and non-government organizations across the region across different issue areas. In doing so, they have been able to influence changes in attitudes in ASEAN towards specific concerns that involve the people in the region. The period following the 1997 financial crisis has been described as a period of reform in ASEAN where space was opened for the involvement of a wider set of stakeholders besides government officials had signaled a shift in ASEAN “style of regional governance.” Civil society organizations which began to interact with ASEAN officials in the late 1990s and, with greater confidence on both sides, in the early 2000s have stood out in this process. This mutual engagement reached its apex in the drafting of the ASEAN Charter where a number of consultation meetings led to the explicit language used in the commitment to the establishment of a regional human rights mechanism, and the eventual establishment of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights. Since then, however, there has been a recidivist element in ASEAN’s engagement with civil society as the ASEAN states seemed to claw back that space that had opened. While a complete reversion back to the elitist ASEAN of old is impossible, the space within which civil society can operate within the ASEAN framework is being constrained.

Keywords: Track Three diplomacy, ASEAN Community building, regional civil society, human rights, Asian financial crisis

CHAPTER 5

Do Member Countries Benefit from Economic Integration? A Case Study of the ASEAN

JOSE P. TABBADA AND SAYEEDA BANO

Abstract

It is usually assumed that membership in a regional trade agreement (RTA) redounds to the benefit of the member countries which is why RTAs have proliferated in recent years. That is, after all, what theory tells us: that free trade promotes growth and welfare; RTAs are a form of free trade arrangement among the members; therefore, RTAs promote the member countries' growth and welfare.

Using three different methodologies—the “before and after” test, linear projection, and the synthetic control (or counterfactual) method - the authors test the proposition that RTAs promote growth and welfare among the members, using ASEAN as a case study. Specifically, the tests aim to determine if economic growth, GDP, and GDP per capita improved after, and as a result of, a member country's accession to the ASEAN Free Trade Agreement (AFTA) and ASEAN. The first test shows that growth in six (6) of the ten ASEAN member countries was higher after AFTA/ASEAN than before. The second test shows that GDP and GDP per capita in eight (8) member countries were higher after compared to before AFTA/ASEAN. The synthetic control method confirms the findings of the second method, and has the advantage of being able to quantify the gains and losses. With the gains of the gainers being greater than the losses of the losers, ASEAN as a whole benefited from integration, although the bulk of the gains went to two member countries.

The findings of the study are generally consistent with those of other studies cited in the review of literature.

Keywords: synthetic control method, regional integration, economic growth, ASEAN Free Trade Agreement (AFTA), foreign trade, foreign direct investment

CHAPTER 6

The ASEAN Way: Bedrock or Stumbling Block?

ORLANDO S. MERCADO

Abstract

Much of the success of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in regional cooperation has been credited to the so-called “ASEAN Way,” a consultative, consensus-based decision-making mechanism upholding principles of non-interference, peaceful resolution of conflict, and regional autonomy; preference for bilateral cooperation; and respect for sociocultural norms. However, recent developments and challenges confronting ASEAN have rendered the ASEAN Way obsolete, and the regional association faces pressure to adapt to changes in the geopolitical landscape. With a semi-progressive, semi-conservative ASEAN Charter meant to keep the ASEAN Way intact, will ASEAN be able to move forward? This chapter traces the origins of the ASEAN Way and revisits its legacy of successes and failures in conflict management and resolution. It makes the case for amending the ASEAN Charter either to reinvent the decision-making mechanism.

Keywords: ASEAN Way, conflict management, security cooperation, regionalism

About the Authors

EDNA ESTIFANIA A. CO has a doctorate in public administration from the University of the Philippines National College of Public Administration and Governance (UP NCPAG) where she is full professor and served as dean from 2010 to 2013. Dr. Co went for a research fellowship at the University of Manchester Institute for Development Policy and Management in England. She served as lecturer at the Ateneo School of Government and the Ateneo School of Law. Dr. Co is currently the Executive Director of the University of the Philippines Center for Integrative and Development Studies (UP CIDS) and concurrently serves as Director of the CIFAL Philippines, one of the 16 affiliated centers of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), focused on migration, gender equality and sustainable development. Dr. Co served as Vice President for Public Affairs of the UP from 2016 to February 2017. She has earned International Publications Awards from the University of the Philippines and has authored and co-authored books and articles in journals. She serves as reviewer in many international journals on subject matters such as policy and policy reforms, democracy and citizenship, and social development. She steers the revitalization of the University's *Public Policy Journal* where she serves as member of the editorial board. She partners with the intergovernmental organization, International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) with which she has written 5 books on democracy assessment including a monograph on the 10-year experience of doing global democracy assessment. Dr. Co serves as member of the Advisory Council to the Philippine Civil Service Commission, a council member of the oldest election watchdog, National Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL) and other non-government organizations. She has served as consultant to international development organizations and to the Development Academy of the Philippines.

CARLOS C. TABUNDA, JR. is the Executive Fellow of the Development Academy of the Philippines-Council of Fellows. He also serves as the Director of the ASEAN Studies Center of the New Era University (NEU). He anchors two shows at the Eagle Broadcasting Corp. (NET25) namely "ASEAN in Focus" and "ASEAN in Focus Weekend." He served as Chief-of-Staff at the National Security Council and Assistant Secretary at the Office of the President-Office of the Presidential Legal Counsel. He has been a lecturer at the University of the Philippines, NEU, University of Makati, and Jose Rizal University. He earned his academic degrees including a doctorate in public administration at the University of the Philippines.

SAYEEDA BANO is a Senior Lecturer in economics at the University of Waikato in New Zealand and former Visiting Research Fellow at the UP School of Economics. Dr. Bano specializes in international economics and has published many articles on bilateral trade agreements, regional integration, and foreign direct investment in international economics journals.

HERMAN JOSEPH S. KRAFT is an Associate Professor at the Department of Political Science, University of the Philippines Diliman. He has published articles and book chapters on issues concerning ASEAN, regional security in Southeast Asia, security sector reform, and intra-state conflict in the Philippines. His most recent publications include an assessment of the implications for Philippines defense of the Scarborough Shoal issue and of nontraditional security concerns such as humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. He currently serves as the Associate Dean for Administration and External Affairs at the College of Social Science and Philosophy at the University of the Philippines Diliman.

ORLANDO S. MERCADO is a former ambassador, former Senator, and Secretary of National Defense. He is a veteran broadcaster and professor of political science, communication, and business management. He finished his bachelor's degree in Political Science, master's degree in Communication, and doctoral degree in Political Science all from the University of the Philippines. He served two consecutive terms as Senator from 1987-1992, as Secretary of National Defense in 1998-2001, and as the first Permanent Representative of the Philippines to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 2009. In 2014, he was inducted to the Council of Fellows of the Development Academy of the Philippines as Eminent Fellow. He is currently Secretary General of the Eastern Regional Organization for Public Administration (EROPA), and is professorial lecturer at the Ateneo School of Government.

TEMARIO C. RIVERA is a retired Professor and former Chair of the Department of Political Science of the University of the Philippines Diliman. He also served as a tenured professor of international relations at the International Christian University of Tokyo. Dr. Rivera earned his BA and MA at the University of the Philippines and his PhD at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. His latest publication is a co-edited book (with Felipe B. Miranda), *Chasing the Wind: Assessing Philippine Democracy*, 2nd edition (2016). He is currently Chair of the Center for People Empowerment in Governance (CenPEG) and a lecturer of the Public Management Development Program at the Development Academy of the Philippines.

JOSE P. TABBADA is a former Professor of public administration at the University of the Philippines. He is a Visiting Researcher at the Jesse Robredo Institute of Governance of the De La Salle University and a Senior Fellow of the Institute for Strategic and Development Studies. He is likewise a Research Consultant to the Small Enterprises Research and Development Foundation (SERDEF), Inc. and has been a consultant to the ASEAN Secretariat on a wide range of issues. Professor Tabbada has written on foreign direct investment, industry clustering, competitiveness, and science and technology policy.

JORGE V. TIGNO is a Professor at the Department of Political Science at the University of the Philippines Diliman. He has a doctorate in public administration from the UP National College of Public Administration and Governance (UP NCPAG). His research interests are in the areas of Asian labor migration and comparative immigration policies, democratic consolidation and transitions in Southeast Asia, non-governmental organizations and state-civil society relations in the Philippines, and electoral and political reforms in developing states.

FILEMON A. URIARTE, JR. is a former Secretary of Science and Technology, Executive Director of the ASEAN Foundation, Director for Science and Technology and later Director for Functional Cooperation of the ASEAN Secretariat. He worked at the United Nations ESCAP as Regional Adviser, Secretary of the Commission, and Director. He is currently an Academician of the National Academy of Science and Technology, and Chairman of TEST Consultants, Inc. He earned his BS and MS from the University of the Philippines and PhD from Carnegie-Mellon University in 1970. He has written and published four books and co-authored two.

The ASEAN Drama: Half a Century and Still Unfolding reflects a diversity in thinking about ASEAN, its character, the issues the regional association faces, as well as the many dilemmas it encounters. The book is a forthright scrutiny of ASEAN by academics and diplomatic practitioners. The chapters examine various dimensions of ASEAN, namely: economic performance using a particular methodology to gauge such performance of the member-countries; civil society engagement with ASEAN; the political power relations and dynamics within ASEAN; the so-called regional identity as a “caring and sharing community;” the ASEAN bureaucracy and secretariat; and the characterization and dilemmas of ASEAN as a regional association.

CHAPTER AUTHORS

Sayeeda Bano
Herman Joseph S. Kraft
Orlando S. Mercado
Temario C. Rivera
Jose P. Tabbada
Jorge V. Tigno
Filemon A. Uriarte, Jr.



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