

Understanding the functions of the ASEAN Way in Great Power Management: The Co-constitution between Social Structure and Agency in International Society of States in East Asia

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ABSTRACT

This thesis aimed to capture a deeper understanding of the functions and roles of the long standing norms of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) characterized as the ASEAN Way codified in an ASEAN-led multilateral institution, the East Asia Summit (EAS). Based on a comparative case study between the US and China, and using a theoretical thematic analysis, this thesis addressed what the functions of the ASEAN Way are in great power management in this new geopolitical landscape. Drawing from the English School of International Relations, this thesis proposed that the ASEAN Way is better understood through the framework of the co-constitution between social structure and agency in the international society of states in East Asia. The thesis illuminated that the functions of the ASEAN Way differ between the US and China; for the US, the ASEAN Way functions as a tool to legitimize the US primacy role and engagement in the region, as well as an instrument enabling to achieve foreign policy goal of Pivot balancing policy to engage in multilateral institutions. For China, the ASEAN Way serves as a tool to justify and legitimize Chinese choice of actions, policy preferences and to balance against US interference in domestic affairs and US influence in the multilateral institutions. However, the functions of the norm for the two great power are fundamentally the same involving power and social legitimacy.

Keywords: ASEAN, ASEAN Way, Great Power, the United States (US), China, East Asia Summit (EAS), English School (ES), multilateralism

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ABBREVIATIONS

APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
EAS	East Asia Summit
TAC	Treaty of Amity and Cooperation
US	The United States of America

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION TO ASEAN, ITS NORMS AND THE PROBLEM

1.1 Background and Context

The understanding of Southeast Asian region has never been plausible without taking into the account the relations with extra-regional actors (Tarling, 2010). The region has historically engaged with various external actors including the United States (US), the Soviet Union (Russia), China, Japan, India and Australia. Dating back to 1967, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) emerged with the Cold War context of ideological competition among the great powers; the United States and the Soviet Union held prevailing influence in Asia. The intent of the five founding members¹ of ASEAN was to escape from becoming the pawn of great powers rivalry, as well as, to reduce regional conflicts among the members. ASEAN had managed to set up the ‘rules’ of the game for interstate relations in the region and embedded it in its institutional design known as the ASEAN Way. The principle of noninterference and consensus constituted in the ASEAN Way become the diplomatic and security norms of the region continue to present.

With the end of the Cold War, the Southeast Asian region has enjoyed interstate peace and stability alongside prosperous economic development. ASEAN has enlarged to include ten member states² in Southeast Asia and culminated as the main interlocutor of the wider East Asia and Asia-Pacific region providing a platform for both intra and extra regional actors to articulate and defend their interests in various ASEAN-led multilateral institutions. These include ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN Plus Three (APT), East Asian Summit (EAS) and ASEAN Defense Ministerial Meeting Plus (ADMM+) where the ASEAN Way is transposed as the regulative and procedural norms in such institutions. In this regard, ASEAN could proclaim themselves as being in the driver’s seat within the evolving regional architecture. ASEAN has moved from the Association toward a rule-based Community through the setting up of the ASEAN Charter in 2007 and realization to the ASEAN Community in 2015. The formalization of the notion of ASEAN Centrality has set the role and agenda for ASEAN to perform this leading role in shaping the regional architecture in the regional wide East Asia and Asia-Pacific context.

¹ The five founding members of ASEAN include Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand.

² The enhancement of the ASEAN members to include Brunei, Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia.

The beginning of the 21st Century marks a new era of a great game politics in which an increasingly powerful and assertive China, particularly over the South China Sea has triggered the United States to rebalance itself towards the region to maintain peace and stability within the region through its 'Pivot to Asia'. Given this new geopolitical landscape, great powers have actively engaged with ASEAN and its norms also have endured despite strong criticism.

This thesis is interested in the Southeast Asian regional norms, the ASEAN Way and its enduring role as a norm governing interstate relations particularly in the great powers' relations in the ASEAN-led multilateral institutions. It aims to understand the role and function of such norms in great powers relations in this new geopolitical landscape.

1.2 Previous Research on ASEAN and its norms

This part explores the previous research in the area of ASEAN and reviews the current stage of existing knowledge about the ASEAN Way with a particular focus on the role and function of the ASEAN Way in extra-regional cooperation with external actors. It aims to identify the research gap in the area in order for this thesis to make a contribution to.

The field of ASEAN scholarship is extensive and has long attracted the attention of a wide range of scholars and researchers. This could be given to the fact that ASEAN as a regional institution in the developing world has proven durable in unlikely circumstances (Pooles, 2007, Beeson, 2009). Since its inception, ASEAN has never been short of criticism (Acharya, 2009, p.6) and its regional norms, characterized as the ASEAN Way has been one of the long lasting debates in the field of ASEAN studies. However, currently the criticism on the ASEAN way is as the greatest as ever for ASEAN (Ba, 2012).

The ASEAN Way is a concept which is loosely defined and used, whose meaning remains vague and contested (Acharya, 2009, p.78). The ASEAN Way is officially codified first in the Bangkok Declaration, the first document that gave birth to ASEAN as a regional organization and later in its constitutional document of ASEAN, the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) in 1976 (Beeson and Stubbs, 2012, p.3). ASEAN leaders and statespersons proclaims its distinctive regional norms to solving regional problems (Acharya, 2009). Frequently cited successful cases of the ASEAN Way in solving regional conflicts by ASEAN's leaders is the engagement with Burma's military junta regime and the Cambodian Conflict. However, ASEAN leaders refer to the ASEAN Way in different way either in a broader or narrower sense (Acharya, 2009).

In academic community, much of the conventional works on the ASEAN Way must to be accredited to Acharya (2001, 2003, 2009) and Haacke (2003) whose work rest on the constructivist approach to International Relations.

According to Acharya (2009), the ASEAN Way is constituted by two types of norms; legal rational and socio-cultural norms. In respect to legal rational norms, it is common to international and regional organizations throughout the world but it has a specific meaning and importance for the Third World due to their historical colonial legacies, the struggle for independence and their demands for international recognition. These include the strict adherence to the doctrine of non-interference. In terms of socio-cultural norms, the ASEAN Way claims its distinctive approach to dispute settlement mechanism and regional cooperation (Acharya, 1997, p. 328). These include the informality and avoidance of extensive institutionalization and the practice of consultation (*Musyawah*) and consensus (*Mufakat*) claiming Southeast Asia's cultural heritage (Acharya, 2009). Acharya argues that the ASEAN Way could be understood in both narrow and broad terms. In narrow terms, it is constructed as an informal, non-legalized and weakly institutionalized pattern of regionalism which run its course in the Southeast Asia. In broader terms, the ASEAN Way is the larger framework of norms and role conceptions including the engagement of external powers, the quest for regional autonomy, and the peaceful management of disputes (*ibid.*). In this respect, the ASEAN Way functions as the regulative behavioral norms and procedural norms for inter-state actions and decision-making process. The ASEAN Way thus emphasizes the 'process' of interaction and cooperation based on discreteness, informality, consensus-building and non-confrontational bargaining style which are often in contrast with the adversarial posturing and legalistic decision-making process (Acharya, 1997, 2009).

The transport of the ASEAN way to multilateral frameworks and institutions in a wider context of the East Asian and Asia-Pacific region rests on the key debate among their major proponents (Acharya, 1997, 2003, 2009, Johnston 2003, Ba, 2006, 2012) based on constructivist approaches in International Relations (IR) emphasizing the normative and socializing powers of the ASEAN Way and opponents (Jones and Smith, 2007, Jones, 2009, Beeson, 2009, 2015, Ravenhill, 2009) based on realist assumptions of ASEAN's structural flaw in terms of its material capabilities.

At the positive end of the constructivist approach, it is argued that the ASEAN Way based on their non-threatening style has been a key component for the success of ASEAN to

perform a leading role as a driver's seat, driving force and centrality in a wider regional architecture and include all players to sit at the same table.

Johnston (2003) argues that the ASEAN Way constitutes counter-realpolitik ideology, provides a level of comfort for actors, in particular for novices. He claims that the ASEAN Way helped socialize China into multilateral security frameworks and cooperation, particularly the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF).

Ba (2012) supplements that the ASEAN Way is based on the application of three informal rules, including 1) private-exchange or closed-door diplomacy, 2) a consensus decision making process, and 3) non-interference in internal affairs. These three are likely to be a part of China's response to ASEAN's message. ASEAN perceives itself as successful in persuading China to involve itself in multilateral frameworks. However, Ba emphasizes that ASEAN institutionalization and its norms lie in contrast with the functional approach to regionalism of the United States. Thus prompts US criticism of the ASEAN process as talk shop. Ba argues against criticism that ASEAN consensus decision-making process is not only process-driven but also outcome-driven, based upon its prioritized mutuality among ASEAN members and between ASEAN and its external actors. Ba poses a significant question to the debate, specifically whether changing the way ASEAN works will result in an improved and functional action-oriented cooperation. Ba's insight illuminates that there is a variation across regional arrangements in terms of its functionality, despite the same institutional design based on the application of informality and consensus. This is seen in the ASEAN Plus Three which includes ASEAN and three northeast Asia, while the ARF, which includes a wide range of actors, shows a slow process moving from confidence-building measures to preventive diplomacy.

See Sang Tan (2016), a scholar from the region takes comparative studies and argues that China's changed position on multilateralism, from disengagement to engagement, can be partially explained by the ASEAN Way's process-driven norms which emphasize a common search for cooperation. This importantly means for China that their interests would not be harmed or hampered. In contrast, Tan claims that there is no question of US support for an ASEAN-led multilateral framework and ASEAN Centrality, despite the US publicly critiquing the slow pace of the ASEAN way. This is because there only few exist which is crucial to the establishment and instantiation of regional multilateral framework in Asia.

At the other negative end, for realists, Jones (1997 cited in Beeson, 2009) argues that ASEAN Way is a vehicle for conflict avoidance rather than conflict resolution. Jones claims that this kind of organizational design has minimal influence. The most crucial obstacle to more effective regional cooperation lies in the sovereignty norm which ASEAN has enshrined through its norms of non-interference. In terms of consensus, Beeson (2009) further argues that it is true that ASEAN is able to include all major powers in the region through the adoption of the ASEAN Way but this has made the already difficult job of coordination and implementation much more difficult, and reaching consensus among differing views is a formidable challenge for ASEAN. Jones and Smith (2007) further argue that an attempt of a group of small, weak colonial states in Southeast Asia to apply the consensus-driven and conflict avoidance formula to the wider East Asia community lends itself to more powerful states in Northeast Asia shaping ASEAN's future. Thus the ASEAN way is perceived as a process not the progress (Jones, .

The recent work of Jones and Jenne (2015) argue that the norm-affirming behavior of China before 2010 pulls ASEAN into their sphere of influence. Concurrently the ASEAN Way as an institutional design in the ASEAN-led multilateral frameworks is utilized by China as a strategic tool to prevent US involvement. They argue that Chinese assertiveness in the South China Sea undermines ASEAN unity which is at the core of ASEAN Centrality. In this regard, it demonstrates how powerful states like China can manipulate ASEAN's soft norms which are embedded in ASEAN Way to advance its own interests.

In response to the Constructivists, Yuzawa (2012) challenges the socializing assumption and argues that constructivist approach faces empirical anomalies. Although the ASEAN Way helps ensure that reluctant states, especially China, participates regularly in the multilateral framework during the early period, it promotes the habit of non-implementation and negative socialization in which activists states have decreased its commitment to the multilateral frameworks.

Ho (2012) addresses the ASEAN Way by another angle and argues that most of the existing literature approaches the ASEAN Way in terms of 'how' it is applied to East Asian regionalism, which results a process-driven accounts of the ASEAN Way. However for Ho, the important question is to what extent the ASEAN Way is effective in mediating major powers' relations within the region. Based on a functionalist approach, Ho contends that the current institutional design of the ASEAN Way in multilateral frameworks functions poorly

since the major powers are unwilling to allow multilateralism to manage their core interests. Ho argues that the idea of ASEAN centrality meaning that ASEAN has a single voice is just a political slogan. Ho's study is among other authors who approach the topic with comparative case studies between ASEAN- US and ASEAN-China relations.

To conclude, the ASEAN Way rests on the key debate between the two camps in IR scholars, the pessimistic realist assumptions who emphasize on structural material incapability of ASEAN as a group of small and weak states see the ASEAN Way as ineffectiveness for extra-regional cooperation and the constructivist approaches focusing on ideational factors and the socializing agent of ASEAN argues for the ASEAN and its benign role of the ASEAN Way to include all players in ASEAN's platforms. The gap lies in a search for a middle-grounded theory to bridge the structural material and agential ideational factors to provide a healthy contribution to the field. In terms of a methodological approach, the review's finding is consistent with Tan's argument (2016) that existing literature have used single case study analysis, including China and the US left behind the comparative case studies. This could be a potential method to embark on.

1.3 Research Problem

The ASEAN Way forms and continues to form an enduring intellectual puzzle within ASEAN scholarship and Southeast Asian studies. Under the new geopolitical dynamic, the ASEAN Way debate has still been resilient.

The ASEAN Way rests on the key debate in ASEAN Scholarship in term of its inclusiveness and efficacy (Tan, 2016) as it has been projected to a wider East Asia and Asia-Pacific context in various ASEAN-led multilateral institutions. At the optimistic end of the debate, the Constructivists value ideational factors such as norms and identities. Constructivist scholars argue that the normative-driven processes of the ASEAN Way, based on minimalism, non-threatening posturing, consultation and consensus have helped socialize actors to participate in multilateral settings and could transform material interests into shared identity and interests. Therefore, the issue of inclusiveness attempts to include all players in the wider region, particularly China in the ASEAN-led multilateral frameworks is more important for ASEAN. Conversely, realists prioritize structural flaws of ASEAN in its limit material capacities arguing that the contradictions between rhetoric and actual reality of ASEAN in which the ASEAN Way focuses too much on the process rather than progress. Furthermore, this process-conscious focus allows the more powerful states to manipulate

weaker states for their influence. Currently the debate on the ASEAN Way has proven to be clear that the negative realist end has gained momentum. Of the answers provided by these two sides of the debate, one emphasizes agential ideational factors while the other prioritizes the structural material power, neither capture a comprehensive and complex picture of what has happened in social reality. Individually, they cannot explain the continued engagement of great powers, including the US which has sharp criticism of the ASEAN process. Concurrently the US proactively supports ASEAN-led institutions such as Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and the East Asia Summit (EAS).

Why do such great powers still engage in the ASEAN-led institutions even if the ASEAN Way is ineffective and what are the functions of the ASEAN Way for the great powers' relations. A middle-grounded approach that bridges both structural material and agential ideational factors to reveal a deeper understanding of the function and role of the ASEAN Way in the ASEAN-led multilateral institutions for great powers in this new geopolitical landscape has been lacking. In this respect it is imperative to bring the importance of both agency and social structure to the debate and combine to grasp the working of the ASEAN Way and continued and active engagement of the great powers.

1.4 Research Question and its Focus

“What are the functions of the ASEAN Way in great power management?”

In order to address this central question, it requires an understanding of both social structure of the international society of states in East Asia and the agency of great powers and their co-constitution. The social structure formulates great powers' material conditions, preference and interests, and identities and the agency of great powers exhibits the ways in which they adopt and use the ASEAN Way to manage their relations. In this regard, the thesis focuses on the great powers and their adoption of the ASEAN Way codified in the ASEAN-led multilateral institutions specifically to the East Asia Summit to manage their relations in this new geopolitical landscape.

1.5 Research Aim and its Contribution

The thesis aims to move beyond the efficacy-inclusiveness debate of the ASEAN Way which has been prevailing in the ASEAN scholarship. The debate to which realist focuses on structural material flaws of ASEAN seeing the ASEAN Way as inefficacy for regional cooperation while constructivist prioritizes agency and its socializing power

portraying the ASEAN Way with an imperative to include all players in the region. It hence seeks to capture a deeper understanding of the ASEAN Way in terms of how it is operated and functioned in the social structure of international society of states in East Asia and the degree to which such norms are respected and adopted or internalized by great powers. Approaching the ASEAN Way with a middle ground theory in this way, it provides a healthy contribution to grasp a deeper understanding of its long standing norms.

1.5 Delimitation of the study

The research is demarcated using the time frame. Since the debate on the ASEAN goes back to the 1990s when ASEAN began transposing its norms to a wider East Asia and Asia-Pacific context via various ASEAN-led multilateral frameworks starting with APEC, ARF, APT, EAS, and ADMM Plus. However as Alice Ba (2012) contends, the debate on the ASEAN Way currently is greater than ever. Therefore, the study designates the period of examination as *a new geopolitical landscape* starting from 2011 to the present. Moreover, based on a number of the multilateral institutions in which ASEAN plays a leading role at least in terms of its hosting and convening position, the study is limited to focus on the East Asia Summit (EAS). This particular focus is because the EAS was established in 2005 with thirteen members including ten ASEAN members and China, Japan and Korea and in 2011, it welcomed the US and Russia to participate. It also bears a special attention since ASEAN gives an emphasis to the EAS as the premier and highly strategic platform and it is the only leaders-led institution discussing political and security issues.

The new geopolitical landscape is defined as the period in which the great powers' engagement in the region was highly dynamic and complicated by their volatile domestic imperatives and regional engagements among them. For the US, it was the second phase of the Pivot Rebalancing policy and the Presidential election paving the way for the transition to the second-term of the President Obama. The US had become more engaged and enthusiastic in its engagement with ASEAN during this period (Chongkittavorn, 2012) as it has disregarded multilateral institutions. This can be seen as it entered and signed Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in 2009 and appointed the first Ambassador to ASEAN in 2011. For China, it was a transition period from the former President Hu Jintao to President Xi Jinping in 2013. Supplemented by its assertiveness in South China Sea and their promotion of a new diplomatic approach of China Peaceful rise and a path for peaceful development. For ASEAN, it was the period where its unity and neutrality, the strengths of ASEAN are seen as

shaking and challenged as ASEAN's Foreign Ministers failed to release their political joint communiqué for the first time since its inception to show their common position of the institution. Change was also found in the internal affairs of ASEAN as the ASEAN had rotated and changed the general secretariat from Dr. Surin Pitsuwan to Le Loung Minh in 2013. In regard to the multilateral institution, 2011 was also the first year when the US fully participated with full membership of the EAS.

1.6 Structure of the thesis

The thesis is structured into five chapters; Chapter 1 provides a background of the research topic and problematize the topic and research in the field, Chapter 2 clarifies and establishes theoretical and conceptual frameworks for the data analysis, Chapter 3 discusses and justifies the research methods and the data used in this thesis, Chapter 4 analyzes the empirical data applying the theory and concepts and Chapter 5 concludes the research findings and its contributions.

CHAPTER 2 ENGLISH SCHOOL THEORY AS A POTENTIAL ANALYTICAL TOOL

This chapter discusses, develops and clarifies the theoretical and conceptual analytical frameworks applied to the analysis, with a particular focus on the relationship between norms, institutions and state actors involved. By doing so, this chapter aims to define the key concepts central to the thesis, to specify the operationalization of the concepts, and to establish the theoretical propositions for the rest of the thesis.

2.1 English School of International Relations and the ASEAN Scholarship

The English School of International Relations is the theory about norms (Buzan, 2004, p.8). Among the three mainstream theories in the International Relations (IR); (Neo) Realism, (Neo) Liberalism and Constructivism, the English School is closest to the constructivist approach in which the discourse, practice and social structure are emphasized (Buzan and Zhang, 2014, p.2). Like realists, the English School focuses on power; however, it differs in its sociological approach arguing that power has to be understood in terms of its societal dimension (Hurrell, 2007, p.39). Like liberalists of regime theory, the School believes in institutions and cooperation; yet, the school is much deeper in terms of constitutive rather than only instrumental implications (Buzan, 2004, p.7). Similar to constructivists as a sign of a sociological turn of International Relations, the School interests itself with ideational factors which outlines the importance of culture, norms and identity. However, the difference lies in its emphasis on the agency of the actors in norm adoption and internalization.

By applying the English School to study ASEAN and its norms, the ASEAN Way, this thesis aims to bridge the theoretical gap in the field since ASEAN scholarship has long been dominated by the three schools of International Relations. There is thus a marginal space for other perspectives to explain the social realities and to contribute to a healthy debate in the field. As Alice Ba (2014) argues, geopolitics associated with ASEAN and the International Relations literature is dominated by the US preoccupation and European Union-centric approach. Ba further contends that this has influenced scholars in the way they approach ASEAN. In fact, there is a clear lack in the middle ground theory which reconciles both material and ideational factors in the ASEAN Studies. The English School and its emphasis on *via media* is appropriate to bridge this gap as it offers a middle ground approach between realism and idealism (Linklater, 2013, p.89).

The English school is a potential theoretical tool useful for the area studies on which the research is built since it resolves a problem that has long existed with an uneasy co-existence between the disciplines particularly IR and the area studies and specialists (Quale, 2013). The School reconciles and brings the strengths of the two for the benefit of the task at hand (ibid.). The School does so by taking historical and socio-cultural dimensions into account when analyzing social realities, with a particular focus on cultural factors (Buzan, 2004). Furthermore, the School lends itself to the study of regional specific issues such as sovereignty (Karmarzin, 2014, p.2). As Keohane (1989 cited in O’neill et al., 2004, p.160) asserts that contextual influences of history, culture and learning in reflexive approaches are imperative in understanding normative construction and influences on international cooperation..

2.2 Order, the International Society of States, and Institutions and Norms

This section discusses and elaborates on the interrelated theoretical and conceptual frameworks central to the thesis. These are Order, the International Society of States, and institutions and norms.

2.2.1 Order and the International Society of States

The central tenet of English school is the analytical concept of order (Suganami, 2010). Analysis in the English School starts with the presupposition of the existence of international order as a point of departure. According to Hedley Bull (2012, p.22), a classic writer on the English School, order is a part of the historical record of international relations within which modern states have formed and continue to maintain. Order is understood with an end as “a pattern of activities that sustains the elementary or primary goals of the society of states, or international society” (Bull, 2012, p.8). Such goals include the preservation of the society of state, the maintenance of sovereign independence, of peace and the limitation of the use of violence (Bull, 2012, p.16).

Related to order is the concept of the “international society of states”. A fundamental claim of the English School starts with this concept, arguing that sovereign states form a society but an anarchical society. In this anarchical society, states do not subject themselves to a higher level of monopolized central authority to force them to comply with the global rules (Linklater, 2013, p.188). Order thus exists when international society exists (Alagappa, 2003, p.34). In this aspect, the international society becomes the means through which the order is maintained (ibid). According to Hedley Bull (2012, p.13), the core concept of a

society of states or international society is defined as “exists when a group of states, conscious of certain common interests and common values, form a society in the sense that they conceive themselves to be bound by a common set of rules in their relations with one another, and share in the working of common institutions”. This point makes the English School distinguished from a pessimistic view of the realism. Hurrell (2007, p.29) urges that, although the differences in values and relations are problematic, states cooperate because they see possibility of gains.

The analytical concepts of order and the international society of states provide an analytical framework to understand the interaction between states in East Asia. As Buzan and Zhang (2014) provide an extensive study on international society in East Asia, the thesis thus follows their argument presupposing the existence of an International Society of State in East Asia.

In addition, what lies at the core of the existence of the International Society of States as defined by Bull is the concept of “institutions”. As Suganami (2010) posits order is sustained by a formal social structure of society of states which is governed by institutions.

2.2.2 Institutions; primary and secondary institutions and norms

I. Primary institutions

The English School spells out the concept of ‘institutions’ as a key analytical framework in relation to the international order. Referring to what categorizes as *primary institutions*, Bull (2012, p.71) identifies these institutions as “a set of habits and practices shaped towards the realisation of common goals”. Moreover, Bull (ibid.) further argues that these *primary institutions* are also a demonstration of “the element of collaboration in discharging their political functions” and a “means” to maintaining such collaboration. Khong (2014) sums up that they are fundamentally deep rules and practices upon which states base their collaboration with one another. In addition to fundamental practices of states, deep rules, elements of states’ political functions and the means of states’ collaboration, Buzan (2004, p.167) asserts that the *primary institutions*, are constitutive of agents and delimit the pattern of relationship of legitimate action among them. Critically, *primary institutions* are constitutive of both the social structure of the international society and the agent. As Buzan and Zhang (2014, p.234) emphasize, “they are constitutive of both the players and the game”.

Bull identifies five primary institutions in relation to the concept of order including international law, war, diplomacy, the balance of power and great power management. The latter three are the focus of this thesis. These have been chosen because they are intrinsically linked and intertwined, and are thus helpful in understanding and analyzing the working of the norms, the ASEAN Way as it entails players, the means and social environment respectively in relation to the institutions chosen in which the norms are used and function.

i. Great Power Management

Great power management or the managerial role of the great powers is one of the key institutions Bull (2012) sets out for ordering in the international society of states. The English School has long maintained that the international society has in fact largely impinged on great power relations and they are “great responsables”³ that are restraint to pursue their self-interest and are willing to use their influence to promote global values (Linklater, 2013, p.92). In addition, it is presupposed that great powers usually pose the most serious threat to the international society of states (Wright, 1991, p.130 cited in Linklater, 2009, p. 92). This aspect corresponds to what ASEAN as a group of small and medium power has long been concerned.

Moreover, what lies at the heart of international order is also the question of unequal power (Goh, 2014, p.106). While conceding special rights and duties, great powers foster international order in two ways. Firstly, they manage their relations among themselves through diplomacy and conference to avoid war, control crises and maintain the general balance of power and, secondly, they manage others by employing their unequal power to exploit subordinated states within their sphere of influence and alliance system and joint actions by forming great power concerts or condominiums (Bull, 2012, p. Hurrell, 2007, p.34). Moreover, Hurrell (2007, p.34) addresses the role of small and weak states as they might become the locus for geopolitical competition among the major powers.

Bull (2012, p.197) provides three criteria to define who the great powers are: the comparability of status, military strength and their special duties and rights. In all three terms, Bull identifies the US and China as the great powers in the Southeast Asian and East Asian context (Bull, 2012, p.197).

³ Great responsables, the term used in the English School (Bull, 1977)

In the East Asian context, regional great powers including China and Japan and the US could not agree upon the establishment of a concert of great powers to manage their relations. Thus, ASEAN, with its normative agenda takes up the role of an “honest broker” to facilitate the management of great power relations (Goh, 2012). In fact, as Goh (2014) illuminates, the role of ASEAN is better referred as the management of great power than great power management. The author agrees with this contention about the role of ASEAN as managing great powers and argues that great powers are still managing their relations in the social environment provided by the ASEAN-led multilateral institution in which the great powers interact, bargain and cooperate with each other, as the focus of the thesis.. Furthermore, the way great powers manage their relations also links to the balance of power.

ii. Balance of power

The balance of power is “understood as a recognized social practice, and shared value, rather than as a mechanical consequence of anarchy” (Buzan, 2004, p.183). Associated with great power management, the great powers play a role in preserving the general balance of power.

Hurrell (2009, pp.29-30) clearly captures the emergence of the balance of power as a consequence of the problem of power and of managing an unequal power. A more powerful neighbor is often seen by a state as dangerous, which ignites fear thus giving rise to the balance of power as a mechanism of the system (ibid.).

Hurrell elaborates clearly on the importance of the balance of power and its function in the international society as a means for preserving states’ independence, and as “a means of constraining and restraining the most powerful and would-be hegemonic, as an inducement to moderation and restraint into foreign policy, and, finally, as an essential background condition for operating international law and institutions” (2007, p.32).

From these understandings, this thesis conceptualizes and applies the balance of power to the thesis in two ways; firstly, as a background condition of the international society of states referring to the local balance of power in Southeast Asia and wider East Asia and, secondly, as a means shared and practiced commonly by the states.

iii. Diplomacy

Hurrell (2007, p.37) elaborates on the importance of diplomacy to the international society since it provides the minimal condition and prerequisites of a cooperative order to take place. These prerequisites are the capacity for actors to communicate, the necessity of

shared concessions for communication including linguistics and procedure, and the provision of an institutional framework for political negotiation to occur in a very unlikely circumstance, and lastly diplomacy symbolizes the existence of international community (ibid.). The main functions of diplomacy are communication, negotiation, minimizing friction, intelligence gathering and symbolizing the existence of international society of states (Bull, 2012, pp.163-165).

Alagappa (2003, p.55) illuminates the link between diplomacy and the balance of power. For Alagappa (ibid.), balance of power is a pathway to order in which diplomacy is a key instrument to manage differences.

Diplomacy takes form in both bilateralism and multilateralism (Khong, 2014, p.148) with the format being either formal or informal. In the context of the East Asia, multilateral institutions are institutionalized and concentrated under ASEAN as a hub. ASEAN's institutionalized multilateral diplomacy functions along the same line as Foot (2014, p.191) elaborates, as an instrument to deal with the forms of power. ASEAN's aim to enmesh the great powers at its arm's length thus gives birth to various ASEAN-led multilateral institutions. This institution in the East Asian context has thus become the societal site for great powers to interact, socialize as well as to balance their actions through the embodied norms of the ASEAN Way.

Diplomacy as the primary institution is a central concept helping the understanding of the norms of the ASEAN Way as it is transposed and institutionalized in the various ASEAN-led multilateral diplomatic institutions.

II. Secondary Institutions

In addition to primary institutions, there are also secondary institutions which are important in understanding the social structure of the international society of states. Secondary institutions are seen as having been designed, rather than having evolved over time (Costa-Buranelli, 2015). According to Buzan and Zhang (2014, p.235), secondary institutions are "consciously designed to serve the instrumental purposes of the entities that create them" and "reflect the underlying primary institutions rather than in themselves constituting such societies". In this respect the significance of secondary institutions lies in its relationship with primary institutions since that they may be linked and expressed more than primary institutions (Buzan, 2004, p.186). According to Costa-Buranelli (2015), the relationship between primary and secondary institutions is mutual in the sense that the

primary institutions promulgate and give rise to the secondary institution, and that secondary ones could also form and adjust the primary ones.

The concept of secondary institutions and its mutual relations with the primary institutions are a useful analytical framework in understanding the ASEAN-led multilateral institutions under its institutional hub, categorized here as the secondary institutions. The ‘mutual’ relationship between the two institutions is best captured by the proliferation of multilateral institutions under ASEAN’s auspices. They are instrumentally and normatively designed by ASEAN, albeit through bargaining with various actors. The construction of such multilateral institutions affords the ability for ASEAN members to remotely and indirectly manage the great powers through institutionalized multilateral diplomacy. Furthermore, from the framework of the mutual relationships between primary and secondary institutions it provides an alternative to discern a deeper understanding of the function of the ASEAN Ways.

III. Norms, the ASEAN Way

The concept of norms is treated in relation to the concept of institutions in the English School. Norms and rules are collected in the institutions thus comprising the regional international society of states (Karmazin, 2014, p.13).

Norms are defined as “shared expectations about appropriate behavior held by a community of actors” (Finnemore 1966, p.22 cited in O’Neill et. Al, 2004, p.160). The functions of norm are to “serve as justifications and models for ways in which specific tasks should be accomplished” (Kratochwill, 1989, cited in O’neill et. Al, 2004, p.160).

Hurrell in his forward to Hedley Bull’s *Anarchical Society* (2002, p. xix) emphasizes the importance of norms which “shapes the game of power politics, the nature and identity of the actors, the purposes for which force can be used, and the way in which actors justify and legitimize their actions”. In addition, norms do not cause things to occur. As Jackson claims (2009, p. 22), “a norm is a standard of conduct by which to judge the rightness or wrongness, the goodness and the badness, of human activity”, and would be a mistake to think of norms as the cause of behaviors. Norms are used to justify and validate political acts (ibid.)

Thus it becomes necessary to understand how norms functions in great power management and how the great powers uses the ASEAN way to manage their relations with one another instead of how it causes behaviors and cooperation outcome as most of the literatures have studies.

This thesis understands and defines the ASEAN Way understood in a broad sense employing Acharya's definition (2009). The ASEAN Way as the regional norms including both regulative and procedural norms promulgated by ASEAN and expanded to the secondary ASEAN-led multilateral institutions. The regulative norms include the principles of sovereignty, non-interference, non-intervention, the renunciation of the use of force and territorial integrity. While the procedural norm include discreteness, non-threatening bargaining style, moving at the pace comfortable to all, informality, extensive consultation, dialogue and consensus-building.

To conclude, institutions and norms have been intertwined and embedded in the social structure to enable the ordering of the international society of the states. Such structures contain material conditions, and the interests and identities of the actors (Wendt, 1999, p.3 cited in O'Neill, 2004, p.155).

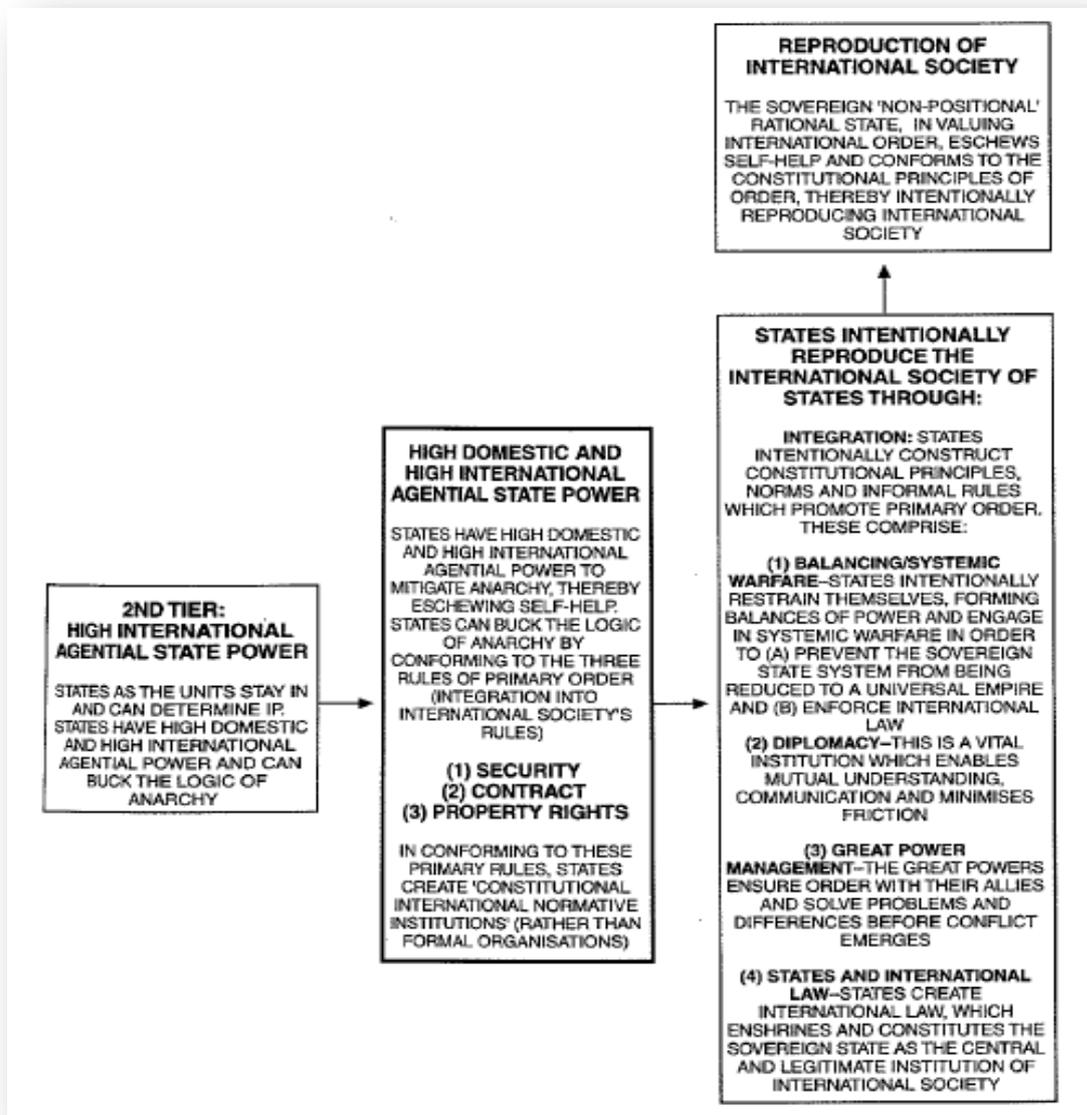
2.3 The Framework of the Co-constitution between Structure and Agent

The previous section elaborates the social structure of international society of states comprising institutions; both primary and secondary institutions, and norms. The overall pattern, or the order. This section underlines the significance of agency in helping understand the ASEAN Way in parallel to the structure.

O'Neill et al. (2004, p.162) argues that in order to understand the role of norms on actors, the theory of agency is imperative. In this regard, the English school has provided a suitable apparatus to tackle this issue. Like the constructivists, the English school perceives institutions as a social environment. However, it differs in that it recognizes that institutions are not only the venue for socialization, but is also the site where power and domination play roles in achieving certain social goals (Buzan and Zhang, 2014, p.13). The School underlines the importance of agency in understanding the working of institutions and norms in the international society of states. As Figure 1 illustrates, the state possesses a high level of international agential power to resist the anarchy (Hobson, 2000, p.89). It is not only the social structure comprising institutions and norms that constitutes "the players and the game" shaping states' interests, preferences and identities but also the states who can adjust and make use of the institutions and norms to serve their interests and preferences. It is because states have a high degree of agential power to shape and foster international order, particularly international security order, states thus shape the system and structure of the

international society (Hobson, 2000, pp.89-91). This results in states reproducing the international society of states (ibid).

Figure 1 demonstrates the co-constitution between agency and structure



Source: Hobson, 2000

2.4 Operationalizing the ASEAN Way

In order to understand the role and function of the norms, the ASEAN Way, in great power management, it is imperative to capture how the ASEAN Way is adopted and used and the degree of such adoption by great powers. Buzan (2004) elaborates that norms can be shallowly or deeply internalized, following a descending path from the most artificial to the deepest way of internalization going from coercion, then calculation, to believe. As

mentioned elsewhere in the thesis, the English School shares a great deal with constructivist approach whose focus is on norms (Byzan, 2004, p.7). Hence, this thesis investigates the degree of norm adoption by using the parameter of the norm life cycle approach developed by Finnemore and Sikkink (1998) and socialization by Checkel (2007).

Finnemore and Sikkink (1998, p.895) elaborates that norm acceptance or cascade happens by socialization where norm entrepreneur in this case, ASEAN, attempts to socialize state to become norm followers. States accept norm by a combination of pressure for conformity, actors' desire to enhance international legitimation and the desire of state leaders to enhance their self-esteem facilitate norm adoption.

From norm acceptance, norm internalization will then take place when norms acquire a taken for granted quality and is no longer a matter of public debates (ibid.). The state agent changes from following a logic of consequence based on strategic calculation to a logic of appropriateness (Checkel, 2007, p.6).

In this respect, it is important to see if the ASEAN Way is instrumental or constitutive of great powers. In order to trace the degree to which the norms, the thesis does so by tracking and matching the great powers' normative rhetoric and behaviors related to the ASEAN Way to see a pattern of how the norms are adopted. By rhetoric, it means how the texts and speeches persuade readers and listener (Atkinson and Coffey, 2011, p.90)

Normative rhetoric and behaviors related to the ASEAN Way include the adoption of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC), its related norms enshrined in ASEAN documents as well as its procedural norms if great powers' political conducts follow the ASEAN Way.

2.5 English School and its Application to the Thesis

The framework of co-constitution between structure consisting the interplay between primary and secondary institutions and agent provided by the English School will be used to understand the norms as it reconciles and bridges the dichotomy of either agent-oriented or structure-oriented approaches in the study of norms and also of either material and ideational factors.

The social structure comprising institutions primary and secondary and norms forms state preferences and identities by providing material conditions, interests and identities. While

state agents with their high agential power and transformative capacity mutually constitute the structure by strategically using norms to pursue their interests.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

Methodological choice and methods are a deliberated choice and are chosen and used not because they have been used before but because they fit the task at hand (Greener, 2011, p.50). This chapter therefore describes, elaborates and justifies the choice of methods used in this thesis with the aim of demonstrating the applicability of the selected methods to meet the aims of the thesis and provide transparency and replicability for the readers.

3.1 Ontology, Epistemology and Theoretical Reasoning

The ontological and epistemological considerations underpinning the thesis are associated closely with theoretical frameworks and reasoning and the research questions being addressed.

Set out to “understand” or in the Weberian term, “*Verstehen*” (Bryman, 2012), the working and function of the norms for state actors, this thesis rejects the positivist epistemology in which social realities can be studied and approached with a scientific model through quantification and hypothesis testing approach. Such assumption fails to give emphasis to perception and meaning in acceptance and the internalization of norms in order to see how it is used by states. This thesis therefore adopts an interpretative approach which can serve such purposes. As Costa-Buranelli (2014, p.36) illuminates, interpretative methodology can help to validate and examine how norms are internalized by actors. Buzan (2004) supplements norms can be shallowly or deeply internalized, following a descending path from the most superficial to the deepest way of internalization going from coercion, then calculation, to believe. Interpretative approaches being able to link to the hearts and minds of statesmen will thus enhance understanding not only whether or not norms and institutions are adopted and respected but also “to what extent, with what meaning, and in the light of what motivations” (ibid.). This epistemological assumption also derives from the English school of International Relations which is grounded on the hermeneutic or interpretative epistemology where social inquiry can be compared as reading texts (Little, 2009).

Ontologically speaking, in contrast to the realist assumption of objective reality, the thesis rests on the assumption about that the nature of social reality is socially constructed and do not exist independently from individuals’ interpretations. Hence, this thesis is underpinned by the social constructivism.

In terms of the theoretically reasoning, a relationship between theory and research, this thesis entails what Bryman (2012, p.27) argues that it is not a clear cut between deductive or inductive approach and they are not mutually exclusive (Grey, 2010, p.15). The thesis neither try to test hypothesis in deductive approach nor generate theory out of the empirical data in terms of inductive theory. It is a dialogical process which Bryman and Bell (2010, pp.26-17) identify as *abductive reasoning* moving back and forth between theory and empirical world. The theory is used as a building blocks for entering the empirical data and the analysis is moved by the data and at the end the theory is used to refine the empirical data.

3.2 Research Strategy and Research Design

In line with interpretative approach, the thesis employs qualitative research strategy to provide in-depth analysis of the function and role of norms. Since this thesis is interested in the worldviews of state actors, the US and China in how they ‘perceive’ the regional norms and how they make sense and make use of such norms. Qualitative research approach is appropriate to recognize how to interpret the social world, and to interpret the adoption and use of norms for various means and purposes.

The research uses comparative case study to provide in-depth understanding of each case. As Bryman (2012, p.72) asserts, the logic of comparison implies that social phenomena is better grasped when comparing two meaningful contrasting cases. By choosing comparative study design, this thesis also aims to discern a pattern in how states adopt and use the norms differently or similarly and to what extent. In this respect, the strength of comparative study lays in its explanatory power. However, as Bryman (2012, p.74) identifies the potential pitfalls of comparative study involves thin descriptions of cases and insensitivity to national and cultural context. To mitigate this foreseen problem, this thesis takes into account the historical and cultural contexts of the two cases since it has influential implications to the degree of norm adoption as well as perception on such norms.

Case Selection: Why the United States and China

The thesis refers to states as case studies and each is strategically selected on the basis based on a purposive sampling strategy specifically to theoretical sampling (Bryman, 2012, pp.418-424 and Silverman, 2010, pp.141-144). The two selected cases, the US and China fell into the criteria of the English School theory used in the thesis define as the great powers.

These two cases are critically significant since to keep the US engage and commit to the region and to find ways to deal with the rise of China have long been a core concern for ASEAN's leaders since the end of Cold War or could be traced back to the emergence of ASEAN itself (Quayle, 2013, pp.29-30). Although ASEAN aims also to involve other key extra-regional actors including Japan, India and Russia, these two actors and their potential competition are a prominent theme for ASEAN policy makers and think tanks (Percival, 2011, p.4). Moreover, the US and China represent two contrasting cases in which the US represent the Western World whose cultures differ greatly with ASEAN. By contrast, China represents a Third World developing country whose comes from the same Asian civilization as ASEAN. These attributes could generate different patterns in the norm adoption and provide insights towards understanding the problems addressed.

3.3 Data Collection

Documents and texts are the source of data used in this thesis, and have been collected through study archives. This provides the researcher with *accessibility* since this source of data is mostly available publicly online. The data comprises both primary and secondary data sources and performs different roles in data analysis.

The primary data derives from state official documents published and released by concerning actors; ASEAN, the US and China. These are publicly available online through the government websites. For the US, the websites of State Department and the White House are the only focal point while for China the data is limited to only the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. These official state websites are chosen on the ground that they reflects the official view and interest of actors and the selection also delimits the research. As shown in Table 1, data from these sources includes state foreign policy statements, reports, speeches, press releases, remarks and public lectures by statespersons. However, Bryman (2012, p.550) cautions that the extent to which official state sources can be considered to depict social realities needs to be aware because of their official and quasi-official characters. Atkinson and Coffey (2011, p. 79) suggest that this source of documents should be viewed as a distinct level of reality and should be examined in terms of its context in which it is generated and their implied readership. Hence, it is critical for researchers who employ documents as a means of understanding the aspects of organization and its operations to support the analysis of the documents with other sources of data (ibid.).

Given the nature of diplomacy based on secrecy, quiet and close-doored diplomacy, accessibility to the actual diplomatic negotiations is limited. In this regard, the secondary data sources are imperative to mitigate such limitations and press reports provide a rich quality. Rüländ et al. (2014, pp.153-157) clearly identify the key values of press reports as a source of knowledge generation for researchers particularly in Southeast Asian studies. Press reports become primary sources for research tracing perceptions, ideas and political interests particularly those from political actors since the original codes and comments from decision makers, politicians, diplomats and persons involved in events are usually replete in the reports (ibid.). This is a case in point since during the data collection process and analysis, original comments and interviews with statespersons, diplomats and ambassadors are found in press reports. Secondly, the sequences of the events can be identified and reconstructed, and this value is critical since it provides contexts for reading the official documents as well as the analysis from various scholars in the region.

These core values from the press reports benefit the research in terms of accessibility since the regional leading English newspapers including The Bangkok Post, The Nation, The Straits Times, The Jakarta Post whose archives are available online. However, this source of data is delimited to only The Nation and The Jakarta Post, both of which are parts of Southeast Asia news network providing entry point and connect to other leading newspapers such as the Straits Times on the same topic. To focus the research key search terms and temporal limitations have been utilized. The keywords are limited to “ASEAN”, “ASEAN Way” and “East Asia Summit”. Moreover, temporal demarcation to search is identify since the search will stop in the year 2011.

Thirdly, secondary data derives from previous research, analysis and publication. These also includes the analysis from think tanks whose associations are closely linked with the actors involved. These secondary sources are used as a cross-check with the primary source and provides in-depth analysis on the topic. However, academic literature bases their analysis on specific claims and defend specific theoretical frameworks. Hence, the existing research needs to be treated with cautions.

Table 1 summarizes the sources of data, its usage purpose, its strengths and weaknesses

Sources of Data	Usage Purpose	Strength	Weakness
1. Official Documents (political speeches, statements)	Understand and reflect worldviews and interests of state actors	Official character	A distinct level of realities
2. Press Report	Understand and reflect worldviews and interests of state actors Provide social context	Accessibility to interviews, comments from statesmen	Time consuming Latent information
3. Academic research, publication and analysis	Cross check with the primary sources Provide in-depth analysis on the topic	In-depth understanding of the topic	Specific claim and defend theoretical perspective

3.4 Data Analysis Method

Through cross comparison between two cases; US and China, the thematic analysis is conducted to analyze the data. As Prior (2011, p.95) pinpoints, thematic analysis is a method which concentrates mostly on what is in the texts. It is about the content of the data as it is the research focus (ibid.). The use of thematic analysis is still debatable if it is a data analysis method in its own right (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.78) because there are no clearly identified procedures and details of the method (Bryman, 2016, p.578). However, this thesis follows Braun and Clarke's argument contending that the thematic analysis should be considered as data analysis method *per se* and the strength of this method lies in its flexibility in coding the data (Bryman, 2016, p.587 and Bruan and Clarke, 2006, p.78). In order to strengthen such contention, clear elaboration of the procedure of conducting thematic analysis needs to be identified. Bazeley (2013 cited in Bryman, 2016, p.587) argues that the research claiming to use thematic analysis is often vague how they identify the theme and how they emerged from data. It is imperative here to clarify on this issue.

As illustrated in Table 2, the themes, a recurring pattern of the data (Bryman, 2012, p.580), is theoretically identified and constructed by the two main analytical concepts in the English school, great power management and multilateral diplomacy. Grey (2013, p.609) recognizes this approach as theoretical thematic analysis. These themes are important in understanding the function of the norms, the ASEAN Way, the subject of the study for two

reasons. Firstly, the theme, multilateral diplomacy, is a key entry point where the norms of ASEAN Way can be traced in its adoption by the actors given to the fact that the norms are codified and institutionalized in multilateral diplomacy/institution of the East Asia Summit. As well as the great power management theme is to trace the actors' views, understanding, interests and behaviors in managing their relations. Table 2 presents the process of how the themes are identified by coding from the sources and how the subthemes are emerged.

Table 2 identifies the process of theoretical thematic analysis applied in this thesis and shows how the themes are identified, constructed and emerged along with the subthemes

Comparison across cases		Theme Identification and Construction	
US	China	Theme	Subtheme
“Multilateral institutions are positioning themselves to better handle territorial and maritime disputes such as in the South China Sea. Through engagement with multilateral structures such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), we are able to encourage a peaceful resolution of contentious transnational issues and discourage escalation of tensions” (US Department of State, 2013)	“We should continue to keep the EAS as a leaders-led strategic forum, focus on major issues of overarching importance and find ways to increase consensus and properly manage differences. We should continue to adhere to ASEAN centrality, be sensitive to the comfort level of all parties and ensure equal participation by all countries, big or small, in regional affairs” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of People’s Republic of China, 2015)	Multilateral Diplomacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View and Expectation on the role and procedure of multilateral institutions, agenda,
“so we are committed to working with China within a framework that fosters cooperation where interests align and manages differences where they do not. That is part of what it means to achieve an effective regional order” (Clinton, 2012).	“We are dedicated to fostering a new pattern of state-to-state relations with win-win cooperation as the core and based on partnership instead of alliance and cooperation rather than confrontation” (Yi, 2015).	Great Power Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great responsables • Alliances • Balance of Power • Unequal powers

3.5 Ethical considerations

Bryman (2012, p.39) clearly points out that social research cannot be unbiased and free from value judgement. However, it is imperative for the researcher to “ensure” that there is no unimpeded intrusion of such values in the research process (ibid.). Therefore, it is

critical for the research to be reflexive (ibid.). The research recognizes and gives the emphasis on this self-reflexivity issue.

As a Thai student who comes from the Southeast Asian region, the research locus of ASEAN, where it could be recognized to be “home” to the researcher, the researcher is well aware of biases and prejudices which could arise from a sympathy to the research topic. Coming from Southeast Asia, the researcher recognizes her own bias and prejudices that relate to the research topic. A driver for this research has been a critical inquiry of the ASEAN Way, and how poor progress has been for ASEAN as well as for external actors.

CHAPTER 4 THE ANALYSIS OF THE CO-CONSTITUTION BETWEEN SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND AGENCY IN EAST ASIAN INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF STATE

This chapter analyzes the empirical data using the English School's frameworks of the mutual relation between primary and secondary institutions, and the co-constitution between social structure and agent to understand the roles and function of the ASEAN Way in great power management in the new geopolitical landscape. This chapter is structured towards answering the research question "what are the functions of the ASEAN Way in great power management". The analysis is structured in three main parts. Part 1 investigates the social structure of international society of states in East Asia. Part 2 analyzes the adoption of the norms by the great powers. Part 3 illuminates the co-constitution between social structure and agency of great powers and concludes the analysis by providing answers to the inquiring question.

4.1 Changing Social Structure in the International Society of States in East Asia

This part of the analysis examines the social structure of the international society of states in East Asia in the new geopolitical landscape. The focus of this analysis will be on the mutual relationship between the primary institutions of great power management, the balance of power, diplomacy and the East Asia Summit (EAS) as a secondary ASEAN-led multilateral institution, and the codification of the ASEAN Way in such institutions. This part aims to understand how the social structure, comprising the interplay between primary and secondary institutions provides the material conditions, interests and preferences, as well as identities to the US and China as the great powers involved.

The East Asian regional order in the Post-Cold War period has been underpinned by three crucial elements. The first element is US military supremacy based on the San Francisco Treaty Alliance System of bilateral relations dating back in 1950. Secondly, the rise of a regional Great Power, China in its comprehensive terms of diplomatic, political, military and economic capabilities. Finally, is the network of overlapping multilateral institutions under the institutional hub of ASEAN Centrality (Goh, 2015). This pattern of activity reflects the underlying social structure of the international society of states in East Asia, which points out the unequal power-relations among actors, and the interwoven link

between primary institutions of great power management, the balance of power, diplomacy and secondary institutions.

4.1.1 Great Power Management

Evelyn Goh (2014, p.167) elaborates that the East Asian regional order has developed under a great power social structure in which small and middle powers, ASEAN seek to manage the great powers involved.

The United States as a Pacific power has long-standing recognition to have special rights and duties to maintain regional order by providing security guarantees and public goods to its bilateral partners, as detailed in Table 3.

In contrast, China positions itself as an Asian regional great power, and therefore hierarchically inferior to the US. China has benefitted from US security guarantees, with China seeing this as helpful by reassuring and restraining Japan (Khong, 2014, p.157). In this regard, by creating a stable order, the US has allowed China to concentrate on domestic development and emerge with significant economic influence.

As Bull (2012) illuminates, great powers manage their relations between each other and manage unequal powers. In this respect, as Daniel Russell, Assistant Secretary of State (2016) posits that the US rejects dividing the region into spheres of influence and seeks to avoid building great power condominium. China has also rejected building the great power concert and an alliance system. Wang Yi, the Chinese Foreign Minister said that while China had become a great power, and pursues great-power relations, it does not follow previous forms of great power relations (Kejin, 2013). A particular stress of Chinese foreign policy is that it will not tolerate interference from foreign forces in its diplomatic decisions, and will not seek alliances or hegemony (ibid.). Instead, Wang Yi argues that Beijing will pursue a path of peaceful development (ibid.). In lieu of the construction of a great power concert by either the US or China, this role is taken by ASEAN through its overlapping multilateral institutions.

4.1.2 Balance of Power

The local balance of power in the East Asia is characterized by US primacy despite China's rise. To Khong, (2014) the local balance of power in Southeast and East Asia is peculiar since most of the states in the region – particularly ASEAN states – embrace US

primacy over China due to recent history in which China funded communist groups throughout the region during the Cold War.

However, the rise of China has complicated the local balance of power in the East Asia since it is being seen as a structural challenge to the US regional primacy (Goh, 2014, p.184). Ikenberry (2015, p.2) posits that while the US dominates the security order in Southeast Asia and East Asia, China is dominates the economic order. China has come to replace the US as the major trading partner of the region (ibid.). In this respect, the change in the local balance of power provides an incentive for the US to rebalance towards the region through its Pivot policy. This has resulted in China having to carefully manage its costly relations with the US (Goh, 2014, p.183).

4.1.3 Diplomacy

The overlapping multilateral secondary institutions under the institutional hub of ASEAN reflects an intertwining link between the primary institutions, great power management, the balance of power and diplomacy. It is an attempt of a group of small and middle powers to manage great power relations and balance their influence. As Foot (2014, p.1919) elaborates, these secondary institutions of diplomacy are a means of dealing with forms of power. As illustrated in Table 3, the East Asia Summit, as a secondary institution is promulgated by primary diplomatic institutions as a way of coping with unequal powers between ASEAN and great powers. The aim this is to allow small and medium states to adjust primary institutions of great powers and balance their power and influence.

ASEAN's incentives in designing these secondary institutions are its desire to be in "driver's seat", and maintain its centrality are three-fold. Firstly, ASEAN's conscious awareness of the unequal powers constrains their policy choices and actions. Multilateralism enhances the negotiating power of ASEAN's member states, yielding positive results and affords ASEAN with a global presence (Quayle, 2013, p.29). As Wendt (1992, p.415 cited in Ba, 2006, p.164) suggests, small states may tend to employ a non-coercive and diplomatic approach at the outset of their actions. Secondly, ASEAN's core concern is on extra-regional interference and domination. The aim of ASEAN-led secondary institutions are to manage great power influence through institutional binding within its institutional length (Quayle, 2013, p.29). Thirdly, ASEAN has taken up a brokerage role to ensure that does not become irrelevant if the great powers were to form a concert of power between themselves, which risks a potentially high cost to ASEAN members (Goh, 2012 p. 113). ASEAN's strategies

correspond to what Goh (2007 and 2008) illuminates as the complex balance of influence and omni-enmeshment. The foreign policies that entail more than realist tradition of balancing and bandwagoning.

Among others, the East Asia Summit (EAS) is one of the secondary multilateral institutions that bears special attention to the management of the great powers in this new geopolitical dynamic as it is the only leader-led security-related institution in East Asia. The institution is framed as an integral part of ASEAN-led multilateral institutions in the evolving regional architecture, and paves the way for community building in East Asia (ASEAN, 2005). The East Asia Summit established in 2005 is an expanded version of the ASEAN Plus Three (APT); the ten ASEAN members and China, Japan and South Korea to include Australia, New Zealand, India. In 2011, the United States and Russia officially joined the EAS as full members.

The Kuala Lumpur Declaration determined the purpose of the East Asia Summit as “a leaders’-led Summit for strategic discussions on key issues affecting the region and the evolving regional architecture” (ASEAN, 2005). Decision to work on the functional issues involving six priority areas including energy, finance, disaster management, education, avian flu prevention/global health issues and pandemic diseases, and connectivity aims to translate trust deficit to common interests and build strategic trust. Goh (2014, p.181) points out that ASEAN seeks facilitate great power interaction and cooperation over functional issues. The institutions thus functions as a confidence-building mechanism (SIIA, 2014).

ASEAN with its normative power has set out membership criteria that they must 1) be full ASEAN dialogue partners, 2) accede to ASEAN constitutional norms in the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC), and 3) have extensive contact with ASEAN (Md Nasrudin and Sudo, 2016, p.42). The invitation of the US and Russia to the East Asia Summit in 2011 reflects geopolitical and geostrategic calculations among ASEAN members to include powerful players outside of the East Asian region (ibid. , p.34). When inviting the US to join, ASEAN hoped the great powers would balance one another in the ASEAN-led institutions (Chongkittavorn, 2011).

ASEAN also maneuvered over the forms and modalities of the EAS, with as ASEAN being the driving force of the East Asia Summit through its chair and hosting positions. The norms of the ASEAN Way are formalized in the document to include the principles of consultation and consensus and the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) norms, non-

interference in internal affairs, sovereign equality, non-intervention, and the renunciation of the use of force. In addition, in terms of procedural norms, the ASEAN Way stresses inclusiveness, informality, consultation and consensus.

This part illuminates the changing social structure in East Asia in terms of the local balance of power and great power relations that have provided the US an interest to retain its regional primacy as Table 4 elaborates. Concurrently, through its economic development, increase in military expenditure and diplomatic muscle, China is a rising Asian power and strives for a greater status and role and policy independence in the region. This also provides an incentive for China to cautiously manage its relations with the US. At the same time ASEAN facilitates and balances great powers with the ASEAN Way codified in the secondary institution of EAS.

Table 3 summarizes the social structure in forming great powers' material conditions, interests and identities

Social Structure	Functions and Roles	US	China
1 Primary institutions (PIs)			
<i>1.1 Great Power Management</i>	Special rights and duties <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance and provider of order 	A resident Asia-Pacific Power <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security Guarantee and Public Goods Provider 	An Asian Regional Great Power <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -
	Manage great power relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through the ASEAN-led multilateral institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through the ASEAN-led multilateral institutions
	Manage unequal powers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alliance • Sphere of influence • Great power concert 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bilateral Alliance System • Rejection of sphere of influence • Disagree to build great powers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non Alliance • Rejection of sphere of influence • Disagree to build great powers' concert
<i>1.2 Balance of Power</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background Condition • Means 	Preponderance	Structural challenge to the US preponderance
<i>1.3 Diplomacy</i>	Means to deal with power forms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication • Negotiation • Minimize Friction 		
2. Secondary Institution (SI) East Asia Summit (EAS)	Management of Great Power Balance of power	ASEAN	

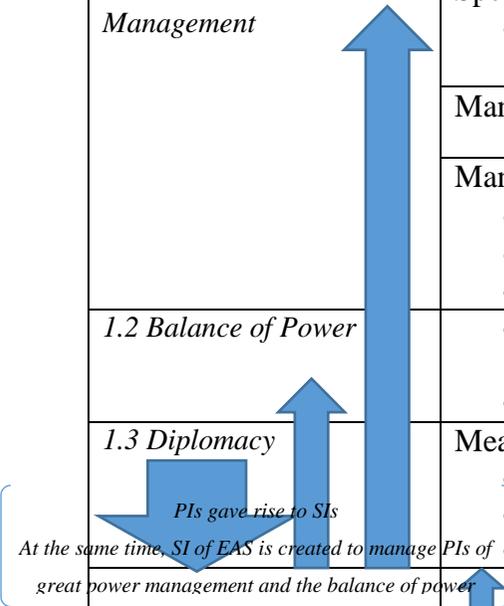


Table 4 identifies the formation of great powers’ material conditions, interests and preferences, and identities resulted from the changing social structure of international society of states in East Asia in a comparative perspective

Formation	US	China
1. Material conditions	An unmatched regional preponderance based on military primacy	Economic clouts and increase in its military, diplomatic and cultural presence
2. Interests and Preference	Maintain status quo as a regional primacy	Strive for a greater status and role as a great power and maintain policy independence and carefully manage relations with the US
3. Identity	An Asia Pacific Power	An Asian regional great power

4.2 Great Powers and their Agencies

This part examines the great power agency acceptance, adoption and use of the ASEAN Way as codified in the East Asia Summit to manage their relations in the new geopolitical landscape. This part aims to determine the degree to which the ASEAN Way is internalized, and how the ASEAN Way functions as part of great power management.

4.2.1 The United States: A Resident Pacific Power

The US views itself as a global leader and a resident Asia-Pacific Power recognizing its capabilities as an unmatched sole superpower. From the US perspective international and regional order is an end to itself, with order being based on the rights and responsibilities of all states to maintain order, yet sees itself as having a particularly special duty to advance its leadership and ensure maintenance endures (White House, 2010). Order is underpinned by rules, norms, institutions, rules of law and claimed universal values. In this aspect, the US bases its legitimacy on international rules and norms anchored in its emphasis on universal values of democracy, human rights and rules of law. Alagappa (2003, p.73) illuminates that the US vision for the Asian region is a derivative of its global vision. In this regard the view on regional institutions and norms derives from its globalist view on international institutions with its functionalist term based on effectiveness of a result-oriented approach. Rules, norms and institutions provide incentives and punishments for actors and their actions, with cost-benefit calculations restraining state actions within international rules and law.

In this new geopolitical landscape, the US has been aware of the rapid change of the social structure and regional dynamics in the Asia-Pacific and the “growing ranks of capable powers” particularly China. Consequently, the US employs a Pivot Rebalancing policy and a regional strategy known as the ‘forward deployed’ diplomacy to respond to the changing

landscape (US Department of State, 2012). The engagement with regional multilateral institutions is one of six key policy priorities along with strengthening bilateral security alliance, working in relationship with rising powers, expanding trade and investment, increasing its military presence and advocating democracy and human rights issues (ibid.).

The US recognizes the importance of, and its responsibility to engage with the region to develop the security and economic architecture (Clinton, 2011). The National Security Strategy (2015) deliberately states,

“We are committed to strengthening regional institutions such as ASEAN, the East Asia Summit, the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation to reinforce shared rules and norms, force collective responses to shared challenges, and to help ensure peaceful resolutions to shared problems”

(The White House, 2015, p.24).

For the US, regional multilateral institutions must be effective as they are a pivotal part of building an effective regional order. The US’ criteria on effectiveness refers to the regional multilateral institutions as the main venue where rules, norms and codes of conduct should be discussed and developed, collective actions should be mobilized, and differences and disputes should be addressed. As Hilary Clinton, a former Secretary of State reflected,

“there is an increasing need for institutions that can mobilize common action and settle disputes peacefully; for rules and norms that help manage relations between people, markets, and nations; and for security arrangements that continue to provide durable peace and stability. These are the building blocks of an open, just and sustainable order for the Asia-Pacific that can safeguard the future of this region for years to come”

(Clinton, 2012)

In this comment, the US stance on regional multilateral institutions is based on “international” rules and norms and the ASEAN-led multilateral institutions, the EAS in this case should be effective in functioning as the main venue to solve the problems through mobilizing collective actions. By this, the US has consistently referred to the South China Sea Conflict where China, as an Asian rising power, is a conflicting party. As Clinton urges,

“Whenever possible, territorial issues should be resolved between the claimants. But broader questions about conduct in disputed areas and about acceptable methods of resolving disputes should be addressed in multilateral settings such as the ASEAN Regional Forum. Issues such as freedom of navigation and lawful exploitation of maritime resources often involve a wide region, and approaching them strictly bilaterally could be a recipe for confusion and even confrontation”

(Clinton, 2012).

As a consolidated state, Foot (2014, p.192) argues that the US doesn't emphasize strict interpretation of the non-interference and non-intervention principles of sovereignty. This corresponds to the US policy preference for multilateral institutions functioning effectively to solve collective problems. Thus the US prefers multilateral institutions to have a functional agenda and address sovereignty disputes in a more straightforward and purposeful way (ibid.).

Resonating in the US functionalist view of the institutions in terms of reward and punishment, the US places emphasis on the multilateral institutions as the main venue for states to show legitimacy and transparency, which can be seen as pressing China to share these aspirations. As elaborated,

“In multilateral settings, responsible behavior is rewarded with legitimacy and respect, and we can work together to hold accountable those who undermine peace, stability, and prosperity”

(US Department of State, 2011).

The US stress in this regard follows Hurrell's remark on the role of norms and institutions as they are “central to the stabilization and legitimization of power in general and of unequal or hegemonic power” (Hurrell, 2007, p.38). By imbuing the institutions with the concepts of prestige and legitimacy, “a great deal of the struggle for political power is the quest for legitimate and authoritative control that avoids costly and dangerous reliance on brute force and coercion” (ibid.). By inserting the concept of legitimacy with the multilateral institutions particularly the ASEAN-led ones, the US quests for the control of the Chinese behaviors of China in the eyes of international society.

Under the normative power of ASEAN in its institutional hub, the membership of the East Asia Summit has set to be a party accede TAC. According to the US Congressional report (Manyin et al, 2009), the US was facing a choice of actions since it was the only Pacific nation who had not entered into TAC after its allies and China had already done so. The US was concerned since the ASEAN Way formalized in TAC could hamper US actions, particularly the doctrine of non-interference in other countries' internal affairs (ibid.). However, accession to TAC is efficient for the US as it gives the US both leverage and legitimacy to engage with ASEAN as part of the rebalancing policy and entered to the East Asia Summit. As Kurt Campbell (2011), a former Assistant Secretary of State, put it, "one of the most important things that the United States did at the outset Secretary Clinton was to try...[to] sign the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation **which allowed us to engage in a more substantial way with ASEAN**" (emphasis added). This norm adoption is based on a strategic calculation in which states calculate and seek to maximize their interests in norm adoption (Checkel, 2007, p.10).

The US also exemplifies the case of Australia which has imposed sanctions on Myanmar, despite having signed the TAC, as evidence that TAC would not constrain US options (Mayin et al., 2009, p.3). This is in line with what Goh (2014, 181) points out that in practice, the TAC has not been applied to all parties who accede to it but merely to ASEAN members. In this regard, the ASEAN Way through TAC accession does not constrain US options but enhances the US the choice of actions to pursue their interests by enabling and legitimizing US actions.

As Finnemore and Sikkink (1998, p. 895) explain, norm acceptance could follow a combination of conformity based on peer pressure, a state's desire to increase its international legitimacy and the desire to enhance self-esteem. In the US, it is the combination of such factors. Peer pressure derives primarily from their alliance and to use Finnemore and Sikkink's term, critical states that is China and its alliance already a party to TAC. It is also to enhance international legitimacy as a great power since ASEAN, the unequal power, has been perceived the US disengagement in the region and thus provides China an opportunity to consolidate its power, particularly in multilateral institutions for quite some time (Md Nasrudin and Suda, 2016, p.43). As Hurrell (2007) identifies, norms help legitimize power. In this regard, the ASEAN Way becomes a tool for the US to legitimize their preponderant power in the region as a goal to pivot policy.

Ann Marie Murphy, a National Asia Research Fellow and Southeast Asia expert, asserts that the US decision to participate in the East Asia Summit is part of the US rebalancing policy in which the US wishes to build the regional architecture based on their values and visions that the institutions would tackle the future challenges of the region (Alan Burns interview with Ann Marie Murphy, 2011). Adopting the ASEAN Way enables the US to pursue its interest to engage with ASEAN with the aim of balancing Chinese influence. As scholars have agreed, the US also uses the EAS as a balancing tool to curb the Chinese influence (Capie and Acharya, 2011, Tan, 2016p. 120). The active US push for the EAS reflects Goh's (2014, p.184) argument in that it aims to shape the evolving regional order by supporting the secondary institutions that it involves.

The US also clarifies that it made choices to “invest” in regional organizations such as ASEAN, APEC and EAS (The White House, 2015). By investing it reflects the strategic calculation as the US aim to enhance US policy options to balance China. As Tang Siew Mun (2016) argues, investing in ASEAN is an efficient and cost-effective means for the US, and gives the US leverage and policy options in the larger East Asia Context.

Before the US first participated in the East Asia Summit, ASEAN the authoritative power to set the agenda and define membership through their own rules and norms. The situation has changed when US entered their first meeting in 2011. While the US recognizes that, “we are new comers to an institution that is already well established” and “In many respects he (President Obama) understands the ASEAN way (Campbell, 2011), the US came to the East Asia Summit with a set of strong agendas including maritime security, non-proliferation and disaster management (the White House, 2011).

However, upon the first US participation in the East Asia Summit as a full official member, the US has transformed the East Asia Summit and social environment to deviate from the ASEAN Way of non-confrontational bargaining style and discretion towards the threatening posture and power projections. Interventions and comments on the issues related to the US interests were projected and this is particularly the case of South China Conflict which the US views as affecting its own interests and freedom of navigation. In 2011, the US twice made comments on maritime security and the South China Sea Conflicts, and also made a second intervention after the 90 minutes' leaders discussion (Chongkittavorn, 2011). In 2015, US comments on this issue became more provocative and harsher, with China interpreting this as interference on the internal affairs of conflicting parties (Global Times,

2015). This power projection and confrontational posture has a clear implication on ASEAN since the aim of the ASEAN Way is to build confidence and strategic trust among participating states, targeting mainly the great powers becoming confrontational political battle. It can be seen that China became uneasy and to some extent felt isolated in the ASEAN-led process (Chongkittavorn, 2011, 2015).

This made ASEAN difficult to operate and control its process. As Surin Pitsuwan, a former ASEAN Secretary General reflected on the situation that “Our stage is getting crowded and the heavyweights are coming on our stage. We should maintain the balance among these giants of contending interests” (Chongkittavorn, 2011). Surin added “We have attracted so much attention, but we need a mechanism or working process that gives us a sense of control, of balance, and of ownership”. In regard to the South China Conflict, Surin stated that in order to avoid “any unintended consequence[s]”, ASEAN needed to carefully handle the situation.

The US further reflects its capability to shape multilateral institutions for their interests. As elaborated,

“Through engagement with multilateral structures such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), we are able to encourage a peaceful resolution of contentious transnational issues and discourage escalation of tensions”

(US Department of State, 2013)

The US even claims that it succeeded in instilling the discussion in the East Asia to focus on the behaviors of states (US Department of State, 2014).

For the US, choosing to accede to TAC enhances their policy choices and enables the US to pursue their interests to balance the Chinese influence in the region through active engagement in the EAS. Instead of actors’ interests and identity transformed by norm adoption, the US can maximize their interest and social status. In this respect, the ASEAN Way is seen as shallowly adopted and serves as a tool to legitimize their power, and enables the US to achieve their foreign policy preferences.

4.2.2 China: Asia Rising Power

China’s view on the concept of order is quite different from the US. As Alagappa (2003, p.75) frames it, for China, regional order has been thought and conceptualized in

instrumental and pragmatic terms with strong realist elements. This is clearly found in the Five Principles of Co-Existence and its foreign policy strategy focusing on mutually beneficial relations.

While the US has embarked on regional strategy with its Pivot Rebalancing policy, China has its own Good neighborliness policy which is hinged on its domestic imperative for economic development and reform as China claims that it pursues a Path to Peaceful Development.

As China rises, it wants to be perceived by their neighbors as a benign power playing a responsible role. As See Sang Tan (2016, p.89) put it, “China’s involvement in Asian multilateralism has not only provided it with a platform from which to promote, if not protect its economic and security interests, but also, or so it is hoped, to calm regional concerns and reassure neighbors on how China will deploy its rising power and influence”. In this respect, China has portrayed itself as a responsible power and recently as an active conductor and practitioner of multilateralism (Jiechi, 2014).

In comparison to the US, China’s case entails a different picture when it comes to norm adoption since China was the first extra-regional actors who acceded the TAC in 2003. Although having acceded TAC a decade ago, China has not entered the stage of norm internalization, the stage in which norms is taken for granted by the actors and is not a matter of public debate (Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998, p.904). This is because China has been arguing for the norms and bargaining for using it in multilateral institution vis-à-vis the US. For China, the ASEAN Way functions in a range of purposes in the new geopolitical landscape.

Firstly, China uses the ASEAN Way as a balancing tool for great powers’ competition for influences. This is seen in China’s claim that

“China was the first ASEAN dialogue partner to accede to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, and it stands ready to become the first dialogue partner to sign with ASEAN a treaty of friendship and cooperation”

(Ministry of Foreign Affairs of People's Republic of China, 2014).

China further urges claim that

“China firmly supports ASEAN countries' efforts to build a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Southeast Asia and has reached agreement with ASEAN on signing the Protocol to the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty. **We hope that ASEAN could step up consultation with the other four nuclear-weapon states so as to sign the protocol at an early date**”

(Ministry of Foreign Affairs of People's Republic of China, 2014, emphasis added).

This emphasis can be seen as a direct reference to the US. In 2012 the US, along with France and UK had postponed the signing of Southeast Asian Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (SEANWFZ) at the last minute (Chongkittavorn, 2012). Dating back to 1971, ASEAN's normative agenda to establish a nuclear weapon free zone, SEANWFZ has required a concerted effort. However, such attempts have not gained much weight and received attention from the great powers since it hampered their interests as nuclear states.

Moreover, the ASEAN Way functions as a balancing tool to guard against external interference referring to US involvement and interference in the South China Sea conflict. Since the US officially participated the East Asia Summit in 2011, the South China issue has been ever present and addressed to China. From the outgoing Premier Wen Jiabao to Premier Li Keqiang recently in 2015, Chinese responses have been increasingly vocal against the US. In 2011, as the last leader to speak in the East Asia Summit, the outgoing Premier Wen had to answer all points brought up by the US (Chingkittavorn, 2011). Even though he was upset, he remained composed and reaffirmed the Chinese position that the East Asia Summit was not a proper venue to discuss these issues since they have been discussed between related parties elsewhere (ibid.). In 2015 the Chinese response to the US became tougher as it called on the countries beyond the region to refrain from interference that could inflame tensions in the region (The Global Times, 2015). China has increasingly perceived the US as politically provoking such tension. In response to US addressed heavily on China in regard to the South China Conflict. In this regard, the strategic use of norms, particularly of consultation and consensus between relevant parties in the Chinese rhetoric is used to guard against US interference.

“... **through dialogue** and communication between China and ASEAN countries, overall peace and stability in the South China Sea have been maintained **without the intervention or involvement of external forces**”

(Ministry of Foreign Affairs of People's Republic of China, 2015, emphasis added)

Furthermore, the ASEAN Way is a key tool used to justify and legitimate China's choices of action and their foreign policy preference. This is clearly the case in the South China Conflict as the Chinese has long been firm in their stance to pursue a dual-track policy, in which the South China Conflict will be dealt with bilaterally among conflicting parties through negotiation and consultation and separate from the overall ASEAN-China relations. As the Chinese Premier, Li Keqiang emphasized in his statement in the East Asia Summit in 2013 that,

“China and ASEAN countries have reached **consensus** that the relevant dispute should be resolved by relevant parties through consultation and negotiation. Unilateral referral of the bilateral disputes to international arbitration runs counter to the DOC, agreed by China and ASEAN countries. China will work jointly with ASEAN members to maintain the peace and stability of the South China Sea, to continue to comprehensively and effectively implement the DOC, and **advance the consultations** on the COC in an active and prudent manner, **based on the principle of consensus-building**”

(Ministry of Foreign Affairs of People's Republic of China, 2013, emphasis added).

In this comment, the ASEAN Way becomes the justification in which the conflict management of the South China Sea Conflict should be accomplished. By emphasizing that it reached consensus with ASEAN and deliberately use the ASEAN Way as conflict management approach, the ASEAN Way becomes a tool to legitimizing China's policy preference of a dual-track approach and also its actions. As Hurrell (2007, p. 38) asserts that norms may well serve as regulatory rules designed to constrain choices and/or as parameters within which individual agents pursue their own preferences. It is this latter role the ASEAN way functions for China as a model for China pursue its own foreign policy preference.

Furthermore, China has chosen to support the concept of ASEAN as being in the “driver’s seat”, the “driving force” and its new brand of “ASEAN Centrality” and the ASEAN-led process based on the ASEAN Way in the EAS. From the Chinese perspective, the support of ASEAN centrality means not only supporting ASEAN’s initiative but avoiding the negative impact of the major powers’ competition in the East Asia cooperation (Ying, 2015). By supporting the leading role of ASEAN, China avoids US domination in the ASEAN frameworks to impose an agenda against Chinese interests. As the Chinese Premier stresses,

“We should continue to keep the EAS as a leaders-led strategic forum, focus on major issues of overarching importance and find ways to **increase consensus** and properly manage differences. We should continue to adhere to ASEAN centrality, **be sensitive to the comfort level of all parties** and ensure equal participation by all countries, big or small, in regional affairs”

(Ministry of Foreign Affairs of People's Republic of China, 2015, emphasis added).

China’s position stresses the importance of “accommodating each other’s comfort level”, which is a key element of the ASEAN Way. China’s sensitivity over this elucidates that China uses this to guard against the US creating an intimidating agenda towards political and security issues which could harm China’s interests. As Foot (2014, p.198) argues, consensus-based decision making results in the lowest common denominator which ensures that some topics fails to appear on the agenda and make progress.

In contrast to the US who pressed heavily on the effective institutional frameworks based on the international rules and norms, China chose to propose an indigenous security framework, known as the concept of Asia for Asian Security. As Premier Li illuminates,

“We should establish a **regional security framework that conforms to the regional situation** and needs of relevant parties. China proposes to promote the new security concept, featuring comprehensive, common and **cooperative security**, and to push forward candid talks and cooperation in traditional and non-traditional security fields, so as to build lasting peace in East Asia”

(Ministry of Foreign Affairs of People's Republic of China, 2013,
emphasis added).

China advocates **an Asian security concept** that features common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security and welcomes initiatives on regional security cooperation principles as proposed by Russia, Indonesia and India. China proposes that the EAS conduct in-depth discussions on the outlook and principles for security cooperation in order **to build consensus** and make joint efforts to ensure security and stability in the region

(Ministry of Foreign Affairs of People's Republic of China, 2014).

This proposal highlights the imperative to have a specific and unique regional security framework that “conform[s]” to regional institutions can be seen in opposition to the US view on effective multilateral institutions. By proposing this concept China mitigates the US primacy in the region (The Nation, 2015). This corresponds to what Buzan and Zhang (2014, p.5) have highlighted, that the US projects its values as global, international and encountering degree of acceptance and resistance (Buzan and Zhang, 2014, p.5). This is clearly the case of the Chinese. The proposal is in line with the concept of cooperative security in which ASEAN has long approached in contrast to collective security and collective defense exemplified by the UN system and NATO respectively.

A key feature founded in a set of Chinese proposals on the security framework and its treaty lies in its shared common language to the ASEAN Way. Hurrell (p.2007, p.40) stresses the importance of a common culture that helps the mutual acceptance of actors as legitimate and provides a common language important for bargaining, contracting, reasoning and persuasion. Ba (2006, p.168) also points out that shared historical experiences between China and ASEAN provide the basis for common language and narrative. Although their experiences are by no means the same, they share a sensitive view of Western domination and external interference (ibid.). This helps Chinese identify itself with ASEAN as the same Asian Civilization and hence provides legitimacy in bargaining.

For China, the ASEAN Way is also not deeply internalized. On the contrary, China has advanced on its pragmatism using the ASEAN Way as a tool to justify and legitimize their foreign policy preference and as a balancing tool to guarding against the US interference

on the issue China recognizes as it is internal affairs and as a balancing for greater US influence in the region.

4.3 Co-constitution between changing social structure and agency of great powers

In this new geopolitical landscape, the changing social structure of the local balance of power in which a rising China challenges the status quo of US primacy in the region provides incentive and interest for great powers to actively manage their relations especially through the ASEAN-led multilateral institution, EAS. The traditional US-dominated balance of power based on security guarantees in East Asia has changed structurally. Growing Chinese economic power jeopardizes US security and economic interests within the region.

By analyzing and comparing the agencies in the cases of the US and China, it reflects the deep rules in the social structure of the International society in East Asia where the great powers have influentially adjusted the normative power of the smaller and weaker states in the designed secondary institution and uses the norms as the instrument to manage their relations. Table 5 summarizes the functions of the ASEAN Way in great power management in a comparative perspective, the ASEAN norm functions differently for the US and China.

Table 5 Functions of the ASEAN Way in Great Power Management

US	China
A tool to legitimize their preponderant power	A Tool to justify and legitimize actions and policy preferences
A tool that enables to achieve foreign policy goal and policy preference	<p>A Balancing tool</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to guard against external interference • great powers' competition for influence

For the US as it projects itself as the global rule and norm setter and bases their legitimacy on the international rules, norms and law, the ASEAN Way has no regulative effect on US behavior. The US shallowly adopted the ASEAN Way, an accession to TAC, based mostly on strategic calculation in terms of both social incentive of legitimacy and material incentive to gain leverage to engage with ASEAN vis-à-vis China. Thus the ASEAN Way functions as an instrument to legitimize their preponderant power in a changing political landscape as ASEAN has long been concerned in the US disengagement in the region and a tool that enables the US to achieve its foreign policy goal of Pivot rebalancing policy and engage in multilateral institution vis-à-vis China.

China's case portrays quite a different picture. This could be explained by shared Asian culture which provided normative claim and shared common language between the ASEAN Way and Chinese policy. Firstly it serves to justify and legitimize Chinese foreign policy preference in the case of dual track policy in dealing with the South China Sea conflict. Secondly, it is a balancing tool to guard against the US interference in what it recognizes as internal affairs, the South China Sea and lastly, the ASEAN way becomes a balancing tool against the US influence and engagement with ASEAN.

As Goh (Goh, 2014, p.182) points out the ASEAN Way of non-interference, consensus and moving at the pace comfortable to all negatively provides great powers a platform to object their politically charge to negotiate their understanding the key strategic issues. Therefore, as ASEAN attempts to tame and bind great powers in the secondary multilateral institution of the East Asia Summit, their institutionalized norms of the ASEAN Way has been used by the great powers to serve various purposes and it has no influence on the great powers. In fact the ASEAN Way has helped institutionalize the means in which China can cede the discussion on the development of norms that would provide self-restraint, transparency (ibid.).

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION ON THE FUNCTIONS OF NORMS

This thesis has addressed the central question, what are the functions of the ASEAN Way in great power management in the light to reveal a deeper understanding of the working of the Southeast Asian regional norms

This thesis has shown that the functions of the ASEAN Way in great power management differ between the US and China, yet fundamentally their adoptions involve self-interest power balancing and social legitimacy in the international society of states in East Asia. For the US, as its bases its legitimacy on the international rules and norms, the US adoption to the ASEAN Way is shallow restricted to the accession to the TAC. The ASEAN Way functions as a tool to legitimize its preponderant power and show commitment to the region and its unequal power, and also as a way of enabling the US to achieve the foreign policy goals of its pivot balancing policy to balance Chinese influence by engaging with multilateral institutions.

By contrast for China, the norms of the ASEAN Way help China to identify with ASEAN as being part of the same Asian civilization, thus the ASEAN Way serves as both a tool to justify their policy preferences and choice of actions, and as a balancing tool to guard against US interference and to counter US influence in the region. Despite these differences, they are both driven by power and legitimacy assumption and use the ASEAN Way and the EAS as a means of managing their relations in a new geopolitical landscape.

By using the framework of the English School, thesis has also underlined that the adoption and internalization of the ASEAN Way of the great powers has been shaped and informed by the deep rules/primary institutions embedded in the international society of states which include the institutions namely balance of power, great power management and diplomacy. In this new geopolitical landscape, there has been a changing in the social structure and of local balance of power, and a transformation in great power relations. This hence provides incentives for the great powers to use the ASEAN Way in the East Asia Summit to management their relations. Although the secondary institution, the East Asia Summit, is designed by small and middle powers, ASEAN, to manage great power relations through their own norms, the ASEAN Way. These norms have thus been adjusted and maneuvered by the deep rules of great powers, and to use as a tool to manage their relations. These understandings by the English School have bridged the gap between the pessimist side focusing on structural flaw and material incapacibilities of ASEAN in its inefficacy of the

ASEAN Way and the optimistic side of agential and ideational factors of ASEAN to include all players. Thus provides a comprehensive picture to the debate.

The future research can also compare between various ASEAN-led multilateral institutions where the ASEAN Way is also codified to see if there are similarities or difference between institutions and also can compare between regional great powers including Japan and India vis-à-vis China. This would provide a healthy debate to the field of studies.

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