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# Mainstream Theories in Southeast Asian International Relations:

## Discourses and Limitations

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*In their research on Southeast Asian international relations, many scholars have heavily applied two mainstream theories—realism and constructivism—to the task of explaining security issues in Southeast Asia. Unfortunately, the capacity of realism and constructivism to rigorously strengthen explorations of Southeast Asian security issues has diminished, owing to a discrepancy between the theories' discursive foundations and current Southeast Asian security culture. Given this diminishment in the theories' explanatory power, the emergence and promotion of new theories in Southeast Asian international relations may be necessary. The current study comprises two sections. The first section will explicate the foundations of the mainstream theories' discourses. The second section will explore the mainstream theories' gradually reduced capacity to facilitate analyses of Southeast Asian security issues.*

### Introduction

Realism and constructivism have become two mainstream theories among Southeast Asian international relations (IR) scholars. However, the capacity of realism and constructivism to facilitate rigorous explorations of Southeast Asian security issues has diminished over time. This diminishment stems from the discrepancy between the two theories' respective discursive foundations and current Southeast Asian security culture. In light of these trends, the creation and promotion of other IR theories may be necessary.

In this article, I explore these mainstream Southeast Asian IR theories in two sections. The first section will explicate the foundations of the realist and constructivist discourses. The second section will identify the factors constraining these two theories' capacity to facilitate analyses of Southeast Asian security issues.

### Mainstream Theories in Southeast Asian IR: Realism and Constructivism

Realism and constructivism are two major mainstream theories used by Southeast Asian IR scholars. Realism dominated the analytical framework for studies about Southeast Asian security issues from the early Cold War period to around the early post-Cold War period. Constructivism overtook realism as the predominant theoretical approach to the Southeast Asian security phenomenon during the demise of the Cold War and the 2000s. In this section, I will briefly introduce realism and constructivism, including their respective discursive foundations and arguments. The analysis will in particular focus on Michael Leifer's and Amitav Acharya's writings, because these two individuals pioneered the use of realism and constructivism respectively.

## Discourses and Arguments of Mainstream Theories

### *The Realist Approach: Michael Leifer*

Realism has been the most durable theory in the IR field. Its primary characteristic has been the assumption that the world is anarchic. States are exposed to an atmosphere of mutual mistrust, where invasion by other states is probable if unmitigated cooperation is unlikely, unless two or more states are galvanized around common challenges or concerns. Therefore, in order to avoid being invaded, a state's first aim is not the improvement of its people's well-being, but national survival.<sup>1</sup> The most effective means of survival is for states to strengthen their internal material factors, such as defense capability, to the maximum capacity possible – this is known as the doctrine of self-help.<sup>2</sup> However, when states over-enhance their material capabilities, a security dilemma among nations is ineluctable and can be managed only through a balance of power, a scenario that the theory predicts. Realism, put simply, posits that the anarchical nature of international society requires states to strengthen their material factors and seek a balance of power in order for survival.

In Southeast Asian IR studies, the best known realist thinker is Michael Leifer. Discussions about IR theories, however, are rare in Leifer's research essays, nor do the essays exemplify a direct application of realism theory to Southeast Asian security phenomena. Ralf Emmers, who gained his PhD under Leifer's supervision, stated that "Leifer was less trying to make a contribution to the IR theory debate than he was to making a contribution to the study of the international relations of Southeast Asia."<sup>3</sup> In fact, Leifer's research was dependent on participatory field studies within ASEAN-related circles and on informal interviews with officials and diplomats.<sup>4</sup> Even so, Amitav Acharya, whose theoretical stance stands in stark contrast to that of Leifer, has argued that Leifer's perspective was "never self-consciously theoretical" and called his analytical approach "classical" rather than "scientific."<sup>5</sup> However, Emmers did agree that Leifer was predominantly a realist.<sup>6</sup> In addition, Leifer is widely regarded as a realist amongst scholars who have devoted their work to the debate between realism and constructivism in Southeast Asian IR.<sup>7</sup> Leifer has been classified as a realist, then, because his writings are largely under-

pinned by realist notions, in particular the concept of the balance of power.

### *Unlikely Multilateral-Cooperation and the Balance of Power*

Two realist concepts can be identified in Leifer's corpus. The first is that effective cooperation, especially multilateral cooperation, amongst Southeast Asian countries seems unlikely, owing to an absence of common strategic perspectives among regional states.<sup>8</sup> Like other realists, Leifer acknowledged not only the situation of international anarchy,<sup>9</sup> but also the salience of material factors.<sup>10</sup> At the same time, however, Leifer did not regard the absence of a common inter-state government or the presence of a security dilemma as the sole causes of difficulty in the cooperation between states. He seems to have believed that regional historical legacy, such as entrenched feuds<sup>11</sup> and long-running competition over territory<sup>12</sup> was the main factor in the divergence of views among member nations.<sup>13</sup> Additionally, in Leifer's analysis, most leaders of Southeast Asian countries believed that cooperation might lead a neighboring state to interfere in their own domestic affairs, which compounds the difficulty of cooperation.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, leaders unsurprisingly eschewed the adoption of multilateral cooperation in order to maintain complete sovereignty and autonomy. It is interesting to note that Leifer disagreed with David Mitrany's concept of functionalism. Functionalism dictates that states can cooperate on less sensitive issues at first, in areas like the economy and culture, before moving toward more serious issues, such as politics and security. This cooperation process is known as a "spill-over." In the case of Southeast Asia however, Leifer argued that regional states showed little willingness to cooperate on straightforward issues, let alone collaboration on more sensitive issues.<sup>15</sup>

Leifer's other realist notion is the balance of power. His use of the idea to explain Southeast Asian security issues, however, has drawn out both discussion and criticism.<sup>16</sup> According to Leifer's realist argument, given severe intra-regional differences, countries facing direct challenges or potential concerns are unlikely to embrace multilateral cooperation. Nevertheless, in the past, many regional states were badly in need of national stability, since they worried that the aggressiveness of any given states was a threat to their national survival. Insofar as multilateral-cooperation was

unlikely, bilateral cooperation based on the principle of balance of power became the primary option for regional states. Balance of power requires that all sides have shared goals or that they can achieve individual national interests through the proposed cooperation. In Leifer's series of Southeast Asian security texts, he used examples to prove that many countries in the region cooperated with neighboring countries or external powers using the principle of balance of power. For example, in the 1960s, Singapore and Malaysia as embryonic independent states believed that British presence on their territory was beneficial to their own national security and stability, since deployment of the British troops could mitigate potential concerns.<sup>17</sup> In January 1977, Malaysia and Thailand engaged in military cooperation because they faced a common threat from the Malayan Communist Party (MCP), which was supported by the Chinese Communist regime.<sup>18</sup> Indonesia's acceptance of the United States as an informal defence partner, and India as ASEAN's formal dialogue partner, exemplifies the Indonesian balance-of-power policy against the rising power of China.<sup>19</sup> By the same logic, Singapore's vulnerability in terms of natural resources and geographical proximity (Singapore being located between Malaysia and Indonesia) prompted the country's leadership to support the United States' influential presence in Southeast Asia.<sup>20</sup>

### ***The Constructivism Approach: Amitav Acharya***

Constructivism is the alternative to realism in IR theory. Unlike realism's claim that the world is essentially in a state of anarchy, constructivism argues that anarchy is not immutable but "what states make of it."<sup>21</sup> Under this theory, states' interactions fall into the categories of enmity, rivalry, and friendship, or Hobbesian, Lockean, and Kantian cultures.<sup>22</sup> Against this backdrop, hostility and cooperation can be seen in the interactions between countries. Therefore, studying states' behavior or national interests via material factors is insufficient. Also of importance are ideational factors, such as the creation of norms and identities, insofar as identity allows states to determine "who I am/ who we are", a determination that helps knit states together.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, common interests may reduce the likelihood of conflict and create a problem-solving mechanism for the realization of mutual benefits.<sup>24</sup>

Constructivism is the other important approach in Southeast Asian IR. The study of Southeast Asian security issues focuses specifically on ideational factors: norms and identities. Constructivism thus explains why ASEAN successfully managed the Cambodian conflict,<sup>25</sup> why Vietnam regarded ASEAN as anathema during the Vietnamese invasion and occupation of Cambodia but nonetheless participated in ASEAN in 1995,<sup>26</sup> and why ASEAN can be seen as a powerful regional organization.<sup>27</sup> It is reasonable to argue that Amitav Acharya, the prolific writer on Southeast Asian norms and identities, typifies the mainstream perspectives of constructivist researchers in the field of Southeast Asian IR.<sup>28</sup> In the context of Southeast Asian security research, Acharya's work is antithetical to that of Leifer, although both authors agree that intra-regional differences in both Southeast Asia<sup>29</sup> and East Asia<sup>30</sup> have resulted in unlikely multilateral cooperation. In addition, other states' aggressive policies and behaviors constitute the most pressing national-security concern.<sup>31</sup> However, in contrast to Leifer's distinct pessimism, Acharya argues that the foundation of optimism characterizing ASEAN can successfully counter seemingly insurmountable difficulties.<sup>32</sup>

### ***The Concept of Norms and Identity***

According to Acharya, "The ASEAN Way" exemplifies "a code of conduct for inter-state behaviours" and a "decision-making process."<sup>33</sup> The principles of the former can be found in the provisions of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC), initially ratified by the original five ASEAN members in 1976.<sup>34</sup> The principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of an independent country and non-use of force constitute ASEAN's fundamental norms. The norms have guided ASEAN's handling of regional problems, in particular security and political issues. For example, in the 1980s, ASEAN's resolution on the Vietnamese invasion and occupation of Cambodia strictly adhered to ASEAN's non-interference and non-use of force principles.<sup>35</sup> The resolution publicly demanded Vietnam's withdrawal of forces from Cambodia, and created negotiatory premises like "Cocktail diplomacy," a by-product of the spirit of the "ASEAN Way," rather than the establishment of a military alliance against Vietnam. Similarly, when Western countries denounced ASEAN's acceptance of military-ruled Myanmar as a new member in 1997, ASEAN members

denounced Western countries' violation of the non-interference principle; in this way, "ASEAN did not depart from its non-interference doctrine in any significant way."<sup>36</sup>

The decision-making process has followed the principles of informality and consultation (*musyawarah*) and consensus (*mufakat*) stemming from the informal, relaxed discussion process of Javanese village society.<sup>37</sup> The purpose of informality is to create a comfortable meeting environment where member states can cooperate with one another. It is hardly surprising, then, that ASEAN members avoid both publicly identifying who is a threat or a concern<sup>38</sup> and discussing sensitive issues among fellow members.<sup>39</sup> From these facts, it is reasonable to imagine that a military alliance in Southeast Asia would be unlikely.<sup>40</sup> Under the model of consultation and consensus moreover, every state's interests are considered and each perspective expressed, since decision-making does not require unanimity.<sup>41</sup> More importantly, to achieve the lowest common denominator of agreement, ASEAN members usually negotiate before engaging with external powers on issues that are discussed within the forum. This tactic can influence divergent strategic perspectives among member nations and other states' aggressive policies and behaviors.<sup>42</sup>

In Acharya's analysis, adherence to regional norms and the operation of a unique model of decision-making prove that norms and identity do matter in Southeast Asia and provide advantages to ASEAN. First, the ASEAN Way increases the likelihood of multilateral cooperation. For example, ASEAN members were at pains to address the Cambodian conflict. Acharya argued that ASEAN's responses to the Cambodian conflicts enhanced its international status and intra-regional solidarity.<sup>43</sup> What is more, as a security framework, the ASEAN Way has kept regional conflicts and the intervention of external powers in check.<sup>44</sup> The ASEAN Way has, in fact, become the main operational principle of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the first security-negotiating forum in the Asia-Pacific region. Internationally, external powers such as the United States and China have accepted the ASEAN paradigm.<sup>45</sup>

## The Two Theories' Gradually Reduced Capacity to Facilitate Analysis of Southeast Asian Security Issues

Realism and constructivism have become mainstream theories among Southeast Asian IR scholars. The issues they tackle include regional security affairs<sup>46</sup> and security relations with external powers (particularly the relationships between ASEAN and China).<sup>47</sup> These scholars' analyses of Southeast Asian security issues have provoked intense debates between realist and constructivist adherents.<sup>48</sup> However, the capacity of these two theories to facilitate rigorous explorations of security issues has come into question, because of discrepancies between each theory and actual Southeast Asian security culture. In this section, my analysis of the two theories' declining theoretical power will first address their relevance to Southeast Asian security culture in the previous eras.

### *Theoretical Discourse in Line with Security Culture in Southeast Asia*

Realism and constructivism have successfully helped explain Southeast Asian security issues because each theory has been notably applicable to the region's security culture. From the Cold War period to the late 1990s, security culture in Southeast Asia was state-centric. During this time, regional states adopted a comprehensive security approach—particularly in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore.<sup>49</sup> According to basic assumptions about comprehensive security, national insecurities stem not only from the military development and aggressive policies of other states, but also from economic and social instability on the domestic front. States concluded that in order to achieve national stability, they must ensure economic and social development domestically, an objective known as national resilience (*ketahanan nasional*). At first glance, this concept seems people-oriented, because a region's nations would treat insecurities extending beyond the scope of military matters and into the realm of people's well-being and security. In fact, comprehensive security was still state-centric during this period, because regimes' leaders were concerned mainly with national-security threats involving other states' aggressive policies and behaviors. For example, original ASEAN members regarded China as a potential con-

cern, because the Chinese government showed sympathy for Southeast Asia's ethnic Chinese, many of whom had suffered unfair treatment at the hands of local governments.<sup>50</sup> In addition, the Chinese government had staked a claim to the oil-rich Spratly Islands.<sup>51</sup> These cases prompted ASEAN members to suspect the Chinese government of interfering in their domestic affairs and of challenging their national sovereignty. Thus, regional states unsurprisingly regarded territory and state sovereignty as paramount. A breach of national sovereignty would endanger individuals' lives. In other words, the principle came to declare that individuals' security is subordinate to national security. In addition, the principle declared that measures to countervail other states' aggressive behavior should lie in the hands of states. For example, ASEAN states established close military and political relationships with external powers and created regional norms and identities owing largely to Chinese aggression. In short, the concept of comprehensive security asserts that the state is necessary for human welfare.

Realist and constructivist discourses for analyses of Southeast Asian security issues were cogent during this period. In Leifer's analysis, states are the source of threats, and states deal with threats by enhancing their material capabilities and adopting a policy of balance of power. Leszek Buszynski also adopted a realist approach in explaining Southeast Asian security issues during the Cold War. According to Buszynski, ASEAN members regarded Vietnam as a potential threat to security and, consequently, used Chinese, Soviet, and American influences in Southeast Asia to countervail Vietnamese aggressiveness.<sup>52</sup>

Acharya's theoretical arguments have also been suitable for analyses of Southeast Asian security culture because, in his view of Southeast Asian IR issues, the primary source of threats is the state. The difference between Acharya and Leifer lies in their views on the methods that states adopt to address state-sourced threats. According to Acharya, states can counter other states' aggressions through the creation of norms and identities, in line with TAC and the ASEAN Way.<sup>53</sup> Like Acharya, many scholars have adopted this way of thinking to explore security issues. As noted by Samuel Sharpe, ASEAN's adoption of the principles of non-interference and non-use of force to deal with the Vietnamese military's occupation of Kampuchea was due to Vietnam's status as a source of potential concern for

the organization's members.<sup>54</sup> From Alice Ba's perspective, ASEAN's decision shifted the organization's members into a closer engagement with China: ASEAN's adopted measure was essentially an effort to create norms because ASEAN and China were suspicious of each other.<sup>55</sup>

### ***Theoretical Discourse Out of Step with Security Culture in Southeast Asia***

Security culture has gradually changed. The linchpin of change can be traced back to the 1997 financial meltdown, deadly terrorist attacks in the United States and Indonesia since 2001, the outbreak of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in 2003, and the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004.<sup>56</sup> These crises led to crippling fiscal problems, greater income discrepancies, and widespread unemployment. These calamities severely affected individuals and countries. In Southeast Asia, state-level problems often surfaced in the form of political turbulence—a good example being the May 1998 overthrow of Suharto, which came about largely because of his incompetence in addressing the concurrent financial crisis. Many countries in Southeast Asia have been beset by transnational crimes, like drug trafficking, human trafficking, and serious environmental issues, which individually and cumulatively degraded people's quality of life. Therefore, with all of these myriad and untested stresses coming to bear, ASEAN members had to start paying attention to new security challenges that were qualitatively different from previous challenges insofar as human beings became a significant focus in the ASEAN agenda. A new language reflecting this concern for individuals is evident in many ASEAN declarations and documents, like *ASEAN Vision 2020*<sup>57</sup> and the ASEAN Charter.<sup>58</sup> By 2015, ASEAN planned to create the ASEAN Community (AC), resting on a people-oriented foundation. In short, security culture in Southeast Asia increasingly favored human security.

However, there was a discrepancy between each of the two dominant theories and the developing people-oriented Southeast Asian security culture. Threats in the new security culture ran the gamut from unpredictable phenomena, such as pandemic outbreaks and natural disasters, to intractable non-state human threats, such as religious fundamentalists, drug traffickers, and warlords, whose networks are typically supra-national. The diverse origins of these new

threats rocked the foundations of both realism and constructivism, which declare that threats arise only from states. In addition, in the new Southeast Asian security culture, states are not the only actor to address threats. Solving challenges beyond state borders necessitates cooperation with other actors, such as regional, international, and non-governmental organizations, because the negative effects of these new threats can spread across regions and indeed around the world. Therefore, individual states on their own cannot satisfactorily rise to these challenges. In short, Southeast Asia's new security culture is no longer state-centric.

The diverse origins of threats have rendered the two theories' methodological foundations essentially ineffective. In the realm of realism, material factors do not provide a feasible way of eradicating many related problems because countries now focus their attention on materially unpredictable phenomena. An increase in countries' material strength is by no means a guarantee that they can avoid the negative effects of pressing threats. Moreover, countries need not pursue a balance of power to countervail unpredictable phenomena. Instead, countries should cooperate more extensively with counterparts, particularly regarding exchanges of information and cross-border educational efforts. In the realm of constructivism, the establishment of norms and identities cannot adequately resolve threats of diverse origins either. When crises spread, most countries find themselves in a difficult situation where they must respond immediately and appropriately. The chief motivation underlying countries' cooperation with one another is the need for immediate action in response to critical, direct threats. Two examples of such threats were SARS, which struck Asian regions in mid-November 2002, and the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami. As an aside, it is important to note that ideational factors may sometimes compound problems because of the required period of lengthy consultation.<sup>59</sup> In cases involving crises, neither norms nor identities are necessary for cross-country cooperation, since the impetus is the problem's degree of urgency rather than ideational factors.

## Conclusions: A Need for New Theories in Southeast Asian IR

Southeast Asian IR has been dominated by theories of realism and constructivism for decades. Even though researchers have adopted other international relations theories, such as those associated with critical theory, post-modernism, human security, and feminist theory, these kinds of approaches have drawn little attention from scholars in the field of Southeast Asian IR. These scholars more often than not continue to use and discuss realism and constructivism. Undoubtedly, realism and constructivism are suitable for the exploration of certain Southeast Asian security issues, like the dispute surrounding the South China Sea.<sup>60</sup> However, because security culture in Southeast Asia is shifting from state-centricity to human-centricity, this has diminished the mainstream theories' contributions to rigorous research exploring Southeast Asian security issues. As such, the creation and promotion of other theories in Southeast Asian IR appears to be advisable and perhaps even necessary.

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## EndNotes

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<sup>2</sup> Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1979), 111.

<sup>3</sup> Interview in Singapore, January 18, 2012, conducted by Chu, Ta-Wei.

<sup>4</sup> Yuen Foong Khong, "The Elusiveness of Regional Order: Leifer, the English School and Southeast Asia," *The Pacific Review* 18, no.1 (2005): 24.

<sup>5</sup> Amitav Acharya, "Do Norms and Identity Matter? Community and Power in Southeast Asia's Regional Order," *The Pacific Review* 18, no.1 (2005): 96.

<sup>6</sup> Interview in Singapore, January 18, 2012, conducted by Chu, Ta-Wei.

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<sup>8</sup> Michael Leifer, "Southeast Asian Attitudes," *International Affairs* 42, no. 2 (1966): 219–229; Michael Leifer, "The ASEAN States: No Common Outlook," *International Affairs* 49, no. 4 (1973): 600–607; Michael Leifer, "Is ASEAN a Security Organization?" in *The ASEAN Reader*, ed. K. S. Sandhu et al. (Institute of Southeast Asia Studies, 1992): 380; Michael Leifer, "The ASEAN Peace Process: A Category Mistake," *The Pacific Review* 12, no. 1 (1999): 31–32; Michael Leifer, "Regional Solutions to Regional Problems?," in *Towards Recovery in Pacific Asia*, ed. Gerald Segal et al. (London: Routledge, 2000), 108–118.

<sup>9</sup> Michael Leifer, *The ASEAN Regional Forum: Extending ASEAN's Model of Regional Security* (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1996), 57

<sup>10</sup> Michael Leifer, "The Security of Sea-Lanes in Southeast Asia," *Survival* 25, no.1 (1983): 22–23; Leifer, "The ASEAN Peace Process," 103.

<sup>11</sup> Michael Leifer, *Conflict and Regional Order in Southeast Asia* (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1980), 11–12.

<sup>12</sup> Leifer, *Conflict and Regional Order in Southeast Asia*, 12–13.

<sup>13</sup> See also Khong, "The Elusiveness of Regional Order," 27; Michael Leifer, "The Limits of Functionalist Endeavour: The Experience of Southeast Asia," in *Functionalism: Theory and Practice in International Relations*, ed. A.J.R. Groom et al. (London: University of London Press, Ltd, 1975), 278; Leifer, *Conflict and Regional Order in Southeast Asia*, 4–13; Peou, "Realism and Constructivism in Southeast Asia Security Studies Today," 129.

<sup>14</sup> Leifer, *Conflict and Regional Order in Southeast Asia*.

<sup>15</sup> Leifer, "The Limits of Functionalist Endeavour," 278–283

<sup>16</sup> Acharya, "Do Norms and Identity Matter?,"; Eaton and Stubbs, "Is ASEAN Powerful?," 139; Haacke, "ASEAN's Diplomatic and Security Culture,"; Khong, "Making Bricks without Straw in the Asia Pacific,"; Peou, "Realism and Constructivism in Southeast Asia Security Studies Today," 125–130.

<sup>17</sup> Leifer, "Southeast Asian Attitudes," 220–221.

<sup>18</sup> Leifer, "Is ASEAN a Security Organization?," 381.

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- <sup>20</sup> Michael Leifer, *Singapore's Foreign Policy: Coping with Vulnerability* (London: Routledge, 2000), 100–108.
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- <sup>25</sup> Busse, "Constructivism and Southeast Asian Security," 39–60.
- <sup>26</sup> Nguyen Vu Tung, "Vietnam's Membership of ASEAN: A Constructivist Interpretation," *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 29, no. 3 (2007): 483–505.
- <sup>27</sup> Eaton and Stubbs, "Is ASEAN Powerful?," 135–55.
- <sup>28</sup> Amitav Acharya, "Ideas, Identity, and Institution-Building: From the 'ASEAN Way' to the 'Asia-Pacific Way'," *The Pacific Review* 10, no. 3 (1997): 319–326; Amitav Acharya, "Collective Identity and Conflict Management in Southeast Asia," in *Security Communities*, ed. Emanuel Adles et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Amitav Acharya, "Culture, Security, Multilateralism: The 'ASEAN Way' and Regional Order," *Contemporary Security Policy* 19, no. 1 (1998): 55–84; Amitav Acharya, *The Quest for Identity: International Relations of Southeast Asia* (Singapore: Oxford University Press Pte Ltd, 2000); Amitav Acharya, "How Ideas Spread: Whose Norms Matter? Norm Localization and Institutional Change in Asian Regionalism," *International Organization* 58, no. 2 (2004): 239–275; Acharya, "Do Norms and Identity Matter?," 95–118; Amitav Acharya, "Arguing about ASEAN: What Do We Disagree about?" *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 22, no. 3 (2009): 493–499; Amitav Acharya, *Constructing a Security Community in Southeast Asia* (New York: Routledge, 2009).
- <sup>29</sup> Acharya, *Constructing a Security Community in Southeast Asia*, 54.
- <sup>30</sup> Acharya, "Ideas, Identity, and Institution-Building," 322.
- <sup>31</sup> Amitav Acharya, "Containment, Engagement, or Counter-Dominance? Malaysia's Response to the Rise of China," in *Engaging China: the Management of an Emerging Power*, ed. Alastair Iain Johnston and Robert S. Ross (London: Routledge, 1999), 129–151.
- <sup>32</sup> Acharya, "Ideas, Identity, and Institution-Building," 320–4.
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- <sup>36</sup> Acharya, "How Ideas Spread?," 264.
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- <sup>38</sup> Acharya, "Ideas, Identity, and Institution-Building," 336; Acharya, "Culture, Security, Multilateralism," 61; Acharya, "Containment, Engagement, or Counter-Dominance?," 131.
- <sup>39</sup> Acharya, "Ideas, Identity, and Institution-Building," 332.
- <sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 331.
- <sup>41</sup> Acharya, "Culture, Security, Multilateralism," 62–63.
- <sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 63.
- <sup>43</sup> Acharya, *Constructing a Security Community in Southeast Asia*, 116
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<sup>47</sup> Alice Ba, "Who's Socializing Whom? Complex Engagement in Sino-ASEAN Relations," *The Pacific Review* 19, no. 2 (2006): 157–179; Jörn Dosch, "Managing Security in ASEAN-China Relations: Liberal Peace of Hegemonic Stability," *Asian Perspective* 31, no. 1 (2007): 209–236; Richard Stubbs, "The ASEAN Alternative? Ideas, Institutions and the Challenge to 'Global' Governance," *The Pacific Review* 21, no.4 (2008): 451–468.

<sup>48</sup> Acharya, "Do Norms and Identity Matter?," 95–118; David Martin Jones and Michael L. R. Smith, "ASEAN's Imitation Community," *Orbis* 46, no. 1 (2002): 93–109; Khong, "Making Bricks without Straw in the Asia Pacific," 289–300; Khong, "The Elusiveness of Regional Order," 24; Nicholas Khoo, "Constructing Southeast Asian Security: The Pitfalls of Imagining a Security Community and the Temptations of Orthodoxy," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 17, no. 1 (2004): 137–153.

<sup>49</sup> Mely Caballero-Anthony, "Revisioning Human Security in Southeast Asia," *Asian Perspective* 28, no. 3 (2004): 160–163; Jörn Dosch, "Changing Security Cultures in Europe and Southeast Asia: Implications for Inter-Regionalism," *Asia Europe Journal* 1, no. 4 (2003): 491–492; Ralf Emmers, "Comprehensive Security and Resilience in Southeast Asia: ASEAN's Approach to Terrorism," *The Pacific Review* 22, no. 2 (2009): 161–163.

<sup>50</sup> Leifer, *Conflict and Regional Order in Southeast Asia*, 13.

<sup>51</sup> Michael Leifer, "China in Southeast Asia: Interdependence and Accommodation," in *China Rising: Nationalism and Interdependence*, ed. David S. G. Goodman et al. (London: Routledge, 1997), 157.

<sup>52</sup> Buszynski, "ASEAN: A Changing Regional Role," 764–786.

<sup>53</sup> In this writings, Acharya seems like an anti-state centrist scholar. Acharya and Richard Stubbs have argued that, although the "state is a first point of reference," it is not "the only or ultimately the most important actor." Acharya has suggested that, in the realm of Southeast Asian IR, we should pay more attention to the forest (i.e., a region) than to trees (i.e., states). Indeed, on the face of it, Acharya comes to across as a researcher who has promoted a holistic approach to Southeast Asian security issues. Furthermore, none of his works pay particular attention to the policies and strategies of individual states. However, this observation is not to say that states are insignificant in his works. Instead, states are desiderata. The ASEAN Way exemplifies the critical role played by states in his works. As discussed previously, the ASEAN Way reflects a set of principle underlying ASEAN's norms and identities—principles that arose from Indonesian village values and were accepted by ASEAN members as constituting the negotiation model optimal for addressing diverse security problems. This leads to the following question: if ASEAN members were to resist the ASEAN Way as the optimal model for negotiations, would the strength of ASEAN's norms and identities come into question? The answer is impossible to answer because states are the most basic building blocks in support of norm and identity creation. Without states' unanimous acceptance of a model, the development of norms and identities within Southeast Asia would necessarily fail. Therefore, despite Acharya's emphasis on regions, states remain the underpinning in his writings. Without states, Acharya's academic discourse on constructivism would likely never have taken shape. Amitav Acharya and Richard Stubbs, "Theorizing Southeast Asia Relations: an Introduction," *The Pacific Review* 19, no. 2 (2006):132; Acharya, "Do Norms and Identity Matter?," 106.

<sup>54</sup> Samuel Sharpe, "An ASEAN Way to Security Cooperation in Southeast Asia," *The Pacific Review* 16, no. 2 (2003): 235–239.

<sup>55</sup> Ba, "Who's Socializing Whom?," 157–179.

<sup>56</sup> Amitav Acharya, *Promoting Human Security: Ethical, Normative and Educational Frameworks in Southeast Asia* (Paris: UNESCO, 2007), 22–26.

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<sup>57</sup> “ASEAN Vision 2020,” <http://www.aseansec.org/2357.htm>, December 15, 1997.

<sup>58</sup> “The ASEAN Charter,” Indonesia: ASEAN Secretariat.

<sup>59</sup> Lorraine Elliott, “ASEAN and Environmental Cooperation: Norms, Interests and Identity,” *The Pacific Affairs* 16, no. 1 (2003): 45.

<sup>60</sup> Buszynski, “Realism, Institutionalism, and Philippine Security,”; Dosch, “Managing Security in ASEAN-China Relations,” 220–223; Sharpe, “An ASEAN Way to Security Cooperation in Southeast Asia,” 239–243.