THE STRUCTURAL PRE-CONDITIONS FOR THE EMERGENCE OF ASEAN PUBLIC SPHERES

Master Thesis

Research Master Public Administration and Organizational Science

Utrecht University | Erasmus University Rotterdam | Tilburg University

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Utrecht University
Netherlands
August 2014

Acknowledgement

Abstract

This study centers on the following question: do the political, civil society organizations, and media infrastructure conditions exist for the emergence of ASEAN public spheres? Based on the reconstructed theory of Habermas' and Angela Crack's public sphere, I have employed the following definition of ASEAN public sphere: a transnational site of deliberation in which civil society organizations reach an understanding about issues of common concern in ASEAN according to the norms of publicity. I have identified some patterns from three distinct structures that may converge to explore the emergence of ASEAN public spheres. Firstly, the prime site of the Southeast Asian regional governance consisting of the ASEAN Summit, ASEAN Community Councils, and ASEAN Secretariat – referred as "triple power helix" – has, to a certain extent, become open to the people's input. Secondly, the emerging "ASEAN Community" project that is coupled with the rise of trans-boundary concerns has also paved the way for the consolidation of transnational civil society and discursive publics in ASEAN. As a reservoir for the grassroot opinion- and will-formation, the civil society in ASEAN – particularly the annual ASEAN People's Forum event – has been recognized as indispensable in terms of its norms of publicity and political efficacy. Thirdly, the cross borders communicative infrastructure – mainly Internet-driven – conversely has proven to be a significant supplement to the mainstream media in the Southeast Asia in two ways. The first is that they provide ample opportunity for the grassroot formation as well as the mobilization of free and critical public opinion towards ASEAN across the region. Secondly, they challenge the "manipulative" and "manufactured consent" that tends to be propagated by the mainstream pro-political authority and pro-market media. Despite the prevailing supremacy of ASEAN's political elites, as well as the interstate ICT cleavages in the region, I argue that a relatively conducive milieu has developed in which ASEAN public spheres can indeed emerge.

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Chapter One: Introduction

"When the Norwegian Peace Committee awarded the Peace Prize to the European Union, it cited its past record in promoting peace and reconciliation, democracy and human rights…increasing the democratic space and respect for human rights throughout the continent…If that is the main measure of Peace Prize candidature, there is no reason why ASEAN should not make the shortlist" (Kavi Chongkittavorn, *The Irrawaddy*, October 22, 2012).

Approximately 40 years since its inception, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) had finally ratified its very first ASEAN Charter in 2007. It is intended to serve as a "legal and institutional framework"[1] for ASEAN. This historical progress lays a foundational shift from an intergovernmental paradigm towards a more "people-centered" ASEAN. In parallel with the critical science embodied within Jurgen Habermas' works, this research shall engage the contemporary development in ASEAN from his perspective of the "public sphere" theory. As consistently emphasized by Habermas, the public sphere is a pivotal precept for the democratization process (Habermas 1991, 1996, 1998, 2001, 2012). Despite the grandiose receptions received by the public sphere theory (e.g., Calhoun et al 1992), the advent of the twenty-first century globalization has increasingly subjected the three conventional structures that inform the theory to some massive challenges: national media, nation state's political authority, and national citizenship. Accordingly, this investigation employed Angela Crack's modified conceptions of Habermas' original public sphere theory – a "transnational public spheres" theory. Crack defines the transnational public sphere as a "site of deliberation in which non-state actors reach understandings about issues of common concern". By reconstructing Habermas' and Crack's conceptions of public sphere, I propose the following definition of "ASEAN public sphere": a transnational site of deliberation in which civil society organizations reach an understanding about issues of common concern in ASEAN according to the norms of publicity. Thus, a primary research question that guides this endeavor is "do the political, civil society organizations, and media infrastructure conditions exist for the emergence of the ASEAN public spheres?"

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[1] ASEAN Charter 2007, p.3.

The main research question has been divided into three sub-research questions:

Sub-research question 1: do the political conditions exist for the emergence of ASEAN public spheres?

Sub-research question 2: do the civil society organization conditions exist for the emergence of ASEAN public spheres?

Sub-research question 3: do the media infrastructure conditions exist for the emergence of ASEAN public spheres?

The main research question, as well as all three sub-research questions, has been tailored to fall into the Habermasian perspective. To put it simply, I attempt to explore the prospects for the emergence of ASEAN Public Spheres; a convergence of will- and opinion-formation by ASEAN's citizens with ASEAN's political authority and media structures.

1.1 ASEAN Background

ASEAN was established amidst the Cold War in 1967. After the failures of two previous attempts to forge Southeast Asian regional inter-state cooperation – Maphilindo and Association of Southeast Asia (ASA) – ASEAN has surprisingly survived until today[2]. With a pursuit for regional peace and stability remained as ASEAN's cornerstone, the organization has evolved into a much over-arching entity in parallel with the enlargement process[3]. Along with the expansion of ASEAN, this regional platform has also become an irresistible fulcrum due to the rise of various pressing transnational concerns. Indeed, globalization obviously did not play little role in ASEAN's unprecedented regionalism progress. The end of the Cold War for instance, did not only affect the increased number of ASEAN members via the accession of Socialist and authoritarian regimes alone. The increased connectivity among ASEAN member states has also proved to be one of the most significant implications due to the advent of globalization. Eventually, during the 9th ASEAN Summit in 2003, ASEAN leaders had

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[2] ASEAN's inception are heavily underpinned by the interest to strengthen the then-five founding nations' regional cooperation – Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and Philippines.

[3] Driven by the accession of five new member states: Brunei (1984), Vietnam (1995), Laos and Myanmar (1997), as well as Cambodia(1999)

unanimously adopted a highly ambitious dream – to move together towards the establishment of a single ASEAN Community in 2015.

However, the degree of citizens' engagement in the aforementioned ASEAN Community project is quite questionable. This trend has been echoed by one of ASEAN studies scholar: "regionalism in Southeast Asia is commonly understood as those processes of inter-state interactions, dialogue and cooperation that take place under the purview of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)….however, with the ASEAN cooperation on regional governance controlled and driven by the region's political and bureaucratic elite with little room for civil society inputs or participation in regional governance processes" (Nesadurai 2012, p.1). Indeed, under the period of rapid market economy-oriented regionalization progress in the Southeast Asia around the 1980s, the relationships between ASEAN with corporate entities had become more solidified than ever[4]. With the ASEAN's further aim toward the establishment of a single regional economic market, the neoliberal market paradigm has attained its ultimate position in the region's agenda. To make it worse, the rise of the neoliberal turn in ASEAN's regionalization occurred at the expense of the public opinion (Moorthy & Benny 2012; 2013; Igarashi 2011, p.9).

As a result, it is debatable whether the peoples of ASEAN – or called the "ASEAN's demos" – are possessing any hopeful potential at all pertaining to their opinion to efficaciously influence the governance affairs at the ASEAN level. Hence, this inquiry sets to contribute into the theoretical debates that revolved around the interconnections of three particular structures: ASEAN political authority, its citizens or demos, as well as the communication media that dwell across Southeast Asia. This quest is deemed relevant since the interrelationship between those structures possesses an intrinsic significance for the democratization in the ASEAN governance which has yet to be uncovered. In the next section, I present the current predominant theoretical perspectives that have been applied to the study of this region thus far. Each of those theories' assumptions will be elaborated and their shortcomings shall be revealed.

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[4] The recognition of the ASEAN Chambers of Commerce and Industry (ASEAN-CCI) as one of the main stakeholders in ASEAN Senior Economic Officials Meetings –along with the establishment of ASEAN Business Advisory Council (ABAC) – is a clear indication of this development.

1.2 Literature Review: Theoretical Perspectives on ASEAN

Almost as diverse as cultural and geographical plurality that resides in the Southeast Asia region, so do its theoretical counterparts. The initial theoretical debates that occurred in the ASEAN and Southeast Asian research were once being dominated by the Realist approach. To begin with, most of the Realists' compelling arguments are mainly supported by its ultimate Hobbesian assumption: interstate's competition and rivalry are inevitable. The international system on the other hand, is conceived by the Realists merely as a stage where the nation-state actors strive to maximize their powers respectively. Hans Morgenthau was among the leading Realist scholars, establishing the key principles and concepts for this particular school of thought – national interest, balance of power, as well as the states sovereignty (1948). ASEAN's inception, in the midst of Cold War, is highly political and security-oriented in nature. The threat of the Communism "domino-theory" – fueled by Vietnam War in particular – influenced most of the early ASEAN's policies. Realist's paradigm remained intact today. Territorial disputes among ASEAN members[5] explicitly galvanized the Realist's conceptions of the nature of nation states in ASEAN. Nevertheless, the emergence of the Pluralist and neo-Marxist perspectives in the 1970s and 1980s was rendered as the Realist's domination in world politics under great challenges.

Rather than positing power in the international system as a uni-dimensional force as the Realist theorist did, the Pluralist on the other hand expands their analytical lenses to encompass the significance of other actors as well; multinational corporations and intergovernmental organizations, along with the nation states (Keohane and Nye 1977). Shifting from the Realist's Hobbesian worldview, Pluralist embraced the cooperative and complex interdependence in the international realm; centering international regimes to forge international integration[6]. As another proponent of this paradigm, Stephen Krasner has stated, "international regimes are sets of implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures around which participating actors' expectations converge in a given issue area" (Krasner 1982, p.186).

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[5] Among other, between Thailand and Cambodia over the Preah Vihear temple, Malaysia and Singapore over Pulau Batu Putih, Philippines and Malaysia over Sabah state, Indonesia and Malaysia over Ligitan and Sipadan islands.

[6] Thus liberating its horizon from the exclusiveness of military, security, and nation-states' self-interest core assumptions.

ASEAN nevertheless is still very much burdened with the pitfalls of becoming not more than a chessboard of Realist-like balance of power proxy among its member states. The difference is only that, rather than "zero-sum" in orientation, the Pluralist provides a "positive-sum" game. At the end of the day, the asymmetrical capacity among ASEAN member states – predominantly determined by the market and resources prowess – have resulted in some countries gaining more than the others. The economic gap among ASEAN countries provides us with abundant examples regarding material divides among ASEAN member states.

The Neo-Marxist paradigm[7] appears as a feasible remedy in order to cure the Realist and Pluralist analytical deficits pertaining to economic inequality in world politics, including in the Southeast Asia. It proposed the framework of exploitative relationship as the main cause of economic cleavages between the richer and the poorer states. Neo-Marxist proponents also assert that the transformation of transnational capitalism structures is a must, in order to exterminate the "under-development" conditions. This "class-oriented" theory nevertheless is at risk of falling in the same way as the Realist did in order to become a comprehensive theoretical framework. If the Realist is endangered by its devotion to the "nation-states" and geo-strategic military power, the Neo-Marxist on the other hand, falls short in terms of providing other power-play dimension at the international level, apart from the economic-material basis. Thus, it is not surprising that this particular paradigm has been neglected in the ASEAN context, despite its high relevancies with regards to the material inequality among the member states[8]. I shall return to this matter when I elaborate on how the Critical Theory cures these particular Neo-Marxist analytical deficits.

Social Constructivism[9] is another main newcomer in ASEAN's politics. Its advantage lies within the core assumption of this theory – it emphasizes the "ideas, images, shared knowledge, identities, discourses and persuasion" that are responsible to "develop, change, and shape world politics" (Kegley & Blanton, 2010). As compared to the initial anti-Communist ideology shared by the ASEAN's founding members, the ASEAN's new accession has posed an

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[7] Led by Andre Gunder Frank's "Dependency Theory" and Immanuel Wallerstein's "World-system theory".
[8] For instance, between the richer Singapore, Malaysia, and Brunei on the one hand, and the poorer Laos, Myanmar, and Cambodia on the other end of the continuum.

[9] This theoretical framework rises to prominence in International Relations academia through a groundbreaking work authored by Alexander Wendt in 1992.

additional challenge to the formation of the ASEAN common identity. Unsurprisingly, all ten ASEAN members had agreed to adopt a community building project: namely the ASEAN Community that accompanied internally by the "ASEAN Way"[10]. The main protagonists of "ASEAN Way"[11] had strongly defended this collective, peace, and prosperity-centered norms above the Western-individualistic, democratic, and freedom norms. To the extent that the peace and stability that occur in the region due to this semi-authoritarian governance style[12], ASEAN Way in particular has been regarded as the identities of the "way of doing things". Nonetheless, on the other hand, to the extent that this conception of identity is being unmasked as a protecting shield for semi-authoritarian regimes, Constructivism instantly loses its normative attractiveness. The needs for a theory that is capable to not only depict the politics in ASEAN as it is, but also which is prone to the emancipation demands for realizing democracy at the ASEAN level, are obvious. As shall be explained, even the recently proposed English School (ES) approach and the Neo-Communitarian perspective are not having grounds for such endeavor.

Departing from their observation on the recent paradigm shift that occurs in ASEAN, Mohd Azizuddin Sani and Abu bakar Eby Hara (2013) attempt to justify that John Dewey's Communitarian perspectives constitute the most reasonable theoretical framework that can be applied. Azizuddin and Abubakar distinguish two rather different conceptions of Communitarian: the Old and the Neo-Communitarian. On the one hand, the Old-Communitarians are considered as "favoring community over the individual, responsibility/ duty over rights, consensus based on elite deliberation, state-oriented decision-making, and discourage civil society involvement" (p.381). Neo-Communitarians in contrast, are more flexible and "embrace approaches especially those that balance the community with the individual, balance responsibility/ duty with rights, inclined toward consensus based on public deliberation, support people-oriented decision-making, and encourage civil society involvement" (p.381). In their final analysis, Azizuddin and Abubakar argue that the debates on the

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[10] A constructive engagement between all member states with regard to any decision-making process.

[11] Most notably, Lee Kuan Yew, a former Singapore's Prime Minister, and Tun Dr. Mahathir Bin Mohammad, former Malaysian's Prime Minister.

[12] It has been acknowledged by the World Bank as an integral factor that contributes to the emergence of "Asian Tiger" in the 1980s.

intervention principle, the adoption of the three pillars of the ASEAN Community, as well as the inclusion of human rights in the ASEAN Community project are the "signposts where ASEAN departs from their Old to a Neo-Communitarianism" (p.393). Apart from the absence of any sense of transformative urges, Azizuddin and Abubakar's account of the Neo-Communitarian application upon ASEAN also suffers from the "deliberative procedural deficits". By "deliberative procedural deficits" here I refer to the same criticism on the basic assumption of the Communitarian approach which has been launched by Habermas (1998, 2006). The Communitarian perspective argued by Habermas as: "too idealistic in that it makes the democratic process dependent on the virtues of citizens devoted to the public weal" (Habermas 1998, p.244). Habermas asserts that "compromise-formation is not conducted in the form of a rational discourse that neutralizes power and excludes strategic action" (p.245) and proposes instead the deliberative model of democracy – anchored on public sphere. This particular deliberative paradigm emphasizes the procedural opinion and will-formation that "grants publicity and transparency for the deliberative process, inclusion and equal opportunity for participation, and a justified presumption for reasonable outcomes" (Habermas 2006, p.413). Thus, the Liberal-"instrumental" politics and Communitarian-"dialogical" politics can "interpenetrate in the medium of deliberation if the corresponding forms of communication are sufficiently institutionalized" for which "everything depends on the conditions of communication and the procedures that lend the institutionalized opinion and will-formation their legitimating force" (Habermas 1998, p.245). In other words, Azizuddin and Abubakar's Neo-Communitarian accounts on ASEAN can be considered as too idealistic in their expectation of the people's efficacy vis-à-vis the prowess of political elites in ASEAN's affairs. They also did not address any feasible normative procedures or communicative mechanism by which the citizens may deliberate, mutually balancing interests, and attain compromise at the ASEAN level with other affected actors.

A "region-theory" dialogue avenue has been proposed by Linda Quayle (2012; 2013) in her effort to provide an English School theory of International Relations (ES) accounts on the relations between ASEAN's political authority and civil society organizations in ASEAN. The central concept of the ES is "international society". According to its main proponent – Bull & Watson (1984) – international society came into existence whenever "a group of states have

established by dialogue and consented common rules and institutions for the conduct of their relations, and recognized their common interest in maintaining these arrangements" (cited from Quayle 2012, p.201). Characterized by some degrees of consensus-building, cooperation, and socialization, the ES ultimately emphasizes "habits and practices shaped towards the realization of common goals" (ibid). Adding non-state actors to the equation, Quayle visualizes a number of contestation intersections within an essentially hierarchical environment between state and non-state actors in ASEAN. As Quayle put it, "states fight to retain their position of power, while civil society actors fight to level the hierarchy by joining hands transnationally, and insisting on their right to an equal voice" (p.203-204). Later, by a conception and empirical investigation of a hybrid hierarchy of two layers – with the international society consisted of ASEAN in the top drawer, and the regional civil society beneath – Quayle summarized that the propagated notion of a "people-centered" ASEAN was highly problematic due to the hierarchical conditions. While coming close to the emancipatory ideal by coining the non-state actors or transnational civil society organizations currency, Quayle's ES theory dialogue with ASEAN nevertheless fall shorts on two visible grounds. The most explicit one was its devotion to portray "unified" descriptions of civil society organizations' presence in the negotiation process to mitigate the hierarchical order of power in the region. Apart from concealing the very contentious nature among each of those regional civil society associations, this particular account also hastily overestimated the "slow processes of change" represented by the "recognition, location of common ground, confidence-building, and burden-sharing" in due trajectory. In other words, it also undermines the formation of the more dispersed ASEAN's publics or *Dêmos* in the first place. This rather non-inclusive account directs us to the second shortcoming of this approach – the desertion of communicative circuits that connect the wider publics in ASEAN. Even though this ES-Southeast Asia approach emphasizes the institutionalization of a continuous relationship between the regional civil society organizations and ASEAN's political authority, it missed its chance to be a democratically appealing theory. It excludes a wider Southeast Asian publics in favor of an exclusive-"unified" view of the regional civil society. It thus shuts the door for a transformative potential possessed by the circuit of ASEAN's demos trans-border public opinion facilitated by the trans-border media communicative infrastructure in the region. Indeed, these two deficits were encountered vigorously in the Habermasian Critical-driven public sphere theory.

Moving from the "status quo preservation" perspectives to the "emancipatory" lenses, now I shall turn to describe the core assumptions of the Critical Theory approach in world politics. The "*Social Forces, States, and World Order*" essay by Robert Cox in 1981 marked the beginning of the Critical Theory debut in world politics. By predicating the two rather opposing positions regarding the status quo in international politics – whether "preserving" or "rejecting" it – Cox distinguished the contending International Relations theories into two simple classifications: "problem-solving" theory or "Critical" theory. Inspired by Antonio Gramsci's conceptions of "hegemony", Cox asserts that the Critical theory must not legitimize the status quo forces in the international realm. Rather, it is the ultimate task of the Critical theory to set free the involved actors from the repressions which tend to be neglected by those so-called problem-solving theories. In order to do so, Cox elaborates on three categories of power in which one has to focus their attention on: idea, material capability, and institutional (Cox 1981). Up until this moment, there were a few research works that had been done in ASEAN's context which can be regarded as falling under this Critical worldview. Accelerated recently by the ratification of the ASEAN Charter as well as the adoption of the ASEAN Community vision, most of these Critical-oriented endeavors were emphasizing the notion of "people-centered" ASEAN (eg., Nesadurai 2012, Igarashi 2011, Chandra 2009, Thi Thu Huong Dang 2008, Collin 2008). In spite of their common "pessimistic" outcomes regarding the degree of citizen's input that was managed to get through the ASEAN Charter as well as other less-promising circumstances, I shall argue that the current applications of the Critical theory in ASEAN were not comprehensive enough. By anchoring their critical-emancipatory accounts on one exclusive entity – the transnational civil society organizations alone – researchers have certainly fulfilled the "idea" as one of the power conceptualizations, as prescribed by Cox. Ideas, which are intended to challenge the current repressive status quo, can necessarily be carried through the transnational civil society organizations network. It also can be, most probably, rejected and kept latent by the unprogressive order. It is by the existence of the trans-border "communicative" public opinion that this kind of repression can be subjected to change. It is by the results of the free flow of rational critical will- and opinion formation – facilitated by the transnational media infrastructure – that "ideas" can be saved, transmitted, as well as distributed across any particular polity, including ASEAN. It is through this vehicle – the free "public sphere" – that the power of "idea" can be unleashed to subject any political authority to

legitimize themselves in their respective constituents. Thus, I argue that despite the current setbacks in ASEAN's critical research, the recent progress in ASEAN necessitates more critical-oriented studies.

1.3 Societal and Scientific Significance

In the wake of the 2015 ASEAN Community project, a possible emergence of the transnational democracy at the ASEAN level has become a focal discussion not only among academia, but also among the ASEAN's demos themselves. It is becoming increasingly difficult to ignore the rise of the grassroots force which demands ASEAN to carry "people-centered" aspirations. To that end, all six theoretical lenses that have been reviewed in Section 1.2 above – Realist, Pluralist, Neo-Marxism, Social Constructivism, English School, and Neo-Communitarian – fixed uncomfortably with the aforementioned concerns among the ASEAN demos. Furthermore, despite possessing an enormous potential to lift the topical debate of democracy at the ASEAN level to a higher stage, the current research that employs the Critical theory upon the ASEAN arena has unfortunately tended to draw some similar pessimistic conclusions as shared by other theoretical perspectives. Hence, I argue that my research significance is two-fold: scientifically as well as societally. Aside from the reconfiguration of the Critical-based public sphere theory that was originally designed by Jurgen Habermas, I also contest that the central position acquired by the media apparatus under this particular theory is integral, especially when it is applied towards the democratization at the ASEAN level. On the other hand, by employing this reconfigured theoretical design, I shall identify the way democracy can be enhanced at the ASEAN level in parallel with the ASEAN Community trajectory. Therefore, scientifically, I embark on the endeavor to refine the application of the Critical theory in the Southeast Asian politics by reconstructing the public sphere prerequisites into the ASEAN settings. Societally, I shall display the way the transnational media infrastructure can be improved to pave the way for democracy in contemporary ASEAN politics.

All in all, my thesis is compatible with the "emancipatory" knowledge interest. Instead of focusing on the "identification and manipulation of variables" as in the "Technical" knowledge interest or merely "interpretation of symbolic communication" as in the "Practical" knowledge interest, my research would be leaning more on the "exposure of domination and exploitation" focus. Through the application of the public sphere theory, all three structures in

the projected ASEAN public spheres – ASEAN political authority, civil society networks in ASEAN, and the transnational Southeast Asian media infrastructure – shall be scrutinized for the sake of the "removal of relations of domination and exploitation that represses without necessity" in the ASEAN Community building projects. Table 1 below underlines the crucial tenets of the Critical science that guides this inquiry.

Table 1 Habermas' Three Knowledge-constitutive Interest

Cognitive Interest	Type of Science	Purpose	Focus	Orientation	Projected Outcome
Technical	Empirical-analytic	Enhance prediction and control	Identification and manipulation of variables	Calculation	Removal of irrationality within means-ends relationships
Practical	Historical-hermeneutic	Improve mutual understanding	Interpretation of symbolic communication	Appreciation	Removal of misunderstanding
Emancipatory	Critical	Development of more rational social institutions and relations	Exposure of domination and exploitation	Transformation	Removal of relations of domination and exploitation that repress without necessity

Having discussed the pitfalls that reside in the current theoretical literature that is already being applied in the ASEAN setting, I will now move on to the next chapter; specifically to address Habermas' original public sphere theory as well as the modified theory of transnational public spheres proposed by Angela Crack that serves as the backbone of this study.

Chapter Two: Habermas and The Transnational Variants of the Public Sphere Theory

The role of the transnational mediated public opinion vis-à-vis political authority and civil society organizations' research in ASEAN has been relatively scarce. This chapter first takes a step back to elucidate the early eighteenth century European context in the constructions of Habermas' original conventional public sphere theory (Section 2.1) before resuming with the explanation of the transnational public spheres (Section 2.2). Subsequently, this chapter extends the transnational public sphere conceptions upon the contemporary ASEAN settings – along with the definition of "ASEAN public spheres" (Section 2.3). Finally, in order to establish a synthesized framework to examine the structural preconditions for the emergence of ASEAN public spheres, the methodological section shall also be provided – with the details of "which" and "what" data will be collected and analyzed (Section 2.4).

2.1 Habermas' Institutional Criteria of Public Sphere

There are at least two predecessors of public sphere conceptions that have already dwelt in political science literatures before Habermas: the agnostic publics by Hannah Arendt (1958) and small town meetings in the United States by Dewey (1927). Nevertheless, it has been widely recognized in academia that *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere[1]* by Habermas is the leading authoritative accounts regarding the matter (Calhoun 1992). According to Habermas, public sphere is "…*a forum in which the private people, come together to form a public, readied themselves to compel public authority to legitimate itself before public opinion. The publicum was developed into the public, the subjectum into the reasoning subject, and the receiver of regulations from above into the ruling authorities' adversary*" (p.25–26). Habermas' accounts of the public sphere theory are derivatives of his socio-historical inquiry upon the educated bourgeois strata during the 18th Century Europe (p.57-66). Energized by his Critical Frankfurt School emancipatory paradigm, Habermas had centered his thesis of public sphere as an attempt to capture the essence of normative preconditions for democratization against the background of modern nation states and early capitalism era. Almost in the same way as "agora" was described in an Ancient Greek's, Habermas also projected the bourgeois public sphere as a public fora in

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[1] Originally published in Germany in 1962 with the title *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit: Untersuchungen zu einer Kategorie der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft.*

which private citizens possessed the opportunities to discuss state affairs. Despite its bourgeois exclusiveness, the eventual social penetration[2] in the United Kingdom, France, and Germany during this period has been recognized by Habermas as a mark for the birth of a critical modern publics. A public that demanding the political authority to be legitimized or even being subjected before them (p.31-43). Thus, Habermas elaborated on the public sphere as an integral arena for rational-based debates, where the government policies shall be critically discussed. Habermas presented his blueprint of the bourgeois public sphere in the eighteenth century as in Diagram 1 below.

Private Realm		Sphere of Public Authority
Civil Society (Realm of commodity exchange and social labor)	Public sphere in the political realm Public sphere in the world of letters (clubs, press)	State (Realm of the "police")
Conjugal family's internal space (Bourgeois intellectuals)	"Town" (markets of culture products)	Court (Courtly-noble society)
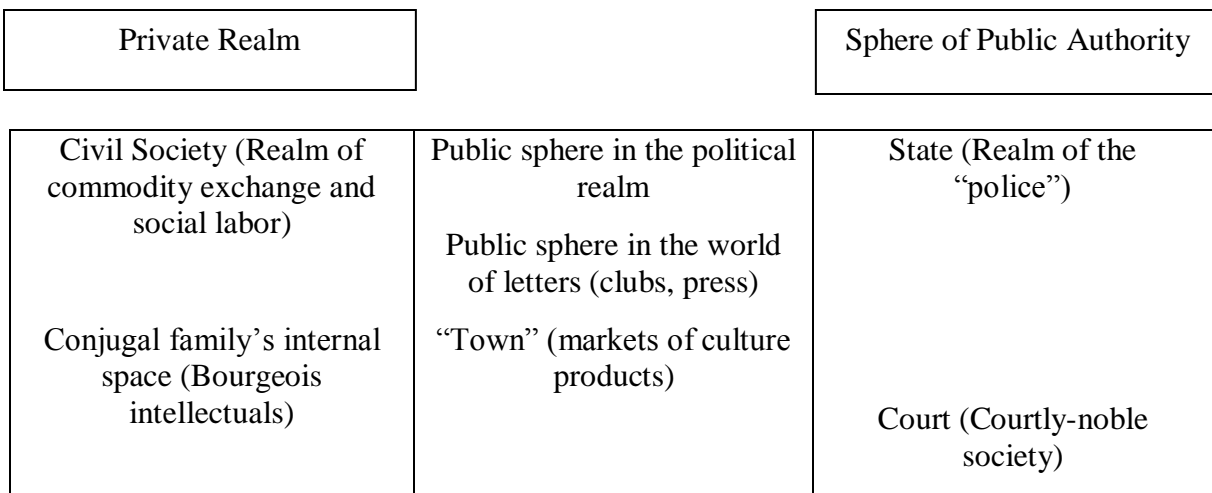
Diagram 1 The Eighteenth century Bourgeois Public Sphere Scheme (Habermas 1991, p.30)

Habermas provided a further elaboration on his schema:

"…public sphere was coextensive with public authority, and we consider the court part of it…[I]ncluded in the private realm was the 'authentic' public sphere, for it was a public sphere constituted by private people…[W]ithin the realm that was the preserve of private people, we therefore distinguish again between private and public spheres. The private sphere comprised of the civil society in the narrower sense, that is to say, the realm of commodity exchange and of social labor; imbedded in it was the family with its interior domain (*intimsphäre*). The public sphere in the political realm evolved from the public sphere in the world of letters; through the

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[2] Resulted from the combinations of town culture, rapid transportation development, and the rise of journals and newspaper media.

vehicle of public opinion it put the state in touch with the needs of the civil society" (Habermas 1991, p.30-31).

We have to bear in mind that in order to construct this Diagram, Habermas' application of the term "civil society" is rather different as compared to its application in this inquiry context. Habermas borrows the term from Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, depicting the "civil society" as a sphere of production and exchange; autonomously separated from the state authority and operating according to its own law – ultimately forming the private realm. Thus, quite in an opposite way as compared to the way I operate the term in this inquiry – referring to the civil society as a non-profit organization and association that represent the grassroots social life (lifeworld) – Habermas' usage is ultimately more "economic"-like in nature. Now we shall move on to the details of the public sphere's institutional criteria.

There are three rather distinct "institutional criteria" that have been rendered by Habermas as important for the emergence of the public sphere. Firstly, those kinds of public fora are supposed to evolve independently from the political authority. It established itself as a participant's empowerment domain. As Habermas put it, "[I]n this stratum, which more than any other was affected *and* called upon by mercantilist policies, the state authorities evoked a resonance leading the *publicum*, the abstract counterpart of the public authority, into an awareness of itself as the latter's opponent, that is, as the public of the now emerging *public sphere of civil society*. For the latter developed to the extent to which the public concern regarding the private sphere of civil society was no longer confined to the authorities but was considered by the subjects as one that was properly theirs" (p.23). Implicitly, Habermas correlates the public sphere notion with modern state machinery that exercised administrative and political power over a bounded Westphalian-nation state territory. When an assembly of estates turned into a modern parliament and the first cabinet government came into existence in Great Britain, the bourgeois rational-critical debate[3] was allowed to thrive. Under further rivalry between political parties[4], English press was cultivated. Hence, the critically-produced public opinion – which was also targeting the Crown besides the parliament – has been recognized as

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[3] Which primarily concerned with their capital flows under the rise of the capitalistic mode of production.

[4] Tory and Whig.

the "Fourth Estate" (p.60). Despite the English parliament's initial response that made its votes and deliberations secrets, the first reform bill of 1834 had inevitably transformed the Parliament into an agent of public opinion. Regardless of the limited enfranchisement during the period, the eager publics had followed the events in Westminster. Following the French Revolution, a parliament had been institutionalized in France, in the same way as the July Revolution delivered in Germany, where it superseded the frail traditional estates assembly with "something akin to a parliamentary life" (p.71). As Habermas put it: "[T]he reduction in the kind of publicity involved in representation that went hand in hand with the elimination of the estate-based authorities by those of the territorial ruler created room for another sphere known as the public sphere in the modern sense of the term: the sphere of public authority. The latter assumed objective existence in a *permanent* administration and a *standing* army (Habermas 1991, p.18). It has to be clarified here that the term "representation" that Habermas was using in these sentences is in reference to the King as well as the nobility who displayed their political prowess before their subjects. Recalling the development of the capitalistic mode of production, the economic demand resided in the private sphere[5] had become a separate domain from the public authority, as compared to their coupling during the Middle Ages. In order to preserve the basic market freedom from the state intervention, a bourgeois constitutional state had been invented[6]. By further linking the public opinion produced via rational-critical debates with the law, legislators of the bourgeois constitutional state were able to legitimize their power. The functioning public sphere on the other hand, had been protected by this particular eighteenth- and nineteenth-century constitutional state – by establishing the basic rights legislation. These basic rights are concerned with three imperatives: press and parties, property transactions, as well as the foundations of the autonomy.

The second institutional prerequisites of the public sphere is the existence of discursive publics in which each participant in the sphere recognizes the validity of those debates as encompassing all affected actors. In this regard, Habermas describes that "[W]herever the public established itself institutionally as a stable group of discussants, it did not equate itself with *the* public but at most claimed to act as its mouthpiece, in its name, perhaps even as its educator –

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[5] Performed by bourgeois participants as the owners of private property.

[6] In which the state itself administered the free market legal system.

the new form of bourgeois representation" (p.37). Depicted as exclusively consisted of the members of a bounded political community, Habermas conceived public sphere's participants as tacitly forged with the citizenry of a Westphalian-nation state. As compared to the traditional balance of power that involved the Estates and the Prince, the rise of the commercial economy had subjected the private property ownership to become apolitical. By coming together as a public, these bourgeois property owners – who actually did not rule – had devised a political confrontation against the political authority via the public use of reason. Before setting their stage as a public, bourgeois property owners first nourished their capacity for the use of reason in their private conjugal family domain. In other words, before assuming any political function, the bourgeois publics created their own public in their very conjugal family subjectivity – observably through diaries, letters, as well as the first-person narratives. The emergence of the literary public sphere[7] had intensified this public's training ground for critical reflection – in the first instance upon arts and literatures – before questioning and opposing government's domination. They eventually evolved into a political public. One particular progress was identified as enabling this transformation to take place: the rise of towns that superseded the medieval court functions. With the proliferation of coffee houses and salons, the towns were not only being consolidated, but also had managed to host regular meaningful literary as well as political meets. By gathering inclusive publics regardless of their social status, these key institutions of the public sphere had compelled any writers to first defend their works before the public in order to be published. Along with the development of the art critic profession (*Kunstrichter*), the critical writings as well as critical periodical journals also emerged to the extent that Habermas wrote, "philosophy was no longer possible except as critical philosophy, literature and art no longer except in connection with literary and art criticism" (p.42). By virtue of questioning the absolutism and sovereignty of Kings, this rational-critical public was further able to launch their concerted efforts to secure their demands – creating the "authority of better argument"-based "public opinion". Thus, the transformation from the so-called "literary public sphere" into the "political public sphere" shall bring us to the third criterion: the communication media.

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[7] Consisted of the journals, periodicals, coffee houses, salons, as well as *Tischgesellschaften* (German's table society).

For the third public sphere's institutional criteria, Habermas explicated the communication media as playing a crucial role: "[B]ecause, on the one hand, the society now confronting the state clearly separated a private domain from public authority and because, on the other hand, it turned the reproduction of life into something transcending the confines of private domestic authority and becoming a subject of public interest, that zone of continuous administrative contact became 'critical' also in the sense that it provoked the critical judgment of a public making use of its reason. The public could take on this challenge all the better as it required merely a change in the function of the instrument with whose help the state administration had already turned society into a public affair in a specific sense- the press" (p.24). Citing the national press, national broadcasting, the letters, as well as the novels produced under the 18th and 19th century print capitalism, Habermas consolidated his bourgeois-driven accounts of public sphere origin in a national media communication infrastructure. Starting as a carrier for critical articles that reflected upon art and literature, the literary public sphere – especially the journals and newspapers that coupled with the rational-critical discussions in coffee houses and salons – was eventually developed and had adopted a political orientation. It has to be noted that it was only under the rise of the bourgeois constitutional state that the traditional public sphere media institution – the press – was able to flourish. Prompted initially by the bourgeois needs for overseas news, the press was very supportive towards the public that grew out of salons and coffee houses. They did not simply become a channel to deliver public opinion, but also a valuable mechanism to provoke public opinion and rational-critical debates. Using the English press as an example, Habermas presented how a tradition of critical public debate had been institutionalized by the press. In this respect, Habermas stated that: "periodical articles were not only made the object of discussion by the public of the coffee houses but were viewed as integral parts of this discussion; this was demonstrated by the flood of letters from which the editor each week published a selection. When the *Spectator* separated from the *Guardian*, the letters to the editor were provided with a special institution: on the west side of Button's Coffee House a lion's head was attached through whose jaws the reader threw his letter" (p.42). Controlled by autonomous private forces, the press thus, was able to perform its critical publicist role against the state political domination.

Summarily, the three public sphere's institutional criteria can be paraphrased as follows: the detachment from the political authority (where the government's role serves merely as

addressees of the resulted rational-critical discussions in the public sphere), the communicative infrastructure capacity (mediated through the media), and in concordance to the norms of the publicity (which requires a certain degree of affinity among its participants in order to be involved in the structured discourses). Despite acknowledging the fact that Habermas' original accounts of public sphere have been greatly challenged[8], those critics are not the main concerns here. The current focus is exclusively anchored in the effort to synthesize the public sphere conceptions in the transnational setting, especially in the ASEAN context. In order to do so, the next section shall explore the transnational variants of the public sphere theory.

2.2 Transnational Variants of Public Sphere Theory

Angela Crack stands among those who are responsible for extending Habermas' public sphere conceptualization further beyond the Westphalian nation states borders. Crack introduces the definition of "transnational public sphere" as "a site of deliberation in which non-state actors reach understandings about issues of common concern according to the norms of publicity" (Crack 2008, p.18). While retaining the basic pillars of Habermas' original works, Crack's elaboration on the three structural preconditions for the emergence of transnational public spheres also strongly corresponds to those outlined by James Bohman: trans-border communicative capacity, transformations in sites of political authority, and transnational networks of mutual affinity. "As in the Habermasian ideal", Crack argues, "important qualitative requirements also need to be met, which are only possible if there are supportive institutions in each category". Crack elaborates that the "media should be free and open; governance structures should be accountable and receptive to public opinion, and civil society institutions should observe basic deliberative norms" (Crack 2008, p.19). Crack's conception of transnational public spheres is in line with those projected by Bohman, "[F]or a global public sphere to be possible, three conditions must be met: the existence of a mass media of global scope and equipped with the technological capacities of the speed of communication; the emergence of a variety of transnational and local public spheres and sub-publics which organize their own audiences and develop their own forms of publicity; and finally, the requisite organizations and institutions of the civil society, the state and international organizations which support and make

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[8] See, among other: Calhoun 1992; Fraser 2007; Crack 2008.

possible a variety of public spheres" (Bohman 1998, p.201). Crack posits that her conceptualizations of transnational public sphere are constructed specifically as flexible guidelines for the research of transnational democracy at the post-national or international level. As compared to Crack, this research has narrowed the scope to examine the emergence of such realm specifically in the Southeast Asian region. The subsequent section provides the details for which the media structure and their interrelationship with other traditional state and non-state actors in the Southeast Asia can be examined from the transnational public sphere framework.

2.3 Case Study: ASEAN Public Spheres Structures

This inquiry will focus on the three outlined structures in the search for the prospects of the emergence of the ASEAN public spheres. Built upon Habermas' and Crack's conceptualization, I propose the following definition of ASEAN public sphere: "a transnational site of deliberation in which civil society organizations reach an understanding about issues of common concern in ASEAN according to the norms of publicity". The ASEAN public sphere's structures that shall be scrutinized respectively are: ASEAN's political authority; the transnational civil society organizations involved in the formation of public's opinion on ASEAN's affairs; and the media infrastructure that resides across the region. Now I turn to explain the details of each ASEAN public sphere's structure.

First of all, ASEAN's political structure shall be examined based on its increasingly "bureaucratic-like" institutions: the ASEAN Summit, ASEAN Community Councils, as well as the ASEAN Secretariat – under the aegis of the ASEAN Charter. In the same way as Habermas had centered the rise of the bourgeois constitutional states in the eighteenth century Europe via the Britain's reform bill of 1834, as well as the French Revolution in France and July Revolution in Germany, this inquiry shall also delve into the "constitutionalization" of ASEAN. Hence, ASEAN's progress – from the 1967 Bangkok Declaration towards the 2007 unanimously ratified ASEAN Charter – shall be appraised under the light of the three mentioned political institutions in ASEAN. These political authorities are subsequently recognized as ASEAN's "triple power helix". Among these "triple power helix" institutions, the ASEAN Summit in particular was considered as the most powerful entity in Southeast Asia by virtues of acquiring immense share in shaping the journey toward the realization of the ASEAN Community project. It is, after all,

consisted of the ten relatively most powerful persons in Southeast Asia, namely the countries' leaders. Thus, the degree of accountability and the receptions among these three ASEAN's political institutions helix towards the ASEAN's demos' public opinion will be studied accordingly.

Secondly, the transnational civil society organizations' structures that dwell in Southeast Asia will be analyzed to determine to what extent their represented cross-border deliberations are adhered to deliberative norms. Those deliberative norms which have been elaborated by Crack (2008) are as follows:

"First, that debate should be free and open to all affected actors as nominal equals, regardless of their social status. Second, debate should be conducted according to certain principles. For example, participants should endeavor to make their contributions intelligible to others; and when interrogated, be willing to provide reasoned justification for their opinions. Third, arguments should be oriented toward understanding and adjudicating through rational judgment" (Crack 2008, p.19).

ASEAN Institutes for Strategic and International Studies (ASEAN-ISIS) and the Solidarity for Asian People's Advocacy (SAPA) shall be treated as two primary network institutions consisting of the transnational civil society in the Southeast Asia. The ASEAN People's Assembly (APA) and ASEAN Peoples Forum (APF) on the other hand are the two "deliberative forums" that have been set up and organized by the two aforementioned networks: the APA was organized by ASEAN-ISIS; the APF was arranged by the SAPA. In the same way the eighteenth century coffee houses, salons, and *Tischgesellschaften* hosting the rational-critical discussions among the bourgeois publics, the APA and APF are also considered as the two prime candidates to inherit this task particularly at the ASEAN level. The only difference between these transnational deliberative forum with their European predecessors are in terms of the driving force behind them. While the bourgeois public sphere was sparked by the bourgeois economic owners' concerns against the absolutism of the political authority, the participants in those ASEAN public spheres solely concern with their mission to empower the political efficacy of ASEAN's demos themselves.

Last but not least, the communicative structures in the Southeast Asia will be scrutinized for the sake of revealing to what extent they are accorded the critical, open, free, and inclusive arrangement dealing with ASEAN issues. ASEAN's, national, and civil society's media shall be explored and the scope examined shall be narrowed to their reporting on ASEAN affairs only. It will be tackled from the perspective of their degree of the critical publicity and interconnections with the previously scrutinized transnational civil society in the Southeast Asia as well as the "triple power helix" of the ASEAN's political authority. Hence, in almost the same fashion as the European critical journals and political newspapers attached themselves to the critical discussions in the coffee houses, salons, and *Tischgesellschaften*, this inquiry set to examine the very same attachments between the SAPA's-organized APF with the media infrastructure across the Southeast Asia region. Due to the fact that this region boasts of diverse languages and dialects, this investigation shall only be limited to involve the English sources. The degree of critical rational appearance between the ASEAN's, national's, and civil society's media shall also be further assessed. Apart from the ASEAN's civil society organizations-formulated opinion contents, this particular section shall also pay some attention to the infrastructure capacity – the accessibility and ownership of media resources. By reconfiguring the rise of a cross-border communicative capacity as well as the broadening of the Southeast Asian demos, this section is set to provide some grassroots power-balancing vis-à-vis the current transnational political authority that has yet to be unleashed thus far. Table 2 below summarizes the envisioned operationalization of the three structural preconditions for the emergence of ASEAN public spheres.

Table 2 Three ASEAN Public Spheres' Structural Focuses

ASEAN's political structure	Transnational civil society structure in Southeast Asia	Communicative structure in Southeast Asia
ASEAN Summit	ASEAN-ISIS and ASEAN People's Assembly (APA)	ASEAN's Media
ASEAN Community Councils	Solidarity for Asian People's Advocacy (SAPA)	National Media
ASEAN Secretariat	ASEAN People's Forum (APF)	Civil Society's Media

Blended with the three central structural criteria of the public sphere, Diagram 2 below has been designed in order to provide a general framework that shall be devised along this particular inquiry.
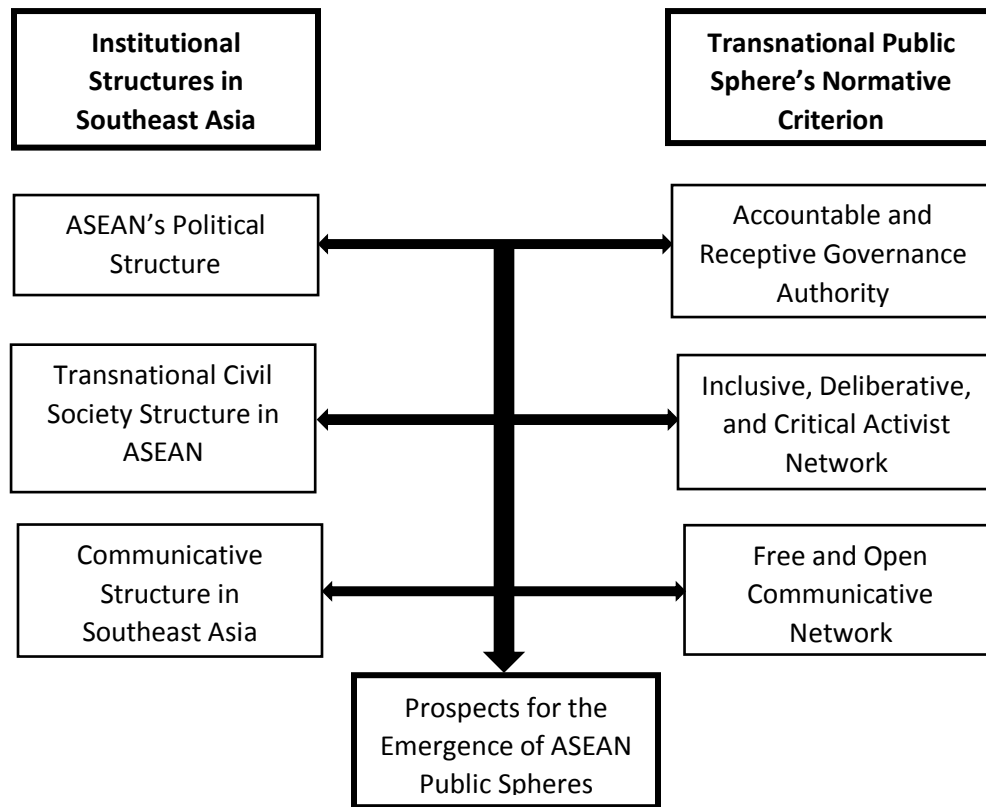
Diagram 2 Structural Pre-conditions for the Emergence of the ASEAN Public Spheres

2.4 Methodology

In order to establish a suitable research approach to appraise the possibilities of the emergence of ASEAN public spheres in a way that is in coherence with the position of Critical philosophy, I found Creswell's distinction of methods and designs' table below very informative.

Table 3 Qualitative Method Approach (Creswell 2008, p.17)

Tend to or typically…	Qualitative Approaches
Use these philosophical assumptions	Constructivist/ Advocacy (Critical)/ Participatory knowledge claims
Employ these strategies of inquiry	Phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, case study, and narrative
Employ these methods	Open-ended questions, emerging approaches, text or images data
Use these practices of research as the researcher	Positions him- or herself • Collects participant meanings • Focuses on a single concept or phenomenon • Brings personal values into the study

	• Studies the context or setting of participants • Validates the accuracy of findings • Makes interpretations of the data • Creates an agenda for change or reform • Collaborates with the participants

Based on Creswell's table, this inquiry can be categorized particularly under the "qualitative approach" box. Apart from the considerably salient philosophical stance that I have already elaborated in the previous chapter, the "strategies of inquiry" as well as the nature of "research practices" possessed by the qualitative approach are also unequivocally leaning towards this research interest. In terms of the strategy of inquiry, case study is considered as the best way to scrutinize ASEAN's structures from the reconfigured transnational public sphere theory. In general, case studies is "a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher explores a program, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals in more in depth way. Cases are bounded by time and activity, and researchers collect detailed information using a variety of data collection procedures over a sustained period of time" (Stake, 1995, cited from Craswell 2008, p.11).

The data collection method for this inquiry is distinguished based on each of the involved transnational public sphere structures developed in the previous three theoretical sections. Generally, all relevant published documents– ASEAN Charter document, ASEAN Community Blueprints, as well as ASEAN-ISIS official documents – shall be engaged. The "Joint Statement of the ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ASEAN Peoples' Forum (ACSC/APF)" will also be scrutinized. Two official websites provide ample opportunity with regard to the first-hand source, namely the ASEAN Official Website as well as each of SAPA's major networking websites[9], reference has been made to their collective advocacy in the ASEAN Community building. SAPA reports, as well as the existing academic literatures on the APA, APF, and ASEAN shall also be critically reviewed. The ASEAN's Facebook page, along with SAPA Facebook page shall also be browsed, respectively. In terms of the traditional media, the English

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[9] Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA), Asian Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Asia (AsiaDHRRA), South East Asian Committee for Advocacy (SEACA), Third World Network (TWN), and Focus on the Global South (FOCUS).

newspapers in ten ASEAN countries shall be explored. The papers explored are The Nation, The Phnom Penh Post, Viet Nam News, the Straits Times, The Star, Brunei Times, Vientiane Times, The Myanmar Times, The Philippines Daily Inquirer, and Jakarta Post. Table 4 below summarizes the data collection methods for each of the ASEAN public sphere structures.

Table 4 Data Collection Method for the Inquiry of the ASEAN Public Spheres

ASEAN Public Sphere Structures	Data Sources
ASEAN's Political Structures	ASEAN officials speeches, Official websites, Official documents, Literature
Transnational Civil Society Structures in Southeast Asia	Published documents, transnational civil society websites, Literature
Media Structures in Southeast Asia	English newspapers websites, Literature

All in all, the subsequent chapters shall proceed empirically under the modified ASEAN public spheres' perspective. This inquiry released from the traditional straitjackets of the institutional particularism in dealing with the transnationalization of democracy in the region – whether from the exclusive perspectives of ASEAN's political authority or from the limited perspectives of the transnational civil society organizations. The novelty of this inquiry shall accentuate the critically-formed public opinion by ASEAN's demos themselves vis-à-vis trans-border media structure as possessing an antidote to the current democratic theory with regards to the emancipatory advocacy of the Southeast Asian's "lifeworld".

Chapter Three: Regional Governance and Public Opinion in ASEAN

Political authority has long been acknowledged as a legitimate master for the use of force within a given territory. The conception of deliberatively produced public opinion by lay citizens or "demos" in Habermas' conventional public sphere theory is ultimately addressed to this very site of governance. The regionalization progress in the Southeast Asia composes the first part of this very first empirical chapter (Section 3.1). The immediate implications due to this long, bumpy progress – the "institutionalization of ASEAN's political authority" – shall be addressed. The purview of the ASEAN Summit, ASEAN Community Council, as well as ASEAN Secretariat – referred as "triple power helix" – falls under this section. Along with the 2007 ASEAN Charter (Section 3.2), the triple power helix shall be closely examined in terms of their receptive and accountability towards public opinion (Section 3.3). Any adherence between the triple power helix with public opinion shall be conceived as signifying a democratization trajectory in ASEAN. Finally, the accumulation of ASEAN's historical-institutional experiences with the focused normative criterion prescribed by the transnational public sphere theory in this chapter – the existence of "accountable and receptive political authority" – shall be forged and further descriptions regarding the incorporation between the two will also be explicated.

3.1 The Beginning of the ASEAN Community Project

The shifting of ASEAN's chairmanship from the Cambodian Prime Minister, Hun Sen, to the post-autocratic leader of Indonesia – Megawati Sukarnoputri – in 2003 provided an opportunity for the newly-democratic nation to shape ASEAN's future. This was the exact background of the "Bali Concord II", a vigorous blueprint prepared for the "ASEAN Community" project. As stated in the official statement, the goal of the Bali Concord II is to "create a dynamic, cohesive, resilient, and integrated ASEAN Community by the year 2020". The ASEAN Community project accompanied with the three complementary pillars: the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC), the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), as well as the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC). These are three main extracts from the Bali Concord II:

- An ASEAN Community shall be established comprising three pillars, namely political and security cooperation, economic cooperation, and socio-cultural cooperation that are

closely intertwined and mutually reinforcing, for the purpose of ensuring durable peace, stability and shared prosperity in the region;

- ASEAN shall continue its efforts to ensure closer and mutually beneficial integration among its member states and among their peoples, and to promote regional peace and stability, security, development and prosperity with a view to realizing an ASEAN Community that is open, dynamic and resilient;

- ASEAN shall continue to foster a community of caring societies and promote a common regional identity (Declaration of ASEAN Concord II).

The adoption of the ASEAN Community project was a breakthrough in terms of the "democratization" prospects at the regional level. The importance of becoming a single community for ASEAN has been listed by Termsak Chalermpalanupap[1] as follows: as the regional peace-preservation; enlarging the regional economic pie; eradicating the economic inequality and material cleavages across the region; protecting human security under the globalized environment that overwhelmed the single nation states capacity; fostering people-to-people contacts in order to better preserve the regional security; as well as its significance pertaining to the international relations with other extra-regional actors and forces (Termsak Chalermpalanupap 2008, p.97-99). I shall now turn to appraise the dispositions of "polyarchy" that formed a "core" of ASEAN's political authority. Up to this moment, this core of ASEAN's political authority monopolizes the decision-making process in the ASEAN Community building. What are the entities that form ASEAN's "political authority"? From what provisions are their current jurisdictions and authorities derived? My answer to the first question is: the "triple power helix" that consisted of the ASEAN Summit, ASEAN Community Councils, and ASEAN Secretariat. For the second question, my reply is: the "ASEAN Charter".

3.2 Constitutionalization of ASEAN

Against the backdrop of Habermas' public sphere accounts on the inter-relationship between the top-down "political" power and the bottom-up "communicative" power, I shall proceed to refer to the ASEAN Charter from this particular framework. Two perspectives shall be applied in evaluating the "constitutionalization of ASEAN" or the drafting of the ASEAN Charter: the

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[1] A former ASEAN Secretariat officer.

degree of inclusivity that revolves around the drafting process as well as the content of the Charter itself.

ASEAN Charter

To begin with, the 2007 ASEAN Charter has expanded ASEAN's purposes. In terms of ASEAN's shift towards "democracy" and "people-oriented" aspirations, the fourth, seventh, and thirteenth "Purposes" of ASEAN are of relevance here.

"To ensure that the peoples and Member States of ASEAN live in peace with the world at large in a just, democratic and harmonious environment" (ASEAN's fourth purpose, ASEAN Charter, p.4)

"To strengthen democracy, enhance good governance and the rule of law, and to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, with due regard to the rights and responsibilities of the Member States of ASEAN" (ASEAN's seventh purpose, ASEAN Charter, p.4)

"To promote a people-oriented ASEAN in which all sectors of society are encouraged to participate in, and benefit from, the process of ASEAN integration and community building" (ASEAN's thirteenth purpose, ASEAN Charter, p.5)

More surprisingly, those democratic aspirations were somewhat tried to be manifested in the Article 14 of the ASEAN Charter. It states that "[I]n conformity with the purposes and principles of the ASEAN Charter relating to the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, ASEAN shall establish an ASEAN human rights body" (ASEAN Charter, p.19). Having briefly laid the process of "constitutionalization" of ASEAN, I shall now evaluate this progress from the two aforementioned perspectives.

From the first perspective, namely the degree of inclusivity involved in the drafting of the ASEAN Charter, it has to be admitted that it is still far from Habermas' aspiration. For instance, as compared to the referenda to establish a European Constitution that was voted directly by the peoples of Europe in mid-2005, ASEAN rulers on the other hand had implicitly achieved some sort of consensus among themselves to not consult their peoples. Closed to the vagaries of public opinion, the ASEAN Charter was drafted by two elite groups: the Eminent Persons Group (EPG) and High Level Task Force (HLTF). Nevertheless, based on the published "Report of the Eminent Persons Group (EPG) on the ASEAN Charter", a call for a detachment from the

traditional elitist "ASEAN Way" principles in the regional governance has been echoed. The EPG report has been considered as already addressing most of the democratic aspiration in ASEAN. One of the top recommendations submitted by the EPG for the ASEAN Charter is:

"Promotion of ASEAN's peace and stability through the active strengthening of democratic values, good governance, rejection of unconstitutional and undemocratic changes of government, the rule of law including international humanitarian law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms" (EPG Report, 2006).

The nature of inclusivity in the ASEAN's "constitutionalization" process thus far displayed ambivalence narratives. On the one hand, it is obvious that the ASEAN Charter was not drafted or voted directly by ASEAN's demos themselves. On the other hand, the EPG that possessed the privilege in terms of giving their input to the draft substantially incorporated the "democratic" aspirations. However, the end-product of the ASEAN Charter clearly did not make everyone happy or satisfied:

"The Charter is a disappointment. [I]t falls short of what is needed to establish a 'people-centered' and 'people-empowered' ASEAN. It succeeds in codifying past ASEAN agreements, and consolidating the legal framework that would define the Association. However, it fails to put people at the center, much less empower them" (SAPA Working Group on ASEAN 2007).

Table 5 below provides us with a useful overview pertaining to the comparison between the EPG Report with the endorsed ASEAN Charter by the ASEAN leaders.

Table 5: A Comparison of References to "Liberal Reform" versus the "ASEAN Way" in the EPG Report and the ASEAN Charter

Reference favoring	Frequency of references in EPG Report	Frequency of references in ASEAN Charter
A. Liberal Reform		
1. "Human Rights"	16	7
2. "Civil Society"	15	1
3. "[Un]constitution[al government]"	11	1
4. "Rule of Law"	6	3
5. "Democracy"/"[Un]democratic"	5	4
6. "Fundamental freedoms"	4	4
Total Reference favoring Liberal Reform	**57**	**20**
B. The ASEAN Way		
1. "Consensus"	5	9
2. "Sovereignty"	5	3

3. "[Non-]interference"	6	3
4. "Territorial integrity"	4	3
5. "Right[s]" of member states	1	5
6. "Harmonious environment"	2	1
Total Reference favoring the ASEAN Way	**23**	**24**
Ratio of "Liberal Reform" references to "ASEAN Way" references within each text	**2.5 : 1**	**0.8 : 1**

Source: Emmerson (2008, p.39)

Along with the Table 5 above, it is appropriate for us now to turn into the second evaluative perspective on the ASEAN Charter: the content of the Charter. As delineated in Table 5, six pro-democratic keywords – "human rights", "civil society", "constitutional government", "rule of law", "democracy", and "fundamental freedoms" – were immensely reduced in the final Charter as compared to the original proposals by the EPG. As expected, six keywords that favor the elitist "ASEAN Way" has reigned supreme. "Consensus", "sovereignty", "non-interference", "territorial integrity", "rights of member states", as well as "harmonious environment" managed to find their ways into the Charter. To make it worse, any further attempt to amend the Charter in future can only be initiated by the Member state leaders – not the peoples – and it must first go through the ladder of consensuses that has been described in Article 48:

1) Any Member state may propose amendments to the Charter;
2) Proposed amendments to the Charter shall be submitted by the ASEAN Coordinating Council by the consensus to the ASEAN Summit for its decision;
3) Amendments to the Charter agreed to by consensus by the ASEAN Summit shall be ratified by all Member States in accordance with Article 47;
4) An amendment shall enter into force on the thirtieth day following the date of deposit of the last instrument of ratification with the Secretary-General of ASEAN (ASEAN Charter, p.35).

Suffice to say, although the "exclusivity" nature of the drafting process of the Charter has been somewhat remedied by the EPG's pro-democracy recommendations to the draft, the final ASEAN Charter was favoring the traditional ASEAN Way.

3.3 Institutionalization of ASEAN Political Authority

Following the constitutionalization of ASEAN through the ratification of the ASEAN Charter, a shift towards the emergence of a more bureaucratically-structured ASEAN is clearly visible. In

fact, the importance of "bureaucratizing" ASEAN has already been emphasized for quite some time:

"The ASEAN Secretariat must be strengthened to become more efficient and effective in discharging its' more expanded and arduous task. It is essential step, for the achievement of balance in the work of ASEAN -balance between economic cooperation and politico-security cooperation would entail significant implication to its administrative support" (Megawati Sukarnoputri, 2003).

If the previously mentioned ASEAN Bali Concord II can be considered as the beginning of ASEAN Community project, the 2007 ASEAN Charter on the other hand can be regarded as sanctioning the course. Both occasions had galvanized the basic organizational structure of ASEAN. As being emphasized in the 4th January 2008 version of ASEAN Fact Sheet, "ASEAN needs a Charter to move from a loosely-organized regional body towards a more rules-based inter-governmental organization in order to better meet the challenges posed by community-building, regional integration, expansion of its external linkages and rapid globalization".

As compared to the national political authority that is empowered by a public opinion-compliance Parliament, I argue that the "triple power helix" in ASEAN assumes the very same ultimate position. The triple power helix in ASEAN is a site of governance that is supposed to be held accountable to the ASEAN's demos' public opinion. My next arguments shall be addressed to each of these "triple power helix" components, beginning with the ASEAN Summit.

3.3.1 ASEAN Summit

Under Article 7 of Chapter IV of the ASEAN Charter, the ASEAN Summit remained as "the supreme policy-making body of ASEAN". It is comprised of the Heads of the State of the Government of the Member States. The ASEAN Summit shall "deliberate, provide policy guidance and decisions on key issues pertaining to the realization of the objectives of ASEAN, important matters of interest to Member States and all issues referred to it by the ASEAN Coordinating Council, the ASEAN Community Councils and the ASEAN Sectoral Ministerial Bodies" (ASEAN Charter, p.10). It is now meeting twice annually and shall be hosted by the Member State holding the ASEAN Chairmanship. Article 20, Chapter VII of the ASEAN

Charter which specifically addresses the "Decision-making" dimension reaffirms the long-practiced principles in ASEAN: the elitist "musyawarah" (consultation) and "muafakat" (consensus). The statements are as follows:

1. As a basic principle, the decision-making in ASEAN shall be based on consultation and consensus.
2. Where consensus cannot be achieved, the ASEAN Summit may decide how a specific decision can be made.
3. Nothing in paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article shall affect the modes of decision-making as contained in the relevant ASEAN legal instruments.
4. In the case of a serious breach of the Charter or non-compliance, the matter shall be referred to the ASEAN Summit for decision (ASEAN Charter, p.22).

Initially, within the original draft by the EPG, a series of so-called "more effective decision-making" recommendations had been included. While admitting that "ASEAN's consensus style of decision making has served ASEAN well and should be preserved as the guiding principle", EPG asserted that "Consensus should aid, but not impede, ASEAN's cohesion and effectiveness". Hence, the EPG recommended that:

"Decision-making by consultation and consensus should be retained for all sensitive important decisions. However, if consensus cannot be achieved, decisions may be taken through voting, subject to rules of procedure determined by the ASEAN Council[2]" (EPG Report, December 2006, p.6).

Elaborating their recommendation further, EPG reiterated that consultation and consensus should be maintained as a general rule, "especially on decisions in more sensitive areas of security and foreign policy". Nevertheless, if consensus cannot be achieved on other areas, "decisions may be taken through voting, either on the basis of a simple majority, or on the basis of a $2/3^{rd}$ or $3/4^{th}$ majority". The ASEAN Summit also shall "prescribe rules of procedure-governing situations when there may be voting by a simple majority, a $2/3^{rd}$ majority or a $3/4^{th}$ majority" (EPG Report December 2006, p.41). By integrating a voting mechanism into the extant consultation and consensus decision-making procedures in the ASEAN Summit, the EPG's recommendation

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[2] It has to be noted that the term "ASEAN Council" that is being used by the EPG here refers to the "ASEAN Summit".

displayed a close proximity with Habermas' deliberative politics paradigm. Citing Michelman, Habermas explicated that "Deliberation… refers to a certain attitude toward social cooperation, namely, that of openness to persuasion by reasons referring to the claims of others as well as one's own. The deliberative medium is a good faith exchange of views- including participant's reports of their own understanding of their respective vital interests- … in which a vote, if any vote is taken, represents a pooling of judgments" (Habermas 1996, p.273). To be certain, although the voting mechanism are not explicitly mentioned in the final ASEAN Charter, the following sentence is nevertheless still open to those possibilities: "where consensus cannot be achieved, the ASEAN Summit may decide how a specific decision can be made" (ASEAN Charter, Article 20, Chapter VII, no.2).

3.3.2 ASEAN Community Councils

Next to the ASEAN Summit in the ASEAN's power hierarchy is the ASEAN Community Councils. It is comprised of the three separate Councils which take charge of the three main ASEAN Community pillars: the ASEAN Political-Security Community Council, ASEAN Economic Community Council, and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Council. The ASEAN Community Councils have been tasked to: "ensure the implementation of the relevant decisions of the ASEAN Summit; coordinate the work of the different sectors under its purview, and on issues which cut across the other Community Councils; and submit reports and recommendations to the ASEAN Summit on matters under its purview" (Charter, p.13). As compared to the "high politics" agenda that engulfed the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) and the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) pillars, the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) is predominantly technical, scientific, educational, or managerial (Weatherbee 2009, p.106). No wonder this area has been considered as the most luxurious field in which ASEAN can be subjected under direct citizen's public opinion's influences (Emmerson 2008). As stated in the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint, "the primary goal of the ASCC is to contribute to realize an ASEAN Community that is people-centered and socially responsible with a view to achieving enduring solidarity and unity among the nations and peoples of ASEAN by forging a common identity and building a caring and sharing society which is inclusive and harmonious where the well-being, livelihood, and welfare of the peoples

are enhanced" (ASCC Blueprint, p.1). Nevertheless, I argue that the ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) is also quite promising with regards to its accentuation on democratic values. As elaborated in its blueprint, "the APSC shall promote political development in adherence to the principles of democracy, the rule of law and good governance, respect for and promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms as inscribed in the ASEAN Charter… it promotes a people-oriented ASEAN in which all sectors of society…are encouraged to participate in, and benefit from, the process of ASEAN integration and community building" (APSC Blueprint, p.1-2). More surprisingly, one of the three key APSC characteristics, namely a "rules-based community of shared values and norms" has even outlined a list of critical concrete sub-actions that are related to the democratic norms. Pages 3 and 4 of the APSC Blueprint particularly point out the following guidelines:

"Intensify exchange of experience and training courses in order to enhance popular and broader participation"

"Hold seminars/workshops to share experiences on democratic institutions, gender mainstreaming, and popular participation"

"Encourage the ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Information (AMRI) to develop an institutional framework to facilitate free flow of information, based on each country's national laws, by establishing an information baseline of these laws and to submit a progress report to the ASEAN Political-Security Community Council"

"Request each ASEAN Member State to develop relevant media exchange programmes to aid free flow of information, starting within three months from the adoption of this Blueprint"

"Enhance media capacity to promote regional-community building, explore the possibility of establishing an ASEAN media panel to boost cooperation and collaboration among the media-related institutions and organizations with emphasis on the process of the implementation of the APSC Blueprint"

"Implement internships, fellowships, scholarships and workshops, study visits and journalist exchange programs to enhance media capacity and professionalism in the region with emphasis on the process of the implementation of the APSC Blueprint"

"Facilitate co-production and exchanges of films, TVs, animations, games and new media content to promote cultural exchanges with emphasis on the process of the implementation of the APSC Blueprint" (APSC Blueprint, p.3-4).

With such assertions of the "media capacity" that were explicit in the ASEAN Political-Security Community Blueprint, it can be said that a solid foundation for the emergence of ASEAN public spheres has been laid in the ASEAN's political authority structure. In order to illuminate the

significance of those outlined guidelines by the APSC Blueprint in the context of the ASEAN's governance, a further elaboration by Habermas is needed. By adopting Bernard Peters's model, Habermas explicated the processes of communication and decision-making in any political system as "lie along a center-periphery axis", "structured by a system of 'sluices'", and "involve two modes of problem solving" (Habermas 1996, p.354). The so-called "familiar institutional complexes of administration, judicial system, and democratic opinion- and will-formation[3]" have been identified by Habermas as forming the "core" area within the political system. It possesses the "formal decision-making powers and actual prerogatives" and organized as a "polyarchy". The "periphery" on the other hand, is represented by organizations "representing clearly defined group interests", "associations", "cultural establishments[4]", "public-interest groups[5]", as well as "churches or charitable organizations" (Habermas 1996, p.355). In other words, the "core" can be equated with the "political authority" while the "periphery" can be equated with the "civil society" or "lifeworld". Quoting Peters,

"…the legitimacy of decisions depends on processes of opinion- and will-formation at the periphery. The center is a system of sluices through which many processes in the sphere of the political-legal system must pass, but the center controls the direction and the dynamics of these processes only to a limited degree. Changes can start just as much at the periphery as at the center…The idea of democracy is ultimately based on the fact that political processes of will-formation, which in the schema here sketched, have a peripheral or intermediary status, are supposed to be decisive for political development. This is not pre-decided by the present schema" (Peters, cited in Habermas 1996, p.356).

Thus, this so-called "sociological translation of the discourse theory of democracy" implies that in order to be legitimate, the binding decisions must be "steered by communication flows that start at the periphery and pass through the sluices of democratic and constitutional procedures situated at the entrance to the parliamentary complex or the courts (and, if necessary, at the exit of the implementing administration as well)" (Habermas 1996, p.356). The aforementioned emphasis of the media capacity and information flows in the ASEAN Political-Security Community Blueprint is definitely not trivial under Habermas' regard of public sphere of

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[3] Which include parliamentary bodies, political elections, and party competition.
[4] Such as academies, writers' associations, and radical professionals.
[5] With public concerns, such as the protection of the environment, the testing of products, and the protection of animals.

"center-periphery". Each ASEAN Community Council is supported by its own relevant ASEAN Sectoral Ministerial Body that "function in accordance with their respective established mandates; implements the agreements and decisions of the ASEAN Summit under their respective purview; strengthens cooperation in their respective fields in support of ASEAN community building; and submits reports and recommendations to their respective Community Councils" (ASEAN Charter, Article 10, p.14; Annex 1). Therefore, if the ASEAN Summit can be regarded as an executive entity in ASEAN's regional governance, we can, on the other hand, recognize that ASEAN Community Councils creates an administrative machinery to execute the ASEAN Summit's policies. Now we turn to the ASEAN Secretariat in the effort to explore any further governance accountability and transparency opportunities that can be found in the contemporary ASEAN structures.

3.3.3 ASEAN Secretariat

The ASEAN Secretariat was originally established as a remedy to the initial ASEAN's administrative shortcomings during the 1976 Bali Summit. Under the provision of the ASEAN Charter, it had been tasked to monitor the implementation of ASEAN decisions. As being specified in the Charter: "ASEAN Secretariat shall comprise the Secretary-General and such staff as maybe required" (ASEAN Charter, p.16). Article 11 that exclusively refers to the "Secretary-General of ASEAN and ASEAN Secretariat" has underlined the details of the duties and responsibilities of the ASEAN Secretary-General. Among others, to "facilitate and monitor progress in the implementation of ASEAN agreements and decisions", "participate in meetings of the ASEAN Summit, the ASEAN Community Councils, the ASEAN Coordinating Council, and ASEAN Sectoral Ministerial Bodies and other relevant ASEAN meetings", as well as to "present the views of ASEAN and participate in meetings with external parties in accordance with approved policy guidelines and mandates given". As we can see thus far, the ASEAN Secretariat can be regarded as only significant in the administrative realm. It might have been empowered in terms of its status vis-à-vis the leaders and senior officials of the ASEAN Summit and ASEAN Community Councils due to their access into the high-profile meetings; nothing more. We definitely have to transpose our attention elsewhere in order to find a more relevant entity to predicate our Habermasian communicative "sluices" that enable the public opinion to

flow into the "core" political authority that is vigorously dominated by the ASEAN Summit and the ASEAN Community Councils.

3.4 ASEAN's Political Authority and Public Opinion

ASEAN's survival, let alone its gradual progress towards a single Community dream, has been very astonishing. Nevertheless, with such a highly elitist "ASEAN Way" of a decision-making process that has been revealed, how can a democratic adherence to the public opinion stand a chance in the course of the ASEAN Community building? It should be noted here that the problem is not at all about the absence of specific "political authorities" within ASEAN that are capable to carry out any decisive take concerning the region. Instead, it is the "sluices" where the ASEAN's demos' public opinion can compel those authorities that are crucial for the emergence of the ASEAN public spheres. Also, the advent of the late twentieth century globalization influx has obviously increased the feasibility of those kinds of channels or sluices in ASEAN. I maintain that the existence of sluices for the reception of public opinion into the supranational governance structure – in this case, rendered by the ASEAN Charter and ASEAN Community Blueprints – can be deemed highly substantive. In sum, ASEAN's political structures are indeed very promising for the cultivation of the public opinion to be admitted into the public spheres at the ASEAN level. I shall now turn to the next chapter to analyze the structure of actors that is responsible in the formation as well the mobilization of critical public opinion towards ASEAN – the civil society organizations.

Chapter Four: Transnational Civil Society and Discursive Publics in ASEAN

There is an immense degree of discernible restructuring process in the Southeast Asian regional order that emerged under the ASEAN Community project. The multilevel political opportunities invented by the progress has also simultaneously paved the way for the rise of the so-called "civil society regionalism". As a second institutional prerequisite for the emergence of the ASEAN public spheres, the transnational networks of civil society organizations in ASEAN's political landscape shall be engaged in this chapter. There are two criteria that can be employed in order to assess the transnational civil society networks. According to Angela Crack (2008), these are: norms of publicity and political efficacy. This chapter evaluates the extent to which both criteria are met with reference to the presence of the transnational civil society in ASEAN.

The discussion is structured in three parts. In the first part, the descriptions of the first criteria, namely the norms of publicity in the two main regional fora in ASEAN – the ASEAN Peoples Assembly (APA) and the ASEAN Peoples Forum (APF) – shall be engaged (Section 4.1). Next, the second criterion shall be scrutinized: the assessment of the civil society transnational network's political efficacy in ASEAN. Their relations as well as contributions to the ASEAN Community building course from three different perspectives will be provided (Section 4.2). Those perspectives are: the drafting of the ASEAN Charter, the interface session with the ASEAN Summit, and finally their engagement with the ASEAN Community Councils. I conclude the chapter by arguing that the transnational networks of Southeast Asian civil society organizations provide a structural precondition for the emergence of the ASEAN public spheres (Section 4.3).

4.1 Norms of Publicity in Southeast Asian Civil Society Networks

Crack (2008) elucidated the norms of publicity as composed of "intelligibility, accountability, and inclusiveness, and be motivated by a desire to rationalize sovereign domination" performed in the civil society organizations' deliberation (p.148). This section investigates two deliberative forums initiated by civil society organizations in ASEAN against those norms of publicity qualities summarized by Crack. The earliest transnational deliberative forum established in the Southeast Asia was the ASEAN People's Assembly (APA). APA was an end-product of the

eagerness of its founder – the ASEAN-ISIS network – to bridge civil society organizations in ASEAN with their political authority counterpart. The second transnational deliberative forum in the Southeast Asia – the ASEAN Civil Society Conference (ACSC)[1] – had initially sparked by the Malaysian government in 2005 before continued annually by SAPA since 2006.

4.1.1 ASEAN People's Assembly (APA)

As a core transmission belt that is supposed to connect the civil society organizations with the ASEAN's political authority, the ASEAN People's Assembly (APA)[2] was the earliest initiative of its kind. In the second half of the 1990s – particularly after the Asian Financial Crisis – ASEAN's capability to cope with the surge of trans-boundary issues across the region was proven to be declining. This situation opened up a new gateway for ASEAN-ISIS – a think-tank group – to perform the task as a main coordinator for ASEAN's engagement with civil society organizations across the region at the time[3]. The ultimate platforms proposed by ASEAN-ISIS – ASEAN People's Assembly (APA) – succeeded in the sense that it became a fora that bridges the civil society organizations with ASEAN. ASEAN-ISIS has become the "convenor, fundraiser, facilitator, spokesperson, as well as the driving force in the initial years of APA until it takes a life of its own" (Caballero-Anthony 2006, p.64). Acharya in fact, even once suggested that APA "could become a useful vehicle for a more participatory form of regionalism by providing an arena for debates and discussions between states and citizens about subjects over which governments have thus far exercised strict control" (Acharya 2003, p.386).

Table 6 ASEAN People's Assemblies, 2000-2009

No.	Date and location	ASEAN-ISIS organizing body	Theme	High-ranking ASEAN and government officials in attendance
1.	24-26 November 2000, Batam, Indonesia	Center for Strategic and International Studies, Indonesia	An ASEAN of the People, by the People, for the People	President Abdurrahman Wahid of Indonesia; Rodolfo Severino, ASEAN Secretary-General; Ali Alatas, former Indonesian Foreign Minister; Jose Almonte, former Philippine National Security Advisor.
2.	30 August-1	Center for Strategic	Challenges Facing the	Rodolfo Severino, ASEAN

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[1] Also known as the ASEAN People's Forum (APF).
[2] Also known as a Track-II Dialogue.
[3]This fundamental shift also reciprocally occurs due to the changing perspective held by the civil society organizations – they initially perceived ASEAN as a "fragile organization which influence on the lives of people was negligible" and thus did not "direct their full attention toward ASEAN" (Chandra 2006).

	September 2002, Bali, Indonesia	and International Studies, Indonesia	ASEAN Peoples	Secretary-General; M.R. SukhumbhandParibatra, Thai Member of Parliament.
3.	25-27 September 2003, Manila, Philippines	Institute for Strategic and Development Studies, Philippines	Towards an ASEAN Community of Caring Societies	Wilfredo V. Villacorta, ASEAN Deputy Secretary-General and representative of OngKeng Yong, ASEAN Secretary-General; M.R. SukhumbhandParibatra, Thai Member of Parliament; Corazon J. Solimon, Secretary of the Philippine Department of Social Welfare and Development.
4.	11-13 May 2005, Manila, Philippines	Institute for Strategic and Development Studies, Philippines	Towards a People-Centered Development in the ASEAN Community	Dr. Linda Posadas, Senior Assistant Director, Bureau of External Relations and Coordination, ASEAN Secretariat.
5.	8-10 December 2006, Manila, Philippines	Institute for Strategic and Development Studies, Philippines	The Role of the People in Building an ASEAN Community of Caring and Sharing Societies	Noli de Castro, Philippine Vice President, as representative of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo; Dr. Nafsiah W. Mboi, Secretary of the National AIDS Commission of Indonesia; M.C. Abad Jnr, as representative of OngKeng Yong, ASEAN Secretary-General.
6.	24-25 October 2007, Manila, Philippines	Institute for Strategic and Development Studies, Philippines	ASEAN at 40: Realizing the People's Expectations	Franklin Ebdalin, Philippine Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs, as representative of Alberto G. Romulo, Philippine Secretary of Foreign Affairs; Esperanza Cabral, Secretary, Philippine Department of Social Welfare and Development; SamdechNorodomSirivudh, high privy counselor to HM the King of Cambodia; and TermsakChalermpalanupap, Special Assistant to the ASEAN Secretary-General.
7.	1-2 March 2009, Manila, Philippines	Institute for Strategic and Development Studies, Philippines	APA Assessment Conference: A Decade Since Conception	Dr. Sum Map, assistant to Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister Sok An; LuningningGolingCamoying, Foreign Service Institute, Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs.

Source: APA Proceedings; Gerard 2014 (p.110-111)

However, the good momentum of APA did not last. Its uncritical stance towards ASEAN's predominantly neoliberal market policies – apart from the projection of the APA itself as a platform for ASEAN leaders to channel their favorable agenda, not the other way around – had

gradually increasing its disapproval (Chandra 2006). This was the background of the birth of the SAPA and ACSC/APF.

4.4.2 ASEAN Civil Society Conference (ACSC)/ ASEAN People's Forum (APF)

When the Malaysian government initiated the ASEAN Civil Society Conference (ACSC) during its tenants for the Eleventh ASEAN Summit in 2005, it was instantly utilized by over 120 civil society representatives. They attempt to produce a "more critical-oriented statement toward ASEAN", making this platform as more distinct and genuine as compared to the APA. Known as the Track-III platform – constituted fully by the civil society organizations – the ACSC had rendered its own formulated "joint statement". These collectively produced statements later on were presented directly to the ten ASEAN leaders. This direct briefing session, known as an "interface meeting", has been regarded as groundbreaking (Igarashi 2011, p.11). Due to its recognition in the ASEAN Summit as an important event, the ACSC has been succeeded annually by a newly-formed network of the civil society organizations: the Solidarity of Asian People Advocacy (SAPA).

Table 7 ASEAN Civil Society Conferences, 2005-2012

No.	Date and location	Title	Theme	Description of interface meeting	Number of participants
1.	7-9 December 2005, Shah Alam, Malaysia	ASEAN Civil Society Conference	Building a Common Future Together	15 minute interface meeting	Approximately 120
2.	10-12 December 2006, Cebu City, Philippines	ASEAN Civil Society Conference	Creating a Caring and Sharing Community: Enhancing People's Participation in Governance and Development	No interface meeting	More than 300
3.	2-4 November 2007, Singapore	ASEAN Civil Society Conference	Moving Forward: Building an ASEAN+ People's Agenda	No interference meeting	Approximately 200
4.	20-22 February 2009, HuaHin, Thailand	ASEAN People's Forum	(Not specified)	30 minute interface meeting	More than 1000
5.	18-20 October 2009, Cha Am, Thailand	ASEAN People's Forum	(Not specified)	15 minute interface meeting; ASEAN leaders' participation	More than 500

				optional	
6.	24-26 September 2010, Hanoi, Vietnam	ASEAN People's Forum	Solidarity and Action for a People-Oriented ASEAN	No interface meeting	More than 700
7.	3-5 May 2011, Jakarta, Indonesia	ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ ASEAN People's Forum	Claiming a People-Centered ASEAN for a Just Global Community	30 minute interface meeting; ASEAN leaders' participation optional; discussion limited to "Health towards achieving the MDGs [Millennium Development Goals] and/ or poverty reduction".	More than 1300
8.	29-31 March 2012, Phnom Penh, Cambodia	ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ ASEAN People's Forum	Transforming ASEAN into a People-Centered Community	Cambodian government requested that ASEAN states nominate a representative to participate in the interface meeting, rather than allowing CSOs to conduct their independent nomination process, prompting many CSOs to boycott the meeting.	More than 1200
9.	14-16 November 2012, Phnom Penh, Cambodia	ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ ASEAN People's Forum	Transforming ASEAN into a People-Centered Community	No interface meeting	More than 500

Source: ACSC Statements; Gerard 2014 (p.116-117)

The triumph of the APF over the APA proves the advantage of having a higher degree of "norms of publicity" that was emphasized by Habermas:

"Public debate was supposed to transform *voluntas* into a *ratio* that in the public competition of private arguments came into being as the consensus about what was practically necessary in the interest of all" (Habermas 1991, p.83).

Based on Diagram 3 below, the APF that includes almost all types of the civil society organizations in its will- and opinion-formation process is much more inclusive as compared to the APA.

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┌─────────────────────────┐
│  ASEAN Political Authority │
│    (Track-I Dialogue)     │◄────────────┐
└─────────────────────────┘             │
            │                            │
            ▼                            │
┌─────────────────────────┐   ┌──────────────────────┐
│  ASEAN People's Assembly  │   │  ASEAN's CSOs Direct │
│  (APA) (Track-II Dialogue)│   │  Interface Meeting with│
└─────────────────────────┘   │    ASEAN Summit       │
            ▲                   └──────────────────────┘
            │                            │
┌─────────────────────────┐             │
│ ASEAN People's Forum (APF)│─────────────┘
│   (Track-III Dialogue)    │
└─────────────────────────┘
            ▲
            │
┌─────────────────────────────────────────┐
│ ASEAN's Demos (Citizens of Southeast Asia) │
└─────────────────────────────────────────┘
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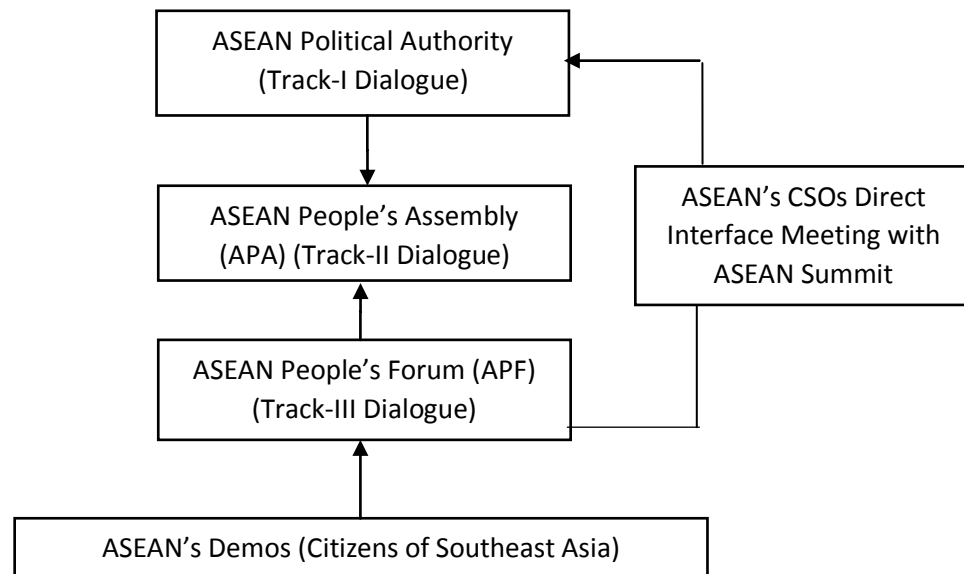
Diagram 3 ASEAN's Demos, Track-II, and Track-III Dialogue

Apart from the "inclusive" quality, another three attributes of the norms of publicity – "intelligibility", "accountability", and "desire to rationalize sovereign domination" – are also present in APF. In terms of "intelligibility", all participants in the APF are demanded to provide an English translation version of their presentation, along with a translator that are responsible to be a mediator between the non-English speakers with the English audience[4]. From the "accountability" perspective, all participants in the APF are representing a particular organization. Hence, when it comes to the production of the "Joint Statement" at the end of the forum, all participants shall sign the document and state their affiliations publicly[5]. In addition,

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[4] See for instance, http://aseanpeople.org/programs-workshops/ and https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AFW3ctr726Y.

[5] All of the "Joint Statement" produced in the APF so far were provided with the details of the involved participants.

there are increase trends of uploading all deliberations during the APF into the internet, making all utterances identifiable (available on YouTube, among other). Last but not least, deliberations in the APF are also tends to be oriented towards "rationalizing sovereign domination" in ASEAN, far beyond the opportunities provided by the APA. There is nothing more conspicuous to elaborate this perspective as compared to the selected themes of the APF itself: "Creating a Caring and Sharing Community: Enhancing People's Participation in Governance and Development", "Solidarity and Action for a People-Oriented ASEAN", "Claiming a People-Centered ASEAN for a Just Global Community", and "Transforming ASEAN into a People-Centered Community". The notion of challenging ASEAN's political elite prominence and reclaiming "people-centered" ASEAN are not only served as the event's decoration – as in the case with the APA. Instead, all thematic workshops in the APF had been surged with the energetic voices and demands – not only from the academics and think tanks, but also from the marginalized segments as well. The aborigines, the farmers, the fishers, the journalists, the workers, and many other – all directly aired their opinions and concerns for a better ASEAN. Not little questioning the ASEAN's current excessive pro-investment policies at the expense of the locals.

Amid the success of the civil society organizations in ASEAN to secure an inclusive deliberative space via the APF, there were a few problems arisen. For instance, in regard of some of the recent APF programs, Kelly Gerard commented:

"While the ACSC/APF 2011 was generally a free and open process, it was unfortunate that some ASEAN governments, via the Government-Organized NGOs (GONGOs) and quasi-governmental organizations used the forum to control the processes and even defend themselves against legitimate criticisms from the civil society. This was apparent in some of the workshops organized during the forum where CSOs critical of their governments were being photographed or were questioned about their statements upon their return to their country. There was also an increased presence of government agents in a supposedly independent and civil society-only activity" (SAPA-WGA 2011, cited from Gerard 2014, p.126).

Nevertheless, despite the problems, the determination of the civil society organizations in ASEAN remains intact. Civil society organizations across the region continue to participate in the forum and deliberate with their fellow comrades from other countries on various issues in the region. Therefore, we can claim that the norms of publicity – while has been continuously

challenged by the encroachment of the ASEAN's political authority – remains intact in the case of the APF. We shall now move to analyze the political efficacy of civil society organizations engaged in ASEAN's governance affairs.

4.2 Political Efficacy of Southeast Asian Civil Society

The political impact of the civil society's dialogue is another critical angle that needs to be scrutinized from the transnational public sphere's perspective (Crack 2008, p.149). This particular impact of collectively formulated will- and opinion upon the governing institutions is summarized as "political efficacy". Indeed, even those civil society organizations that participate in the very first meeting of the ACSC already acknowledge this issue:

"Civil society participants recognized the need for more openness and transparency at all levels of the ASEAN power structure in order to secure greater accountability and allow civil society to effectively play their roles as watchdogs, monitors and early warning systems. Towards this end, the deep feeling was that civil society was not getting access to accurate, relevant and timely information on matters of concern to the people" (Statement of the ASEAN Civil Society Conference to the 11th ASEAN Summit, 9 December 2005, p.2).

I continue to investigate the degree of the ASEAN's civil society organizations' political efficacy from three perspectives: the ASEAN Charter's drafting process (Section 4.2.1), the interface meeting with the ASEAN Summit (Section 4.2.2), and their involvement with the ASEAN Community Councils (Section 4.2.3).

4.2.1 ASEAN Charter's Drafting

To begin with, the input from the ASEAN's civil society organizations network and its actual outcomes in the ASEAN Charter is the perfect litmus test from the "political efficacy" point of view. To be sure, the importance of providing the opportunity for civil society organizations to engage in the drafting process of the ASEAN Charter was not only realized by civil society organizations alone. For instance, an Indonesian representative in the Eminent Persons Group (EPG) also publicly expressed his supports for such engagement:

"From the outset, the Leaders of ASEAN had stressed the need for ASEAN in its further growth to become more and more a 'people-oriented' organization, a community rooted in the peoples of ASEAN…It would therefore be of the highest importance for ASEAN to develop a way of

functioning and management that would ensure the real involvement and participation of the peoples of ASEAN. This need was also acutely felt by the members of the EPG" (Ali Alatas 2006).

At the end of the day, most of the submissions prepared by civil society organizations obviously did not make it into the final document of the ASEAN Charter (see Table 8, below). In fact, quite a contrast to Ali Alatas' statement above, not all SAPA's submissions were even preferred by the EPG in the first place. Nevertheless, the most surprising thing can happen sometimes – as it was the case with the SAPA's proposal for the establishment of "an effective and viable ASEAN human rights mechanism". The proposal was not accepted by the EPG but somehow agreed by all ASEAN leaders and enshrined in the Charter.

Table 8 A Brief Summary of SAPA's Three Submissions and their Reflection in the EPG Report and the ASEAN Charter

Submission on the Security Community	EPG	Charter
*Promotion and protection of human rights and human dignity	○	○
*Establishment of an effective and viable ASEAN human rights mechanism		○
*Recognition of rights of workers and all migrant workers	○	
*Recognition of rights of marginalized groups	○	
1. Inclusion of provisions for conventional and non-conventional security issues with reference to the State as well as to the people	○	○
Recognition of the unique roles and rights of human rights defenders		
Promotion of participation of civil society in conflict prevention and achieving sustainable peace		
2. Promotion of a more conducive political environment for peace, security, and stability	○	○
Refusal of unsconstitutional changes of government or the use of their territory for any actions undermining peace, security, and stability	○	
Creation of peaceful, prosperous and independent zone free from all external military influences	○	○
3. Introducing human security based on the protection and empowerment of the people		
4. Harmonizing existing ASEAN instruments and norms with international instruments and norms	○	○
5. Recognition of the diversity and potential contributions of key stakeholders	○	
Submission on the Economic Community	**EPG**	**Charter**
1. Recognition of a policy mix informed by heterodox economic thinking and policy analyses		
Integration of a social protection in economic development founded on redistributive justice and growth with equity		
Enshrinement of the values of agrarian reform, justice, and food sovereignty		
2. Resolution of development gap between and among members and citizens	○	
Protection of regional currencies and preparation for an independent exchange system		
Disciplining and regulation of the financial market	○	
Establishment of a workable ASEAN Development Fund for innovative home-grown initiatives		

3. Moving away from economic activities based on natural resource extraction		
Promotion of economic growth anchored in, and driven by, rural industrialization		
Promotion of appropriate sustainable industrial development		
Promotion of public investment through regional support mechanisms		
4. Promotion and respect of human and trade union rights		
Formulation of policies and programs on human resource development	○	○
Cooperation and exchange in science and technology research and development	○	○
5. Enshrinement of international core labor standards		
Adoption of standard employment contracts that protect the rights and well-being of native and migrant labor alike		
6. Harmonization of existing norms and mechanisms to address trans-boundary economic concerns		
7. Increase in support to small-scale producers to build their potential	○	
8. Sustainable production and consumption, energy and development	○	○
9. Implementation, monitoring, and mechanisms for adherence to the ideals of the Charter		
10. Full and meaningful participation of civil society at all levels of decision making		
Submission on the Socio-Cultural Community	**EPG**	**Charter**
*Regional recognition of human rights and human dignity	○	○
1. Adherence to international norms	○	○
2. Recognition of the diversity of cultures, peoples, religions, and heritage of ASEAN societies	○	○
3. Enjoyment of all the freedoms and rights enshrined in the UN Charter, declarations, treaties, conventions, and the likes	○	○
4. Environmental sustainability	○	○
5. Establishment of an appropriate regime that protect shared resources, and the intellectual and cultural rights		
6. Recognition of valuable contribution of migrants and promotion of their human rights	○	
7. Promotion of women's socio-cultural rights	○	
8. Protection of the rights and the development and of the full potential of children and youth	○	
9. Measurement of a free, independent, and plural media		
10. Development of appropriate and people-centered science and technology	○	

Source: Igarashi (2011, p.15-16)

However, a limited consultative participation without a full capacity to decide on the final version of the Charter shall not make ASEAN's civil society organizations pass the "political efficacy" test with excellence. Furthermore, the frustration among some of the civil society organizations towards the whole ASEAN Charter drafting process are far from minimal:

"The EPG says it has met civil society groups but many have not heard about the Charter…Critics suspect the lack of public consultation over the Charter could be due to the real intention behind the blueprint. They see the charter as giving a legal personality to ASEAN, paving the way for a regional economic framework that would facilitate investment and trade in

the region, while the interests of ordinary people- workers, the poor and the marginalized- could come a distant second" (Anil Netto, cited from Jörn Dosch 2008, p.77-78).

Despite the unfortunate degree of participation in the ASEAN Charter drafting consultative process, these civil society organizations nevertheless should be proud of themselves. In terms of perseverance and resilience, they have proven that they are more than just a rubber stamp or plain observer. We should never forget that they were facing an entity that was yet to be fully democratic. It is appropriate for us now to move on to analyze their political efficacy in terms of their direct interface meeting with the ASEAN leaders.

4.2.2 The Southeast Asian Civil Society Interface Meeting with the ASEAN Summit

The introduction of the "interface meeting" between the civil society organization's representatives with ASEAN leaders by the Malaysian government back in 2005 has paved the way for highly critical opinions to be echoed at the ASEAN level. For instance, these were among the crucial inputs that had been briefed in that 2005 ASEAN Summit:

"Participants urge the ASEAN Summit to reconsider the 'ASEAN way" of dealing with these trans-boundary challenges so that swift and effective action can be taken in the interest of the people. The principle of consensus should not hinder ASEAN from acting decisively on behalf of justice when the situation so demands" (Proposal Five, Statement of the ASEAN Civil Society Conference to the 11th ASEAN Summit, 9 December 2005, p.4).

"Our population structure demands that women, youth and indigenous people are adequately represented at all levels of decision making processes within ASEAN. The Civil Society urges greater focus and attention to women, youth and indigenous peoples. Recognizing their rights and broadening their participation in the society will go a long way in creating a safer, more stable and caring ASEAN community. ASEAN governments should also ensure that they have equitable access to healthcare services particularly in relation to the reproductive health and HIV/AIDS" (Proposal Nine, Statement of the ASEAN Civil Society Conference to the 11th ASEAN Summit, 9 December 2005, p.7).

Such profound and critical proposals – directly presented to the ASEAN leaders – were nowhere to be found in the previous APA. Regardless of the outcomes, such platform has been considered positively by civil society organizations:

"The interface meeting is symbolic. You cannot expect anything to come out from that. But that is not the point. The point is the gesture, the political gesture. Because this is about institutionalization. Institutionalization means we have to have this meeting as a formal agenda

of the leaders. So we have to do it every year, no matter whether the host country is ready or not. As it is a tradition, we have to do it" (Yuyun Wahyuningrum interview by Quayle 2013, p.126).

4.2.3 The Southeast Asian Civil Society Involvement in the ASEAN Community Councils

Apart from the ASEAN Summit, the ASEAN Community Councils is another ASEAN's political machinery that has to be reckoned with. In parallel with the Southeast Asian civil society organizations' vows during the 2nd ASEAN Civil Society Conference (ACSC) 2006:

"We resolve to continue to engage with and challenge the ASEAN at all levels, making use of all available spaces and opportunities to defend and advance the rights and interests of the marginalized and excluded people in the region. We further resolve to strengthen our ranks and expand our initiative in solidarity and movement building, challenge ourselves to be more inclusive and participatory, and respond to issues of urgent concern in a timely manner. We commit to build an ASEAN People's Charter that reflects the rights, interests and aspirations of all peoples in the ASEAN region…We demand that the ASEAN create effective mechanisms for transparency, accountability and people's participation. In particular, we demand for automatic civil society seats in all decision making processes of the ASEAN" (Statement of the 2nd ASEAN Civil Society Conference, 12 December 2006).

The ASEAN Community Councils are much more administrative in nature and less political as compared to the ASEAN Summit. Therefore, it is tacitly much easier for the civil society organizations to engage ASEAN Community Councils as recognized by one of their representatives:

"The sectorals…continue to engage, and I think, when the level is higher, then the conflict becomes higher. When the level is lower, we can talk more [about] substance and engaging… So, we come here, because we have a common interest, a common goal, a common concern. With the ASEAN leaders, we don't have a common and straight-to-the-point goal…But when it comes to issue-based [meetings], we share the language. Then the communication happens, because we share the concern" (Quayle 2013, p.138, interview with Yuyun Wahyuningrum).

Nevertheless, these relationships are still relatively problematic, especially when it comes to the ASEAN Economic Council. The left-oriented organizations, for instance, were hesitant to engage ASEAN in this particular area due to its projection as a "neoliberal organization" that opposes the ideas of social justice:

"For this reason, I think a lot of the advocacy issues around the trade and investment agenda have not really been pushed for in an appropriate manner… it's a pity, because you cannot

change ASEAN unless you actually try to sit down and talk to them (Quayle 2013, p.128, interview with Chandra).

4.3 Discursive Demos in ASEAN

The vignettes of the Southeast Asian civil society organizations activism discussed in this chapter posit an intriguing picture of the grassroots transnational will- and opinion-formation in ASEAN. It portrayed how different transnational civil society actors came together to mobilize the Southeast Asian peoples; ASEAN's demos. Evidently, these networks – previously initiated by the ASEAN-ISIS, now spearheaded by the SAPA – have succeeded in stimulating counter-hegemonic discourses across the region. The phenomenon of the transnational civil society organizations' engagement in the regionalization process in the Southeast Asia implies that ASEAN is gradually transformed by the "regionalism from below" forces. In one way or another, the critical mass supports are obviously valuable resources as it was the case with the SAPA-led APF. However, only by relying on the existence of such resources alone – as Social Constructivist and English School theorists tend to do – shall conceal scholarly research from the potential of one critical force that must be reckoned with when it comes to the emancipation subjects: public opinion. To add, there is no other medium that is more appropriate to be approached in order to investigate ASEAN's demos' public opinion than the media and communication infrastructure. Let us then turn to investigate the critical public opinion underpinnings of the ASEAN public spheres in the next chapter.

Chapter Five: Trans-border Media Infrastructure and Public Opinion in ASEAN

The third ultimate precondition for the emergence of transnational public spheres is the existence of transnational media infrastructure that enabled broad public participation across state borders. This chapter shall first go deeper into the elaboration of the three different variants of the Southeast Asian's trans-border media infrastructure: ASEAN's media, national media, and civil society's media (Section 5.1). The qualitative contents published by each of those media are crucial to be gauged from the perspective of their criticalness towards ASEAN's political authority. Their adherence to another normative public sphere prerequisite, namely circulating the collectively formed public opinion across borders also shall be scrutinized from four different viewpoints. Those viewpoints are: the critical coverage on the ASEAN Charter's drafting process, coverage on the ASEAN Civil Society Conference (ACSC)/ ASEAN People's Forum (APF), critical reporting on ASEAN's decisions and policies, as well as the space or forum that they provide for ASEAN's demos' will- and opinion-formation via their media. Having analyzed the degree of critical publicity present in each of the three types of media in the Southeast Asia, the impediments that are potentially degrading the prospects for the emergence of ASEAN public spheres shall also be reviewed (Section 5.2). In the final analysis, the reflection based on the transnational public spheres normative requirement shall be compared against the actual findings of the current state of media infrastructure in Southeast Asia (Section 5.3).

5.1 Variants of Southeast Asian's Media

Generally, there are three rather distinct types of media infrastructures in the Southeast Asia. These are: ASEAN's media, national media, and civil society's media. The details of the selected portals from each of those media types for this inquiry can be found in Table 9 below.

Table 9 List of Selected Media in the Southeast Asia

ASEAN's Media	National Media	Civil Society's Media
• ASEAN's Website • ASEAN's Facebook Page	• The Brunei Times (Brunei) • The Phnom Penh Post (Cambodia)	• South East Asian Committee for Advocacy website (SEACA.net) • Solidarity for Asian People's Advocacy (SAPA) Working Group

	• The Jakarta Post (Indonesia) • Vientiane Times (Laos) • The Myanmar Times (Myanmar) • The Star (Malaysia) • The Philippines Daily Inquirer (Philippines) • The Straits Times (Singapore) • The Nation (Thailand) • Vietnam News (Vietnam)	on ASEAN Facebook Page • Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA) website • Asian Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Asia (AsiaDHRRA) website • Third World Network (TWN) website • Focus on the Global South (FOCUS) website • The Irrawaddy

The selection of "national media" is based on the criteria of the leading English newspaper in each of the respective ASEAN countries. While the selection of "ASEAN's media" was much more straightforward, the selection for the "national media" on the other hand was influenced by the language barriers that impeded this investigation from including the main daily newspapers in all ten ASEAN countries. Nevertheless, the current selections of all ten leading English daily newspapers in the region assured the representativeness of the reporting in respective countries.

5.1.1 ASEAN's Media

I have selected two ASEAN's main media infrastructure: ASEAN official website and the official ASEAN Facebook page. To begin with, ASEAN's official website (www.asean.org) is the main public portal for ASEAN. Apart from basic information, the site also provides an access to the speeches and ASEAN Secretariat News. ASEAN's official Facebook page on the other hand was established on 23 December 2008 and the account has been managed by the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta. Both portals had been analyzed from all four aforementioned angles. From the first perspective, namely the "critical coverage on ASEAN Charter's drafting process", both media are obviously distanced away from such reporting orientation. They are only keen to publish the formal processes involved in the Charter drafting instead of the wider debates that revolve around the Charter. Both portals' coverage is also less impressive when it comes to the "coverage on ASEAN Civil Society Conference (ACSC)/ ASEAN People's Forum

(APF)"; only one report can be found on the topic[1]. Hence, it is not hard to anticipate that the third perspective – "critical reporting on ASEAN's decisions and policies" – is also absent in both ASEAN's media. Nonetheless, due to the interactive nature of Facebook, the space or forum that its media provides for "ASEAN's demos' will- and opinion-formation" does exist and thus, has fulfilled the fourth requirement. Yet, despite "encouraging discussions" on its page, ASEAN's official Facebook page did warn that " the decision to publish comments received via this site remains at the administrator's discretion" and "ASEAN reserves the right to delete any comments that it considers inappropriate or unacceptable" while "repeat offenders may be blocked from using the Facebook page indefinitely".

5.1.2 National Media

Ten leading English newspapers from all ten Southeast Asian countries had been analyzed from the very same perspectives as in the previous ASEAN's media. The analysis started with the online archive search provided by all ten selected newspapers. The keywords that had been inserted were: "ASEAN", "ASEAN People's Forum", "ASEAN Civil Society Conference", "ASEAN Charter", "ASEAN human rights", "ASEAN Way", and "ASEAN People". The results of suggested articles then analyzed in terms of all four outlined "criticalness towards ASEAN" assessment. Based on the political regimes that prevailed in each of the ASEAN countries, it was expected that the less democratic member country will fall short in all four perspectives. While such assumptions were proven to be true in some countries, the findings show that it was not always the case. Indeed, the English newspapers in more democratic countries in ASEAN – The Jakarta Post (Indonesia), The Philippines Daily Inquirer (Philippines), and The Nation (Thailand) – are proven to contain all four requirements. The Vientiane Times (Laos) and the Vietnam News (Vietnam) on the other hand were considerably absent from those requirements. However, almost as democratic as the Indonesian, Philippines, and Thailand's newspapers can be, The Brunei Times (Brunei), The Phnom Penh Post (Cambodia), and The Myanmar Times (Myanmar) did somehow manage to fulfill most of the

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[1] Both reports were on "Civil Society Forum in Myanmar to Advance ASEAN Solidarity" (http://www.asean.org/news/asean-secretariat-news/item/civil-society-forum-in-myanmar-to-advance-asean-solidarity) without any deeper coverage on deliberations and criticisms that has been raised in the forum.

four requirements outlined. Astonishingly, these three newspapers displayed such critical stances towards ASEAN – publishing articles ranging from the ASEAN Charter, human rights, as well as the coverage on ASEAN People's Forum (APF). The fact that those newspapers are not owned directly by the political authority – as it is more likely in the Socialist's Laos and Vietnam – might be a significant contributing factor. The nature of the ASEAN issues itself that can be considered as not harmless to the ruling regime as compared to other domestic issues also might be another crucial factor. Slightly counter-intuitive findings are The Star (Malaysia) and The Straits Times (Singapore) in which both tend to prefer highlighting business and economic news pertaining to ASEAN, rather than engaging in more political debates. The lists of the analyzed articles that lead to the findings are provided in the Appendix A.

5.1.3 Civil Society's Media

The significance of the non-mainstream media's presence is widely recognized. For instance, Axford (2001) emphasizes that the ICT is capable of "sustaining the activities of a tranche of INGOs (International Non-Governmental Organizations) and social movements…and provide a degree of information and support for a host of people ill-served by the public services in the 'real' civic spaces where they live out their lives" (p.18). Seven civil society organization's media in Southeast Asia had been analyzed in order to shed some light on the "criticalness" level in their reporting on ASEAN. Those media were selected in terms of their distinctive features as compared to the ASEAN's and national media: independence from the control of political authority as well as the transnational attributes; did not bind in the locus of one particular country. Aside from SAPA's Facebook page, the websites of five main civil society organizations' networks which were responsible in the birth of the SAPA itself had been scrutinized closely: the SEACA, Forum-Asia, AsiaDHRRA, TWN, and Focus on the Global South. In addition, an independent newsmagazine – The Irrawaddy – had also been analyzed. As can easily be anticipated, six out of seven selected civil society's media in the Southeast Asia displayed such a high criticalness towards ASEAN. Quite surprisingly however, the Third World Network (TWN) portal did not fulfill any of the four requirements outlined, although being strong advocators both in the establishment of the SAPA as well as in the organization of the APF. The TWN is much more globally-oriented in terms of its coverage, thus it quite

negatively affected the quality of its critical coverage on ASEAN. The lists of the analyzed articles from all selected civil society's media are provided in the Appendix B.

In the final analysis, a summary of the critical publicity displayed towards ASEAN in each of the selected Southeast Asian's media has been produced in the following table, Table 24:

Table 10 Critical Publicity towards ASEAN in the Southeast Asian's Media[2]

Southeast Asian's Media Category	Critical Coverage on the ASEAN Charter	Coverage on ASEAN People's Forum (APF)	Critical towards ASEAN	Forum for Will- and Opinion-formation
ASEAN's Media				
1) ASEAN Website				
2) ASEAN Facebook Page				○
National Media				
1) The Brunei Times	○	○	○	
2) The Phnom Penh Post		○	○	
3) The Jakarta Post	○	○	○	○
4) Vientiane Times				
5) The Myanmar Times		○	○	○
6) The Star			○	○
7) The Philippines Daily Inquirer	○	○	○	○
8) The Straits Times			○	○
9) The Nation	○	○	○	○
10) Vietnam News				
Civil Society's Media				
1) South East Asian Committee for Advocacy website (SEACA.net)	○	○	○	○
2) Solidarity for Asian People's Advocacy (SAPA) Working		○	○	○

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[2] Summarized from the analyzed articles in the Appendix A and Appendix B.

	Col1	Col2	Col3	Col4
Group on ASEAN Facebook Page				
3) Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA) website		○	○	
4) Asian Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Asia (AsiaDHRRA) website		○	○	
5) Third World Network (TWN) website				
6) Focus on the Global South (FOCUS) website	○	○	○	
7) The Irrawaddy	○	○	○	○

5.2 Southeast Asian's Trans-border Communicative Capacity Impediments

Although ASEAN has been proactive in improving its information capacity – evidently through its 2000 e-ASEAN Framework – it was only in 2010 that the concrete "ASEAN ICT Masterplan" had finally been produced. Nevertheless, this progress is very welcomed and bears great importance in terms of its detailed content in accordance to the trajectory of the ASEAN Community blueprint. The ASEAN ICT Masterplan can be considered as an ASEAN's attempt to remedy the absence of the region's most crucial connectivity trajectory. The Masterplan can be seen in the following diagram:
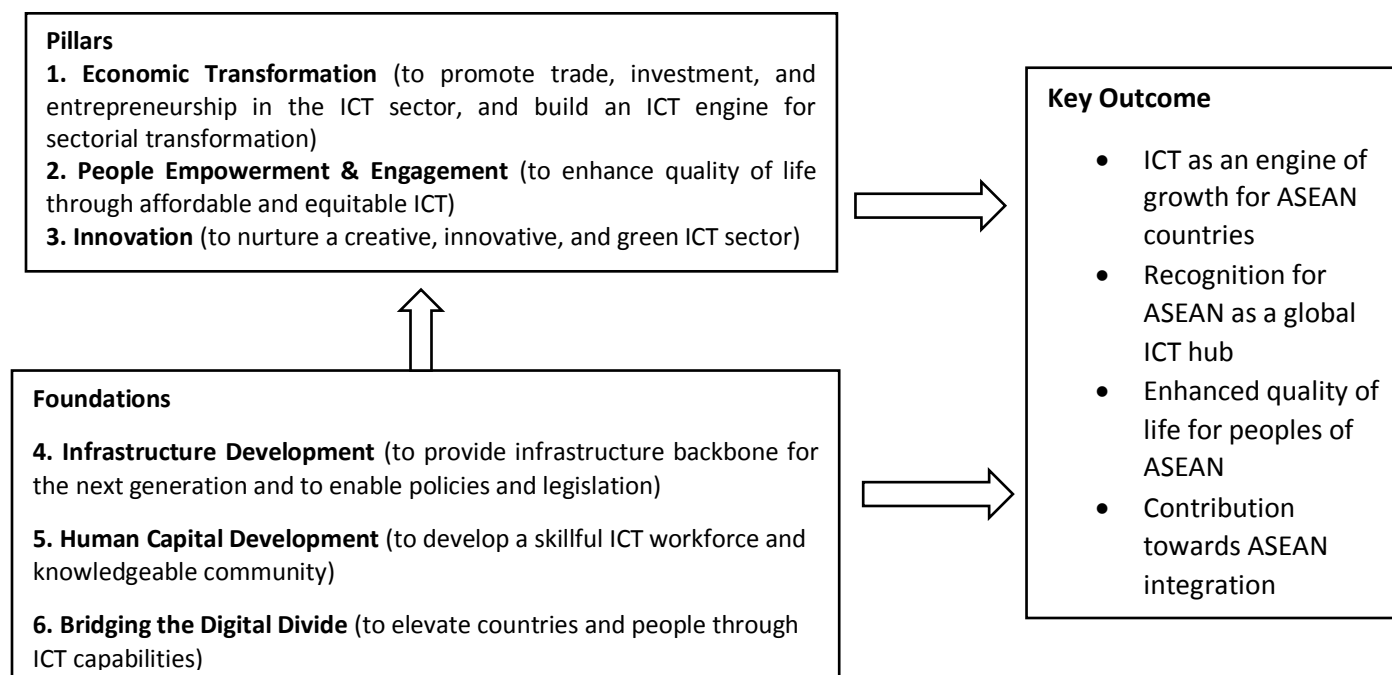
Diagram 4 ASEAN ICT Masterplan

5.2.1 Interstate ICT Divides

The ASEAN ICT Masterplan is undeniably comprehensive; complete with concrete objectives and a distinct time-frame. Nevertheless, democratic advocates in the region are yet to breathe a sigh of relief when the current progress of ASEAN's interstate digital divide, infrastructure ownership, as well as the limitations by the state authority came into the picture. Below are the two tables that captured this vacillation.

Table 11 ASEAN Internet Use, Population Data, and Facebook Statistics

Country	Population (2012 Estimated)	Internet Users (Year 2000)	Internet Users 30 June 2012	Penetration (% Population)	Users % ASEAN	Facebook 31 Dec 2012
Brunei Darussalam	408, 786	30,000	318, 900	78.0 %	0.19 %	254, 760
Cambodia	14,952,665	6,000	662,840	4.4 %	0.41 %	742, 220
Indonesia	248,645,008	2,000,000	55,000,000	22.1 %	33.62 %	51,096,860
Laos	6,586, 266	6.000	592,764	9.0 %	0.36 %	255,880
Malaysia	29,179,952	3,700,000	17,723,000	60.7 %	10.83 %	13,589,520
Myanmar	54,584,650	1,000	534,930	1.0 %	0.33 %	n/a
Philippines	103,775,002	2,000,000	33,600,000	32.4 %	20.54 %	29,890,900
Singapore	5,353,494	1,200,000	4,015,121	75.0 %	2.45 %	2,915,640

Thailand	67,091,089	2,300,000	20,100,000	30.0 %	12.29 %	17,721,480
Vietnam	91,519,289	200,000	31,034,900	33.9 %	18.97 %	10,669,880
ASEAN	**622,096,201**	**11,443,000**	**163,582,455**	**26.30 %**	**100 %**	**127,137,140 (Excluding Myanmar)**

Notes: (1) The Asian Internet Statistics were updated for June 30, 2012. (2) The Facebook subscriber data were updated for December 31, 2012. (3) The demographic (population) numbers are based mainly on data contained in Census Bureau. (4) The usage numbers come from various sources, mainly from data published by Nielsen Online , ITU , and other trustworthy sources. (5) Data may be cited, giving due credit and establishing an active link to Internet World Stats. Copyright©2013, Miniwatts Marketing Group. All rights reserved worldwide (http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats3.htm#asia).

Table 12 ASEAN ICT Infrastructure Indicators, 2011

Country	Fixed Line telephone subscription per 100 inhabitants	Cellular subscriber per 100 inhabitants	Internet User per 100 inhabitants
Brunei	19.7	109	56
Cambodia	3.7	70	3.1
Indonesia	15.9	98	18
Laos	1.7	87	9.0
Malaysia	14.7	127	61
Myanmar	1.1	3	1.0
Philippines	7.1	92	29
Singapore	38.9	149	75.1
Thailand	9.7	113	23.7
Vietnam	11.5	143	35.5

Source: International Telecommunications Union, http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/statistics/explorer/index.html, World Bank Statistics (Cited in SanchitaBasu Das 2013).
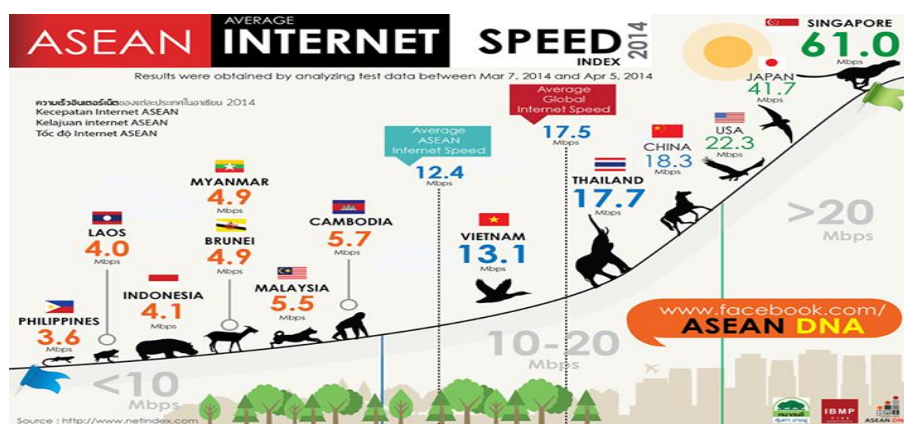

Image 1 ASEAN Internet Speed Index 2012 (ASEAN DNA)

Based on the two complementary tables, along with the ASEAN DNA's data image above, it is not ambiguous for us to reach an understanding regarding the current "progress" of the ASEAN ICT Masterplan. As compared to the positions enjoyed by the economically advanced group of the ASEAN nations – for instance Singapore, Malaysia, and Brunei Darussalam – a group of four ASEAN latecomers, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam (CLMV) were obviously falling far behind. Myanmar alone, for example, despite having more than 54 million populations, was disillusioned by having only 1 percent internet penetration. The situation in Myanmar can nowhere be improved by taking the cellular subscriber per 100 inhabitants that saw only 3 achieved, falling even far behind Laos that at least managed to secure 87 and Cambodia (70). It has to be noted that under the public sphere's theory perspective, the ownership and access towards the information and communication technology (ICT) is such a crucial prerequisite, serving as a means of democratic penetration that overwhelms the traditional media infrastructure for the same course. Additionally, the risks of ownership inequality have even been highlighted by Lucas and Sylla as follows:

"Suppose… that the Internet and related IT are really epochal innovations such as those of the British industrial revolution two centuries ago… If so, these new technologies… might well increase inequality in the world for decades, with political and social consequences that do not differ from those that came with inequalities brought by industrialization after 1800" (Lucas and Sylla 2003, p.7).

5.2.2 Bureaucracy Colonization: Censorship, Impunity, and Manipulative Publicity

The importance of a free media in a functional public sphere has long been emphasized by Habermas. In lieu of his remarks on the post-revolutionary Great Britain: "The elimination of the institution of censorship marked a new stage in the development of the public sphere. It made the influx of rational-critical arguments into the press possible and allowed the latter to evolve into an instrument with whose aid political decisions could be brought before the new forum of the public" (p.58). However, a close observation on the current condition across the ten Southeast Asian countries seems a little bit worrying – as can be seen in the World Press Freedom Index below:

Table 13 Southeast Asian's World Press Freedom Index Ranking 2010-2013

Country	2010	2011-2012	2013
Brunei	142	125	122
Cambodia	128	117	143
Indonesia	117	146	139
Laos	168	165	168
Malaysia	141	122	145
Myanmar	174	169	151
Philippines	156	140	147
Singapore	136	135	149
Thailand	153	137	135
Vietnam	165	172	172

Source: Reporters Without Borders World Press Freedom Index 2010, 2011-2012, and 2013

The data definitely tell us a lot of stories that are embedded in the current state of the Southeast Asian media. Eventually, the Southeast Asian civil society delegates to the 2012 Asia-Pacific Regional Internet Governance Forum (APrIGF) has come up with a statement that simultaneously substantiates the Reporters Without Borders' observation above as well as comprehensively captures the realities surrounding the Southeast Asian media:

"The space for free expression on the Internet is shrinking. Many governments are extending censorship and control of traditional media to the Internet…In some countries, citizens who make use of the free space on the internet as bloggers, citizen journalists or social media users become targets of attacks, arrest, and/or threats by state security agents…We thus call upon all governments to ensure that any measure to limit freedom of expression and the right to information are in accordance with international human rights laws and standards, particularly Article 19(3) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)" (Statement of Civil Society Delegates from Southeast Asia to 2012 Asia-Pacific Regional Internet Governance Forum APrIGF, 31 July 2012).

5.2.3 Market Colonization: Profit Interest

The enormous threat posed by profit interests upon the criticalness of the media in the public sphere is not only realized by Habermas alone. Similarly, the lure of such "commercialization" under the aegis of the globalization process has even been elaborated by Herman and McChesney as follows:

"As the media are commercialized and centralized, their self-protective power within each country increases from the growing command over-information flows, political influence, and

the ability to set the media-political agenda (which comports well with that of advertisers and the corporate community at large)" (Herman and McChesney 1997, p.9).

There are no other statements that can assert the profit interest in the media as compared to the statement made by a media mogul himself:

"…the [I]nternet allows us to be more granular in our advertising, targeting potential consumers based on where they've surfed and what products they've bought. The ability to more precisely target customers using technology-powered forms of advertising represents a great opportunity for us to maintain and even grow market share and is clearly the future" (Murdoch, 2005).

In the Southeast Asian case, business news has almost always taken a main portion of news that allocated to make coverage of ASEAN. Not only in The Star (Malaysia) and The Straits Times (Singapore), even in the Vietnam News (Vietnam) and the Vientiane Times (Laos) the reports on ASEAN's market integration, local business readiness, and the country's market resilience to compete in the upcoming ASEAN Economic Community progress have been published consistently. Even the ratio of their coverage on the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) project compared to the coverage on the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) project is almost incalculable. Nevertheless, the existence of "forum" or space for "public opinion formation and debates" – particularly in The Star (Malaysia) – has proven to be crucial. A recent collaboration project between the CIMB Group (Malaysia), Star Publications (M) Bhd (Malaysia), The Jakarta Post (Indonesia), The Nation (Thailand), and The Philippine Daily Inquirer (Philippines) has been forged in. As a result, a so-called "CIMB-ASEAN e-paper" has been launched in the effort to reach out to 450 million of ASEAN's 600 million population. As has already been addressed in Section 5.1, The Jakarta Post (Indonesia), The Nation (Thailand), and The Philippine Daily Inquirer (Philippines) are highly productive in publishing a vast array of critical opinions on ASEAN. Under this business-oriented networking project, the circulation of critical publicity across four ASEAN countries involved marked a unique symbiotic relationship between the business profit and critical media, thus shall benefit the media's prerequisite for the emergence of ASEAN public spheres.

5.3 Communicative Circuits and Public Opinion Transmission into ASEAN

In sum, the intrinsic features of new information and communication technology (ICT) possess a huge capacity to intensify the media infrastructure across the Southeast Asia. However, there are a few serious considerations that first need to be made before we can equate the advent of the

ICT with the rise of critical public opinion circulation from the ASEAN's demos into the ASEAN's political authority. Without a doubt, the critical re-configuration of the conventional public sphere theory and its applications upon the ASEAN setting thus far has provided us with a crucial angle to investigate the relationship between the Southeast Asian's media infrastructure and critical public opinion on ASEAN. The ownership of media infrastructure between three different actors – ASEAN, national, and civil society – has paved the way for us to analyze the contents of each of them critically under the transnational public sphere's frame of reference. As expected, the media owned by civil society organizations have surpassed the ASEAN's media in all critical opinion distribution. However, the degree of criticalness displayed by the newspapers such as The Myanmar Times (Myanmar), The Phnom Penh Post (Cambodia), as well as The Brunei Times (Brunei) is actually quite significant. All these three newspapers were in fact distributing more critical articles towards ASEAN as compared to the Straits Times newspaper (Singapore) – which tends to publish mostly economic news. Indeed, the critical potential possessed by the media in the Southeast Asia has significantly been distorted by the reality of the media access and ownership cleavages among the citizens across the region. This condition has been exacerbated by the censorship policies adopted by some of the ASEAN's regime. Nevertheless, quite in an opposite manner as compared to Habermas' suspicion with regard to the "colonization" of business and market interests upon the criticalness of media, the Southeast Asian context gave us somewhat a "symbiotic" picture of the relationship between them. Built upon the collaboration between the CIMB Group (Malaysia), Star Publications (M) Bhd (Malaysia), The Jakarta Post (Indonesia), The Nation (Thailand) and The Philippine Daily Inquirer (Philippines), a so-called "CIMB-ASEAN e-paper" has been launched. With numerous critical articles on ASEAN that have always been centered in each of those four national newspapers, the expanding effort that is originally stimulated by business profits interest is simultaneously expanding the proliferation of the critical opinion on ASEAN across the four countries. I conclude by affirming that the media infrastructure in ASEAN are currently progressing rapidly towards more people-centered notions and thus, has provided a conducive milieu for the emergence of the ASEAN public sphere.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

This inquiry is anchored on the Habermas' public sphere theory that originally recounts the rise and dissolution of the eighteenth century bourgeois society in Europe. I employed his public sphere's structural prerequisites in order to assess the prospects of the present Southeast Asian citizens – or ASEAN's demos – to substantively involve in the ASEAN Community building project. Despite of the "people-centered" notions that can be found everywhere in ASEAN Community documents, the actual progress does not seem to support the slogans. There is nothing more apparent to prove this reality as compared to the series of exclusive back-door negotiations by the ultimate political authority in ASEAN – the ASEAN Summit – that monopolizes the crucial regional decision-making authority. This elitist "ASEAN Way" was also moving hand in hand with the privilege enjoyed by the large corporations with regard to the massive developmental project – both at the expense of ASEAN's demos' voices. Nevertheless, I did not opt for the pessimistic stance that has been taken by most of the contemporary Southeast Asian scholars when discussing democratization prospects in ASEAN. I continue to investigate the potential patterns that might converge and lead to the emergence of the ASEAN public spheres. For this purpose, I specifically modified the definition of the ASEAN public sphere: "a transnational site of deliberation in which civil society organizations reach understandings about issues of common concern in ASEAN according to the norms of publicity". I reconstruct the structural requirements for the emergence of the public sphere to be implemented in the context of the contemporary ASEAN's settings. Three outlined structural preconditions for the emergence of the ASEAN public spheres were: accountable and receptive governance authority; inclusive, deliberative, and critical activist networks; as well as free and open media infrastructure. Each of those underlined normative prerequisites has been critically compared against the eventual realities dwelling in Southeast Asia. Some crucial remarks pertaining to the convergence between each of those structures – the existence of a political authority that is an accountable and receptive to public opinion on behalf of ASEAN, the rational-critical discursive civil society on behalf of ASEAN's demos, and the availability of a free and open cross-border media infrastructure – shall be elaborated. The following section summarizes to what extent does each of those structural prerequisites is fulfilled.

6.1 Pre-condition One: ASEAN's Political Authority

The third chapter discusses the first precondition for the emergence of the ASEAN public sphere – the structural transformation of the political authority at the ASEAN level. Incepted as a loose cooperative intergovernmental pact between the Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, and Indonesia amidst the Cold War, ASEAN was prompted to evolve gradually – not only in terms of its membership, but also from the perspective of its guiding principles and rules. The ASEAN Secretariat was established with a Secretary-General post headquartered in Jakarta in 1976. ASEAN's later transition towards the ASEAN Community project has further discarded its early Realist-adherence nature. The rise of globalization, in particular the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis that infringed the region, nevertheless had transcended the pace of the Southeast Asian transnational governance-political architecture evolutions. The surge of non-traditional security concerns across the region leaves the leaders of the ten ASEAN countries to one common path: to partially submit their absolute nation states authority to a more supranational order of ASEAN. Therefore, the current state of ASEAN's political authority that consisted of the ASEAN Summit, ASEAN Community Councils, as well as the ASEAN Secretariat – that is subjected to the ASEAN Charter – has been gradually opened in terms of their accountability and receptive level to the public opinion.

6.2 Pre-condition Two: ASEAN's Discursive Publics

The second precondition for the emergence of the ASEAN public sphere has been investigated in the fourth chapter: the transnational civil society actors in ASEAN. The expansion of scope for advocacy works at the ASEAN level can be observed. Two of the most valuable sources in that particular respect are the ASEAN-Institutes of Strategic and International Studies (ASEAN-ISIS) and the Solidarity of Asian People's Advocacy (SAPA). Both civil society networks organize their own sort of "transnational deliberative forum" involving direct participation from the ASEAN's demos. The ASEAN People's Assembly (APA) was organized by ASEAN-ISIS, meanwhile SAPA was responsible for the continuity of the ASEAN People's Forum (APF). ASEAN-ISIS – consisted mostly of the academic and think-tank groups – set the first regional civil society moves to engage ASEAN leaders via the APA. This dialogue integrally serves as a "bridge" between civil society organizations in the Southeast Asia with the ASEAN senior officials. Eventually, in spite of the projected

benefits offered by the APA, the majority of the dialogue participants were not happy with the APA's "exclusiveness" and its continuous "uncritical stance" towards most of the ASEAN's policies. APA's severe lack of "norms of publicity" has resulted in the birth of the SAPA and APF. The SAPA has been very proactive from the beginning; not only that it stimulates the APF, but it also continuously empowers the grassroots to be able to engage ASEAN. Along with their perseverance in providing critical check and balances towards ASEAN – whether in the ASEAN Charter drafting process or various engagements with the ASEAN Community Councils – the valuable presence of the transnational network of civil society organizations in ASEAN definitely substantiates the ASEAN public spheres.

6.3 Pre-condition Three: ASEAN's Trans-border Communicative Infrastructure

The fifth chapter examines the transnational media infrastructure in the Southeast Asia – the third pre-condition for the emergence of the ASEAN public sphere. I have focused on the potential of the new media in the contemporary Southeast Asia: the Internet. Due to a rather plural history engulfing each of the ten ASEAN countries, I provide a macro-overview pertaining to not only the trans-border media infrastructure in the region, but also the circulations of the ASEAN's civil society organizations' formulated opinions into each of those countries. This encompassing overview is deemed more than essential since the central concerns of the public sphere precepts are highly related to the circulations of the "critical publicity", rather than the "manipulative" publicity. Thus, instead of narrowing my focus only on the officially reported news regarding ASEAN affairs, it is more normatively crucial for me to highlight the civil society organizations-formed opinions on ASEAN. In this case, a high degree of critical debates reported in the media that stems from the APF shall indicate a high degree of "critical publicity" in the Southeast Asian's media infrastructure. Nevertheless, some identified impediments such as the asymmetric patterns of the media ownership and the state censorship in some ASEAN countries had restricted this critical publicity from being unleashed to the fullest. The combination of those impediments has exacerbated ASEAN's demos' access to information, especially to those critical opinions formulated by the civil society organizations upon regional affairs. This condition deteriorated their opportunities for trans-boundary deliberative political mobilization. On the other hand, this study finds that the relationship between business profit interests and the circulation of critical publicity among ASEAN's demos on ASEAN affairs are rather symbiotic in manner. It is not so much confined in the "colonization" nature as depicted by

Habermas. The emergence of the "CIMB-ASEAN e-paper" – comprised of the Star (Malaysian newspaper), The Nation (Thailand's newspaper), The Philippines Daily Inquirer (Philippines' newspaper), and the Jakarta Post (the Indonesian newspaper) has opened up a new trans-border opportunity for the critical opinion circulation in ASEAN public spheres.
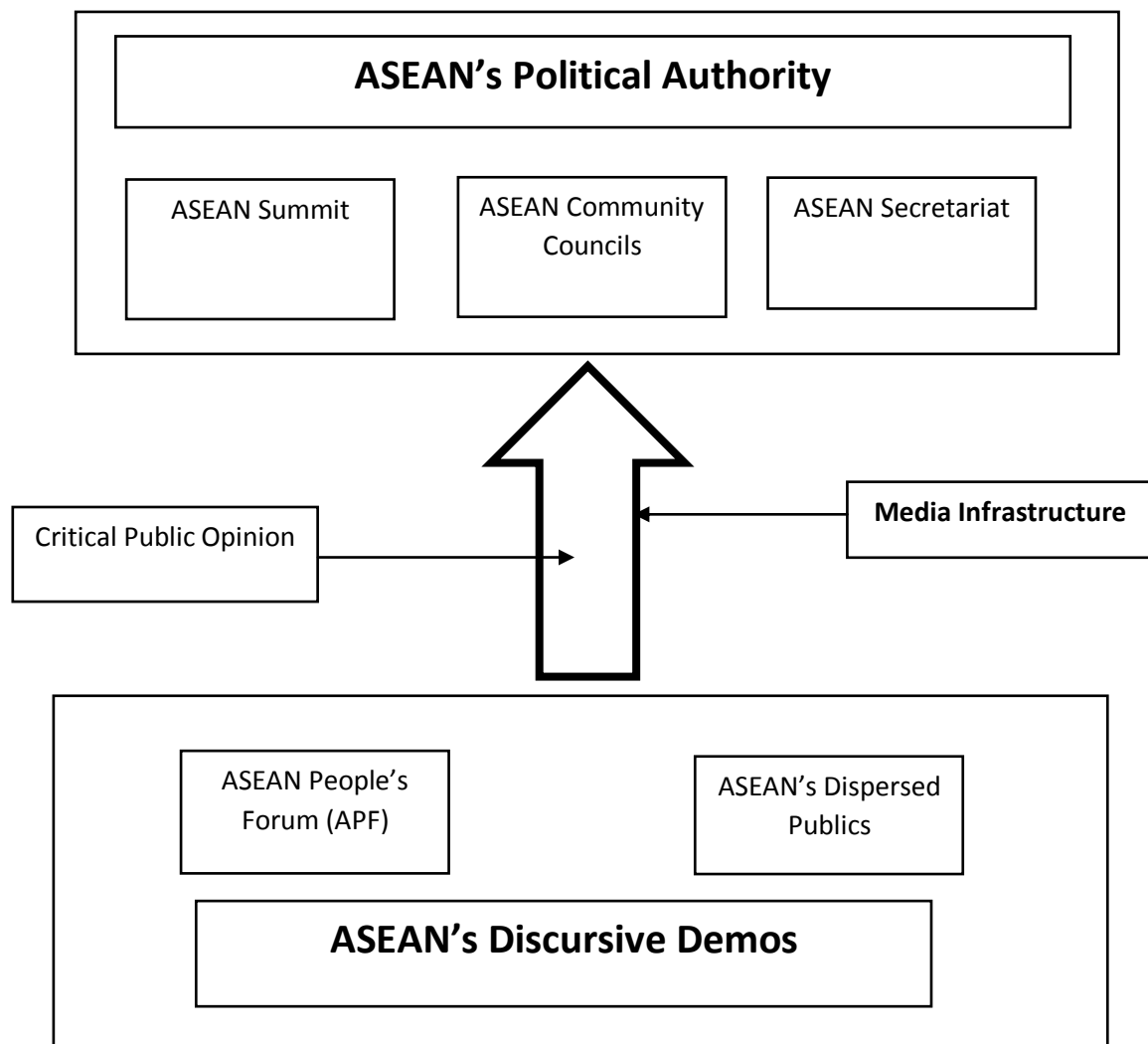
Diagram 5 Three Structural Pre-conditions for the Emergence of the ASEAN Public Spheres

6.4 The Future Path for ASEAN Public Spheres Research

There are a few next steps that can be conducted for ASEAN public spheres' research. Among the options is to investigate one particular issue from the three ASEAN public spheres' structural perspective. For instance, future researchers can tackle the issue of environmental quality in the Southeast Asia, first by examining its discussions among civil society organizations (in APF, perhaps). For instance, what are their collectively formulated

statements on the issue, how the particular ASEAN authority reacts to it (whether the Political-Security Council, Economic Council, Socio-Cultural Council, or even the ASEAN Summit), and finally how the three different media structures in ASEAN report (or not report) about it. The convergence of those three structures later on shall become a valuable evidence of the functioning (or dysfunctioning) of ASEAN public spheres. Secondly, future researchers can also use a comparative perspective to evaluate the distinctiveness of the ASEAN public spheres by comparing all three ASEAN public spheres' structures with the very same structures from another region – the European Union, for instance. The outcome of such investigation shall contribute significantly from the comparative regionalism perspective. Aside from the regional comparative perspective, the ASEAN public spheres framework is also suitable to be applied in order to determine which issues that are more likely to be addressed in all of the three structures. As a result, it will be clear in which area the convergence of the collectively produced will- and opinion- by civil society organizations, with the ASEAN authority, and eventually with the media in the Southeast Asia, is more likely to occur.

The centrality and ubiquity of the transnational critical publicity circuits in ASEAN's demos political life have long been undermined. There is an increasing recognition that Southeast Asian scholars need to restructure their theoretical takes accordingly, based on the current intense structural transformation that occurs in the region. To that end, all six theoretical lenses that have been reviewed in the Section 1.2 – Realist, Pluralist, Neo-Marxism, Social Constructivism, English School, and Neo-Communitarian – fixed uncomfortably with the aforementioned concerns among ASEAN's demos. Furthermore, despite possessing an enormous potential to lift the topical debate of democracy at the ASEAN level to a higher stage, the current research that employs the Critical theory upon the ASEAN arena has unfortunately tended to draw some similar pessimistic conclusions as shared by other theoretical perspectives. I summarize the pitfalls embedded in each of those theories below.

Table 14: A Summary of Pitfalls in Currently Applied Theory on ASEAN's Politics

Currently Applied Theory on ASEAN's Politics	Pitfalls from Democratic Perspective
1) Realist	Pro-status quo; State-centric
2) Pluralist	Undermine the nation states resilience
3) Neo-Marxism	Sole Focus on Material Disparities
4) Social Constructivism	Uncritical stance towards the "ASEAN Way"
5) English School	Narrowly overemphasize the civil society activism at the expense of wider ASEAN's publics or demos
6) Neo-Communitarian	Too idealistic with regard to the consensus-formation among diverse interests in the regional arena

Each of those pitfalls nevertheless proved to be crumble under the application of the Critical-based public sphere theory that was originally designed by Jurgen Habermas. Throughout this research, I contest that the central position acquired by the media apparatus under this particular theory is integral. On the other hand, by employing this reconfigured theoretical design, I had identified the way democracy can be enhanced at the ASEAN level in parallel with the ASEAN Community trajectory. Far from being a pro-status quo or state-centric as in the case of the Realist theory, the modified ASEAN public sphere perspective questioning the monopoly of decision-making capacity in the hands of ten ASEAN Summit's leaders. By acknowledging the nation states' prowess in ASEAN, this theory escaped the utopia promoted by the Pluralist's view – accommodating, rather than rejecting the authority possessed by the ASEAN Summit, ASEAN Community Councils, and ASEAN Secretariat. By emphasizing the multifaceted challenges faced by the ASEAN's demos, this modified theory had also overcoming the weakness of Neo-Marxism theory: limited material disparities-focused. This theory also strongly subjected the notion of "ASEAN Way" into the scrutiny – as opposed to the "uncritical" stance of the "appreciative" Social Constructivism theory. By positing the importance of the existence of a critical, free, and widespread media, the application of ASEAN public sphere conceptualizations had been able to despise the exclusivity of the civil society activism at the expense of wider ASEAN's publics or demos – as opposed to the English School's approach. As compared to the Neo-Communitarian

theory that relies almost entirely on the "ideal" consensus formation among diverse civil society organizations in the international arena, the ASEAN public spheres' perspective are more reasonable. Not only it posits the possibility of the incoherency among the civil society organizations via transnational deliberative forum, but also proposed a remedy: the variants of "critical publicity" carried by transnational media infrastructure.

On the other hand, it is beyond dispute that the role of trans-border communicative infrastructure vis-à-vis transnational political authority and transnational civil society organizations network has been staged primarily by the Habermas-inspired transnational public sphere theory. In that regard, the capacity of critical publicity to be dispersed across the region against traditional impediments – whether spatial or temporal – has been reconciled to a certain degree. Most notably, by the rise of ICT that goes hand in hand with the globalization. Hence, the application of transnational public sphere normative preconditions – reconstructed into the search for the ASEAN public sphere in this inquiry – shall contribute significantly from the international organizations' democratization's point of view. By incorporating the forms of political participation among ASEAN's demos via the ICT, a wider debate that accelerated ASEAN's demos' efficacy was not being excluded. As for ASEAN, by a continuous progress in terms of its relations with the two structures – civil society organizations and transnational media infrastructure – a dream to be shortlisted for the future Nobel Peace Prize might be proven as not superfluous after all.

Appendix A: Lists of the Analyzed National Media's Articles

The Brunei Times

Title	Date Published
"Youth participation in ASEAN held back by uncoordinated regional involvement"	Monday, April 8, 2013
"Getting ready for the ASEAN Charter"	Monday, April 16, 2007
"Without enforcement, ASEAN Charter is meaningless"	Tuesday, September 8, 2009
"What makes ASEAN fruitless?"	Tuesday, March 10, 2009
"What is ASEAN consciousness?"	Monday, August 9, 2010
"Vietnam bars ASEAN forum rights campaigners"	Thursday, September 23, 2010
"Two leave for human rights meeting"	Tuesday, April 29, 2014
"Thematic briefing for civil society on May 27"	Tuesday, May 21, 2013
"The ASEAN rights conundrum"	Monday, August 10, 2009
"Thailand darkens its role as ASEAN chair"	Wednesday, July 23, 2008
"Southeast Asia civil society gives rights body failing grade"	Thursday, November 4, 2010
"Should we settle for second best?"	Tuesday, August 14, 2007
"SEACA rep calls for human rights issues to be highlighted"	Saturday, January 19, 2013
"Asean charter needs to reflect aspirations of region's people"	Thursday, January 24, 2008
"Asean charter: to sign or not"	Tuesday, November 6, 2007
"Can Asean Charter be salvaged?"	Tuesday, June 12, 2007
"ASEAN People's Forum to commence Saturday"	Tuesday, April 2, 2013
"ASEAN Peoples' Forum way to open up dialogue"	Sunday, April 7, 2013
"Brunei hands over ACSC/APF chair to Myanmar"	Tuesday, April 9, 2013
"Civil society organisations boycott leaders meeting"	Monday, May 12, 2014

"Delegates call for more variety at ASEAN People's Forum"	Monday, April 8, 2013
"Five countries reject civil group representatives at ASEAN summit"	Saturday, October 24, 2009
"Forum touches on youth participation"	Friday, March 8, 2013
"Joint statement calls for youth involvement in decision making"	Thursday, April 11, 2013
"Hanoi to host Asean forum"	Friday, June 11, 2010
"Asean facing an unfinished errand"	Tuesday, April 8, 2008
"ASEAN must address HR violations"	Thursday, January 31, 2013
"Asean must do more to uplift profile among regional organizations"	Thursday, March 3, 2011
"ASEAN must move into people centred grouping: Anifah"	Saturday, October 6, 2012
"Asean needs new mindset"	Monday, February 21, 2011
"Asean's relevance challenged"	Sunday, March 1, 2009
"Asean seen failing on human rights in Hanoi"	Tuesday, November 2, 2010
"Double standard divide Asean"	Tuesday, June 16, 2009
"Group questions mandate for Asean human rights body"	Friday, February 20, 2009
"Human rights: Asean vs universal norms"	Monday, August 23, 2010
"International watchdogs slam ASEAN secrecy on rights pact"	Monday, July 9, 2012
"Is Asean biting off more than it can chew?"	Tuesday, April 6, 2010
"Making Asean more people-oriented"	Saturday, December 6, 2008
"Myanmar rep calls for CSOs to back ACSC/APF 2014"	Tuesday, April 9, 2013
"Myanmar sleuth sent out of civil society meeting"	Sunday, May 8, 2011
"Out of step with Asean"	Saturday, August 4, 2007
"Reevaluating Asean Charter"	Wednesday, December 3, 2008

"Regional rights body spurned as toothless"	Monday, June 29, 2009
"Rights activists barred from attending Asean meeting"	Sunday, March 1, 2009
"SE Asian nations risk dissension by ignoring human rights"	Saturday, August 8, 2009

The Jakarta Post

Title	Date Published
"Activist criticize ASEAN's industrial, nuclear ambitions"	Wednesday, May 04 2011
"Advocacy groups push for participation of civil society"	Tuesday, May 03 2011
"ASEAN Charter and a more people-centric grouping"	Tuesday, July 15 2008
"ASEAN Charter ushers in historic new era for region"	Tuesday, December 16 2008
"ASEAN's democratic deficit"	Friday, September 13 2013
"ASEAN fails to connect with its people: Activist"	Tuesday, May 03 2011
"ASEAN human rights talks face major challenges"	Tuesday, March 04 2014
"ASEAN leaders adopt lame-duck rights declaration"	Monday, November 19 2012
"ASEAN should enhance efforts to reach out to its people"	Wednesday, August 08 2012
"It's time for ASEAN to 'move beyond awareness promotion'"	Saturday, January 21 2012
"Building true ASEAN community"	Thursday, March 31 2011
"Businessmen to Asean: AEC what? Explain further"	Wednesday, January 01 2014
"Civil society looks for institutionalized engagement in ASEAN"	Saturday, May 07 2011
"CSOs 'pleased' with meeting with ASEAN leaders"	Sunday, May 08 2011
"Expanding ASEAN Secretariat to help small enterprises"	Wednesday, May 14 2014
"Housing rights violations pose challenge for ASEAN human rights body"	Sunday, September 19 2010
"How to create a stronger ASEAN?"	Tuesday, November 08 2011
"'Interests of people' must be ASEAN's top focus"	Wednesday, May 04 2011

"Judicial review of ASEAN Charter?"	Friday, May 13 2011
"Let us make ASEAN matter to our people"	Wednesday, July 20 2011
"Maintaining transparency key to ASEAN human rights declaration"	Thursday, June 28 2012
"Making ASEAN for the people"	Thursday, December 04 2008
"Moving from state-centered to people-centered security in ASEAN"	Tuesday, July 19 2011
"News Analisys: Facing the people, ASEAN's strategic deficit"	Thursday, March 05 2009
"Peeking through ASEAN community"	Thursday, September 05 2013
"Projects and decision-making in ASEAN"	Monday, April 09 2012
"Reflections on the first APA"	December 05 2000
"Reviewing the ASEAN Charter"	Thursday, March 07 2013
"Rights dialogue to discuss ASEAN Charter"	Monday, October 29 2012
"Southeast Asia launches human rights body"	Friday, October 23 2009
"Suu Kyi calls for ASEAN countries to push Burma's democracy"	Tuesday, May 03 2011
"To what end, ASEAN?"	Wednesday, May 23 2012
"Where is ASEAN cultural diplomacy?"	Friday, June 14 2013
"Where is the ASEAN Community?"	Wednesday, August 14 2013

The Myanmar Times

Title	Date Published
"Almost all in business society will benefit"	Monday, 10 February 2014
"ASEAN civil society meeting called off amid controversy"	Monday, 12 May 2014
"ASEAN integration still a long way off"	Monday, 10 June 2013
"ASEAN ministers urge CLMV nations to open up their markets"	Monday, 30 August 2010
"ASEAN needs help from media: Surin"	Monday, 22 March 2010

"People's Forum looks to donors for funding"	Sunday, 03 November 2013
"ASEAN rights body launched"	Monday, 26 October 2009
"Campaign promotes children's rights with workshops, theatre"	Monday, 21 October 2013
"Charting ASEAN's future"	Monday, 10 February 2014
"Code of silence: A reporter's lot in Myanmar"	Monday, 02 June 2014
"e-governance: Myanmar got its wires crossed"	Monday, 12 May 2014
"Farmland issues absent from forum"	Monday, 06 January 2014
"For the media, ASEAN summit marks a new low"	Thursday, 15 May 2014
"Government prepares accord on ASEAN Community ahead of summit"	Monday, 12 May 2014
"Govt axes civil society meet after dispute over reps"	Monday, 19 May 2014
"Govt eyes ASEAN Charter review"	Monday, 13 January 2014
"Halfway to ASEAN targets: minister"	Sunday, 18 May 2014
"Myanmar's chairship can bring hope for ASEAN"	Monday, 10 February 2014
"Myanmar to host ASEAN People's Forum"	Monday, 29 April 2013
"Nationalism: a barrier to integration?"	Monday, 30 December 2013
"No response to People's Forum invitations"	Monday, 17 March 2014
"Regional leaders steer clear of Rakhine violence"	Monday, 19 May 2014
"Review of ASEAN human rights mechanism begins"	Thursday, 13 February 2014
"Rights and wrongs"	Monday, 10 February 2014
"Role model: Indonesia's key role in ASEAN"	Monday, 02 June 2014
"Small business: Worth supporting"	Monday, 26 May 2014
"The long road to the gavel"	Monday, 10 February 2014
"Why smallholder farmers need our help"	Monday, 12 May 2014

| "Youth, civil society reps get replaced ahead of   summit" | Friday, 09 May 2014 |

The Nation

Title	Date Published
"Malaysia showcases civil society"	December 10, 2005
"A bark perhaps, but no bite: Why the ASEAN Inter-Governmental Commission on Human Rights lacks teeth"	August 6, 2009
"Activist pressure forcing AHRB into a 'make or break' period"	June 29, 2009
"ASEAN civil society groups can lead the way"	January 28, 2008
"Connectivity: the next step in ASEAN community building"	October 21, 2009
"ASEAN gets a chance to move on"	October 23, 2009
"ASEAN is Community of Action, Connectivity and Peoples : Abhisit"	August 4, 2009
"Avoiding 'illiberal' pitfalls is key to new ASEAN charter"	April 9, 2007
"Berlin wall mentality still casts a shadow over ASEAN"	November 9, 2009
"Can Jakarta become 'the Brussels of the East' and the capital of ASEAN"	February 11, 2010
"Confronting human rights: Time to tell all we know"	December 28, 2009
"Thailand a test for ASEAN's democratic ambitions"	June 10, 2014
"Time to act"	October 23, 2009

The Philippine Daily Inquirer

Title	Date Published
"1,500 rally in Cebu ASEAN people's summit"	12/14/2006
"A socially transformed ASEAN needed"	Thursday, June 28th, 2012
"Activists press ASEAN to create rights body"	01/11/2007
"An ASEAN identity?"	March 22, 2014
"Aquino backs harmonized ASEAN legal frameworks"	May 11, 2014

"ASEAN adopts rights pact despite criticism"	Sunday, November 18th, 2012
"ASEAN aims to be hub for multinational firms"	May 21, 2014
"ASEAN body wants undemocratic governments rejected"	01/12/2007
"ASEAN charter comes into force"	12/15/2008
"ASEAN charter doesn't solve Burma problem"	11/16/2007
"ASEAN Charter faces rough sailing in Senate – Romulo"	12/19/2007
"ASEAN charter needs substance, not just words: analysts"	December 6, 2006
"ASEAN charter not pro-women, pro-kids"	03/04/2009
"ASEAN won't be like EU, says main drafter of charter"	03/20/2007
"Asean drafts HR declaration"	Tuesday, July 10th, 2012
"Asean's elusive integration"	Sunday, May 4th, 2014
"ASEAN leaders to adopt rights pact despite protest"	Friday, November 16th, 2012
"Asean must have another way"	Monday, April 2nd, 2012
"Asean must have social protection NTSP"	Tuesday, May 13th, 2014
"ASEAN OKs rights body in charter"	July 31, 2007
"Asean on track for EU-style market by 2015"	Friday, April 26th, 2013
"ASEAN: people-oriented or disoriented?"	11/29/2008
"ASEAN posturing on human rights"	10/30/2009
"ASEAN rights body lacks powers—draft"	02/28/2009
"ASEAN rights body refuses to meet activists"	03/29/2010
"ASEAN rights body unlikely to get tough on violators—execs"	10/17/2007
"ASEAN rights declaration needs fine tuning –watchdog"	Monday, July 9th, 2012
"ASEAN rights talks blocked"	03/02/2009
"Asean rights watchdog set but lacks bite"	10/21/2009

"ASEAN seen worse than WTO"	January 12, 2007
"Asean, gov't execs snub people's forum"	10/20/2009
"ASEAN Union"	01/15/2007
"Can Myanmar abide by ASEAN charter?"	11/18/2007
"Challenges ahead for visions of an Asean community"	04/11/2010
"Create environment pillar of Asean Community"	02/23/2010
"Experts deadlocked on ASEAN charter over human rights issue"	07/27/2007
"Greenpeace urges swift ASEAN action vs climate change"	August 01, 2007
"How Asean can truly matter to its people"	Tuesday, August 16th, 2011
"How West was won: Asean Magna Carta"	Friday, December 21st, 2012
"Human rights must top ASEAN agenda"	02/26/2009
"Image worries pushed ASEAN on rights"	July 31, 2007
"Journalists' widows file complaint at Asean"	02/03/2010
"Low awareness of 2015 Asean integration noted"	Monday, April 1st, 2013
"Maximum tolerance for protesters but...."	December 07, 2006
"Migrants toil as Asean ministers talk rights"	07/22/2009
"Militant groups put off ASEAN People's Camp"	12/10/2006
"No probe powers for ASEAN rights body yet"	03/28/2009
"Observers doubt Myanmar on ASEAN charter pledges"	07/21/2008
"Philippines initiates civil society consultation within Asean"	05/06/2011
"Put people at center of integration"	12/10/2006
"Thai groups see Asean as a political arena for reforms"	08/22/2010
"Toothless rights body would hurt ASEAN group"	06/30/2009

"Vietnam flouts commitments to ASEAN on rights"	01/22/2010
"Walkout, absences mar Asean summit opening"	10/24/2009

The Phnom Penh Post

Title	Date Published
"Activists barred at summit"	Monday, 2 March 2009
"Activists gather ahead ASEAN summit"	Monday, 12 November 2012
"Activists protest closed summit"	Monday, 26 October 2009
"AIPO adjourns empty-handed"	Friday, 24 September 2004
"ASEAN forums divide"	Monday, 19 March 2012
"ASEAN civil society cooperation"	Monday, 10 August 2009
"Forum, government face off"	Friday, 30 March 2012
"Interference mars meets: groups"	Thursday, 15 November 2012
"Muffled voices of ASEAN dissent"	Friday, 8 November 2002
"NGOs fear govt snub at ASEAN summit"	Tuesday, 20 October 2009
"NGOs feel ignored by ASEAN rights council"	Monday, 9 July 2012
"NGOs reject regional rights body"	Wednesday, 4 March 2009
"Rights body lacks teeth: NGOs"	Tuesday, 21 July 2009
"Thais will sit out NGO meet"	Monday, 2 April 2012
"Venues snub ASEAN activists"	Wednesday, 14 November 2012
"Voices divided pre-ASEAN"	Thursday, 29 March 2012

The Star

Title	Date Published
"ASEAN: Focus on regional interest"	Saturday February 22, 2014
"ASEAN must not miss opportunities"	Saturday May 17, 2014
"ASEAN needs more vim and vigour"	Saturday December 7, 2013
"Asian News Network considers steps to develop economic community by 2015"	Saturday January 11, 2014
"AYEA upgrade to boost cooperation"	12 June 2014
"Building a strong news platform"	Wednesday May 28, 2014
"CIMB-Asean ePaper draws attention at media industry meeting"	Thursday April 24, 2014
"Funding will fulfil people's dreams, PM tells members"	Wednesday April 9, 2014
"Great deeds still to match fine words"	Sunday December 29, 2013
"Hard choices as ASEAN forges ahead"	17 June 2014
"Indonesian delay in embracing AEC surprises CIMB chief"	Wednesday June 11, 2014
"Khairy: People-to-people engagement important between ASEAN members"	Friday September 20, 2013
"Let's get real about ASEAN community"	Saturday April 19, 2014
"Making ASEAN Community relevant"	Saturday September 21, 2013
"Misunderstanding the 'Asean way'"	Sunday December 1, 2013
"Strengthening region's news platform"	Monday May 26, 2014
"Survey: Businesses see opportunities in Asean economic integration"	Thursday December 12, 2013
"Three things Asean must do – now"	Saturday May 31, 2014

The Straits Times

Title	Date Published
"ASEAN: The way forward"	June 11, 2014
"ASEAN can do more to protect human rights"	April 29, 2014
"ASEAN Corporate Social Responsibility Network launches three-year plan to encourage responsible business"	June 12, 2014
"Is ASEAN a pipe dream"	Friday, January 03, 2014
"Report card on ASEAN economic integration"	May 8, 2014
"Singapore 'risks being ASEAN's slowest growing country': Shanmugam"	September 05, 2013

Vientiane Times

Title	Date Published
"ASEAN assembly meets in Vientiane to discuss drug control"	May 14, 2014
"ASEAN forestry network aims to prevent climate change"	June 20, 2013
"ASEAN leaders to assess community building efforts"	October 09, 2013
"ASEAN moves towards community in 2015"	April 26, 2013
"ASEAN moves towards implementation of ASCC blueprint"	March 12, 2014
"Civil society groups learn about benefits of ASEAN"	October 21, 2013
"Lao businesses urged to prepare for ASEAN Economic Integration"	February 15, 2013
"Laos calls for stronger ASEAN parliamentary cooperation"	September 21, 2013
"Laos vows to keep import tariff reduction on track"	February 22, 2013
"Laos making progress in regional telecoms connectivity"	March 06, 2013
"More work required before AEC integration"	February 10, 2014

Vietnam News

Title	Date Published
"ASEAN bloc to improve regional co-operation FM"	September, 09 2013
"ASEAN business, investment summit looks for drawcards"	August, 21 2013
"ASEAN Community looks to coming years"	December, 04 2013
"ASEAN countries increase cultural links"	April, 21 2014
"ASEAN develops insurance market"	December, 06 2013
"ASEAN employment deal set to reinvigorate tourism"	September, 03 2013
"ASEAN leaders meet on welfare"	September, 07 2013
"ASEAN nations rise to the challenge"	December, 21 2013
"ASEAN One Community underlines importance of intra-bloc communication"	April, 10 2014
"ASEAN promotes human rights work"	October, 29 2013
"ASEAN spotlights nationality rights for women and children"	August, 20 2013
"ASEAN to successfully build community, says Deputy FM"	May, 09 2014
"ASEAN trade lacks lustre"	December, 20 2013
"ASEAN unions unite to protect migrant workers"	July, 19 2013
"ASEAN urged to become connected"	August, 15 2013
"Businesses urged to get ready for AEC market"	May, 08 2014
"Community vital for peat progress"	August, 17 2013
"Give people direct stake in ASEAN unity"	January, 03 2014

Appendix B: Lists of the Analyzed Civil Society Media's Articles

Focus on the Global South (FOCUS)

Title
"Activists slam ASEAN's lack of commitment to human rights"
"Analysis of the ASEAN Charter"
"ASEAN for the People"
"Civil society rejects flawed ASEAN Human Rights declaration"
"Southeast Asian groups petition ASEAN for information disclosure"
"Statement from the organizers of the ASEAN People's Forum / ASEAN Civil Society Conference"
"Statement of the 2011 ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ASEAN Peoples' Forum"
"Statement of the 2014 ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ASEAN Peoples' Forum (ACSC/APF) 2014"
"The 3rd ASEAN Civil Society Conference (ACSC): Moving Forward: Building an ASEAN People's Agenda"

Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (Forum-Asia)

Title	Date Published
"The Solidarity for Asian People's Advocacy Task Force on ASEAN and Human Rights (SAPA TFAHR) Annual Strategic Meeting 2014 (Bangkok, 21-22 April 2014)"	9 May 2014
"The ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ASEAN People's Forum (ACSC/APF) 2014 (Yangon – Myanmar, 21-23 March 2014)"	9 May 2014
"Corporate Human Rights Abuses in ASEAN: Civil Society Calls for Corporate Accountability and Compliance with International Human Rights Law"	4 October 2013
"Statement issued by the 6th Regional Consultation on ASEAN and Human Rights: Civil Society Organisations demand meaningful engagement with ASEAN human rights bodies"	4 October 2013

"Civil Society Organisations demand meaningful engagement with ASEAN human rights bodies"	4 October 2013
"Corporate Accountability in ASEAN : A Human Rights-Based Approach"	27 September 2013
"SAPA TFAHR Letter to the ACWC Regarding the draft Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Children in ASEAN"	24 July 2013
"STILL WINDOW-DRESSING A Performance Report on the Third Year of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) 2011-2012"	20 June 2013
"JOINT STATEMENT OF THE ASEAN CIVIL SOCIETY CONFERENCE/ASEAN PEOPLES' FORUM (ACSC/APF) 2013"	17 April 2013
"Civil society denounces adoption of flawed ASEAN Human Rights Declaration: AHRD falls far below international standards"	19 November 2012
"ASEAN Grassroots People's Assembly People's Statement"	15 November 2012
"Civil society rejects flawed ASEAN Human Rights Declaration"	15 November 2012
"Cambodia: Stop disrupting civil society events and restricting freedom of expression and assembly ahead of ASEAN Summit"	15 November 2012
"Civil Society Statement on Corporate Accountability in ASEAN"	14 November 2012
"Open letter to ASEAN Foreign Ministers at Informal ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting (IAMM) on the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration"	26 September 2012
"Joint submission to the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights on the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration by Civil Society Organisations and people's movements participating in the Civil Society Forum on ASEAN Human Rights Declaration, 10-11 September 2012"	14 September 2012
"ASEAN Human Rights Declaration must not provide protections lower than international human rights law and standards"	13 September 2012
"Open Letter to the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting (AMM) on the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration 7 July 2012"	7 July 2012
"Joint submission to the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission	25 June 2012

on Human Rights on the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration by Civil Society Organisations and people's movements participating in the Fifth Regional Consultation on ASEAN and Human Rights, 22 June 2012"	
"Civil society organisations meet ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights on the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration, call for universal standards to be upheld"	24 June 2012
"Total Reform Is Needed to Make AICHR Independent, Effective and Relevant to the ASEAN Peoples"	26 April 2012
"A Commission Shrouded in Secrecy – Performance Report of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights 2010-2011"	26 April 2012
"AICHR's Consultation on ASEAN Human Rights Declaration: Too Little Too Late"	16 April 2012
"Joint Statement: Calling AICHR to release ASEAN Human Rights Declaration"	8 April 2012
"Civil Society Demands Transparency and Consultation on the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration"	8 April 2012

South East Asian Committee for Advocacy (SEACA.net)

Title	Date Published
"SAPA WG on ASEAN's Analysis of the ASEAN Charter"	November 18, 2007
"2008 ASEAN People's Charter Processes - Schedule of Workshops"	May 6, 2008
"A need for an ASEAN 'regional identity'"	April 12, 2007
"ASEAN 'people's charter' to advance civil society"	February 14, 2008
"Alternative trade groups on ASEAN economic integration in 2015: A hazy future for the people"	July 29, 2013
"ASEAN Foundation still an under-utilized resource"	August 23, 2007
"ASEAN Peoples' Charter Process Launched"	November 7, 2007
"ASEAN peoples push for corporate accountability in ASEAN: Make ASEAN work for the people and not for big corporations"	November 14, 2012

"Civil Society Statement on Corporate Accountability in ASEAN 13 November 2012"	November 14, 2012
"CSOs call on ASEAN to implement regulatory mechanism in Extractive Industries, ask for greater corporate accountability"	May 28, 2013
"Indigenous communities and civil society groups challenge big business and ASEAN on CSR Framework; calls for greater corporate accountability"	November 28, 2011
"No Bloody Hands on an ASEAN Charter"	February 14, 2008
"Primer on Communication Rights"	November 8, 2005
"Solidarity for Asian People's Advocacies (SAPA) Submission on Economic Cooperation to the ASEAN EPG on the ASEAN Charter"	March 8, 2007
"Solidarity for Asian People's Advocacy (SAPA) Submission on Political and Human Security to the ASEAN EPG on the ASEAN Charter"	July 26, 2006
"Solidarity for Asian People's Advocacy (SAPA) Working Group on the ASEAN Submission on the Socio-Cultural Pillar and Institutional Mechanisms to the Eminent Persons Group on the ASEAN Charter"	10 November 2006
"SEACA: Peoples' solidarity is key to ASEAN Community Building"	2014-06-05
"SEACA and 135 other civil society organizations in Southeast Asia calls on AICHR to release ASEAN Human Rights Declaration"	April 11, 2012
"SEACA announces the 8th Round of Country Sensitization Workshops on ASEAN"	March 25, 2013
"SEACA supports ASEAN follow-up country processes"	August 23, 2007
"Message of the SAPA Working Group on ASEAN* at the Solidarity Event for Sombath Somphone"	April 18, 2013
"Southeast Asian groups petition ASEAN for information disclosure"	June 24, 2011

The Irrawaddy

Title	Date Published
"Activists Skeptical on ASEAN Human Rights Body"	Monday, August 3, 2009
"Arroyo Again Warns Manila May Veto ASEAN Charter"	December 7, 2007
"ASEAN's 45th Birthday Woe"	Monday, August 6, 2012
"ASEAN Agrees on Human Rights Commission"	Monday, July 30, 2007

"ASEAN and the Lady"	December, 2010
"ASEAN Charter Comes into Force"	Monday, December 15, 2008
"ASEAN Summit: Will New Charter Lead to More than Words?"	Tuesday, November 20, 2007
"ASEAN Charter Promotes Human Rights"	Wednesday, July 25, 2007
"ASEAN Charter Will Pressure Burma on Human Rights"	Tuesday, July 24, 2007
"ASEAN Human Rights Body Lacks Power to Punish"	Friday, February 27, 2009
"ASEAN Human Rights Body Launched Amid Controversy"	Friday, October 23, 2009
"ASEAN Human Rights Body with Teeth—or Paper Tiger?"	Wednesday, August 1, 2007
"ASEAN Human Rights Commission Should Have Independent Experts"	Thursday, January 31, 2008
"ASEAN Human Rights Debate Continues"	Thursday, November 5, 2009
"ASEAN Human Rights Moves More Talk Than Action"	Monday, November 24, 2008
"ASEAN's Never-ending Struggle for Relevance"	Wednesday, October 21, 2009
"ASEAN's New Challenges Post-Phnom Penh"	Monday, July 23, 2012
"ASEAN Rights Body Not Guaranteed"	Wednesday, August 1, 2007
"ASEAN Rights Body Should Prompt Guarded Optimism"	Wednesday, August 1, 2007
"ASEAN Secretariat Must be Strengthened"	Monday, May 21, 2012
"ASEAN Should Promote Democracy, Human Rights, Says Philippines"	Friday, December 8, 2006
"ASEAN Signs Landmark Charter with Watered-down Human Rights Body to Appease Burma"	Tuesday, November 20, 2007
"ASEAN Snubs Nominees from Peoples' Forum"	Friday, October 23, 2009
"ASEAN's Tricky Human Rights Charter"	Monday, June 18, 2012
"Burma's ASEAN Agenda"	Wednesday, December 12,

	2012
"Burma's New Media Can Shake-up ASEAN"	Monday, October 1, 2012
"Burma Opposes ASEAN Investigative Powers"	Tuesday, July 22, 2008
"Burma to Host ASEAN Human Rights Meeting"	Monday, May 14, 2012
"Burmese Activist Awaits Ruling on ASEAN Meeting"	Thursday, October 22, 2009
"Burmese Civil Society Groups Face Impasse at ASEAN Summit"	Wednesday, May 4, 2011
"Burmese Junta Signs ASEAN Charter"	Monday, July 21, 2008
"Can ASEAN Learn to Put People First?"	Wednesday, November 26, 2008
"Draft ASEAN Charter Shields Human Rights Violator Burma"	Friday, November 9, 2007
"EU's Nobel Prize—Lessons for ASEAN"	Monday, October 22, 2012
"Exile Groups to be Present at ASEAN Meet"	Tuesday, October 20, 2009
"Exiled Burmese Dissidents May Get Rare Recognition from ASEAN Lawmakers' Group"	Friday, August 24, 2007
"How ASEAN Engagement Led to Burma Reform"	Tuesday, June 5, 2012
"Human Rights in ASEAN: a Struggle Going Nowhere?"	Wednesday, July 22, 2009
"Human Rights Questions Arise at ASEAN Meeting"	Sunday, July 19, 2009
"Is ASEAN Ready to Take a Stand on Domestic Issues?"	Wednesday, February 26, 2014
"Parallel Battles for Burma and ASEAN's Human Rights Commission"	Thursday, May 31, 2012
"Philippine Senate Debates ASEAN Charter"	Tuesday, March 18, 2008
"Postpone Signing ASEAN Charter until People Are Heard"	Wednesday, November 7, 2007
"Proposed Sanctions in ASEAN Charter Dropped"	Tuesday, March 27, 2007
"Ramos Says ASEAN Charter Should Force Action on Burma"	Thursday, June 29, 2006
"Rights Group Seeks ASEAN's Help on Lao Activist"	Thursday, February 21, 2013

"Skepticism Expressed over Creation of ASEAN Human Rights Commission"	Tuesday, July 31, 2007
"The ASEAN Charter: A Human Rights Whitewash?"	February, 2009

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