

ISTANBUL TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY ★ GRADUATE SCHOOL OF
ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

**THE ROLE OF THE ASEAN WAY IN VIETNAM'S SOUTH CHINA SEA
POLICY TOWARDS CHINA**



M.A. THESIS

Yılmaz DURMAZ

Department of Political Studies

Political Studies M.A. Program

JUNE 2017

ISTANBUL TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY ★ GRADUATE SCHOOL OF
ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

**THE ROLE OF THE ASEAN WAY IN VIETNAM’S SOUTH CHINA SEA
POLICY TOWARDS CHINA**

M.A THESIS

**Yılmaz DURMAZ
(419131014)**

Department of Political Studies

Political Studies M.A. Program

Thesis Advisor: Asst. Prof. Dr. Ash alkıvık

JUNE 2017

**VIETNAM'IN GÜNEY ÇİN DENİZİ POLİTİKASINDA
ASEAN YOLU'NUN ROLÜ**

YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ

**Yılmaz DURMAZ
(419131014)**

Siyaset Çalışmaları Anabilim Dalı

Siyaset Çalışmaları Yüksek Lisans Programı

Tez Danışmanı: Yrd. Doç. Dr. Aslı Çalkıvık

HAZİRAN 2017

Yılmaz Durmaz, a M.A. student of ITU Institute of Social Sciences, student ID 419131014, successfully defended the thesis entitled “THE ROLE OF THE ASEAN WAY IN VIETNAM’S SOUTH CHINA SEA POLICY TOWARDS CHINA”, which he prepared after fulfilling the requirements specified in the associated legislations, before the jury whose signatures are below.

Thesis Advisor: **Asst. Prof. Dr. Aşlı ÇALKIVİK**
İstanbul Technical University

Jury Members: **Assoc. Prof. Dr. Evren BALTA**
Yıldız Technical University

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Umut UZER
İstanbul Technical University

Date of Submission: 5 May 2017

Date of Defense: 5 June 2017





in memoriam Necla Erman (1935-2016)



FOREWORD

I want to express my sincere appreciation to my thesis advisor Asst. Prof. Dr. Aslı Çalkıvık for her guidance, encouragement and criticism through the process. She allowed this study to be my own work, but steered me in the right direction.

I would like to thank Assoc. Prof. Dr. Umut Uzer and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Evren Balta for their precious support and advices. And, I would like to thank Asst. Prof. Dr. Asena Demirer. She broadened my horizons.

Finally, I must express my deepest gratitude for my mother Mihriban and uncle Oğuz. Without their endless support and understanding, I could not have complete this.

May 2017

Yılmaz DURMAZ

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
FOREWORD.....	ix
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	xi
ABBREVIATIONS.....	xiii
SUMMARY.....	xv
ÖZET.....	xvii
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Methodology.....	10
1.2 Thesis Structure.....	10
2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW.....	13
2.1 Realism.....	14
2.1.2 Hedging Strategy.....	16
2.2. Constructivism.....	18
2.3 Literature Review.....	21
2.5 Conclusion.....	22
3. WHAT IS THE ASEAN WAY?.....	25
3.1 Definition of the ASEAN Way And Its Components.....	26
3.1.1 Non-Interference.....	28
3.1.2 Settlement of disputes through peaceful means/non-use of force.....	30
3.1.2.1 The Sabah crisis.....	31
3.1.2.2 Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia.....	32
3.1.3 Unwritten norms.....	33
3.1.3.1 Consensus & consultation.....	33
3.1.3.2 Non-confrontation.....	35
3.1.3.3 Informality.....	38

3.2 The Debate on The ASEAN Way.....	40
3.3 Conclusion.....	45
4. VIETNAMESE-ASEAN RELATIONS: THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.....	47
4.1 1978-1991.....	47
4.2 1991-1995.....	49
4.3 Conclusion.....	51
5. THE SOUTH CHINA SEA DISPUTE.....	53
5.1 Historical Background.....	53
5.2 The South China Sea Claimants' Positions.....	56
5.2.1 China.....	56
5.2.2 Vietnam.....	57
5.2.3 The other claimants.....	57
5.3 The Importance of the South China Sea for the Claimants.....	58
5.4 Conclusion.....	60
6. VIETNAM'S STRICT AND WEAK ADHERENCES TO THE ASEAN WAY.....	61
6.1 1995-2005 Strict Loyalty to the ASEAN Way.....	61
6.2 2005-2015 Weak Loyalty to the ASEAN Way.....	67
6.3 Theoretical Analysis.....	80
6.3.1 Realist explanations.....	83
6.3.2 Constructivist explanations.....	87
6.3.2.1 Vietnam's identity in transition.....	87
6.3.2.2 Further consolidation of ASEAN identity.....	93
6.4 Conclusion.....	100
7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	103
REFERENCES.....	107
CURRICULUM VITAE.....	119

ABBREVIATIONS

ADMM:	ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting
ARF:	ASEAN Regional Forum
ASA:	Association of Southeast Asia
ASEAN:	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
COC:	Code of Conduct
DOC:	Declaration of Conduct
EEZ:	Exclusive Economic Zone
JIM:	Jakarta Informal Meetings
MAPHILINDO:	The Greater Malayan Confederation
PRK:	The People's Republic of Kampuchea
SEANWFZ:	Southeast Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty
SEATO:	The Southeast Asia Treaty Organization
TAC:	Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia
UN:	United Nations
UNCLOS:	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
USSR:	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
ZOPFAN:	Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality



THE ROLE OF THE ASEAN WAY IN VIETNAM'S SOUTH CHINA SEA POLICY TOWARDS CHINA

SUMMARY

The aim of this work is to analyse the role of ASEAN Way of diplomacy in Vietnam's policy towards Chinese actions in the South China Sea in the period between 1995 and 2015. My main argument is that the ASEAN Way led Vietnam to show deference to China and cooperate with it in certain fields, such as joint security endeavours and the resolution process for the South China Sea dispute.

The main factors that determine state behaviour are crucial for International relations theory discussions and my thesis is an attempt to discuss the ASEAN Way as an ideational factor influencing Vietnamese foreign policy. In order to examine my case, I use constructivist and realist IR schools as the theoretical framework. A constructivist analysis shows that Vietnam's adoption of the ASEAN identity drives it to show deference to China and to keep cooperation with it in line with its interests. On the other hand, realist school can explain Vietnam's employment of internal and external balancing vis-a-vis an aggressive China in the South China Sea. However, realist approach is not successful in explaining the continuity in Vietnam's maintenance of the ASEAN Way along with power politics after 2005. Constructivism can solve this anomaly by showing that Vietnam's learning and socialization process within ASEAN guide Vietnamese leadership to respect some key principles of the ASEAN method of diplomacy.

The thesis consists of six chapters and conclusion. In the introductory first chapter, the general structure of the thesis is elaborated and its methodology is explained. In the second chapter, constructivist and realist theories are evaluated. Their premises and arguments are examined. I also explain my reason to choose constructivism and realism instead of other theories. A literature review is also elaborated. In the third chapter, the ASEAN Way is elaborated. The discussion on the concept is examined. The historical background of Vietnamese-ASEAN relations is analysed in the fourth chapter. The South China Sea dispute is examined in the fifth chapter. The legal claims of littoral and other regional states are elaborated. The importance of disputed islands and other sea features in the region for the claimants are examined. In the sixth chapter, the role of the ASEAN Way in Vietnam's South China Sea policy towards China is discussed within a theoretical framework.



VIETNAM'IN ÇİN'E YÖNELİK GÜNEY ÇİN DENİZİ POLİTİKASINDA ASEAN YOLU'NUN ROLÜ

ÖZET

Bu çalışmanın amacı ASEAN Yolu diplomasi şeklinin, Vietnam'ın 1995-2015 arası Çin'in Güney Çin Denizi'ndeki faaliyetlerine karşılık uyguladığı politika üstündeki etkisini incelemektir. Temel argümanım ASEAN Yolu'nun Vietnam'ı Çin'e saygı gösterme ve bazı konularda işbirliği yapma konusunda yönlendirdiğidir. İşbirliği konuları arasında askeri alanlar ve Güney Çin Denizi Sorununa yönelik çözüm faaliyetleri sayılabilir.

Devlet davranışlarını tetikleyen ana faktörler Uluslararası İlişkiler Teorisi tartışmaları için hayati konulardandır ve benim tezim de ASEAN Yolu'nun bir fikişsel etken olarak Vietnam dış politikasına etkisini tartışmaya çalışacak. Ele aldığım konuyu incelerken inşacı (constructivist) ve realist yaklaşımları teorik çerçeveyi oluşturmak için kullanıyorum. İnşacı bir bakış açısından, Vietnam'ın ASEAN kimliğini benimsemesi, Çin'e saygıyla yaklaşma ve işbirliğinde bulunma konusunda itici olmuştur. Öte yandan, realizm de Güney Çin Denizinde hırçın bir Çin karşısında Vietnam'ın iç ve dış dengelemeye başvurmasını açıklayabiliyor. Fakat realizm, 2005 sonrası Vietnam'ın güç politikalarının yanında ASEAN Yolu'nun devam ettirmesindeki sürekliliği açıklayamıyor. İnşacılık bu uyumsuzluğu, Vietnam'ın ASEAN içinde geçirdiği sosyalleşme ve öğrenme sürecinin ülke yöneticilerini ASEAN tarzı diplomasinin temel ilkelerine saygı duymaları için yönlendirmesiyle açıklayabiliyor.

Tez altı bölüm ve sonuçtan oluşuyor. Giriş niteliğindeki ilk bölümde tezin genel yapısının detayları veriliyor ve metodoloji açıklanıyor. İkinci bölümde inşacı ve realist teoriler değerlendiriliyor. Teorilerin argümanları inceleniyor. Ayrıca inşacılık ve realizmi diğer teorilerin yerine seçme nedenimi açıklıyorum. Literatür taraması atruca bu bölümde yapılıyor. Üçüncü bölümde ASEAN Way detaylıca inceleniyor. Kavram üzerine olan tartışma değerlendiriliyor. Dördüncü bölümde Vietnam-ASEAN ilişkilerinin tarihsel arka planı analiz ediliyor. Beşinci bölümde Güney Çin Denizi sorunu ele alınıyor. Denize kıyısı olan ve diğer bölge ülkelerinin hukuki iddiaları ile ilgili detaylar veriliyor. Vietnam'ın Çin'e yönelik Güney Çin Denizi politikasında ASEAN Yolu'nun rolü teorik çerçeveden tartışılıyor.



1. INTRODUCTION

This thesis will be an attempt to answer the question “Does Vietnam show deference to the ASEAN Way in its efforts to deal with China regarding the South China Sea dispute after its membership to ASEAN until 2015?”. It will also provide answers for two additional questions. These are: “If Vietnam followed the ASEAN Way in the period between 2005 and 2015 towards an aggressive China, did she strictly preserve it?” and “Which theoretical approaches are most appropriate to provide an explanation for the case?”.

The big question that led me to ask these questions is: “Do normative values, ideas, identities and ideologies influence state behaviour?”. The factors that affect state behaviour is one of the central questions of the International Relations discipline. Rational choice theories, namely realism and liberalism, argue that states act according to cost and benefit calculations. For them, material conditions are the main drive behind their actions. On the other hand, constructivist perspective sees ideational factors, such as ideas, ideologies and culture as influential factors behind state behaviour. In this thesis I will examine a case in which ideational factors influence state policies. I argue that the ASEAN Way had an impact on Vietnam’s policy towards the South China Sea. The ASEAN Way’s role can explain the amicable side of Vietnam’s attitude towards an aggressive China in the 2005-2015 era. From a rational choice and materialist perspective, Vietnam’s maintenance of a friendly, reverent and cooperative attitude along with power politics presents an anomaly, namely an irrational policy from a rational actor. Constructivist theory can explain this phenomena with Vietnam’s adoption of the ASEAN Way.

The first two questions help to refine the argument and provide a context. The first one examines the two decades of Vietnam’s South China Sea policy towards China. From Vietnam’s membership to ASEAN in 1995 to 2015, Vietnam’s loyalty to the ASEAN’s norms and principles will be tested by examining its actions and discourse towards China regarding the South China Sea dispute. The second question emerges because of the need to emphasize the change and continuum in Vietnamese policies.

It is possible to observe that China has begun to follow a more aggressive stance in the South China Sea since 2005. In the face of a more assertive China, Vietnam's loyalty to the ASEAN Way in the period between 2005 and 2015 deserves an elaboration.

The thesis observes a strict loyalty to ASEAN Way by Vietnam in the 1995-2005 period and the second question aims to inquire the volume of ASEAN Way's impact on Vietnamese policies towards an assertive China. The second question examines the influence of the ASEAN Way towards changing conditions. The third question is required to detect a convenient theoretical approach to explain the factors behind change and continuum in Vietnam's position towards the South China Sea dispute.

The thesis aims to analyse one particular ideational factor that influences Vietnam's policies towards China regarding the South China Sea dispute. This factor is the ASEAN Way. The ASEAN Way can be defined as a unique method of diplomacy that emerged from ASEAN members' experiences since 1968 and Southeast Asia's cultural peculiarities. Its focus on cooperation, tacit and informal diplomacy provided 40 years of peace among member countries, which have fought wars (i.e. Konfrontasi) before the establishment of ASEAN. Several norms and principles constitute the ASEAN Way. These norms and principles are non-confrontation, consultation (musyawarah) and consensus (mufakat), respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-intervention, pacific solution of international disputes. The terms musyawarah and mufakat are from Indonesian language. ASEAN diplomacy also shows certain patterns, such as refraining from naming a country as a threat, establishing strong informal ties among state leaders, hiding problems and focusing on areas that can allow cooperation instead, Track II diplomacy via think-tanks, NGO's, business leaders and academics .

Constructivist IR theory is employed to analyse the Vietnamese position. The findings of realist approach about the issue is also examined and compared with constructivist results. They are utilised in order to support constructivist analysis. Constructivism has been chosen as the primary theoretical framework for this work because of its emphasis on the role of ideas, normative values and identities on states' perceptions of their interests. Constructivism does not see state action as necessarily based on rational calculations of cost and benefit and allows for explanations that take ideology, historical experience and self-other perception into account. Thus it can explain the points that neglected by rational choice and

materialist perspectives. On the other hand, realist theory explains some points such as Vietnam's return to balancing policies to cope with China's increasing material capacity and its determination to use them in the South China Sea. As a whole it is possible to see an eclectic approach in this work.

One can argue that, neoliberal institutionalism can also explain the cooperation between Vietnam and China. However, neoliberal institutionalism is not convenient for the aims of this thesis. First of all, although neoliberal institutionalism can be useful in explaining cooperation among states, it explains cooperation via the function of international regimes, such as the oil regime before 1930's among the major oil firms, the international monetary regime, Bretton Woods System or General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. It is important to note that such regimes depend on the consent and participation of all parties. However, in my case, China and Vietnam do not share strict norms and principles of an international regime. China did not adopt and practice the ASEAN Way. Thus, it is hard to see Vietnam's cooperative behaviour as a product of mutually adopted regimes. Furthermore, neoliberal institutionalism suggests that common material, and especially economic interests drive states to cooperate with help of international regimes and institutions. However, in my case, I argue that rather than pure cost and benefit calculations and material consequences, Vietnam tries to maintain its cooperation with China or with other words, respect the ASEAN Way because it sees such behaviour as the appropriate and legitimate foreign policy of an ASEAN member. A neoliberal institutional analysis can neglect Vietnam's adoption of the ASEAN identity and method of diplomacy and their effects on its China policy. Its perception is overly materialistic and rationalist as an alternative to constructivism for this work. Secondly, the main focus of neoliberal institutionalism is on the emergence of cooperation among western nations as a product of institutions established under the hegemony of the United States. Hegemonic stability theory is seen as one of the two reason of the emergence of cooperation among post-second world war environment by neoliberal institutionalism. It would be problematic to apply such an approach to the Southeast Asia region. Given the fact that after the end of colonial rule newly founded regional states did fight with each other, it is hard to explain Southeast Asian regional cooperation with the institutions that established under a previous hegemony. Thirdly, although Vietnam and China shares some platforms, they do not

share the ASEAN platform. China is not a member of ASEAN. Neorealism focuses on cooperation among members of the same international organization. Moreover, neorealists argue that along with membership to the same organization, some other mechanisms are necessary to facilitate cooperation among them, such as rewards, incentives, sanctions and punishments. Such mechanisms require active participation of other member states. However, it is not possible to mention such a mechanism between China and Vietnam. China insists on conducting relations on bilateral platforms. On the other hand, Vietnam and other ASEAN members are very sensitive about their sovereignty and independence. Strict organizational mechanisms such as punishment and sanction are not compatible with Vietnam's expectations of complete respect for its sovereignty and independence. Fourthly, neoliberalism is western centric to examine the ASEAN Way. ASEAN's some norms and principles are conditioned by historical experiences and culture, such as *musyawarah* (consultation) and *muafakat* (consensus). A constructivist perspective allows for sensitivity to such regional concepts. Furthermore, its employment can compensate western centric assumptions of realist theory about the regional politics of Southeast Asia. Thus, neoliberal institutionalism's application to my case along with or instead of constructivism and realism would not be theoretically accurate or fruitful (Keohane, 1984), (Dunne, Kurki & Smith, 2013, p.118-119).

According to the examination of Vietnam's loyalty to the ASEAN Way in the two periods, it is possible to observe change as well as preservation. On the one hand, there are strong signs of Vietnamese tendency to employ power politics towards China and the violation of the ASEAN Way. These tendencies reveal themselves in the period between 2005 and 2015. On the other hand, Vietnam sticks with the key ASEAN norms, principles and methods. The pressure of material conditions on Vietnam, namely the rise of China, can be seen as the motor of policy change in Vietnam. And realist IR theory provides answers for such phenomena. However, Vietnam's insistence on following most of the ASEAN norms and principles does not match with the realist insight. From a realist perspective, the ASEAN Way does not provide tactics that could contribute Vietnamese efforts for survival before the assertiveness of an economic and military behemoth like China. For realists, increasing internal capacities of states to defend themselves and establishing foreign alliances are the two main ways to cope with emerging assertive powers. As I will

demonstrate, the ASEAN Way offers sticking with peaceful resolution of disputes. This approach includes pretending that there is no conflict between parties, maintaining cooperation in many fields including military, usage of a tacit language and refraining from tagging any party as a threat or enemy. As I will demonstrate, Vietnam's persistence to maintain the ASEAN Way along with power politics cannot be explained with realist terms.

It is critical to note that this thesis focuses on the Vietnam's cooperation with China in non-traditional security issues, the joint naval patrols and the port visits of the navies. The economic relations between the two countries are not treated as anomaly for overall balancing policies of Vietnam towards China. Since economic relations could even occur among belligerents during wartime, and realist theorists do not see it as a factor in promoting cordial relation between rivals or attribute any great significance to it for geopolitics, Vietnam's preservation of its trade partnership with China is not seen as a part of its simultaneous cooperation and balancing towards its northern neighbour (Levy & Barbieri, 2004), (Mearsheimer, 2010, p. 393).

On the other hand, the Sino-Vietnamese cooperation in non-traditional security issues occurs in the South China Sea. At the very place where both countries maintain territorial claims and even naval clashes take place. Vietnam's willingness to enter into cooperative relations with China on such a sensitive matter is not a usual and expected behaviour from realist perspective. In similar conditions, even members of the same military alliance, for instance Greece and Turkey, could refrain from conducting such activities and confirm realist prophecies.¹ Thus, a search for ideational factors behind simultaneous cooperation and balancing can shed some light on Vietnam's behaviour.

Constructivist perspective offers a solution to fill the gap here. From constructivist point of view, ideas, ideologies, state identity, culture, traditions and experience condition state leaders' efforts to establish their countries' interests. Pure material conditions are not the only factor in constructing interests. Therefore, Vietnam's persistence on the ASEAN Way has to be examined by its two decade long interaction with the Association. The ASEAN member identity and socialization within the organization affect Vietnamese state elite's policy preferences to cope

¹ At October 2015, Greek authorities rejected to conduct joint naval patrols with the Turkish Navy in the Aegean Sea to prevent the refugee influx. (Athens rules out, 2015)

with an assertive China in the disputed South China Sea and prevent a total abandonment of the ASEAN Way for the sake of power politics in 2005-2015 period. The thesis sees the lack of power politics in Vietnam's repertoire in 1995-2005 period and its emergence in the next decade as a result of change in China's military capacity to push its interests in the South China Sea. In 1995-2005 period, under the suitable material conditions, namely when China was relatively calm, Vietnam managed to show a strict loyalty to the ASEAN Way. In 2005-2015 era, Vietnam violated some of the norms and principles of the ASEAN Way by applying balancing tactics. The thesis claims that the strict loyalty of the previous decade has been replaced by a weaker form of deference to the ASEAN Way. Although preoccupied with geopolitical considerations and applying power politics are increasing trends among Vietnamese policy makers, they also prefer to deal with the South China Sea problem under the ASEAN framework. The usage of constructivist tools can manage to solve the anomaly of Vietnam's preservation of the ASEAN Way even towards a capable and aggressive China.

As a result of inability to explain Vietnam's policy towards China by either balancing or bandwagoning, other attempts emerged to address the issue. By many theorists, Vietnam's policy is presented as a hedging strategy. This policy can be defined as taking defensive measures against China's increasing power and aggressive behaviour and putting efforts to maintaining warm relations in various realms, such as economy and bilateral diplomacy at the same time. However, this thesis sees Vietnam's efforts to cooperate with China when balancing her, not as part of a hedging strategy but as result of ASEAN Way's ideational influence on the country. I will argue against the attribution of a rational basis to Vietnam's pursuit of contradicting strategies towards China. Appreciating the influence of extra-rational elements such as ideas, ideologies, culture and traditions on state behaviour can perform better in explaining such conflicting policy choices. According to rational choice theories, namely realism and liberalism, state decisions are products of a rational deliberation processes. Cost-benefit calculation is main determinant behind state policies. All states seek to maximize their interests. Realism and liberalism differ in the explanation of state perception towards interest. For realists, states are sensitive to other state's relative gain. However, liberals argue that states are mainly preoccupied with their own absolute gain. As it can be seen, rational choice theories

overlook the role that played by many other factors that can influence state behaviour. For instance, from a pure rational choice perception, socialism did not play any role behind the foreign policy of the USSR, the same goes for Kemalism and Turkey.

As I will demonstrate, Vietnam's amicable behaviour towards China in the period between 2005 and 2015 was not part of a calculated move to cloak her balancing of Chinese power or soften or delay Chinese responses to Vietnam. Rather, it emerged because of Vietnam's adoption of ASEAN identity and the ASEAN method of diplomacy. Through learning and socialization within ASEAN, it developed a sensitivity to comply to the ASEAN Way. However, as it will be seen, this thesis does not reject rational choice. Realist theory is employed to explain Vietnam's balancing of Chinese power and aggressiveness. Mostly because enquiring ideational factors behind Vietnam's return to power politics necessitates another broad research. On the other hand, I argue that rational choice assumption cannot explain every part of Vietnamese policy towards China. It can explain Vietnam's application of internal and external balancing towards China with its effort to survive against an aggressor. However, it is not successful in shedding light on Vietnam's deferent and cooperative approach towards the same aggressor. And, as I will demonstrate, realist-hedging explanations for Vietnam's cooperative attitude do not reflect the policies of a rational actor. To be able to give a more comprehensive answer, the rational choice explanation regarding the Vietnamese policy should be sophisticated with constructivist theory and vice versa. As Hemmer and Katzenstein put it (2002, p. 601), "rationalist theories are more compelling when they are combined with constructivist insights into the importance of norms and identities". In a similar vein, Wendt argues (2000, p.168) that idealists and materialists have to consider both ideational and material factors. Both rationalist and constructivist approaches produce useful bits of knowledge and our knowledge should be unified.

I applied both constructivist and realist theories to the case because the complexity of the problem necessitated it. As Hemmer and Katzenstein state (2002, p.600), a problem-driven, rather than approach-driven style of analysis fits the complexity of political processes that occur within specific contexts. One side of the case is explainable with a balance of powers approach. However, the other side, namely, Vietnamese cooperation with China while balancing it is not simple enough to

explain within realist realm. Thus, I employed constructivism to enquire ideational influence of the ASEAN Way. Benefitting from wisdom of other approaches seem a more scientific way than insisting on the answers of a specific theory, given the limits in every theory. As Popper said, a theory that explains everything, explains nothing.

It is possible to mention two objections for an eclectic, problem-driven approach (Cornut, 2015). The first one is choosing certain theories over others. Katzenstein mainly prefers realism, liberalism and constructivism in applying his eclectic approach. However, if sound reasons for these preferences are provided, this should not be a problem. I tried to explain my reason to exclude liberalism from my analysis above. And also, preference of certain theories over others are not solely a problem of eclecticism. All other, theory-driven styles of analyses should address this issue too. Secondly, problem-driven approach can be seen incoherent, since it apply different theories to same case. However, by using answers of different approaches in a complementary way, it is possible to avoid contradictions. Moreover, the very reason for employment of different approaches is that specific cases require it. Problem-driven approach is not mere juxtaposition of random analysis, it is a necessity.

In order to prove the argument of the thesis, Vietnam's actions, state leaders' discourse and rhetoric of formal documents in the particular time periods are examined. Two time periods have been chosen for the examination of the Vietnam's China policies about the dispute. The year 1995 was determined as the beginning of the first period because it is the date of Vietnam's participation to ASEAN. 2005 was determined as the end of the first period and the beginning of the second one because of the relative increase in the China's aggressive moves regarding the South China Sea dispute since that year. Vietnam's responses to China's policies in the South China Sea in the periods of 1995-2005 and 2005-2015 are compared with the ASEAN norms and principles. The thesis determined usage of military means, unilateral actions regarding the South China Sea without consulting fellow ASEAN members and usage of a hostile rhetoric towards China as violations of the ASEAN Way. These actions are in contradiction with the principles and norms that are laid down in the 1967 Bangkok Declaration, 1971 Kuala Lumpur Declaration of Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN) and 1976 Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) and 2007 ASEAN Charter. They are also in

contradiction with the unwritten elements of the ASEAN Way. The studies on written and unwritten elements are discussed in chapter three. In order to observe internal balancing manoeuvres towards China, the data about the increase in Vietnam's defensive budget, new weapon systems purchases and the initiation of military modernization projects were collected and examined. The calls for other great powers' investments and navies to the disputed region by Vietnam, visits to Vietnamese naval bases by other great powers' navies, joint naval exercises with them and their efforts to enhance Vietnamese navy were observed to detect external balancing by Vietnam towards China.

It is important to elaborate the reason for choosing the Southeast Asia region and Sino-Vietnamese relation in the South China Sea. The South China Sea can be the next focal point of international political developments. Since the end of the Vietnam War and shift of the U.S.'s focus from the region to other parts of the world, the South China Sea and Southeast Asia show signs of becoming a place for turning points once again. China's increasing assertiveness, which is armed with its growing military and economic capacities can be thought as the main factor behind such re-emergence of the region as an attraction point. The disputed status of strategically located and resource rich islands in the South China and even the entire sea's own vague status are the main source of such a fertile ground for conflict and cooperation. Vietnam's position deserves a special attention. It is not only a claimant in the South China Sea and the disputed islands of the Spratlys and Paracels, Vietnam is also geographically closest to China among ASEAN countries and it experiences the pressure of China's increasing economic and military capabilities and its determination to use them from the first hand. Because of that reason, the factors that influence Vietnamese decision making deserve exploration. In this thesis I will attempt to investigate one of these factors, namely the ASEAN Way. The role of the ASEAN Way can contribute to appreciate Vietnamese pattern to cooperate with China when applying power politics to cope with her.

Vietnam and China's shared experiences of cooperation, conflict and even war within the last 40 years make already complex relations between the two more problematic for the dispute in particular. Ideologies, ideas, norms, traditions and culture are among the key factors that impact such relation along with aforementioned brute material conditions. As a result Vietnam's position and

policies towards China regarding the South China Sea problem provide a suitable ground for applying constructivist theory to explain its partial deference to the ASEAN Way.

1.1 Methodology

This thesis bases its questions and answers on a historical analysis of Vietnam's foreign policy. For the purposes of the thesis, close reading of policy documents have been preferred over qualitative interview. The documents that are issued by Vietnamese state provides evidence about its state identity, which is essential for a constructivist analysis on state policy. ASEAN's publications are used as important reference points to detail the concept of ASEAN Way. I intend to use interviews to enrich and sophisticate future works.

Primary and secondary sources are used to answer the research questions of the thesis. The historical documents and records that are published by the Vietnamese state and ASEAN, newspaper articles, interviews, statistical data are the primary sources that are used for the thesis. White papers, political reports, articles from official newspapers and ASEAN's joint communiques are among such documents. Secondary sources of the thesis are composed of academic articles from journals, books, academic theses, and web sites.

The thesis mainly covers the two decades of Sino-Vietnamese relations, namely the period between 1995 and 2015. However, in order to appreciate the roots of influential ideas that shaped the Vietnamese state identity and decision makers' perspective, many references to pre-1995 period are made.

1.2 Thesis Structure

This thesis consists of seven chapters. In the second chapter, general assumptions of realist and constructivist schools and a literature review will be elaborated.

Chapter three will focus on the ASEAN Way. Different definitions of the concept from various perspectives will be elaborated and compared with each other. Each component of the ASEAN Way will be detailed with their historical examples. The theoretical debate on the ASEAN Way will be examined in the second section of this chapter.

In the chapter four, the historical background of Vietnamese-ASEAN relations will be analysed. This chapter covers two historical eras, namely 1978-1991 period and the 1991-1995 period. The Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia in 1978 has been chosen as a starting point because of its significance for the Vietnamese-ASEAN relations, in which the two actors indirectly confronted and intensively interacted. Until 1991, Vietnam experienced ASEAN's problem solving methods and worked with the Association in the final stages of the Cambodian Crisis. 1991 marks the beginning of a new phase for the both actors, which was concluded with Vietnam's participation to ASEAN in 1995. This second period examines Vietnam's membership process. This chapter provides the necessary background to appreciate the evolution in Vietnamese state identity, which is crucial for the constructivist analysis in chapter five.

Chapter five is dedicated to the South China Sea Dispute. In the first section, the historical development of the issue will be provided. Section two will examine the claimant states' legal positions on the issue. Finally, the importance of the South China Sea for the littoral states and extra-regional actors will be elaborated.

In chapter six, the ASEAN Way as an ideational factor in Vietnamese policy towards South China Sea will be examined from a theoretical perspective. In the first section, Vietnamese deference to the ASEAN Way before a cooperative China in the years between 1995 and 2005 will be analysed. Section two focuses on the Vietnamese weakened loyalty to the ASEAN in the 2005-2015 period. The last section analyses Vietnam's employment of power politics along with its deference to the ASEAN Way from realist and constructivist international relations theories.

The conclusion chapter makes an overall assessment of the answers that provided for the research questions.



2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter constructivist and realist international relations theories will be evaluated. Hedging strategy will also be examined. Their assumptions about the ontology of the international relations, international system, main actors and their motivation or incentives will be examined. This examination is necessary to appreciate the theoretical analysis of Vietnam's South China Sea policy in Chapter Five. A literature review on Vietnamese policies towards the South China Dispute and China will be elaborated.

Before discussing the features of the theories I used in my case, I need to elaborate my reasons to choose them over other theories. As it mentioned above, I use both constructivism and realism in an eclectic, complementary manner. Peter Katzenstein is one of the main contributors to analytical eclectic approach and his problem-driven method to borrow necessary tools from different theories suits my case.

As the first research question indicates, I inquire the role that played by ideas in state behavior. Constructivist approach suits well for such a research because it takes ideas into account. It can explain certain sides of cases that cannot be explained from a pure materialist and rationalist perspective. Vietnam's deference for the ASEAN Way towards an aggressive China is such an issue. By examining Vietnam's ASEAN identity, the impact of ASEAN norms and principles on Vietnamese decision makers' perception of their interests, it is possible to observe that ideas do matter. However, constructivism has its limitations too. In general, there is more than one influential idea and it is hard to cover all of them in the same work. For instance, for my case, it is possible to discuss the impact of anti-Chinese sentiment on the Vietnamese balancing policy towards Chinese power. The same goes for Ho Chi Minh Thought. They require separate substantial work from constructivist point of view. Realism's parsimony shows its preciousness here. It can explain Vietnam's application of power politics against China by simply pointing out the emerging disruption in Sino-Vietnamese distribution of capabilities for Chinese favor. Similar to constructivism, realism cannot explain whole sides of Vietnam's South China Sea

policy. Rather, the joint use of realism and constructivism can help to grasp the whole story.

2.1 Realism

Realist theory of international relations can be defined as an approach that focuses on power and conflict among international actors. From realist perspective, the main actors of international relations are states. States use power to realise their national interests (e.g. security) and it leads to a constant pursuit for power. States are defined as rational actors and they act according to a cost-benefit calculation of the situation and their relative power. Realism in general explains power in material terms. Morality is seen as a relative concept and along with ideology and domestic politics of states they are considered as irrelevant to rational power calculations. Despite these common points, realism cannot be considered as a monoblock theory. There are disputes and disagreements between classical realists and neorealist-structural realists. And there are even sub-branches of neorealism, such as offensive and defensive realism.

Classical realism sees human nature and universal laws that derived from it, as the main factor that conditions politics among nations (Morgenthau, 1948). It is assumed that state leaders think and act in terms of interest defined as power. Their motives or ideologies are not seen as indicators of their foreign policies. Classical realism does not see interests as fixed once and for all. Rather, interests are depended on cultural and political contexts. And power does not seen solely as material power, anything that construct man's control over man is considered as power. Thus, it is interesting that there are certain similarities between classical realism and constructivism about their definition of interest. The origins of classical realism can be traced back to Thucydides' Melian Dialogue and Niccolo Machiavelli's *The Prince*. Along with these archaic representatives of the school, E.H. Carr and Hans J. Morgenthau can be seen as the founding fathers of classical realist branch.

Contrary to classical realists, neorealists argue that human nature is not a factor in international politics. Power is defined purely in material terms. International system is seen as the main determinant of state behaviour. Neorealists does not concern with cultural or political contexts in which interests are established. Only the distribution of capabilities among states determine interests.

Kenneth Waltz's criticism of classical realism paved the way for the emergence of second main branch within realist school, namely neorealism or structuralist realism . For Waltz (1979), international politics can only be analysed at the systemic level. Analyses at the individual level or human nature or domestic level that target internal structure of states cannot explain international politics. Because of the absence of central authority above states or a world government, international system can be defined as anarchy. Neorealists argue that international system should be understood with material terms. Balance of power puts states in order within the systemic anarchy and prevents the emergence of a world hegemon. In order to balance the power of another state, international actors could employ internal and external balancing. Internal balancing means a state's increasing of its own defensive capabilities. Forming alliances with other states is the external balancing. Main purpose of states is to survive and it is a prerequisite for other intentions. To achieve survival, states rely on themselves and self-help is the primary valid mechanism within the conditions of international anarchy.

John Mearsheimer's offensive realism emerged as a criticism of Waltz's assumptions about the degree of a states' desire for power. For Waltz, when states feel secure, they try to maintain status quo. Because of that reason, his version of realism is also known as defensive realism. Mearsheimer (2014) argues that states can only feel secure when they have a military power that cannot be challenged by the combination of all other militaries in the world. Thus, building a military hegemony is the ultimate goal of states. Such a goal renders all states power maximizers instead of status quo seekers. Moreover, states mainly prefer buck-passing strategy, namely transferring the burden of balancing to another state, not balancing.

It is important to note another important feature of neorealist perspective. According to neorealists, parsimony is necessary to build a successful theory. Putting too much variables into analyses is seen as a flaw. In order to maintain accuracy in their theories, realists try to keep their suggestions as much simple as possible. Their avoidance from discussing state's internal political developments or characters of state leaders in their theories aims to achieve such simplicity.

It is possible to observe that realist theorists tend to draw pessimistic pictures about future developments. Aaron Friedberg's (1993) prophesy about East Asia is a remarkable example of it. For Friedberg, the multipolar structure of East Asia, which

was emerged with the end of Cold War, is the main source of instability in the region, along with lack of intensifying economic relations, democratic structures and a common cultural consciousness. He concludes that such a structure makes the region ripe for rivalry. On the other hand, Mearsheimer also sees the region as a potential battlefield. He argues that if the economic and military development of China continues, she will attempt to establish a regional hegemony and it will eventually lead to a war among China, its neighbours and another regional hegemon in its own hemisphere, namely the United States.

This overview shows that from a realist point of view, the ASEAN Way of diplomacy could not have an impact on Vietnamese policy preferences towards China's posture in the South China Sea. The power asymmetry is the sole factor that constitutes the form of relations between China and Vietnam. ASEAN Way at best can be a tool to cloak their efforts to boost their defensive capabilities.

On the other hand, it can be treated simply as a mistake in Vietnamese leadership's cost-benefit calculations. However, as I will show, it is almost impossible for Vietnam to hide its gigantic moves to balance China. China is already aware of them. And, Vietnam does not try to hide them in the first place, rather, she tries to deter China from taking further unilateral action in the South China Sea.

It is also possible to mention another realist explanation for Vietnam's simultaneous application of balancing and cooperation towards China. It is known as hedging strategy. According to theorists who try to explain Vietnam's recent policy towards China, Vietnam tries to soften Chinese response to her balancing policy or escape from it. In section 2.1.2, hedging strategy will be elaborated.

2.1.2 Hedging Strategy

The term hedging is used among international relations theorists to explain simultaneous usage of balancing and cooperation by a state. Some theorists use hedging strategy in order to explain Vietnam's and other Southeast Asian states' China policy. Thus, it is important to examine the assumptions and arguments of it.

In general, it is argued that states employ hedging strategy to minimize risks of following a single constant way to cope with threats. Hedging provides states more freedom of action and elasticity vis-a-vis ambiguity. It is hard to find a clear-cut

definition of hedging in the literature, the common point in different definitions is hedging states' desire to expand their options and avoid from a fixed path to follow.

According to Leng and Liao (2016), hedging is used as an insurance by states. Hedging states strengthen their security strategy via alignments with other countries. However, they avoid from forming formal alliances to escape from the wrath of the state they hedge. Moreover, they deliberately create uncertainty in their partnerships and alignments to prevent hostility of potential rivals.

Salman et al. (2015) argues that second-tier states hedge against the risks of their foreign policy. The uncertainty in dominant states' intentions or overall future developments drive second-tier states towards hedging behaviour. Hedging states try to escape from antagonizing more powerful states while pursuing their own interests. However, their policies could clash with the interests of dominant actors. In such cases, they might avoid from confrontation and roll-back their policy preferences to escape from greater costs in the future.

Goh (2005) also stresses on employment of hedging as way to avoid from choosing one side at the expense of another. In order to achieve this, hedging states do not pursue open tactics, such as balancing or bandwagoning. Rather, they amalgamate them. Goh, argues that Southeast Asian states show a common pattern of hedging against China's dominance in the region. They use three tactics. The first one is soft balancing. Southeast Asian states try to convince the United States to balance China. Secondly, they try to convince China to conform international law by engaging her in economic, strategic and political fields. Third, they try to involve other regional powers to their pursuit for regional stability.

Vuving, Thayer, Hiep, Cheng and Chakraborti claim that Vietnam pursues a version of hedging strategy towards China. In section 2.4, their claims are elaborated.

As I will argue in chapter six, section 6.3.1, the hedging argument is based on the assumption that China can be tricked and convinced by Vietnam to tolerate its balancing strategy. However, it can be observed that China's aggressiveness in the South China Sea increased in the period between 2005 and 2015. It was aware of Vietnamese military efforts in the region. Chinese leadership showed this with their rhetoric and deed. In the same period, Vietnam took very huge steps to show its discontent from Chinese assertiveness in the disputed region, it is hard to explain its

pursue of cooperation with China with a hope to soften responses or multiplying options. By establishing and strengthening defensive cooperation with the United States, Japan, India and the Philippines and inviting their navies to its naval bases and the disputed region and conducting joint military exercises, and rearming its own navy, Vietnam chose a certain path instead of increasing its alternatives. Thus, I argue that, explaining cooperation with China as a pure rational, calculated move to ensure its security vis-a-vis her is not satisfactory. Rather, treating it as an extension of ASEAN Way of diplomacy can explain more. Constructivist theory provides the necessary perspective to evaluate such factor in Vietnamese foreign policy preferences regarding the South China Sea dispute.

2.2 Constructivism

Constructivism can be defined as the application of social constructivism into international relations discipline. Alexander Wendt's criticism on neorealist assumptions about the ontology of international structure can be seen as a turning point for constructivist IR theory. For Wendt (1992), systemic anarchy is not a pure reflection of material conditions but a social construction. He summarises this view as 'Anarchy is what states make of it'. The central concepts within the realist perspective, namely self-help mechanism and interests are also socially constructed. Individual state interests are shaped by states' identities. Ideas, ideologies, history and culture are among important factors in the cultivation process of interests (Wendt, 1999, p. 108). Thus, interests do not independently emerge as products of brute material conditions. They are refined by state leaders' perception of self and other and shaped through reiterated interactions. For instance, a realist assumes that primary factor that forms the relations of a second-tier state like Vietnam and a great power like China is the distribution of power among them. Ideology, identity, culture, history and tradition are irrelevant to their relations. On the other hand, constructivist perspective appreciates the influence of ideational factors like anti-Chinese sentiment among ordinary Vietnamese people or the ASEAN Way and socialism among the ruling state elite.

It is important to note that, constructivists do not reject the existence of a material basis beneath the ideational international structure. States build their interests over this material reality. For Wendt, power also should not be underestimated in

explaining international politics. However, material developments or fluctuations in power distribution are not enough to explain change in some cases. For example, the United Kingdom's preference to balance the USSR and aligning itself with the United States during the Cold War cannot be merely explained with power politics, given the almost equal power accumulation in both sides. History of Anglo-American relations, the ideologies that influenced both countries and a shared cultural heritage between the two nations drove the British decision-makers to invest in the idea that the UK's national interests lay in an alliance with the US. It shows that ideas matter.

Similar to realism, mainstream constructivist perspective focuses on states and sees them as primary actors of international politics. Wendt observes that system change occurs through states (1999, p. 9). For instance, an anarchic system that dominated by revisionist powers can be thought as Hobbesian anarchy. If it is populated by status quo powers, it can be thought as Lockean anarchy. An anarchic structure that composed of collectivist states can be defined as Kantian anarchy.

Another important contribution of constructivism to the IR discipline is its criticism on rational choice models of both realism and liberalism. Wendt argues that, rational choice theories see desires and beliefs as separate entities. From this perspective, beliefs do not have motivational power of their own, they merely describe the world and they are simply instrumental to desires. Wendt (1999, p. 119) offers a cognitive model for it and summarizes it as "we want what we want because of how we think about it". In this model, desires are constituted by beliefs. Furthermore, material needs are defined and directed by beliefs. For example, a status quo state's interest in avoiding from provoking a war is defined by its belief in its position in the world as a satisfied member of the society of states. Wendt argues that all states have material needs of security and stability, however not all of them have such status quo interests. Beliefs constitute identity of state as status quo power or revisionist power. Brute material needs are not enough to explain these categories. Self-schemas of revisionist states like victim or representation of other as evil empire are products of identity and interest building processes. However, as mentioned above, constructivism does not reject rationality, rather it offers to give norms and ideas as much weight as rationality.

Other theorists' contributions to constructivist theory deserve to be mentioned here. Katzenstein (2000) focuses on the ideational foundations of regionalism in Asia and other parts of the world. He sees political considerations, social practices and language as source of regions. The invention of the term 'North Atlantic region' by the policy makers of the United States to justify the establishment of NATO and American military presence in Europe is an example of such ideational processes (Hemmer & Katzenstein, 2002).

Alice Ba (2006) contributes to the constructivist understanding of the relations between ASEAN and China by examining the social learning process between the two actors. She argues that the relative stability in material conditions and ideational instability at the end of Cold War paved the way of interaction between ASEAN and China. Ba suggests that ASEAN pursues a complex engagement strategy towards China to convince it to respect ASEAN norms. In this process, ASEAN employs multiple channels such as economic, political, social, formal and informal. She concludes that the material leverage of China before ASEAN is not so influential because of ASEAN's success in shifting China's perception towards itself in a positive way. When parties see each other as friends rather than foes, material capabilities become less crucial.

Nikolas Busse (1999) observes the absence of power politics among Southeast Asian nations and argues that constructivist approach can explain such pattern. He claims that the consensus on a code of conduct among ASEAN members led to the emergence of a regional identity. The actors that internalized such identity refrain from coercive policies or balancing behaviour. Busse provides empirical evidence for the lack of internal balancing, namely avoidance from armament projects among ASEAN members. He reminds ASEAN's decision to not to organize itself as a military alliance even against the invasion of Cambodia by Vietnam. He explains such a behaviour by ASEAN's perception of the concept of military alliance as a factor that decreasing security and their dislike of confrontational politics as a cultural trait.

Acharya created an important literature on the social and cultural dimensions of ASEAN Way and its influence on state behaviour in South East Asia. A detailed elaboration of his contribution to the discussion on the ASEAN Way will be provided in chapter three.

2.3 Literature Review

About the analysis on Vietnamese policy of China in general and the South China Sea in particular, it is possible to mention a tendency to see it as a mixture of different methods rather than a fixed way. For instance, according to Vuving (2006), Vietnamese strategy to deal with China is based on four tactics, which are solidarity, deference, balancing and enmeshment. He also argues that this combination has passed four phases and according to power distribution among international and local actors one of them could be more predominant. It is important to note that Vuving does not see a consensus on the tactics among Vietnamese policy makers. He underlines the struggle for influence among Vietnamese political elite as one of the main factors of changing composition of Vietnam's hybrid policy.

Similarly, Thayer (2011) claims that under the conditions of power asymmetry, Vietnam employs both balancing and deference. He observes that both Vietnam and China try to preserve a mature asymmetry between them. This situation includes both cooperation and struggle. And both parties have too much at stake to turn their relationship into an open conflict or hostile asymmetry. Chakraborti (2012) also notes that Vietnam pursues a mixture of three strategies, namely engagement, omni-enmeshment and hedging towards a rising China.

Vuving's analysis can be seen as an eclectic approach that employs both constructivist and realist tools. He emphasizes the interplay of Marxist ideas and geostrategic considerations on the governing level of Vietnam. On the other hand, Thayer and Chakraborti attribute much more importance to power politics and see cooperation as a way to alleviate defensive measures that taken by Vietnam against China's increasing assertiveness. All of the three treat ASEAN only as a tactical tool in the Vietnam's arsenal and do not pay attention to the ideational influence of the ASEAN Way. This thesis tries to explain the cooperative side of Vietnam's contradicting policy by its deference to the ASEAN Way rather than by showing deference to a bigger neighbour under power asymmetry as Thayer and Vuving argued. As it will be mentioned in 6.3.1, tricking China is not actually an effective way to deal with it. This work will attempt to elaborate the ASEAN Way's part in a thirty year period of construction of Vietnam's identity and interests in its relationship with China regarding the South China Sea Dispute. As Tung observed

there could be more than one identity and the thesis focuses on the ASEAN member identity of Vietnam. Cheng (2011) sees Vietnam's efforts to take both defensive measures against China and maintain good relations with her as a hedging strategy.

Shoji (2012) also argues that Vietnam uses both ASEAN platform and the United States as parts of her hedging strategy. For him, ASEAN provides some tools to Vietnam to diplomatically deal with China's increasing aggressiveness regarding the disputes in the South China Sea. Vietnam's enhancing security cooperation with the United States composes the other part of the hedging strategy and provides the country the ability to check China's increasing military power.

Hiep (2013) is another champion of the hedging argument. He argues that after the normalization of Sino-Vietnamese relations in 1991, Vietnam employs a multi-tiered, omni-directional hedging strategy. Hiep argues that this particular strategy includes both elements of bandwagoning and balancing. Vietnam's economic pragmatism and direct engagement are within the realm of bandwagoning. Soft and hard balancing compose the balancing part of its hedging strategy.

On the other hand, there are other theorists who claim that realism is still relevant. According to Lim and Cooper (2015), hedging is not as prevalent as claimed in East Asia. Rather, balancing towards China is the widespread strategy among East Asia's second tier states. On the other hand, Khoo (2014) argues that the main strategy that pursued by China's neighbours towards itself is *realpolitik*. He tags the claim that there is no balancing and no fear from China's rise among its Asian neighbours as a myth. For him, East Asian states support the United States' balancing behaviour against China and there is an increasing tendency towards conflict between Vietnam and China. Similarly, Casto (2012) argues that China's own *realpolitik* approach towards Southeast Asian states regarding the South China Sea pushes Vietnam and the Philippines towards balancing manoeuvres that involve the United States.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter aimed to provide preliminary information about the theoretical perspectives that employed in the thesis and the previous works and discussions on Vietnamese policies towards the South China Sea dispute and China. Constructivist and realist perspectives were examined and a literature review was elaborated. It is

possible to observe that there is a tendency to see Vietnamese policies towards China as a mixture of different methods. However, there is no significant reference to the ASEAN Way in explanations for Vietnam' multiple policy preferences.





3. WHAT IS THE ASEAN WAY?

In this chapter, a definition of the ASEAN Way will be provided and the meaning of the concept as used in this thesis will be elaborated. Because of the reason that, the ASEAN Way neither has a single definition nor has an official status within ASEAN, the explanation of the meaning of the term for the thesis is a must. The ASEAN Way is taken as an ideational force that influence Vietnamese policies towards Chinese position in South China Sea between the periods of 1995-2005 and 2005-2015. Although the ASEAN Way is generally known as the methods unique to ASEAN, to manage the inter-ASEAN problems among the members of the Association, its reflections and influence on Vietnamese foreign relations as an ASEAN member with a non-ASEAN country like China is evaluated in this thesis. There are also other works that examined the impact of ASEAN norms, principles, practices and methods on individual ASEAN members vis-a-vis non-ASEAN countries like China and the United States. For example, Nischalke (2000) examines some of the ASEAN members policy decisions towards non-ASEAN parties and compare them with ASEAN norms and principles to find out whether the ASEAN Way is ‘a Real Spirit or a Phantom?’. Acharya on the other hand, discusses the relevancy of the ASEAN Way with the greater Asia-Pacific region including the great power actors, and examines its potential as a normative set of rules of international relations in the future (Acharya & Layug, 2012, p. 28), (Acharya, 1998). The thesis understands the ASEAN Way in a similar vein with these approaches. It is not limited to intra-ASEAN diplomacy. It is engaged during the pre-membership process to the Association and experienced from the first hand after the participation.

In the first section of this chapter, the definition of the ASEAN Way will be provided and the sources of the concept will be examined. The norms and principles of the Association and its form of organization will be evaluated. In the following section, the debate on the ASEAN Way will be examined. The existence of the concept as a substantial factor in inter-ASEAN relations and its capacities to redefine member’s

interests are the themes of this debate among theorists. The chapter will be concluded with the elaboration of these points.

3.1 Definition of the ASEAN Way And Its Components

There is no official definition for the ASEAN Way. However, the term was coined first by some of the leaders within the Association and later it was introduced to academic literature by theorists. Senior Indonesian General Ali Moertopo's emphasis on 'the system of consultations that has marked much of its [ASEAN's] work' that may be called 'the ASEAN way of dealing with a variety of problems confronting its member nations' can be seen as one of these early examples (Acharya 1998, p. 56).

Various definitions and descriptions have been produced for the term over the years; however, there are common points in all of them. These are the norms and principles of ASEAN. At this point, examining some of these definitions and descriptions and then focusing on the elements of the concept can be helpful.

According to Acharya, the ASEAN Way is a security culture that aims to manage intra-ASEAN disputes and present a common method in dealing with external security issues. Its resources are from common cultural and administrative heritage of Southeast Asia, Western practices of diplomacy, namely Westphalian principles and a common sense of regionalism (Acharya 1998, p. 80). For Gillian Goh, 'culturally-based beliefs governing the ASEAN actions which make up the real ASEAN Way' (Goh 2003, p. 114). She points the principle of consultation or *musyawarah* as a shared value and common cultural concept that shaped ASEAN's approach to regional interaction and cooperation. Noordin Sophie lists thirteen key principles that construct the ASEAN Way. These are 'rejection of internal and external collective military pacts; rejection of emphasis on peace through military deterrence; the advocacy and practice of 'true peace measures: the building of confidence, trust, predictability, goodwill and friendship, national resilience, a rich web of productive and warm bilateral relations; the principle of actively seeking and maximising solidarity, common ground, agreement and harmony; the principle of sensitivity, politeness, non-confrontation and agreeability, emphasising 'the ability to agree to disagree without being disagreeable'; the principle of decision making by consensus; the principle of mutual caring; the principle of respect for territorial integrity; the principle of non-intervention in domestic affairs; preference for quiet

diplomacy and aversion to excessive public washing of dirty linen and diplomacy through the media and mass mobilisation; the principle of pragmatism; the preference for content rather than form, substance rather than process, non-addiction to Cartesian [approaches] and to legalism; the principle of egalitarianism (Acharya, 2001, p. 74-75). Katsumata defines the term as ‘an unique style of diplomacy emphasizing an informal and incremental approach to co-operation through the habit of consultation and dialogue, while limiting to a minimum the level of institutionalization in the Association’ (Katsumata, 2003, p. 105). From his point of view, the ASEAN Way is an example of the reconstruction of global norms in the Southeast Asian context. By global norms he refers to non-interference and non-use of force principles of the UN Charter. For Narine, the ASEAN Way focuses on managing and containing problems and uses cloaked or indirect approaches, symbolism and code words to deal with them (Narine, 1997, p. 964). According to Tamaki, the ASEAN Way is a vague concept and its vagueness should be taken as an inherent feature because of the evaluation of it with this way since its formation. He argues that iterated action and ‘routine and constant reference’ to it by ASEAN leaders creates or with other words speech acts create, the ASEAN Way as a form of ‘social reality’ (Tamaki, 2006, p. 12).

It is possible to separate the elements of the ASEAN Way into two categories, namely the principles that specified in the legal documents of the Association and the unwritten norms that shaped by Southeast Asian cultural, diplomatic and administrative practices (Acharya&Layung, 2012, p. 11). The founding document of ASEAN, namely 1967 Bangkok Declaration, 1971 Kuala Lumpur Declaration of Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN), 1976 Treaty of Amity, Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) and 2007 ASEAN Charter are the main documents that specify the ASEAN principles. In Bangkok and Kuala Lumpur Declarations, specific references to the United Nations Charter are noticeable. Bangkok Declaration points ASEAN states’ aim to promote ‘peace and stability through adherence’. 1971 ZOPFAN Declaration clarifies this point by noticing ASEAN states’ inspiration from the UN principles of ‘respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states, abstention from threat or use of force, peaceful settlement of international disputes, equal rights and self-determination and non-interference in affairs of States’ (Demirbaş&Aydın, 2014, p. 75). Furthermore, with

1976 TAC the member states declared their willingness to ‘adhere the principles of mutual respect for the independence, sovereignty, equality, territorial integrity and national identity of all nations; the right of every state to lead its national existence free from external interference, subversion or coercion; non-interference in the internal affairs of one another; settlement of differences or disputes by peaceful means; renunciation of the threat or use of force; effective cooperation among themselves’ (Url-1, 2016). 2007 ASEAN Charter keeps these principles intact and adds references to adherence to democracy, fundamental freedoms and protection of human rights (Url-2, 2007). As many scholars pointed, these principles are not unique to ASEAN and take their sources from Westphalian principles and international law. However, for Katsumata these principles should be understood in the Asian context and their implication with non-written norms, which are unique to ASEAN, constitutes the ASEAN Way (Katsumata 2003, 106-107). Similarly, from Acharya’s point of view, these principles can be found within other international institutions, however, ASEAN members’ adoption of them as a part of the ASEAN culture and supplement of them with administrative methods that unique to the region makes them an element of the ASEAN Way (Acharya 1998, 57). To sum up, it is possible to narrow the written principles into two categories: non-interference and settlement of disputes through peaceful means (non-use of force).

3.1.1 Non-Interference

The nucleus of non-interference principle of the Association can be traced back to 1967 ASEAN Declaration. Through this document, founding leaders of ASEAN declared that ‘they are determined to ensure their stability and security from external interference in any form or manifestation in order to preserve their national identities in accordance with the ideals and aspirations of their peoples.’ (Url-3, 2016). As mentioned above, 1971 ZOPFAN Declaration points out the United Nation’s principle of non-interference as an inspiring source for their aim of ASEAN countries to turn Southeast Asia into a zone of neutrality (Url-4, n.d.). According to Article 2 of the 1976 TAC, parties to the treaty shall be guided by the fundamental principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of one another (Url-1, 2016). The Article 2 of the ASEAN Charter also refers to non-interference principle.

The unfinished nation-building process in all of ASEAN members and in the Southeast Asia region can be seen as the main reason behind a strict commitment to non-interference/respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity principle of ASEAN (Katsumata, 2003), (Acharya, 2001). ASEAN countries' newly gained independence from colonial administrations put these states into a perpetual process of consolidating the legitimacy of their government in the eyes of the society and establishing basic pillars of an independent nation, namely economic and social development. The fragile socio economic and political state of Southeast Asian countries made their ruling elite sensitive to internal threats, such as socialist rebel activity, ethnic strife and civil unrest. Without a normative basis of respecting sovereignty of each other, it would be impossible for these countries to come together for cooperation. Thus, the principle of non-intervention emerged as a cement of unity among ASEAN states.

As Acharya put it, ASEAN countries' perception of weakness vis-a-vis internal threats contributed to the development of national resilience policy and comprehensive security in Southeast Asian nations (Acharya, 2001, p. 58). National resilience emerged as an Indonesian response to domestic fragility of the country and it focuses on economic, social development as the main means to cope with security problems. Later the concept was adjusted for the Southeast Asian region and comprehensive security was adopted as one of the primary strategies of ASEAN. This point too shows that, ASEAN's security perception was mainly inward looking during the formation of ASEAN norms and directly influenced member states' tendency to emphasize sovereignty and territorial integrity.

On the other hand, for Katsumata (Katsumata 2003, p. 112), concerns towards external threats are also relevant regarding the ASEAN countries' stress on non-intervention. Colonial legacy also plays its part in such an approach. Since the independence of Southeast Asian nations, they faced with foreign intervention from powerful external actors. Katsumata sees Chinese meddling with Malaysia's and Indonesia's internal affairs by supporting socialist rebel groups as an important example of such threats. Moreover, the division of Southeast Asia between communist bloc and anti-communist forces also contributed to ASEAN members' concerns over foreign interference. As a result, sovereignty and non-intervention became focal points for these countries.

Acharya (Acharya 2001, 58-60) points four elements of non-intervention principle: not criticising a member state publicly, criticizing those who violate the non-intervention principle, refraining from supporting rebel groups that targeting neighbour states, supporting member states that are fighting rebel groups. ASEAN's reluctance to criticize member states because of their policies and political regimes is examined below under the title of consensus and consultation. About the criticizing those who violate the principle, Acharya does not give an example about intra-ASEAN process. Rather, he provides ASEAN's calls for respect for sovereignty in the region towards the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia as an example. However, given the Vietnam's status of non-party to ASEAN in 1978, it does not reflect an ASEAN criticism towards its own member's violations of non-intervention principle. The third element of the non-interference principle was actually breached by Thailand during the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia. Khmer Rouge found shelter in the Thai side of the border and organized attacks against Vietnamese positions in Cambodia during the war. On the other hand, according to Acharya, member states and Thailand more specifically, were much more careful in following the principle. For the last principle, it is possible to mention about cooperation at the border regions against rebel groups. Malaysian-Thailand cooperation during the Cold War in the form of Thai permission for Malaysian hot pursuits is an example of it. On the other hand, it can be observed that ASEAN showed signs of solidarity with regimes that were under internal threat. ASEAN's support for President Aquino of the Philippines by organizing 1987 ASEAN Summit in Manila reflects such tendency.

3.1.2 Settlement of disputes through peaceful means/non-use of force

Non-use of force principle can be named as the *raison d'état* of ASEAN. The very basis of the organization depends on the prevention of an armed conflict between member states. In this respect it is possible to construct an analogy between ASEAN and the United Nations. Similar to the United Nations, ASEAN emerged after a few failed attempts and armed conflicts. Association of Southeast Asia (ASA), which was formed in 1961, and MAPHILINDO, which was formed in 1963, were two short-lived, unsuccessful examples that aimed to prevent possible conflicts by gathering regional states. Both organizations dismantled as a result of conflicts in the region. The territorial dispute over North Borneo/Sabah between the Philippines and

Malaysia prevented ASA from taking an active role and the Indonesian-Malaysian conflict (Konfrontasi) led MAPHILINDO to collapse.

With the end of Konfrontasi in 1966 as a result of the replacement of Sukarno of Indonesia by Suharto, initiatives to revive ASA emerged. ASEAN was established on the framework of ASA (Url-5, 2011). Acharya (Acharya 2001, 49) claims that Indonesian policy to restrain itself by ending Konfrontasi became an example for the management of relations between neighbours in the region and formed the basis of non-use of force principle.

Two cases from the Cold War period can be helpful in illustrating the ASEAN's implementation of non-use of force principle vis-a-vis crisis: The Sabah crisis in 1968-69 and Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia.

3.1.2.1 The Sabah crisis

The Sabah crisis is an important example of how the Association deal with international disputes with methods other than use of force or legal means to settle the disputes. It mainly relied on advice, recommendations, peer pressure and dialogue to prevent the deepening of the crisis (Acharya, 2001, p. 50)

After the formation ASEAN in 1967, the Sabah issue between Malaysia and the Philippines resurfaced. However, with its experiences from the early failures of regional organizations it achieved to prevent a conflict between the parties and keep the Association intact. The media reports about the formation of secret army by Philippine authorities to invade Malaysian region of Sabah deteriorated the relations between the two countries in March 1968. The diplomatic relations of the two were suspended in June followed by Malaysian refusal to participate in any ASEAN meetings because of Philippine possibility to voice its claims over the region. As a response, ASEAN formed ad hoc committees to maintain the dialogue between the two and reiterated its calls for restraint in their approaches for the sake of ASEAN. Eventually, the organization managed to convince the Philippines to not to voice its claim on the region for the future ASEAN meetings. One year later after the suspension of all ASEAN meetings due to the crisis, the Philippines could not take the risk of deteriorating its relations with other three member states and the two party of the dispute came together in an ad hoc meeting. In 1969, Malaysia and the Philippines decided to restore their relations and freeze the issue.

According to Acharya, given the lack of economic integration in the region in 1960's as a factor to alleviate the relations between the conflicting parties, the main reason of the restoration of relations between Malaysia and the Philippines was their deference to the ASEAN principle of non-use of force.

3.1.2.2 Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia

The war in Cambodia is an important case that can test ASEAN's deference to non-use of force principle towards a crisis that emerged among non-ASEAN actors. Contrary to the Sabah case, ASEAN's capacities in establishing communication, applying peer pressure or giving advices to Vietnam were limited. Thus it applied other mechanisms such as international pressure and diplomatic isolation. Although it will be elaborated in the chapter four, a brief examination of ASEAN methods towards the issue will be provided here.

In 1978, the border clashes between Khmer Rouge in Cambodia and Vietnamese troops turned into a full scale war. The full invasion of Cambodia by Vietnam and the toppling of Pol Pot regime followed it and led to the establishment of a pro-Vietnamese government, namely the People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK), guerrilla attacks on Vietnamese occupation forces by Cambodian resistance including Khmer Rouge, Khmer People's National Liberation Front and former Cambodian King Sihanouk's FUNCINPEC.

ASEAN's main instrument against Vietnam was the United Nations platform. The replacement of Khmer Rouge's position by PRK in the UN as legitimate representative of Cambodia was the main issue for ASEAN's attention and efforts. The aim of the Association was to prevent the legitimization of Vietnam's invasion and spread of socialism in Southeast Asia.

ASEAN worked to prevent any attempt that can provide a legal basis for Vietnamese intervention. In 1979 it opposed Indian proposal to keep the Cambodian seat at the UN vacant. Between 1979 and 1982 it prevented extraction of Khmer Rouge from the UN General Assembly and the main actors behind such policy were Indonesia, Thailand and Singapore. On the other hand, ASEAN foreign ministers called for the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Cambodia (Goh, 2003, p. 117). Moreover, ASEAN lobbied for the unification of Cambodian resistance and formation of a coalition government. Finally, after the initiation of partial Vietnamese withdrawal in

1985, ASEAN managed to gather parties including Vietnam to the conflict in informal meetings, namely Jakarta Informal Meetings and worked to facilitate the solution process.

Although there are allegations about some ASEAN initiatives that provided anti-Vietnamese Cambodian resistance (Jones, 2010, p. 487), ASEAN declared that it would not provide weapons to such groups and it would not take a military role in the conflict, (Busse, 1999, p. 50).

As a result, towards an external crisis ASEAN showed deference to the principle of non-use of force. It used diplomatic pressure, international platforms and bargaining in handling the crisis in Cambodia. It might be pretentious to claim that ASEAN 'solved' the Cambodian crisis single-handedly via the ASEAN Way, given the other factors that influenced the Vietnamese position in Cambodia. However, it played its part as a pressure factor and facilitator in the solution process.

3.1.3 Unwritten norms

The other elements of the ASEAN Way are the norms that the cultural, diplomatic and administrative traditions of the Southeast Asian region shaped. The methods of consultation (musyawarah), consensus (mufakat), informality and non-confrontation can be thought under this category. The examination of each of these norms could provide a better insight about the essence of the concept. Consultation and consensus are the practices that ASEAN employed in its management of intramural relations and member states relations with external parties. According to some observations, the decision making methods in Indonesian, Malaysian and Philippine village societies are based on consultation and consensus and it is possible to find a cultural relationship between ASEAN's method and such administrative approaches (Thambipillai&Jayaratnam, 1985, p. 11).

3.1.3.1 Consensus & consultation

In the ASEAN context, consensus does not mean unanimous decision or full agreement among members. Rather, each party share its opinions, suggestions and concerns about the issue and the result becomes a combination of all of these different views. According to Narine (Narine, 1997, p. 965), the Association's common policies display a consensus that is usually the lowest common denominator

among its members. Moreover, there is another embedded norm within consensus building efforts. It is not letting problems to block ongoing processes. When a member disagree with a common decision of other parties, this situation is also considered as a consensus and without giving any harm to sceptic one, other members can benefit from new arrangement (Acharya, 1998, p. 64). The source of this model is five-minus-nine method, which was used in order to proceed with the process of ASEAN Industrial Projects in 1980. According to it, disagreeing party nevertheless supports the other members' decision (Thambipillai&Jayaratnam, 1985, p. 22). Malaysian and Indonesian support for the Thai position during the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia can be an example of such a model of consensus. Despite Indonesian and Malaysian scepticism and opposition towards China because of the Chinese support to insurgent movements in these countries a few years ago and sympathy for Vietnam as a potential block to China in Indochina, they agreed to not to thwart Chinese-Thai efforts against Vietnamese advance in Cambodia and even supported Thai position.

Another feature of the consensus method is the efforts to prevent losing face towards external actors. When a member state support a position that is not acceptable by others, the disagreeing parties does not let it to lose face and try to keep the image of unity among members (Acharya, 1998, p. 64). The process that followed the failure to issue a Joint Communiqué after 45th Annual Ministerial Meeting in Cambodia in 2012 shows ASEAN members' efforts to keep the image unity among members. The disagreement on the reference to South China Sea in Joint Statement text between Cambodia, Vietnam and the Philippines was the main reason of the failure to issue a joint statement. However, the following efforts of Indonesia showed that the mechanism of preventing or at least alleviating public disagreement among members is working. Indonesian foreign minister Marty Natalegawa, by employing shuttle diplomacy among ASEAN capitals within two days, managed to create a fully agreed consensus on a Six-Points Principles on South China Sea. He further succeeded to guarantee consensus among ASEAN members on a Draft Code of Conduct as base text to proceed negotiations with China (Thayer, 2013, pp. 1-5).

Related to this practice, it is possible to mention about ASEAN members' preference to employ quite diplomacy or with other words to not to criticize any member state publicly. It is possible to argue that such practice developed because of member

states' need to provide a comfortable situation for discussions and negotiations. As Katsumata and Acharya put it, keeping comfort level high and avoiding from a hostile environment are two keys to proceed with consultations and reach consensus. Moreover, it is possible to argue that departures from the ASEAN Way by member countries do not lead comments about them within the organization because of the practice to not to criticize or isolate any party. Thus, an observation on reactions of members to those who follow or give up the ASEAN tradition can hardly give an opinion about a strict or weak loyalty to it.

From Acharya's point of view (Acharya 1998, pp. 63-66), such a system of consultation and consensus emerged because of the perception of Southeast Asian countries themselves as weak and their need to take a common stand against powerful external actors. Thus, national interests of the member countries are partly defined by the need to keep consensus and not to upset the community.

3.1.3.2 Non-confrontation

Non-confrontation is another pillar of the ASEAN's unwritten norms. It is possible to talk about three core features of non-confrontation, namely avoiding to tag any external party as a threat, sweeping important issue areas under the carpet or with other words ignoring problems and focusing on areas that can allow improvement of relations and finally, to not to turn ASEAN into a collective security organization or a military alliance. Moreover, until the formation of ASEAN Regional Forum, security issues were not discussed during the ASEAN Summits and it was a reiterated practice within ASEAN. However, with the end of the Cold War, security issues became a subject for ASEAN meetings and ASEAN-sponsored multilateral forums.

The practice to refrain from naming any external power as a threat or enemy can be observed in official documents that released by the Association, such as joint communiques. The documents do not use a hostile language towards any party or point out a specific target as a threat. Moreover, the individual member states are very sensitive to usage of such rhetoric for themselves. Indonesian negative reaction to Australian categorization of the country as a national security threat is an example of it (Acharya, 1998, p. 61). On the other hand, China is not encoded as an enemy or threat, despite the tensions in South China Sea. For instance, in 2011, at the height of

tensions in South China Sea, Joint Communiqué of 48th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting calls for the implementation of 2002 Declaration of Conduct on South China Sea, creation of a Code of Conduct and continuation of dialogue between China and ASEAN. It also emphasizes the economic relations between China and ASEAN. The tone of voice that used towards China is very far from hostility. Although it can be argued that the relative material weakness of ASEAN vis-a-vis China in 21st century or Vietnam and the USSR in 1970's and 1980's led to such a preference, there are many examples that weaker side uses a hostile and targeting language. Thus, it is possible to mention about other reasons, such as inward looking security understandings, national resilience policy or with other words comprehensive security. The common understanding within major ASEAN countries (Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand) that economic and social development are key to national security is not compatible with creating enemies with a hostile rhetoric. As a result, this norm can be seen as a product of a particular ideational element within ASEAN and unique to the Association.

The second component of non-confrontation principle is 'sweeping important issues under the carpet'. It is possible to mention an ASEAN practice of leaving hard to solve and serious problems among members out of multilateral discussion agenda within ASEAN and focusing on potential areas that could improve relations. The main aim behind such a practice can be freezing disputes, gaining time, maintaining progress in other areas and protecting gains from previous interactions among members. It is possible to argue that, the implementation of such a practice needs adoption of absolute gain principle by state leaders. Because of the fact that the essence of practice aims to protect cooperation in other areas, those who make such cooperation need to think that a gain in a fruitful area is not transferable to coercive efforts to solve problems among them. As Acharya put it (Acharya 1998 p. 61), this practice allowed the improvement of inter-ASEAN economic relations. Relations among China and ASEAN can be another example of such an approach. Although the South China Sea is discussed by ASEAN meetings and other international platforms like ARF, ASEAN follows a step by step approach towards the problem and does not allow sovereignty issues or incidents in the region to dominate the sessions. The efforts to implement the DOC and to create a COC reflect such approach. Moreover, the Association's concentration on fostering relations with

China on several fields, such as infrastructure, non-traditional security rather than preoccupying only with the South China Sea conflict even during the height of conflict in 2011 can be observed in joint communique of ASEAN Ministerial Meeting of that year (Url-6, 2011). ASEAN-China Foreign Ministers' Meeting on Connectivity in Kunming, Third ASEAN-China Young Entrepreneurs Forum and establishment of ASEAN-China Investment Cooperation Fund are among such efforts.

Lastly, ASEAN members are determined to not to turn the Association into a military alliance. Even in the height Cold War, Vietnamese aggression in Indochina and Chinese support for insurgent movements in Indonesia and Malaysia did not lead member states to form a collective defence mechanism. It is possible to think about three reasons for such a policy. The first one is the historical experience. After the failure of Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), which was composed of Australia, France, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand, United Kingdom, United States, to counter security threats and provide a stable environment in the region and its eventual dissolution, Southeast Asian countries may have seen inconvenience of forming collective military alliances in the region. Rather a focus on economic and social cooperation and an image of unity may have been seen a better attitude, given the coexistence of ASEAN and SEATO in the period between 1969 and 1977. Secondly, and related to the first one, comprehensive security and national/regional resilience approaches of ASEAN countries exclude collective security concept. According to comprehensive security understanding, national and regional security depends mainly on the economic and social development of individual states and region as a whole (Hsiung, 2004, pp. 3-4). Collective security agreements and great power protection do not meet the security needs of regional countries. The last reason can be thought as refraining from provoking important actors in the region. However, as mentioned above, it might be a mistake to reduce ASEAN's decision to exclude hard power from its diplomatic repertoire to strategic calculations. Thailand's and the Philippines' membership to collective security organizations like SEATO also shows Southeast Asian countries' high risk tolerance vis-a-vis big powers in the region.

3.1.3.3 Informality

Informality can be thought as another part of the procedural norms of the ASEAN Way. It is possible to observe that ASEAN prefers to rely on informal methods, namely personal connections among state leaders, measures to provide mutual trust or confidence building measures and Track II diplomacy, over formal arrangements.

According to Severino (Severino, 2006, pp. 12-14), one of the most important examples of the informal approach is the lack of implementation of binding, formal mechanisms of ASEAN. The reluctance of member states to apply the High Council, which is a body at ministerial level (Url-1, 2016), to settle the disputes among them is seen as an important example of informal arrangements. For instance, in both Indonesian-Malaysian and Malaysian-Singaporean border disputes, the parties submitted the case to International Court of Justice instead of the High Council. In the first case, Malaysia rejected to submit the case to the High Council and in the second case Malaysia and Singapore preferred to settle their several disputes via ICJ and bilateral mechanisms. This shows that ASEAN members do not prefer to turn ASEAN into a court with binding decisions. Severino notes that it is possible to mention two important binding treaties that emerged as a result of ASEAN's efforts, namely Southeast Asia Nuclear Free Zone (SEANWFZ) and ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution. For Severino, the commission that created for the observation of implementation of SEANWFZ will only make decisions on procedural matters. About the second agreement, it is possible to mention a relatively long ratification process. It took twelve years from 2002 to 2014 for the ratification of all member countries.

Informal personal contacts among ASEAN state leaders form another part of informal, loose arrangement methods of the ASEAN Way. ASEAN leaders themselves point out a general tendency within organization towards keeping informal meetings, advices, recommendations over formal procedures. For instance, former Foreign Secretary of the Philippines Carlos Romulo stated that 'I can pick up the telephone now and talk directly to Adam Malik (former Indonesian Foreign Minister) and Rajaratnam (former Singaporean Foreign Minister). We often find that private talks over breakfast prove more important than formal meetings.' (Collins, 2013, p. 33).

The bureaucratic structure of the Association is also compatible with the norm of informality. The ASEAN Secretariat was formed seven years later after the formation of the Association and the bureaucratic body is relatively smaller than other regional groupings in the world such as European Union. The formal authority is actually at the hands of ASEAN state leaders and the Secretariat does not enjoy an equivalent power over the ASEAN region. It can be thought as an extension of the principles of respect for sovereignty and non-intervention. ASEAN states do not desire to turn the organization into a supranational body by pooling sovereignty. According to Ravenhill (Marsh, 2006, p.180), ASEAN leaders deliberately formed a weak structure for the Secretariat and prevented its formation of an independent source of authority. The organizational weakness of the Secretariat, such as small numbers of professional staff, their secondment from national governments, was to ensure it will remain with minimal authority.

As Collings pointed out (Collins, 2013, p. 34), the ratification of ASEAN Charter in 2008 by all member states can be seen as a step towards building formal institutional structures. For instance, Charter gives authority the Secretariat to observe the implementation of ASEAN agreements and report the results to the ASEAN Summit (Url-2, 2007). However, the decision on whether members comply with agreements or not remains within state leaders' hands. Moreover, the Charter does not provide an independent source of power or authority for the Secretariat and national secretariats remain as the main nodes of ASEAN works.

One of the most important diplomatic mechanisms of ASEAN, Track II diplomacy can be examined under this part. The concept can be defined as the management of diplomacy via informal channels such as Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO), think-tanks and workshops. It is possible to observe that there is an increasing trend of holding Track II meetings in Southeast Asia since the early years of 1990's (Url-7, 2010). Two organizations, which are associated ASEAN and ARF, are important in conducting second track dialogues in the Southeast Asia region, namely the ASEAN Institutes for Strategic and International Studies (ASEAN-ISIS) and the Council on Security Co-operation in Asia Pacific (CSCAP). In such Track II meetings, not only scholars from universities or analysts from NGO's participate in, but government officials also join them. The relationship between Track I and II is not limited to that in the Southeast Asian context, CSCAP also submit reports to the ARF. Because of

the non-binding nature of Track II diplomacy, new ideas and sensitive issues could be discussed at these meetings. For Acharya (Acharya, 1998, p. 76), Track II platform can be thought as testing grounds for bold ideas and issues and it provides an environment for the arrangement of ideas and concepts to Southeast Asian Context.

So far, ASEAN's written and unwritten/procedural norms and principles were elaborated. In the next section, the debate on the ASEAN Way in the international relations literature will be examined. The main discussions are made around whether the concept substantially exists or just a myth and its capacity to redefine both intra-mural and extra-mural actor's interests.

3.2 The Debate on the ASEAN Way

The first theme of the discussion on the ASEAN Way is the existence of the concept as a substantial factor among intra-ASEAN and extra-ASEAN relations.

Violation of the norms and the principles that constitute the ASEAN Way is the main point the sceptics emphasized. According to Nischalke (Nischalke 2000, p. 101), the ASEAN Way is a myth. By examining twenty cases regarding the cooperation in foreign policy between ASEAN members, he observes that ASEAN countries follow the ASEAN Way on thirteen cases. In seven cases, the principles and norms were not respected by member countries (Nischalke, 2000, p. 98). Nischalke claims that in thirteen cases, ASEAN countries' respect for the norms was actually triggered by external pressure. Moreover, in the cases that deference to the ASEAN Way emerged, ASEAN's support for the policy initiatives were crucial. However, for the unilateral initiatives, state leaders were reluctant to follow the ASEAN Way. In testing the member's deference for the norms and principles, Nischalke mainly observes emergence of consultation and consensus in decision making processes. For Nischalke, the following cases are the examples of violation of such norms: Thai minister's establishment of a de facto alliance with China in 1979 without consulting ASEAN leaders, Malaysian and Indonesian leaders' declaration of Kuantan Principle that called for a cease to the Soviet and Chinese intervention to the war in Cambodia in 1980. Thai Prime Minister's proposal to turn Indochina from a battlefield into a marketplace without consulting other ASEAN members is another breach of the ASEAN principles. For the last two cases he argues that they were also contradicting

with ASEAN's general policy towards the problems. Singapore's fail to consult ASEAN members regarding its intention to open up its military facilities to the United States in 1989 is another example of failure to following the consultation principle. This case also triggered an intra-mural discussion on the compatibility of the American presence with ZOPFAN (Nischalke, 2000, p. 93). Finally, 1995 Australian-Indonesian security cooperation was concluded without a consultation with ASEAN members. Indonesian foreign minister Ali Alatas rejected the necessity to consult with the ASEAN partners on bilateral initiatives. (Nischalke, 2000, p. 96)

Lee Jones (2010) also examines the cases that including serious violations of the ASEAN Way. He observes ASEAN members' compliance to the non-intervention principle and argues that class considerations of ASEAN countries' governing elite or class conflict in general and the efforts to maintain the capitalist order in the Southeast Asian region necessitated both emergence of the non-intervention principle and recurring violation of it. The conflicting class interests within the individual ASEAN countries result with compromises on non-intervention principle. Jones examines cases from both the Cold War and post-Cold War era.

For Jones, during the Cold War era, internal threats to the ruling elites by socialist groups and the perceived support for them from the socialist countries led them to collaborate to block such forces. Non-intervention principle provides a basis for them to give up meddling with each other's affairs and focus on the common enemy. Jones notes that Thailand supported the Burmese rebels in their fight against socialist groups in Burma and Laos. The Philippines, Malaysia and Thailand involved with the Vietnam War. They provided material support to the South Vietnamese regime by sending troops, engineers and giving military training and civil assistance. Thailand conducted secret operations to deploy troops in Laos and Cambodia to prevent communist takeovers in these countries. Indonesia covertly helped to transfer US-made materiel to Cambodia, proposed to send peacekeepers and provided economic and political support for anti-communist forces in the country. After the invasion of Cambodia by Vietnam, he also sees a heavy ASEAN involvement with the conflict and thus violation of the non-intervention principle. Jones claims that Thailand supplied Khmer Rouge with hundreds of million dollars worth military equipment. Along with the frontline state and the United States, other ASEAN countries re-built the anti-communist forces in Cambodia to regain the control of the

country; they helped them to form a government-in-exile and provided political support in the UN.

Jones observes that after the Cold War, social conflict within ASEAN member states resulted with different social groups and power nodes' pursue of their own agenda even against the official policies. For instance, Thai military's high profits from black market trade in Cambodia and continued support for Khmer Rouge resulted with the resurface of conflict in the country in 1994. Same year, a Thai business oligarch organised a failed coup against Cambodian prime minister. ASEAN on the other hand, as a response to the instability in Cambodia imposed conditions for Cambodia's membership to the Association. The preconditions were aiming to reshape the internal political structure of the country, such as renewal of elections, and formation of a new government. Malaysian, Singaporean and Thai decision to send peacekeeping forces to East Timor, and ASEAN's criticism of Myanmar's undemocratic internal policies are also presented as violation of non-intervention principle by Jones.

David Martin Jones and M.L.R. Smith (2007) examine the economic and security performance of ASEAN in order to test its success in exhibiting a common identity. From authors' point of view, ASEAN states' response to 1997 Asian economic crisis and their efforts towards coping with terrorism in Southeast Asia do not confirm the claims about an ASEAN identity, community or solidarity. During the 1997 crisis, ASEAN members showed a common tendency to protect their own economy. They just paid lip service to solidarity and community. About the fight against terror in Southeast Asia, they claim that mutual suspicions from each other emerged among ASEAN members. Moreover, domestic considerations go beyond the concerns on keeping a communal stance and image of community. For instance, Indonesian Prime Minister's reluctance to alienate Muslim populations of the region weakens the Southeast Asian war on terror.

As it can be seen, contrary to the claims about the relevancy of the ASEAN Way to Southeast Asian international relations, the violations of the ASEAN's very own norms and principles by its member states lead some theorists to take a sceptical position towards the concept. However for Katsumata (Katsumata, 2003, p. 108), focusing on actor behaviour to detect the validity of norms and principles is not appropriate.

The actor behaviour is meant to be influenced by norms and this renders the reasoning tautological. Instead he offers to observe speech and writings of actors to appreciate the role of norms. He notes that from constructivist point of view, actors legitimize their behaviour by referring norms. Actor's action might be incompatible with the norm. However, his reference to that norm is the indicator of norm's validity. For instance, Katsumata presents Thai Foreign Ministry's attempt to legitimize its 'flexible engagement' approach. This approach was presented as a more enhanced interaction of ASEAN with the region (Url-8, 1998), by claiming that the concept is fully consistent with ASEAN's commitment to non-interference.

From a different point of view, Tamaki (Tamaki, 2006) finds the attempts to detect a substance within the ASEAN Way as problematic. For him, references to Asian characteristics, without reference to what is truly Asian about it or international law and describing the concept via exogenous stationary principles do not provide a satisfactory explanation about the ontology of it. Tamaki offers to focus on iterated practices, speech acts and interaction among ASEAN members. He employs Social Theory to understand the formation of the ASEAN Way and see it as an emergence. As an institutional fact, the ASEAN Way emerges through iterated acts of agents. He notes that much of the characteristics of the concept 'are detected through routine and constant reference to it by ASEAN policy makers' (Tamaki, 2006, p. 12). Tamaki's reference to John Searle can be important in the debate on the role of observing actor behaviour to detect the validity of norms. He notes 'Once particular social context emerges, agents seek comfort in replicating behavioural norms through their everyday activities. Just like the social context, actors are not required to consciously follow the rules of behaviour.' (Tamaki, 2006, p. 14). Finally, Tamaki also sees the ASEAN Way as the grammar of ASEAN. The habit of doing things together forms this grammar and it regulates the way the member states interact with one another (Tamaki, 2006, p. 16).

The second debate on the ASEAN Way is its capacity to alter member state's interests and behaviour. Constructivist analyses attribute important role to the norms and principles of ASEAN in influencing both member states and other regional actors' behaviour, such as China. Contrary to such studies, the limits of norms and identities in changing actor interests are emphasized.

Shaun Narine argues that the ASEAN Way does not change the way member states define their national interests (Narine, 1997, p. 965). He observes that the ASEAN Way manage to construct cooperative relations among member states when the conditions are suitable and their interests are common. The very own reason of the emergence of cooperation and absence of conflict among ASEAN members during the Cold War was the pressure of external powers and the need to cooperate. When their interests are in conflict, the ASEAN Way can only provide an illusion of unity.

Similarly, Nischalke underlines the external factors in the emergence of cooperative behaviour among ASEAN members (Nischalke, 2000, pp. 100-101). For him, adherence to the ASEAN norms and principles does not indicate a common vision or altered interest; rather it reflects ASEAN members' need of expectable behaviour from their counterparts in the Cold War environment.

Contrary to these examinations, Acharya (2005) argues that it is possible to observe the role of ASEAN norms and principles in shaping state behaviour in Southeast Asia. He points out Indonesian opposition to the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia. Despite Indonesian comfort with communist regime in Vietnam and its potential role as an obstacle on Chinese influence in Southeast Asia, it gave up such strategic consideration for the sake of ASEAN's non-intervention principle. Again, in 1998, Thai government relaxed its desire to adopt 'flexible engagement' principle and turned to strict loyalty to non-intervention principle. For Acharya, these are the examples that reflect power of norms in altering national interests (Acharya, 2005, p. 102).

Nicolas Busse stresses the ASEAN countries preference to not to turn the Association into a military alliance despite the conditions that can push them to choose such a strategy, such as Cambodia-Vietnam War or rise of China (Busse, 1999, p. 44-55). For him, ASEAN states does not enhance their military alliances with outside powers or form a collective security framework because they are simply contradicting with ASEAN norms. ASEAN countries see military alliance as a source of less security rather than more security. He concludes that collective identity of ASEAN shapes the identity and interests of individual member states.

Finally, for Alice Ba, ASEAN even managed to change the perspective of a great power like China. From Ba's point of view, by using a complex engagement, it

succeeded in altering the Chinese behaviour towards the Association. The complex engagement depends on argumentation, persuasion, search for areas of consensus and friendly socialization. She argues that by socializing China, ASEAN managed to change China's behaviour into a direction that compatible with three pillars of the ASEAN Way, namely restraint, respect and responsibility (Ba, 2006, p. 166). Thus, Ba attributes much more power to the ASEAN norms than Narine and Nischalke.

3.3 Conclusion

The components of the ASEAN Way and the debate on the concept were elaborated. The concept can be defined as a diplomatic technique that focuses on conflict prevention and management in both intramural relations and individual states' extramural engagements. The thesis itself sees the written norms and principles of the Association as one of the two constituent parts of the ASEAN Way. Unwritten norms, namely consensus and consultation, non-confrontation and informality form the second part of the ASEAN Way.



4. VIETNAMESE-ASEAN RELATIONS: THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In this section, I will provide a historical background for the relations between ASEAN and Vietnam. The state of relations between the 1978 Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia and the rapprochement in 1991, the 1991-1995 era, which is Vietnamese pre-membership period to ASEAN, will be elaborated.

4.1 1978-1991

Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia and the toppling of Khmer Rouge regime in 1978 shaped the mode of relations between her and ASEAN until the end of the Cold War. The warming relations between the two since the early years of 1970's were deeply shaken by this move. In the eyes of ASEAN, Vietnam was an aggressor and an expansionist threat for the security of Indochina and Southeast Asia. Along with such an image, Vietnam also was perceived by the association as an extension of the Soviet Union in the region, which was a formal ally of Vietnam since November 1978 (Singh, 1997, p. 218). Vietnam on the other hand, was justifying its occupation of the country by its intention to end the Cambodian Genocide which was perpetrated by the Khmer Rouge regime and the special historical ties between the two countries. (Pao-min, 1987, p. 635). During this period Vietnam maintained an occupation force in Cambodia and continued its presence in the country until 1991 Paris Peace Accords. Until the end of 1980's, Vietnamese determination to defend the invasion and uncompromising attitude supplied the ASEAN fears and willingness to back the Khmer resistance in Cambodia and make Vietnamese presence in the country costly, both materially and diplomatically. ASEAN used international channels to for this task. In the United Nations platform, it achieved to prevent the recognition of Vietnamese-installed People's Republic of Kampuchea as Cambodia's legitimate government. Secondly, during the meetings of International Conference on Kampuchea, ASEAN managed to pass its plan to call for the withdrawal of all foreign military presence from the country without naming Vietnam (Murphy&Welsh, 2008, p. 260). During the conflict in Cambodia, ASEAN almost

showed a united attitude towards Vietnam. In the military field, ASEAN did not convert itself into a military alliance towards Vietnam, rather some of its members provided material and organizational support and shelter for anti-Vietnamese groups. Especially Thailand, which was known as the front-line country, aided Cambodian resistance, transferred Chinese weapons to Khmer Rouge and accepted them to the border regions for reorganizing and attacking Vietnamese positions (McGregor, 1990, p. 275), (Stedman, 2002, p. 502). Moreover, ASEAN lobbied for the unification of Cambodian resistance groups including Khmer Rouge against Vietnam and such a coalition appeared in 1982 and met the American and ASEAN need for a legitimate candidate for the representation of Cambodia in the UN chair (Sothirak&Wade, 2012, p. 167).

From the beginning of 1985, the Cambodian conflict and Vietnamese-ASEAN relations entered a new phase with the initiation of partial withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from the country (Singh, 1997, p. 221). The Gorbachev administration's focus on economic development and peaceful relations with the United States and China, with other words the fading of Cold War atmosphere can be seen as one of the reasons for such a development. The reluctance of its sponsor to continue the conflict in Cambodia had an impact on Vietnamese decision to loose its pressure over the country. According to McGregor, Hanoi was also interested in focusing on economic development and ceasing the conflict in the region (McGregor, 1990, p. 272). Secondly, there was a growing socio-economic crisis in Vietnam (Thayer, 2015, p.3) that caused by the series of wars that the country involved for four decades and the economic structure that emulated from the pre-Gorbachev USSR. Under such circumstances, Vietnam was not as eager as to maintain the occupation in Cambodia. Moreover, as will be seen in chapter six, Vietnam's socio-economic challenges along with fascination of Deng Xiaoping's economic reforms and Gorbachev's ideational influence and increasing international isolation led Vietnamese leadership to rethink their policies on Cambodia, towards the ASEAN countries and reorient overall foreign policy of the country. In 1988, the bulk of Vietnamese military presence withdrew from Cambodia (McGregor, 1990, p. 273). During this period, ASEAN initiated two diplomatic initiatives to contribute the peace process in Cambodia, namely 'proximity talks' and Jakarta Informal Meetings (JIM) among the parties including Vietnam. The proximity talks in 1985 were collapsed because of the

Vietnamese concerns about the representational issues and its rejection to participate direct talks with Khmer Rouge. In 1988 and 1989, JIM I and JIM II were held with the participation of Cambodian resistance groups, ASEAN, Vietnam and Laos and produced a framework for the further negotiations (Sundararaman, 1997). In 1991, Paris Peace Accords under the auspices of the United Nations effectively ended the war in Cambodia and paved the way for Vietnamese-ASEAN rapprochement. The relations of 1978-1991 era was conditioned by war and conflict and the perceived identities of the actors. Vietnam's image in the eyes of ASEAN as an intruder and a communist threat from the north, Vietnam's description of ASEAN as a product of U.S. aggressive and interventionist policy (Tung, 2002, p. 113) and a resurrection of SEATO (Singh, 1997, p. 219) rendered an early improvement of relations impossible. Eventually, the disappearance of such Cold War codifications and tagging as a result of the internal developments in Vietnam and ASEAN and external developments facilitated the rapid normalization of relations. Vietnam's Deputy Foreign Minister emphasized this point in 1994, he stated "With the October 1991 Paris Agreement on the overall political solution to the Cambodia problem, the key obstacles to Vietnam-ASEAN relations over the last 10 years was removed. Relations between Vietnam and ASEAN members could thus rapidly develop bilaterally and multilaterally" (Tung, 2007, p. 486).

4.2 1991-1995

Vietnam's interest in being a part of ASEAN appeared immediately after the settlement of the dispute in Cambodia. In 1991, Vietnamese Prime Minister officially declared Vietnam's intention to join the association. In 1992, Vietnam signed ASEAN's Treaty of Amity and Cooperation and became an observer state within ASEAN (Tuan, 1996, p. 74). In 1993, Vietnam expressed its intention to join ASEAN at an appropriate time and in 1994 it announced its desire for an early membership. As an observer state, Vietnam participated in the first ASEAN Regional Forum Meeting in 1994. In July, the country officially took the decision to join ASEAN and it became a member in July 1995 (Tung, 2007, p. 485). During this process ASEAN responded positively to Vietnam's initiative. In 1992 Joint Communiqué of 25th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, it pledged to take active role in reconstruction of Indochina and initiated joint economic ventures in Vietnam with

Western countries to improve the infrastructure in the country (Singh, 1997, p. 224), (Url-9, n.d.). Malaysia, for instance, supported Vietnamese integration into region via ASEAN and encouraged Vietnamese leadership for participation (Goodman, 1996, p. 598). In 1991, Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad claimed that Vietnamese-ASEAN differences in socio-cultural field would not prevent Vietnam from joining the ASEAN (Tung, 2007, p. 484).

In 1995, during the membership process, Vietnamese leaders was showing the willingness of the country to join the association and sending positive messages about the Vietnamese determination to meet the requirements to be a responsible power within ASEAN. Vietnamese representatives to ASEAN meetings stated that “joining ASEAN is also the opportunity for us to push forward the reform process”, which is known as Doi Moi (Goodman, 1996, p. 598). Vietnamese Foreign Minister Nguyen Manh Cam stated that “Vietnam has undertaken to fulfil all obligations and responsibilities of a member country according to the targets, objectives, principles and documents and regulations that have been clearly specified in the ASEAN basic documents, including its joining in AFTA”. Prior to the ASEAN Summit in Bangkok, top Vietnamese leadership reassured ASEAN members about the Vietnamese willingness towards the integration process. Vietnamese Premier said that “Although it will not be easy to fulfil our commitments and obligations as a member, the government would be working hard to do so since this is in accord with the direction of the renovation movement in our country” and Vietnamese Prime Minister Vo Van Kiet expressed that “under specific conditions, we will do all that is necessary to fully participate in the work of ASEAN, contributing actively to peace, stability and co-operation in the region.” (Tuan, 1996, p. 75). In order to achieve harmonization with ASEAN acquis, Kiet created the National ASEAN Committee (Johnston&Ferguson, 1998, p. 148). In October 1995, Vietnamese national assembly completed adjustments on taxation to meet the requirements of membership to ASEAN Free Trade Area (Tuan, 1996, pp. 74-75).

The relationship between Vietnam and ASEAN in the 1991-1995 period was in transition. Vietnam was trying to diversify and normalize its relations with other international actors. Also, it focused on brightening its image as a responsible member of Southeast Asian region and international community and ASEAN membership would be a confirmation of this. For ASEAN, the idea to integrate

Vietnam into the association was not a new idea. For instance, former Malaysian Foreign Minister Tan Sri Ghazalie Shafie stated that in 1996 “By bringing ASEAN to life via a Treaty of Amity and Cooperation, we expected that one day Vietnam would be able to join by acceding to this treaty. When the Americans withdrew from Vietnam we asked Hanoi to do so and again in 1978-79 in the aftermath of their intervention into Cambodia. It was our policy of constructive engagement.” (Goodman, 1996, p. 593) However, ASEAN’s insistence of seeing a genuine change in Vietnamese character via signing of TAC before further improvement of relations can be observed in their unresponsive attitude towards Vietnamese prime minister’s visit to ASEAN countries one month prior to Cambodian Invasion and his offers for them, such as a non-aggression pact and Vietnamese public renunciation of support for revolutionary movements in the region (Singh, 1997, p. 220). The withdrawal from Cambodia and adoption of TAC in 1992 were adequate signs for ASEAN to move on towards engagement in Indochina.

4.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, I provided a historical evaluation of the contact between ASEAN and Vietnam. The background details of Vietnam’s perception of ASEAN before the membership and the solution process of Cambodian Conflict between the two were important to appreciate the reshaping of Vietnamese identity. This chapter will contribute to the theoretical discussion in chapter six.



5. THE SOUTH CHINA SEA DISPUTE

This chapter aims to examine the South China Dispute. The emergence and development of overlapping territorial claims and their judicial bases will be elaborated. In section 5.1, I will provide a historical background of the dispute. Section 5.2 will focus on regional states' claims over the South China Sea. The factors that drive regional actors to pursue claims over the sea will be examined in section 5.3. The evaluation of South China Dispute in this chapter is crucial in appreciating Vietnam's South China Sea policies regarding Chinese involvement in the region.

5.1 Historical Background

Overlapped claims for the South China Sea can be traced back to the early years of 20th century (Tonesson, 2015, p. 466). The Chinese U-shaped line/nine-dash line area first emerged in 1914 and Vietnamese claims on Paracels were uttered before 1945 (Hong, 2013, p. 28). However, conflict in the region escalated after the Second World War.

Two important incidents between Chinese and Vietnamese sides in 20th century deserve attention. These are China's invasion of Paracels in 1974 and the naval battle of 1988. Chinese military presence in Paracels was constructed first in 1946 as a result of occupation of Woody Island by Republic of China. The Paracels were a problematic frontline between first French colonial forces, later their South Vietnamese successors and China. In 1974, at the brink of collapse of South Vietnamese state, China sent its naval forces to the area and took whole Paracels from South Vietnamese units. The clashes between Vietnamese and Chinese navies concluded with the death of 70 Vietnamese sailors and less than 20 Chinese casualties (Singh, 2012, p. 120). However, this would not be the last naval battle between China and Vietnam.

After the skirmishes in the Paracels, South Vietnam enhanced its presence in the Spratly Group. North Vietnam later took their place in the area. In 1988, Chinese

navy and this time unified Vietnamese forces engaged over the Spratlys. China's entering into Spratlys via establishing outposts, scientific and military expeditions led to naval and land clashes on the reefs of the area (Tonesson, 2015, p. 468). The battle over the unoccupied reefs of Johnson South led to the death of 60 Vietnamese sailors. Chinese side suffered no casualties. With the battle of Johnson South Reef China managed to control six islands in the Spratlys (Singh, 2012, p. 120).

Apart from Vietnam and China, three more countries have military build-ups in the Spratlys, namely Taiwan, the Philippines and Malaysia. In 1947, Itu Aba Island of the Spratlys was occupied by a Republic of China military expedition force. After the Chinese civil war, Taiwan retreated from the region. However, in 1956 it reoccupied Itu Aba. Since that date, the administration of the island remained within Taiwan's hands (Emmers, 2010, p. 68).

Philippine presence in the Spratlys was first established by a businessman and explorer Tomas Cloma in 1956. He declared the independence of state of Kalayaan. The Philippines later officially claimed eight islands in the region and occupied them in 1972 (Singh, 2012, p. 119). However, Philippine authority in the region shook in 1995. Chinese navy occupied Philippine claimed Mischief Reef and established military installations on it.

Malaysia can be considered as a latecomer to the Spratlys. It first occupied Swallow Reef in the Southern part of Spratlys in 1983. Three years later, it deployed troops and established military facilities on Ardasier and Mariveles Reefs (Vuving, 2016). In 1999, it also established naval stations on Erica Reef and Investigator Shoals (Ho&Bateman, 2012, p. 74).

The history of conflict and clashes in the South China Sea is not limited to the regional, littoral states. The United States and India also can be seen as actors of the dispute in the region. Although they do not have any territorial or maritime claims in the region, the United States' insistence on the freedom of navigation and activity for both civilian and military vessels in the region, Indian's desire to tighten its relations with ASEAN countries, especially Vietnam and its initiatives towards oil exploration in the region led to mutual showdown with China.

The most important naval engagement between the United States and China can be considered as USNS Impeccable incident. In 2009, in the south of China's Hainan

Island, the seismic exploration mission of an American ocean surveillance ship was disrupted by Chinese military and civilian vessels. Chinese side demanded an immediate halt to its activity and its departure from the area. Through two weeks period, Chinese efforts to harass American naval activity in the area continued. (Rahman&Tsamenyi, 2010, pp. 326-327). The incident reflects the incompatibility between the American position on the freedom of navigation in the South China Sea and Chinese insistence on its sovereign rights over Exclusive Economic Zones.

In 2011, a confrontation between Indian Navy vessel INS Airawat and Chinese Navy was reported in the media (Sharma, 2011), (Bagchi, 2011). The incident occurred in the international waters of the South China Sea, during the Indian warship's visit to Vietnam. According to Indian Ministry of External Affairs, INS Airawat received a radio signal that identified itself as Chinese Navy. It stated that "you are entering Chinese waters". Both the Ministry and Indian Navy rejected the occurrence of a clash between Indian and Chinese navies (Singh, 2012, p. 127). On the other hand, it is possible to observe that China was determined to prevent Indian attempts to establish a foothold in the South China Sea. In 2011, Indian state-run oil company ONGC Videsh's partnership with Vietnamese corporations and its oil and natural gas exploration activities in the Vietnamese-claimed parts of South China Sea were criticised by China. China demanded from Indian company to not to make any business deals that targeting exploration on China's area of sovereignty (Singh, 2012, p. 127). Despite China's warnings, India continued its partnership with Vietnam in hydrocarbon exploration. The company extended the period of exploration since 2006, the last time it was until 2015 (ONGC Videsh, 2015).

In this section, the history of conflict over South China Sea since 1945 and some critical turning points were elaborated. In the next section, the claimant states' arguments will be detailed. The following section will cover the littoral states' territorial and maritime claims on South China Sea and features in it and their legal arguments that used to back these claims.

5.2 The South China Sea Claimants' Positions

There are six regional parties in the South China Sea dispute, namely, China, Vietnam, Taiwan, The Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia and Brunei. The biggest sources of dispute in the Sea are the Paracel and the Spratly Islands. On the other hand, among the parties Indonesia and Brunei do not have any territorial or maritime claim on these island groups. However, other parties' claims overlap with their Exclusive Economic Zone.

5.2.1 China

China issued a nine dash-line map in 2009 as a response to the United Nations Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf's (UNCLCS) call for submission of claims for extended continental shelves beyond 200 nautical miles before May 13, 2009 (Singh, 2012, p. 116). According to China's submission, "it has indisputable sovereignty over the islands in the South China Sea and the adjacent waters, and enjoys sovereign rights and jurisdiction over the relevant waters as well as the seabed and subsoil thereof." (China's submission, 2009). Therefore, based on the nine dash-line map, China claims sovereignty over all islands in the South China Sea.

One way China used to back its claims over the South China Sea Islands is emphasizing historical expeditions in the area since 2nd century by Chinese dynasties. The naval expeditions that were conducted by the Han Dynasty in 110 AD and by the Ming Dynasty in 15th century to the Spratly Islands are seen by China as the historical evidence that demonstrate Chinese historical rights over them. Moreover, the fishing and trading activities around the region by Chinese subjects of old Dynasties are part of China's historical proof (Singh, 2012, p. 118), (Hong, 2013, p. 28). Nine-dash-line first emerged in Chinese maps that demarcated China's maritime borders in 1914. In 1947, Republic of China issued an official map and used nine and eleven dash versions of them. On the other hand, these maps and their modern versions, including the 2009 map do not specify coordinates and Chinese administration does not clarify their legal status. It is even vague that whether China claims the South China Sea as its own territorial waters or just claims sovereignty over features within the nine-dash line (Bateman, 2011, p. 29). Despite such vagueness, China sees the South China Sea among its four core interests. She

upgraded the status of South China Sea to the level of other core interests, namely Taiwan, Tibet and Xingjiang-Uyghur region in 2011 (Bateman, 2011, p. 26).

5.2.2 Vietnam

According to Vietnam's 2004 White Paper, it has "sufficient historical evidence and legal basis to assert its indisputable sovereignty over the territorial waters and islands of the East Sea, among them the Paracels and Spratlys." (The Socialist Republic of Vietnam Ministry of National Defence, 2004, p. 17). Also, Vietnam's May 8, 2009 submission to UNCLCS, which was a response to China's submission, reiterates that both "the Spratly and Paracel archipelagos are part of Vietnamese territories" and Chinese claims "has no legal, historical or factual basis, therefore is null and void" (Vietnam's submission, 2009). Vietnam also uses historical evidence to show that its sovereign rights over the two island groups can be traced back to hundreds years ago. Nguyen Dynasty's suggested control over the Paracel and Spratly Islands between 16th to 19th century is part such historical claims. In order to enhance its historical claims, Hanoi administration also provides archaeological findings. For instance, according to state-run Vietnam News Daily, a Nguyen Dynasty woodrock confirms the early Nguyen control over and Vietnamese sovereignty over both island groups (Nguyen dynasty, 2016). South Vietnam's claims on both the Paracels and Spratlys compose an important part of later Vietnamese arguments. Nguyen Dynasty's control over the Paracels was claimed by Saigon in 1956. Moreover, French colonial administrations' annexation of the Spratlys into Cochinchina in 1929 and the sovereignty over entire South China Sea via succession right from France were among South Vietnamese claims (Hong, 2013, p. 30).

5.2.3 The other claimants

Taiwan and China claim the same areas and sovereign rights over the South China Sea. Because of the reason that Taiwan considers itself as the continuation of the Republic of China and legitimate sovereign over the whole mainland China, it maintains its claims on the region.

The Philippines claims sovereignty over eight islands in the eastern part of the Spratly group. It first submitted to the United Nations regarding the issue in 1946. As mentioned above Philippine national Thomas Chloma's attempt to found a state over the islands provided a base for the Philippines to further its claims over the features.

Moreover, from Philippine point of view, the islands became *res nullius*, nobody's property after the 1951 Japanese renunciation of its sovereignty claims over them (Hong, 2013, p. 29). The Philippines also employs geographical arguments. It sees the geographical proximity of the islands to the Philippines as an indicator for the Philippine rights over them. Also, for the Philippines authorities, these islands are not part of the Spratly group but within the archipelagic baseline of the Philippines (Singh, 2012, p. 119).

Malaysia employs geographical arguments to back its sovereignty over the Spratlys. It sees three islands within the Spratly groups as part of its continental shelf. It provides clear coordinates for the area that it claims (Guo, 2015, p.200).

Indonesia does not claim sovereignty over any of the Spratly Islands. It sees the Chinese and Taiwanese claims over South China Sea as possible violations of its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and continental shelf. (Guo, 2015, p.199).

Similar to Indonesia, Brunei does not have any claim over islands in the South China Sea. It declared a 200 mile EEZ in 1984 and it overlaps with Malaysian EEZ (Guo, 2015, p.199).

5.3 The Importance of the South China Sea for the Claimants

This section will examine the reasons behind the emergence of South China Sea as contentious arena for littoral states and extra-regional actors as well. Two factors are vital in such development. First, the South China Sea links some of the most important trade nodes in the world. It is a home to many critical sea lanes and trade routes. Secondly, it contains important living and non-living resources, such as oil, natural gas and fisheries.

These reasons led to the dispute over islands in the region. The possibility to have a capacity to generate 200 nautical miles Exclusive Economic Zones for some of the South China Sea Islands makes the Spratly Island a focal point of the debate. Moreover, continental shelf, possibility to have the extended continental shelf beyond 200 miles, regime of islands and freedom of navigation are among other disputed issues (Tonesson, 2015, p.462).

As mentioned above, the location of South China Sea leads many countries to pay special attention to the region. The trade routes that link Europe and Middle East

with Northeast Asia cross the Sea. Moreover, India and Southeast Asian region are connected to Pacific and North America via the South China Sea. It is the world's second most used sea lane, more than half of the world's super tankers pass through the South China Sea. China uses the South China Sea lanes to import 85% of its energy. 80% of Japan's, South Korea's and Taiwan's crude oil imports pass through the waters of South China Sea. More than half of India's trade with China, Japan, Korea and the United States uses the routes that cross the Sea (Singh, 2012, p.121), (Rahman&Tsamenyi, 2010, p.318). As a result, for many littoral states and extra-regional actors, the South China Sea plays a vital role in their commercial ties with other parts of the world. It is possible to argue that even a short halt to the transit activities in these sea lanes can create enormous costs for business around the globe. Controlling such a sea lane either to guarantee uninterrupted commercial activity or acquiring the capacity to halt it in case of a conflict can be seen as among the reasons for the dispute over the South China Sea. For instance, one of China's main priorities is keeping the sea routes that used for fossil fuel importation from the Middle East open. Straits of Malacca, Lombok and Sunda are crucial choke points for these routes. As a result, China is eager to enhance its presence in the South China Sea, especially on areas close to such critical straits, such as the Spratlys. It can also provide her the ability to cut Japan's, Taiwan's and South Korea's lane of life in case of a conflict.

On the other hand, the South China Sea lanes are crucial for military activity too. It provides the shortest routes from the Pacific Ocean to Indian Ocean. For instance, during the NATO operations against Taliban and Al-Qaeda in 2001 and 2002, U.S. military equipment and supplies were transferred from the bases in Guam, Pearl Harbor and Japan to Indian Ocean via South China Sea routes (Rahman&Tsamenyi, 2010, p.318).

Along with its role in the global trade activity as a location that provide some of the shortest routes, the South China Sea itself is home to important living and non-living resources with huge commercial and even strategic value. The South China Sea contains a huge part of world's oil, natural gas reserves and fisheries. It currently has seven billion barrels of proven oil reserves and 900 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. According to Chinese claims, the area has the potential to provide 130 billion barrels of oil. Such an amount can make the area the second biggest oil field after the Saudi

Arabia (Kaplan, 2014). A special report that issued by Chinese tabloid Global Times named the South China Sea as the ‘Second Persian Gulf’. The report states that the region contains 50 billion tons of oil and more than 20 trillion cubic meters of natural gas (Singh, 2012, p.121). It is possible to observe that China, Vietnam and the Philippines endeavour to increase their exploitation operations in the South China Sea. The last two reward foreign international corporations with drilling and exploration contracts in the region (Hong, 2013, p.33). Indonesia is also a long time member of offshore oil production club in the region.

The South China Sea also is a rich area of living resources. Its fishing stocks was account for 8 percent of global fishing catches in 1988 (Hong, 2013, p.30). According to more up-to-date numbers, it may account for 10 percent of global fishing catches (Kaplan, 2014).

5.4 Conclusion

The history of conflict in the South China Sea after the Second World War, the legal positions and claims of the littoral states and extra regional powers and the material conditions on which the states construct and refine their interests were examined in this chapter. It is possible to observe that the emergence of modern nation states in the Southeast Asia in the beginning of 20th century triggered the South China Sea Dispute. China, Vietnam, the Philippines, Taiwan and Malaysia have territorial claims on either Paracels or Spratlys or both. Moreover, these parties have military presence and economic activity in the disputed islands. China also claims sovereignty over almost entire South China Sea. However, it avoids giving details about its claims except its nine dash-line map and prefers to use a vague language.

The strategic positioning of sea lanes in the South China Sea for international trade and military activity makes it crucial for both littoral and extra-regional actors. Moreover, living and non-living sources in the South China Sea drives regional states to compete in both legal platforms and in the field. This chapter will contribute to appreciate the material conditions on which Vietnam constructs its interests.

6. VIETNAM'S STRICT AND WEAK ADHERENCES TO THE ASEAN WAY

This chapter aims to achieve two tasks. In sections 6.1 and 6.2, it will analyse the Vietnamese positions towards both a relatively calm and cooperative and later an assertive China. Through this examination, the chapter targets to describe two periods within Vietnam's post-Cold War policies towards China regarding the South China Sea dispute. After providing definitions and descriptions of the periods of strict and weak loyalties to the ASEAN Way in the first two sections, section 6.3 will make a theoretical analysis.

The ASEAN Way's influence on Vietnam's behaviour as a normative set of values will be the main target of examination in the third section. Realist and constructivist IR theoretical lenses will be used to explain the changes and continuities in the Vietnam's South China Sea policy. The strong and weak sides of both theories in illuminating the phenomena will be compared. Realist theory's convenience in explaining the annexation of balancing tactics after a decade of ASEAN Way's pre-eminence in shaping Vietnam's South China Sea policy will be elaborated. However, the continuum of Vietnamese adherence to the ASEAN Way in a weaker form between 2005 and 2015 is an anomaly for the realist perspective. Constructivist theory shows a greater potential in solving the mystery of the presence of both balancing tactics and loyalty to the ASEAN Way by underlining the influence of norms, principles, socialization and traditions on state behaviour.

6.1 1995-2005 Strict Loyalty to the ASEAN Way

In this section, the Vietnamese policies and methods to cope with the problem in South China Sea and the Vietnamese reactions towards Chinese position and initiatives in the 1995-2005 period will be empirically evaluated. This will provide the opportunity to compare the changes in the Vietnamese policies with 2005-2015 period and to examine the explanatory power of constructivist and realist point of views regarding the issue in the third section of this chapter.

The Vietnamese policies and method of diplomacy towards China regarding the South China Sea dispute in the period between 1995-2005 shows compatibility with the ASEAN Way. The way that chosen by Vietnam in approaching the dispute comprises non-confrontation, solidarity with ASEAN members, avoiding from tagging any party as a threat or enemy, sweeping major problems under the carpet and focusing on the easy issues and concentration to fertile areas that have the potential to improve relations. These are also part of the normative values and principles within inter-ASEAN relations (Acharya, 1998, p. 56).

Before elaborating Vietnam's policies and the strong influence of the ASEAN Way on them in the 1995-2005 period, a summary of the China's general attitude and most critical incidents that involve it and Vietnam and other regional actors is necessary.

China's position towards the South China Sea in this period can be seen as relatively moderate when it is compared to the following decade. Nevertheless, it is possible to observe critical Chinese naval initiatives and activities that have irritated Vietnam and the other claimant states in the disputed region. However, the general Chinese tendency towards the incidents were stepping back and repairing the relations.

One of the incidents in this period is 1995 Chinese occupation of Mischief Reef Islands from the Philippines. In January 1995, Chinese Navy occupied the islands, which are in the disputed region both claimed by the Philippines and China, and build some installations on them. As a response, ASEAN issued a joint statement and censured China. The statement called for resolution of issues by peaceful means, refraining from actions that can destabilize region and restraint. This call led China to avoid from further escalating tensions, offering joint development of the area and the emergence of a Sino-Philippine code of conduct that aims to reduce further similar incidents (Chakraborti, 2012, p. 288; Majumdar, 2015, p. 77).

In another incident, China showed a similar reaction. On March 1997, China deployed the Kanto Oil Rig number 3 to a region that claimed by Vietnam as its continental shelf to carry out oil drilling operations. Despite Vietnamese warnings, China conducted the operations and claimed that the vessels are within the Chinese continental shelf and exclusive economic zone. Vietnam responded by reiterating its claims in the region. Next month, China withdrew the oil rig from the region and

Foreign Ministry of China stated their emphasis on peaceful resolution of disputes and good relations with Vietnam (Emmers, 2010, p. 78). As it can be seen, Chinese behaviour in this period showed a pattern of refraining from further escalating the crises.

Vietnam's adherence to ASEAN Way towards China about the South China Sea dispute can be observed in the following incidents, its reactions to them and its efforts to peacefully solve or at least manage the dispute.

Vietnamese willingness to open the dialogue doors with China about the dispute is one of the most remarkable examples of its application of ASEAN Way of diplomacy in this period. The joint working groups on one of the disputed regions, namely Spratly Islands, can be counted among these efforts. Chinese Premier Jiang Zemin's visit to Hanoi in November 1994 created an opportunity to discuss the issue and led the holding of Joint Working Groups on the Spratly's. Between 1995 and 1999, five joint working groups were held between China and Vietnam on the Spratlys. As a result of these working groups, parties exchanged notes, stated their positions and agreed on working procedures. Also, they discussed new opportunities to cooperate on maritime issues and reiterated their willing to seek peaceful solution of disputes (Guan 1998, pp. 1129-1130).

The efforts to solve the land border dispute between Vietnam and China and its achievement in 1999, is another example of Vietnamese adoption of ASEAN Way. Although the maritime dispute in the South China Sea and the demarcation dispute on the land borders are different realms in their essence, it shows that the parties were determined to focus on the easy and manageable issues and sweeping hard issues, namely Spratly and Paracel islands, under the carpet for a while. Also, the negotiations over the land border had a spill over effect and the working methods of them used in the joint working group meetings for the Spratlys (Guan 1998, p. 1129). Between February 1994 and December 1999, the joint working group on the land border met sixteen times. (Amer and Jinwei, 2013) In 1999, both sides managed to sign a treaty on land borders.

The solution in the Gulf of Tonkin can also be seen in this category. The meetings to reach an agreement on the Gulf of Tonkin maritime border were holding simultaneously with the land border negotiations. Another joint working group on

the issue met seventeen times between March 1994 and December 2000 and concluded with the agreements on several realms on 25 December 2000, namely the demarcation of waters, Exclusive Economic Zones and Continental Shelves in the region. It is important to note that the negotiation process on land border and Gulf of Tonkin, the meetings and the talks were not limited to official sessions, informal meetings have been held between the parties. It can be thought as another reflection of the ASEAN tradition of informality on the bilateral meetings between China and Vietnam (Ganesan, 2015, p. 84).

Vietnam's contribution to the preparation process of a Code of Conduct in the South China Sea between ASEAN and China is the most remarkable example of its willingness to conduct Vietnamese diplomacy towards the disputed area within the ASEAN framework in this period. The most crucial part of this document as an indicator for Vietnam's adoption of ASEAN methods is that, the document was actually a product of joint Vietnam-the Philippines efforts. It is safe to argue that, Vietnam adopted a pioneering role for the South China Sea solution process. In March 1999, Vietnam and the Philippines were tasked by the ASEAN Regional Forum including China, for the preparation of a code of conduct for the South China Sea. The drafts that two countries prepared were submitted to the ARF in September and October 1999 (Bateman and Emmers, 2009, p. 104). After the Chinese rejection of the draft and its submission of its own version of code, ASEAN managed to create consensus among itself on a third draft in an informal summit of ASEAN heads of states/governments. China also accepted this draft as a base for further discussions, which led to the adoption of a Declaration of Conduct in the South China Sea in 2002 (Majumdar, 2015, p. 78).

The source of the code of conduct is also an important sign of the Vietnamese engagement with the ASEAN peace efforts. The 1995 code of conduct for the Spratly Islands agreed between the Philippines and Vietnam was one of the texts that taken as a base for the 1999 draft. This shows that the normative norms and principles that pointed by Vietnam can be a source for a scheme that targeting South China Sea claimants within ASEAN, other members of the association and China. The other sources of the 1999 draft are the 1976 Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in South East Asia, the ASEAN Declaration on the South China Sea of 1992, the ASEAN-China Joint Statement of 16 December 1997, the Joint Statement between

the Philippines and the China on the South China Sea and Other Areas of Cooperation of August 1995 and the Hanoi Plan of Action at the Sixth ASEAN Summit 1998 (Thao, 2001, p. 114).

Vietnam's adherence to the ASEAN principle of avoiding from tagging any party as an enemy or threat can be observed in the policy reports of both the 8th (1996) and the 9th (2001) National Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam and the 2004 White Paper. 8th National Congress identified four threats for the national security of Vietnam, these are "lagging further behind economically compared with other countries in the region and the world, departure from socialism, corruption and bureaucracy and peaceful evolution pursued by hostile forces" (Viet Nam's present Foreign Policy, n.d.) The 9th congress reiterated the same warnings about national security in 2001 (Nesadurai, 2006, p. 156). On the other hand, according to the 2004 White Paper Vietnam sees "the unsettled problems relating to the disputes on border, land and maritime territories, especially the conflicting claims on sovereignty over the East Sea" as among their security concerns (The Socialist Republic of Vietnam Ministry of National Defence, 2004, p. 12).

In the same document Vietnamese government states its possession of historical and legal evidence that supports its claims over the South China Sea, specifically on the Paracels and the Spratlys. However, as an important sign of its adoption of the ASEAN methods, it declared its readiness to enter into peaceful negotiations with every concerned party in order to reach a Code of Conduct regarding the disputed islands and waters. The presence of a concept that suggested and pursued by ASEAN in its defence white paper shows Vietnam's internalization of ASEAN methods and identity (The Socialist Republic of Vietnam Ministry of National Defence, 2004)

The 2004 white paper present an opaque definition of threats towards the nation. It refrains from naming any country as a cause of irritation or threat and only points the overlapping claims on the Spratlys and Paracels as a security concern. Along with the references to the essential role of ASEAN and ARF in Vietnamese foreign policy in the text, this choice is an indicator of Vietnamese deference to the ASEAN tradition to not define anyone as an enemy. When it is compared to the 2004 Chinese white paper, which names Taiwan and the United States as destabilizer actors in the region, it is understood that there is a special care to not to alienate any party (Url-10, 2004). The 8th and 9th National congresses also focused on internal dynamics,

namely economic development, bureaucracy, peaceful evolution, departure from socialism. It did not point an external territorial threat towards the country.

Track II diplomacy is an important component of the ASEAN Way of diplomacy. Track II diplomacy can be defined as a mode of diplomacy that is conducted via informal channels. In general, NGO's, academics and business actors are main participants of such activities. In its engagement process with China, ASEAN uses this method to build confidence and enhance consultation among parties. Vietnam adopted the same method in 1990's. For instance, its simultaneous participation to the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) with China in 1996 is an important sign of the willingness to build and maintain informal links with it and other regional centers. It is important to note that CSCAP is associated with the ASEAN Regional Forum's Track I meetings and its works are presented at ARF meetings after an approval (Url-11, n.d.).

In the 1995-2005 period participants from Vietnam joined various non-governmental/Track II meetings with an increasing volume. In these multilateral informal meetings, along with other ASEAN countries and China, Vietnamese participants found the opportunity to exchange their views and focus on the fertile areas that can foster cooperation in the region and facilitate dialogue. For instance, in 1997, Vietnam participated 9 of total 23 Track II meetings that focused on Asia-Pacific Security and community building (Url- 12, 2010). Next year, the numbers of Vietnamese participation were 11 of 34. In 2003, Vietnam showed up in 29 of total 149 meetings (Url-13, 2010). It can be understood that in the period between 1995 and 2005, Vietnam tried to grasp the opportunity to maintain dialogue and confidence building with the regional countries and especially China.

Military spending and/or the presence of armament projects can be seen as an indicator of an actor's tendency towards balancing tactics. There is no clear and detailed data or reports about military budget and purchases of Vietnam for this period. This is mostly because of the Vietnamese preference to not to share the data and report its military purchases. However, it is possible to observe that there were no Vietnamese armament projects or purchases to increase its naval capabilities in the South China Sea. According to the United Nations, Vietnam reported the importation of 8 aircraft fighters from the Russia Federation. Other countries, namely Russia and Ukraine reported the exportation of 31 aircraft fighters to Vietnam (Url-

14, 2014). According to SIPRI's military expenditure database, there is no data about the military expenditure of Vietnam as a percentage of GDP between 1995 and 2002. According to data from the years between 2002 and 2005 there is a slight decrease in the military expenditure, from 2.1% to 1.8% (Url-15, 2017). From that limited data, it is possible to argue that there was no internal balancing tendency towards China in the South China Sea region.

As a result, Vietnamese efforts to create a code of conduct within the ASEAN framework, its willingness to open up the dialogue doors with China in order to settle the disputes with negotiations and its adoption of track II methods and its application of ASEAN methods in the bilateral negotiations with China show that Vietnam was adherent to the ASEAN way in this period. On the other hand, an external or internal balancing towards China was not pursued by Vietnam. Although there were some destabilizing moves of China in the region such as Mischief Reef occupation in 1995 or deployment of an oil rig into the regions that claimed by Vietnam, they did not trigger balancing manoeuvres, because of the Chinese pullback.

6.2 2005-2015 Weak Loyalty to the ASEAN Way

In the middle of 2000's, the introduction of the balancing policies against China into the Vietnamese repertoire regarding the dispute in the South China Sea reflects a weakness in its adherence to the ASEAN Way methods. ASEAN Way itself appeared to prevent application of power politics and represents an alternative way of contact, dialogue and diplomacy among the regional states. Balancing politics, namely efforts to increase military capabilities and application to external powers to increase defensive opportunities against an outsider party, is not compatible with some of the norms and principles on which ASEAN Way has been built. Pacific settlement of disputes, consensus, consultation and non-confrontation are the norms that are in conflict with balancing policies. As it will be seen below, Vietnam diversifies its tactics to cope with China in the South China Sea region in this period. However, its usage of balancing manoeuvres against China does not lead to a total abandonment of ASEAN Way principles and norms. During this era, Vietnam both maintained its ties with ASEAN Way of diplomacy and applied self-help methods towards assertiveness of China. In this section, the details of these policies will be elaborated. In the third section, they will be analysed within a theoretical framework.

After a decade long strict adherence to the ASEAN Way, Vietnamese policies towards the disputed waters of the South China Sea begun to show balancing tactics against China in the period between 2005 and 2015. The Vietnamese decision to increase its own naval capabilities in the region and to seek external help appear as a response to increasing Chinese assertiveness in the South China Sea. Through these balancing moves Vietnam tries to deter China from further unilateral action or increase its chance to resist its pressure. In order to understand the change in the Vietnamese policies, first Chinese actions in this period will be examined.

It is possible to observe that in the 2005-2015 period Chinese policies regarding the region is much more assertive than the previous decade. In the legal field, China has increased the extent of its claims on the South China Sea to very high limits. In May 2009, China sent a nine-dash-line map to the UN to meet the requirement to define the limits of its continental shelves. Based on this map, China claims sovereignty over 90% of the entire South China Sea (Simon, 2012, p. 996; Yahuda, 2013, p. 6).

Moreover, to limit the area of manoeuvre of other claimants, it has used lobbying and economic pressure. For instance, China sent several special warnings to the oil companies to not to work with Vietnam. According to the Wikileaks cables, between 2006 and 2007 China warned more than 18 oil companies and recalled the potential consequences for their work in China. As a result, China managed to stop five oil exploration projects (Buszynski and Roberts 2015, p. 98).

As another dimension of Chinese methods, the naval presence of China in the region increased and enhanced. Although the military spending of China is stable as a percentage of GDP in this period the increase in the absolute numbers is directed to the strengthen its naval capabilities (Url-15, 2017; Url-16, 2016; Dillow, 2015). According to a CSIS report, in this period, China's naval modernization program created a technologically advanced and flexible force (Center for Strategic & International Studies 2015, p. 232). Along with purchases of destroyers, frigates and a decommissioned aircraft carrier from Russia China has also initiated its own indigenous projects (Emmers, 2010, p. 121; Gady, 2015).

Chinese naval patrols and military exercises around the disputed waters became a routine (Amer 2014, p. 20). In April 2010, Chinese Northern Command destroyers, frigates and submarines were sent to the North of Spratly islands and stopped en

route as a part of war games and conducted simulated bombing exercises in the South China Sea. Between 2011 and 2015 China continued to organize naval exercises in the region including the trials for its first aircraft carrier. China's navy also held landing exercises near disputed islands (China's navy holds, 2013; Bhutia, 2015; Scott, 2012, p. 1037)

Along with these enhanced naval abilities, China enforced unilateral fishing bans to support its sovereignty claims in the disputed region (Wu and Zou, 2013, p. 28). Other claimants naval activities in the region are frequently harassed or intervened by Chinese patrol units. In 2007, a Vietnamese fishing boat was targeted by Chinese patrol boats and one sailor was killed (Chakraborti, 2012, p. 290). In 2009, according to Vietnamese resources, 33 Vietnamese fishing boats and 433 crew members were seized and detained by China. Next year, again hundreds of Vietnamese fishing vessels were targeted by China (Thayer, 2011, p. 357). Between 2012 and 2015, similar fishing incidents occurred in the disputed region (China frees, 2012; China Sinking, 2014; Panda, 2015). In both 2011 and 2012, Chinese civilian and military units clashed with Vietnamese seismic oil vessels in the South China Sea. According to Vietnamese sources, in the first incident, Chinese naval patrol boats were coursed at high speed and cut Vietnamese vessels' cables (Vietnam accuses, 2011). In the second incident, Chinese fishing vessels cut the cables of a Vietnamese ship that conducting a seismic survey (Page, 2012). After both incidents, China did not take responsibility and reiterated its claims on sovereign rights over the South China Sea.

On the other hand, China increased its scientific surveys and economic activities in the region. As a recent phenomenon, China initiated land reclamation activities, construction of military and civilian facilities and artificial islands in the disputed areas. In 2006, China initiated new construction projects in Paracel islands (Emmers, 2010, p. 128). In 2007, it decided to establish a city level administration in Hainan province, namely Sansha city. The area covers both the Paracels and Spratly islands (Scott, 2012, p. 1036; Cheng, 2011, p. 389). Between 2012 and 2015, China converted several reefs into artificial islands in the Spratly island chain. Also China conducted similar activities in the Mischief Reef. According to official American resources, China is also constructing military installations and airstrips in these artificial islands (Watkins, 2015; Borger and Phillips, 2015)

Furthermore, Chinese boldness is not limited to the field; it shows a similar pattern on the negotiation table. China sees the dispute in the South China Sea essentially as a bilateral problem and insists on the settlement of it via bilateral channels. It strongly opposes the multilateralization, regionalization or internationalization of the issue. In one of the workshops on the South China Sea dispute in Hanoi, in 2010, Su Hao, board member of China Asia-Pacific Studies Association and director of Center for Strategic and Conflict Management argued that Vietnam has been trying to internationalize the issue. According to Hao, Vietnam and China “have to stick to our [their] one-on-one policy, and resolve disputes with individual countries one at a time rather than with a handful of them” (Yang, 2010). In 2011, foreign ministry spokesman of China stated that “China has always insisted on resolving disputes with other countries in the South China Sea through bilateral negotiations” (Guanqun, 2011).

In July 2011, ASEAN Senior Officials meeting in Bali, China opposed to a draft that emphasize the right of South Asian claimants to consult among themselves about a Declaration of Conduct. China’s reason to oppose was the potential violation of Chinese claim that ASEAN is not a party to the dispute and it can only discuss the issue only bilaterally not multilaterally (Simon, 2012, p. 1014).

Nonetheless, Vietnam is insistent on the discussion of the dispute in a multilateral fashion. For instance, according to a statement from Vietnam's Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Nguyen Phuong Nga in 2010, “issues that relate to other countries and parties, like the Spratly Islands, cannot be settled by Vietnam and China; they require the participation of other concerned parties”. She added that “issues that are not only related to countries that border the East Sea, such as maritime safety and security, must be negotiated and settled by all countries that share this common interest” (Chan, 2010; Thayer, 2011, p. 362).

As it can be seen, in this period, Chinese attitude towards the dispute shifted from a relative moderation to a bold and aggressive direction. As a response to such a change, Vietnam also recalibrated its approach towards China regarding the disputed waters and employed balancing tactics to cope with this. However, as a crucial point, Vietnam has not abandoned the ASEAN Way. Although, the annexation of balancing tactics to it weakened the essence of this type of diplomacy, Vietnam still shows a willingness to remain within the ASEAN framework, it contributes to the effort for

the implementation of the 2002 Declaration of Conduct and formation of a code of conduct for the South China Sea, avoid from tagging China as an enemy or threat, try to develop cooperation on non-traditional security and employ track II diplomacy to maintain an alternative to formal bilateral relations. Moreover, Vietnam tries to develop cooperation with China on the fields that could allow flourish of relations. The main reasons of this continuum, namely Vietnam's adoption of ASEAN identity, its "more friends less enemies (them ban bout thu) policy" (Thayer, 2015, p. 5) which was adopted in 1988 with the Politburo Resolution No. 13 and internalisation of ASEAN Way as an ideational force as a result of two decade long socialization and learning process within the association since 1995 will be analysed from a theoretical point of view in the third section.

After the examination of China's new assertive attitude in the period between 2005 and 2015, Vietnam's reaction to this development can be elaborated. First, Vietnam's efforts to create a code of conduct (COC) and to implement the Declaration of Conduct in this period will be analysed.

The 2009 Vietnamese White Paper remarks the ASEAN countries' commitment to respect and implement the Declaration of Conduct and their efforts to form a COC that is based on the 1982 UNCLOS in order to reach a long term solution for the sovereignty issues in the South China Sea. Vietnam recommends all parties to "restrain themselves, strictly abide by DOC and strive for building COC in order to reach a long-term and fair solution to this complicated issue" and sets "turning the East Sea into a sea of peace, friendship and development" as a goal. (The Socialist Republic of Vietnam Ministry of National Defence, 2009, pp. 14-20)

Vietnam's greatest efforts and contribution to the solution process for the disputed waters emerged in 2010, during its chairmanship of ASEAN. As the ASEAN chairman, Vietnam hosted 12 events, including the ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting, the ASEAN Regional Forum and ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus (ADMM Plus) (Ninh, 2010). In both the ARF and ADMM, Vietnam showed a strong willingness to issue the South China Sea dispute and accelerate the two processes, namely the implementation of 2002 Declaration of Conduct (DOC) and the formation of a legally binding COC on the South China Sea. Through Vietnamese participants' efforts in these meetings, Vietnam managed to add the implementation of DOC into the agenda of ARF (Thayer, 2011, p. 352; Hang, 2013, p. 50). In the

ARF meeting, Vietnam opened up the South China Sea security issue for discussion and emphasized the importance of DOC. As a result ASEAN-China Joint Working Group on the Implementation of the Doc was hosted by Vietnam in the same year (Majumdar, 2015, p. 79). Vietnamese efforts to turn the spotlight on the issue can also be observed in the 2010 Joint the Communique of 43th ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting. The document emphasizes the importance of the creation of a COC and as Hang observed, it gives far more space than the previous communique (Hang, 2013, p. 53).

In the 2011 Vietnam continued its support for the implementation of DOC and the realization of a COC. At the 2011 ARF meeting, ASEAN and China managed to agree on a guideline for the implementation of DOC on South China Sea. The document also refers to the intention for the conclusion of a COC. Vietnamese foreign minister's assistant hailed the document and emphasized their "level of agreement on the draft guideline of the implementation of the DOC" through "the fruitful and constructive discussion and dialogue". Vietnamese side stated that they see the guideline "as a good start for both parties [ASEAN and China] to work together to continue dialogue and cooperation, with their view to further promote peace, stability and confidence in the region". (Charaborti, 2012, p. 296)

The 45th Annual Ministerial Meeting of ASEAN in July 2012 reflected Vietnamese intention to maintain the dispute within the ASEAN agenda. The joint communique draft that outlined the consultations had references to discussions on the South China Sea, Vietnam's concerns about Chinese oil exploration activities within its Exclusive Economic Zone and the dispute between China and the Philippines on Scarborough Shoal. Cambodian objection to the inclusion of these issues into the joint communique led to a deadlock and such a document could not be issued after a ministerial meeting for the first time. According to the leaked record of minister's retreat held after the meeting, Vietnamese Foreign minister Pham Binh Minh mentioned about the Chinese moves within the early months of 2012. For the minister, the announcement of the establishment of Sansha City as a part of Hainan province, which covers a huge part of the South China Sea, the invitation for bidding for nine oil and gas blocks, which are part of Vietnam's EEZ and continental shelf are among the recent Chinese manoeuvres "to impose their 9 dash claim". The minister sees such moves as violations of Vietnam's sovereignty, the DOC and

UNCLOS. After stating his concerns for the peace and stability in the region, the minister reminded the every year routine of devoting a paragraph for the developments in the South China Sea in the joint communiqué and insisted on the necessity for 2012, given “those incidents occurred not only in the South China Sea but deeper in the EEZs”. He recommended a call for respect for EEZ’s and continental shelves. (Thayer, 2012, pp. 7-12)

These informal statements of Vietnamese Foreign minister show that Vietnam partially tries to stick to the ASEAN traditions of consultation and solidarity and to create a common ASEAN voice for the issues in the South China Sea. However, Vietnam’s defensive engagements with the United States, Japan and India against China without consultation with ASEAN render such respect crippled. The concerns of Indonesia, which is also known as de facto leader of ASEAN, about the Vietnam’s balancing tactics towards China and the involvement of Japan’s and the United States into the South China Sea indicate that Vietnam’s deference for the ASEAN Way is weaker in this period than the previous decade (Shoji, 2012, p. 21).

On the other hand, Vietnam’s demand to include the new developments into the joint communiqué is limited to a call for respect for EEZ’s and continental shelves. It did not point China as a threat and chose a careful language. This preference is a sign of Vietnamese effort to maintain ASEAN Way even in a weaker form.

In this period, Vietnam diversified its channels of dialogue and diplomacy towards China regarding the dispute. Organization of workshops as a form of track II diplomacy is one of the methods that employed by Vietnam. “The International Workshop on the South China Sea: Cooperation for Regional Security and Development” is a part of such efforts that inspired by ASEAN Way. The usage of workshops is a method that employed by ASEAN in its engagement process with China since early 1990’s. (Chachavalpongpun, 2014, p. 41). The first one of this series of workshops was initiated by the state-run Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam and the Vietnam Lawyers Association in 2009. In 2015, 7th workshop was held in Vung Tau city, VietNam (Url-17, 2015). In these workshops, academics from Vietnam, China and other countries met and discuss the issues about the South China Sea (Scott, 2012, p. 1025).

The joint naval patrols Vietnam and China organized in the Gulf of Tonkin are another way of building trust between the two parties. Despite the increasing tensions in the South China Sea, the Vietnamese and Chinese navies conducted 18 joint patrols in the Gulf of Tonkin between 2006 and 2015 (China, Vietnam complete, 2015). Moreover, these joint patrols in the region are frequently concluded with naval visits to Chinese and Vietnamese ports. According to the daily newspaper of Vietnam's state-run news agency (Vietnam's News Agency), the joint patrols do not only have the technical purposes such as security of the Gulf of Tonkin and other waters or preventing incidents at sea but it also has other objectives such as strengthening "the friendly relationship and the mutual understanding and trust between the two armies and navies of Vietnam and China" (Vietnamese naval ships, 2013).

During the joint naval patrols and port visits, the two navies also conduct search and rescue trainings, they share experiences and discuss other security matters. The cooperation in non-traditional security issues is again, a method that employed by ASEAN before. Similarly, Vietnam joined the Joint Marine Seismic Undertaking (JMSU) in 2005. According to the agreement between China, Vietnam and the Philippines, the national oil companies from the three countries undertook pre-exploration activities around the disputed areas of the South China Sea. After the initially planned three years of activity, the agreement was not renewed in 2008 (Singh, 2009, p. 47). The 2011 6-points-agreement between Vietnam and China points the need to cooperate on less sensitive issues in the South China Sea, namely marine environmental protection, scientific research, search and rescue operations, and disaster prevention and reduction (Johnson, 2011). Moreover, the two countries agreed to establish a hotline in order to consult with each other in case of emergency in maritime issues (China, Vietnam sign, 2011).

The efforts to develop cooperation in non-traditional security issues show Vietnamese emulation of ASEAN methods. As a critical point, the joint naval activities of Hanoi and Beijing continued without interruption during a period that dominated with naval incidents between the two sides. The 6-point-agreement was also a measure to reduce the tensions that caused by naval incidents in the disputed region during 2011.

In this period, Vietnam continues to employ a prudent and vague language towards China regarding the dispute in the South China. As in the previous decade, Vietnam refrains from naming China as a threat or enemy. The 2009 White Paper of Vietnam indicates that “concerning the disputes over sovereignty, sovereign rights and jurisdiction over the territories in the East Sea, the complicated developments so far have seriously affected many activities and the maritime economic development of Vietnam” (The Socialist Republic of Vietnam Ministry of National Defence, 2009, p. 18).

Vietnam states the threats towards itself mainly as peaceful evolution, abuse of democratic, religious and human rights by hostile forces and non-traditional security issues. The dispute in the South China Sea is presented as a source of wasted opportunities for the country, not as a vital security challenge.

The Communist Party of Vietnam Central Committee’s political report to the 10th National Congress (2006) sees the influence of developments in the Southeast Asia, namely “the trend of peace, cooperation and development” (The Communist Party, 2006). However, it also points out “disputes over power and influence, over border, land, and seas, islands and natural resources between countries; economic, political and social instabilities in certain nations” as potentially destabilizing factors.

The report emphasizes the security threats within the country and uses a harsher tone in identifying such threats than it did towards external threats. The danger of deviation from socialist goals and “peaceful evolution under the pretexts of democracy and human rights” are seen as serious threats that are fabricated by “hostile forces” in order to change the political system of the country. Apart from these, lagging behind other countries in the economic field and corruption, bureaucratism and extravagance are seen as other threats towards Vietnam. The difference in presenting the external and internal threats to the country reflects that Vietnam puts a special effort in using a mild language towards China.

The Communist Party of Vietnam Central Committee’s political report to the 10th National Congress (2011) reiterates almost the same warnings on the field of national security. About the situation in Southeast Asia region, the report makes a specific reference to the role of ASEAN in the region. It stresses the importance of ASEAN’s

role despite many challenges and destabilizing factors such as intensification of territorial and maritime disputes. (Url-18, 2015).

As it can be seen, Vietnam avoids from tagging China as a competitor in the disputed region in this period. It continues to show adherence for the ASEAN principle of not to tag any party as an enemy or threat. Despite the sour relations, conflictual engagements with China and the balancing manoeuvres towards it to cope with its assertiveness, Vietnam maintains its attachment to this principle of ASEAN Way.

As mentioned above, although Vietnam continued to adhere to the ASEAN Way, it also began to employ balancing tactics to counter China's increasing assertiveness in the 2005-2015 period. It uses both internal and external balancing. Hanoi increased purchases of naval military equipment and began to modernize its navy under a comprehensive military modernization project. These developments are Vietnamese endeavours to increase its naval posture in the South China Sea against the enhancement of Chinese military presence in the region. Vietnamese balancing moves are not limited with self-help. Hanoi also seeks external partners to balance China in the disputed waters. The United States, India and Japan are three main candidates of friendship for Vietnam. Moreover, Vietnam increased the volume of its cooperation with the Philippines, which is also irritated by Chinese aggressiveness.

As the first dimension of balancing, Vietnam's efforts to enhance its own military capacity need to be examined. According to United Nations, Vietnam reported the purchase of 4 Svetlyak Project 10412 Patrol Boats and 10 Su-30MK2 strike aircrafts from Russia in 2012. In 2005, Ukraine reported its export of 3 Su-22 combat aircraft and Czech Republic reported 5 Su-22 combat aircraft to Vietnam. Next year, Ukraine reported another 5 Su-22. In 2006, Russia reported its export of 2 combat aircraft to Vietnam. In 2010, Romania reported 4 combat aircrafts. In 2012, Russia reported Vietnamese purchase of 10 combat aircraft and 2 warships from itself. In 2014, Russia reported another 2 warships and 4 combat aircraft transaction with Vietnam (Url-14, 2014). On the other hand, according to other resources, in 2009 Vietnam and Russia signed a deal for the purchase of six Kilo-class hunter-killer submarines and eight Sukhoi jet fighters (Jeffries, 2011, p. 79). Also, under this deal, Russia will build on-shore infrastructure for submarines (Centre for Analysis of Strategies & Technologies, 2011). This deal is biggest since the end of the Vietnam War (Chan, 2009). According to Thayer, the purchase of this equipment is aimed at area denial

(2011, p. 352). In 2014, India agreed to provide \$100 million credit to Vietnam for the purchase of naval military equipment from itself (Miglani, 2014). Moreover, between 2013 and 2015, Vietnam negotiated international suppliers to add new frigates and corvettes to its naval flotilla (More than the, 2013; Vietnam, Russia, 2015). Such developments show that in the 2005- 2015 period, Vietnam pursued a policy of internal balancing. From its efforts to enhance its naval capacity, it is possible to observe that they are directed to establish a strong position in the South China Sea against China.

The other dimension of balancing policy is external balancing. Vietnam's efforts to establish warm relations with the United States, India, Japan and the Philippines, based on military cooperation is one of the most remarkable changes in the Vietnamese policy from the previous 10-year period of 1995-2005. It is possible to observe that from every aspect such efforts targets the South China Sea region and therefore they are part of a balancing policy against China.

The military relations between Vietnam and the United States began to warm in 2011. A Memorandum of Understanding between the U.S. Department of Defence and the Vietnamese Ministry of National Defence was signed during the Defence Policy Dialogue in 2011. In October 2013, the Joint Minutes on Vietnam and U.S. Coast Guard Maritime Cooperation was signed between the Vietnamese and U.S. Coast Guard Commandants. In December 2013, the U.S. Secretary of State announced \$18 million aid for Vietnam to increase the capacities of coastal patrol units. In October 2014, the United States partially lifted the ban on lethal weapons sales to Vietnam (U.S. Department of State, 2016). The American-Vietnamese collaboration is not limited to agreements and potential military sales in the future. The navies of the two countries conduct naval exercises in the South China Sea in this period. Since 2010, the United States and Vietnam staged joint naval exercises every year. In 2010, for the 15th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations, the two navies conducted a joint naval exercise in the South China Sea (US and Vietnam, 2010). In 2011, naval exchanges between the two countries repeated (Barta, 2011). In 2012, the two navies conducted a weeklong training for salvage and disaster (Vietnam begins, 2012). During the 2014 exercises, Lieutenant Commander Clay Doss of U.S. Navy stated that "the quality and depth of the exchanges is increasing each year as our navies get to know each other better" (US-Vietnam,

2014). For the 20th anniversary of the normalization of the diplomatic relations, the two navies initiated another naval exercise in 2015 (LaGrone, 2015). Finally as a climax of cooperation between the two countries the United States lifted its embargo on sales of lethal weapon systems to Vietnam (Obama lifts, 2016).

Indian contact with Vietnam regarding the South China Sea can be traced back to Vietnamese Prime Minister Phan Van Khai's visit to New Delhi in 2000. During the meetings, the Vietnamese were asked for the Indian access to the naval and aerial base in Cam Ranh Bay and Indians offered the development of the base by themselves, joint defence trainings and selling of advanced weapon systems to Vietnam (Brewster, 2012, p. 95). In October 2010, Vietnam and India agreed on the access of Indian vessels to Vietnamese port facilities and India agreed to help Vietnam in increasing its naval logistical capabilities. In November 2010, the Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung stated that Cam Ranh Bay would stand ready to service ships and submarines from all countries (Moore and Swami, 2010). In 2011, a naval incident between China and India in the South China Sea led to the reiteration of Vietnamese invitations of Indian vessels to the disputed region. During the Indian naval assault vessel, INS Airavat's port call to Haipong, Vietnam, it received a radio transmission and a caller from Chinese Navy warned the vessel for entering Chinese waters and requested it to leave (Bagchi, 2011). As a response, Vietnamese ambassador to India Nguyen Thanh Tan declared that Indian ships are welcome in their seas (Vietnam counters, 2011). In 2013, India and Vietnam initiated a training program for 500 Vietnamese submarines who will be assigned to the newly purchased Kilo-class submarines from Russia (Thayer, 2014). Furthermore, Vietnam and India conduct naval exercises in the South China Sea and Indian warships frequently visit Vietnamese ports (Mandhana, 2014; India, Vietnam, 2015; Indian Navy, 2015). As a result, there is an Indian-Vietnamese engagement towards the South China Sea and it can be seen a part of Vietnamese efforts to increase the presence of 3rd parties in the disputed waters to undermine the Chinese sovereignty claims and posture. Also, there is a clear Vietnamese endeavour to benefit from Indian military technologies and resources in the field of naval warfare. For instance, the two countries signed a Joint Vision Statement on Defence Cooperation for 2015-2020 period in May 2015 and Vietnam seeks to purchase Brahmos anti-ship cruise missiles from India (Vietnam, India, 2015; Sharma, 2015).

During this period, Vietnam sees Japan as another weight to counter China in the South China Sea. In 2011, Japanese and Vietnamese defence ministers signed a Memorandum of Understanding on military cooperation (Defence cooperation, 2013). As a part of the implementation of this document, the two countries increased their military cooperation and consultation through the following three years (Vietnam, Japan, 2011). In this period, top leaders from both armies and military bureaucracy have met frequently, exchanged views and maintained dialogue. Because of the Japanese self-imposed arms sale embargo, the arms deals or technology transfer have not developed between the two countries so far, however Japan supplies Vietnamese coast guard with non-lethal equipment (Pollmann, 2015). Moreover, it provides used ships to Vietnamese coast guard in order to increase its capacities in patrolling missions. (Two more, 2015) On the other hand, Vietnam keeps trying to overcrowd the South China Sea with external parties. In November 2015, Vietnam invited a Japanese warship to take part in naval exercises and to visit the aerial-naval base in Cam Ranh Bay (Kelly and Petty, 2015). In February, Vietnamese and Japanese navies conducted joint naval exercises in Danang.

Finally, the 2015 strategic partnership agreement between Vietnam and the Philippines is the closest thing to an anti-Chinese alliance among Vietnam's foreign engagements. On 27 October 2010, Vietnamese and Philippine defence ministers signed a Memorandum of Understanding on defence cooperation (Url-20, n.d.). According to the Philippine President Benigno Aquino, Vietnam asked them for a strategic partnership in April 2015 (Robles, 2015). And actually, on November 17, the two countries issue a joint statement on strategic partnership. According to the statement, both countries agreed to hold regular meetings between leaders of military bureaucracy and increase cooperation to enhance the capability of both sides to combat traditional and non-traditional security threats (Viet Nam, Philippines, 2015).

Vietnamese policies towards China about the South China Sea dispute show diversification and complexity in the 2005 and 2015 period. It is possible to observe that Vietnam tried to be attached with most of the key ASEAN Way principles and apply its methods. It kept consulting with its fellow ASEAN members and trying to reach consensus and common voice for the ASEAN on the dispute. The process that aimed to implement DOC and create COC reflects this Vietnamese pattern. It shows that Vietnam chose to remain within ASEAN platform and multilateralize the issue,

rather than handle the problem with China on a bilateral basis. Hanoi also refrained from presenting China as a threat or enemy, the dispute in the South China Sea was not demonstrated as a national security threat. The doors of dialogue with China were kept open by Vietnam and cooperation on promising fields was pursued. As a part of the ASEAN Way, during these efforts hard issues are not discussed and a positive spill-over effect to other fields is expected. Vietnam uses track II channels along with track I during these processes. On the other hand, in the face of increasing Chinese assertiveness, it began to employ balancing tactics to cope with its giant northern neighbour. The balancing policies are in conflict with peaceful settlement of disputes and non-confrontation principles. Also, it weakened the traditions of consensus and consultation. All in all, despite the continuity in Vietnamese deference to ASEAN Way, its employment of balancing tactics against China regarding the disputed area crippled the integrity of it as a method of diplomacy.

6.3 Theoretical Analysis

In this section, I will argue that Vietnam cooperated and balanced China simultaneously regarding the South China Sea dispute in the period between 2005 and 2015. The idea of ASEAN Way was the main reason behind Vietnamese policy to show respect and friendship towards China. Constructivist perspective can explain the long term effects of the ASEAN Way on Vietnamese identity and its decision to cooperate with China. By applying constructivism, I observed continuity in Vietnam's China policy about the South China Sea dispute in particular. Vietnam showed deference to the ASEAN Way in both 1995-2005 and 2005-2015 periods. On the other hand, realist perspective can shed light on Vietnamese employment of balancing in the 2005-2015 period.

This section will evaluate the continuity and change in the Vietnamese association with the ASEAN Way towards the Chinese position on the South China Sea dispute from a theoretical point of view. The shift in the Vietnamese policy from strict adherence to the ASEAN Way in the period between 1995 and 2005 to weak adherence to the ASEAN Way in the following decade will be examined from constructivist and realist schools. The convenience of constructivist and realist approaches in explaining the constancy and change in Vietnamese posture will be tested.

The change and continuity in the Vietnamese policies between the two periods has two important features. The first one is the insertion of balancing tactics into the Vietnamese inventory since 2005. The evident increase in the Chinese aggressiveness and assertiveness in the South China Sea is the main reason behind Vietnamese decision to employ balancing tactics towards China. This development eroded the ASEAN Way's influence on Vietnamese policy towards the Chinese position in the South China Sea. The erosion emerged because of the incompatibility of balancing policies with some key features of the ASEAN Way namely, non-confrontation, peaceful settlement of disputes, consultation and consensus. Thus, in the period between 2005 and 2015 Vietnam's adherence to the ASEAN Way has weakened. Realist point of view has no trouble in explaining the Vietnam's shift to power politics in the face of danger and can be the convenient theoretical approach for the phenomenon.

The second crucial point is the maintenance of ASEAN Way in a weaker form by Vietnam in its relations with China regarding the dispute. From a realist point of view, Vietnam as a rational actor who pursues relative material interests supposed to adapt new material conditions, namely increasing Chinese assertiveness, and leave the ASEAN Way. However Vietnam did not abandon the ASEAN Way of diplomacy towards the China on the issue of disputed waters. Vietnamese insistence on the ASEAN Way in this period is an anomaly for realist explanations. From a realist point of view, states focus on relative material gain in order to survive in a dangerous environment. Preoccupation with ineffective ways before perils may have vital consequences. As can be seen in the period between 2005 and 2015, the application of the ASEAN Way by Vietnam could not prevent China from making assertive and aggressive moves in the South China Sea. Realist analyses can see Vietnam's pursuance of balancing tactics as the proof of ASEAN Way's inconvenience to Vietnam's efforts to defend its interests. For realists, only establishment of materially supplied defensive build-ups and/or forming military alliances can deter an aggressive external actor from making undesired moves. Thus, a possible expectation from a realist analysis can be Vietnam's concentration to enhance its defensive material capabilities and seek external partners to balance China and its total abandonment of the ASEAN Way. The preservation of an ineffective method can only distract the country from its aims and lead to waste of time and resources.

Realist expectation from a rationalist actor like Vietnam can be focusing on vital priorities. However, the ASEAN Way still shapes Vietnamese posture in the South China Sea and influence the mode of relations with China. Realist approach cannot explain such phenomenon. The reason for the inadequacy of realist perspective in explaining Vietnam's continuing adherence to the ASEAN Way is its focus on merely material conditions and interests and overlooking ideational, ideological and social effects on state behaviour. The ASEAN Way as a body of normative values, principles, reiterated practices and traditions that shared by ASEAN members shows durability even before sharp changes of material conditions such as an increase in assertiveness of China. However, since the ideational structures are built on material conditions, the ASEAN Way also takes new forms to adapt such changes. As Wendt put it, "constructivism should not matter as if nature did not matter" and "brute material forces can still have independent effects" (Wendt, 1999, p. 111). The increase in the Chinese assertiveness and military activity in the South China Sea can be thought as brute material factors that force Vietnam to modify its association with the ASEAN Way or with other words "the distribution and composition of material capabilities at any given moment help define the possibilities of our action" (Wendt, 1999, p. 113).

As can be seen below, presenting the ASEAN Way as a Vietnamese distraction to hide the balancing manoeuvres against China or a tactic to alleviate Chinese wrath can be possible realist explanations for Vietnamese attachment to this unique method. However, they do not achieve to provide strong explanations.

Therefore, when realist explanations cannot provide adequate answers for the Vietnamese loyalty to the ASEAN Way, constructivist approach can come to help. First of all, constructivist approach gives insight into ideational factors that shape decisions of countries. The Vietnamese decision to maintain the ASEAN Way can be explained with the ASEAN member identity of the country, the social learning process within the association and ideational weight of the method as a reiterated foreign policy custom. Moreover, it is important to note that the shift in Vietnamese identity from an Indochinese socialist vanguard into a regional actor that compatible with ASEAN tradition did not start with the ASEAN membership in 1995, rather since 1986 Vietnamese identity was changing slightly in this direction (Thayer,

2015). It means, the ASEAN Way left some durable marks on the motif of Vietnamese foreign policy.

Secondly, application of policies by states does not necessarily aim material ends. For instance according to Nguyen Vu Tung, the main motive behind Vietnamese membership to ASEAN was not material gain but the need for association and the need to cope with an identity crisis after the collapse of the USSR (Tung, 2007, p. 486). Similarly, searching for pure material interests in Vietnam's preservation of the ASEAN Way in the period between 2005 and 2015 renders realist explanation inadequate. As mentioned above, balancing policies towards China show that Vietnam has already took measures in the material field to enhance its security in the South China Sea and to cope with Chinese assertiveness. The reasons behind Vietnamese maintenance of the ASEAN Way, even though in a weak form, should not be defined in material terms but ideational terms. I argue that the transformation of perceptions of top Vietnamese leaders since Doi Moi reforms in 1986, the contact with ASEAN, the learning and socialization process before and after the membership, the harmony between ASEAN's normative norms and Vietnam's intentions for itself and image in the world motivate Vietnamese leaders to show deference to the ASEAN Way regarding its policies towards the South China Sea.

6.3.1 Realist explanations

Realism is convenient in explaining the weakening of Vietnamese adherence to ASEAN norms, principles and methods of diplomacy or with other words, the annexation of balancing tactics to Vietnamese repertoire in the 2005-2015 period. As a middle-sized country compared to its northern neighbour, Vietnamese employment of both internal and external balancing against China can be understood as a search for security and survival. From realist point of view, the increase in Vietnam's purchase of new military equipment that aim the South China Sea, the initiation of a modernization program and its seeking of defensive engagements with the United States, India, Japan and the Philippines are caused by external pushes towards Vietnam and its reaction is actually shaped by the systemic influence of anarchy. Vietnamese application of power politics can be explained by pure materially driven behaviour without a contradiction.

On the other hand, materialist explanation for the maintenance of the ASEAN Way is problematic. From realist point of view, there are two ways to define the ASEAN Way. First it can be presented as an ineffective or aimless policy to cope with Chinese aggressiveness in the South China Sea between 2005 and 2015. From a realist point of view, relativity in material power conditions relations between rational actors. In this case, the raw power inequality drives China to exploit weakness of Vietnam and other ASEAN claimants in the South China Sea and turn it into profit for itself. Employment of ASEAN Way by Vietnam, namely remaining within ASEAN framework to settle the dispute, keeping the dialogue doors opened with China, focusing on easy, solvable matters and developing cooperation on low politics cannot change China's position on the disputed waters and lead it to denounce its claims on the area. Actually, China itself expressed this in a most direct fashion in two occasions. In March 2010, Chinese officials declared their sovereign right over the South China Sea as a core interest in a meeting with senior Obama administration officials (Wong, 2010). Same year, during the ARF meeting, Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi said "China is a big country and you are small countries and that's a fact". (Yahuda, 2013, p. 10)

Along with these clear messages, China showed no signs of stepping back from its moves in the field. It continuously enhanced its position in the disputed area with military build ups and terraforming projects. Thus, from a realist point of view, the ASEAN Way can achieve almost nothing to cease China's aggressiveness towards the South China Sea, simply it is inefficient. Moreover, Vietnam is already applying balancing policies; it renders the ASEAN Way to an aimless and redundant policy according to realists' standards. In other words, the maintenance of the ASEAN Way is an anomaly for the first possible explanation that a realist analysis offered.

According to a second possible explanation, the insistence on the ASEAN Way can be seen as a cloak to hide balancing manoeuvres of Vietnam, to stall China and to avoid from its wrath. For instance, the simultaneous conduction of joint naval patrols with Chinese vessels in the South China Sea and Vietnamese-American, Vietnamese-Indian and Vietnamese-Japan naval exercises in the same region can be attributed to such a policy. Vietnam's willingness to refrain from presenting China as an enemy or threat can be seen under this category too. The evident inequality in material capacities can be seen as a factor in Vietnamese avoidance from tagging China in a

negative way even in the top public national security documents, such as White Papers and policy reports of National Congresses. From such a realist reading, Track II diplomacy, ASEAN solution process for the South China Sea and the cooperation on the fields that could boost the development of bilateral relations are Vietnamese tools to gain time while building the capacities of Vietnamese People's Navy, increasing the third party presence and forming partnerships that can balance Chinese military might in the disputed area.

However, this is actually not a strong argument. The main reason of this is the fact that the ASEAN Way cannot hide Vietnamese balancing manoeuvres. The modernization program for the army that initiated in 2011, the Vietnamese efforts to gain access to more complex defensive systems, its invitations of foreign navies to the region and Vietnamese strategic ports and joint naval exercises are publicly well known developments. Apart from the impossibility to cloak such gigantic movements with the ASEAN Way of diplomacy, Vietnam actually has not tried to hide them from anyone. Contrary, the internal and external balancing moves of Vietnam aim to warn and deter China from further elevating tensions. For example, on 6 November 2015, in a meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping, Nguyen Phu Trong of Vietnam agreed to build trustworthy relations between their countries. During the same meetings, Japan declared that their warships have been invited to strategic Cam Ranh Bay of Vietnam to participate in the joint naval exercises (Petty and Blanchard, 2015). Chinese side is well aware of these Vietnamese ventures and they are not delayed by Vietnamese formal or informal diplomatic initiatives. The non-stop enlargement of Chinese influence over the South China Sea is the proof of their immunity to such tricks or the absence of a Vietnamese endeavour for such an end. As a result, it is hard to define the Vietnamese application of the ASEAN Way as an instrument to hide its balancing manoeuvres. Realist theory cannot solve the mystery of the preservation of the ASEAN Way. On the other hand, constructivism can explain Vietnamese political-economic cooperation with China and deference to her by ideational allegiance to the ASEAN Way.

Some theorists' conceptualization of Southeast Asian states' policies towards China as hedging implies a kind of cloaking behaviour. According to the advocates of hedging argument, Southeast Asian states employ a combination of balancing and bandwagoning or cooperation against China. They deliberately create vagueness in

their allegiances in order to escape from choosing neither China nor the United States as straightforward allies. It can be understood as another way to say that Vietnam's and other Southeast Asian states' political and economic engagement or cooperation with China is a way to alleviate the reaction of China for their balancing policies. For instance, according to Goh (2005) Vietnam, Thailand and Singapore both apply soft balancing against China and try to convince it to defer international law. She notes that hedging can be applied along with soft balancing policy. Lim and Cooper (2015, p. 699) write that hedging argument defines Southeast Asian states' political engagement with China as an effort to minimize China's dissatisfaction from the regional status quo. According to Thayer (2011, p. 352), Vietnamese political initiatives and engagement towards China aim to render Chinese behaviour more predictable and less harmful for Vietnamese national interests. Similar to the defenders of hedging argument, he claims that Vietnam pursue self-help or balancing along with the political engagement.

As it can be seen, hedging explanations for simultaneous usage of political-economic engagement with balancing can be seen another version of realist cloaking argument. And, it is as problematic as realist explanations. First of all, supporters of hedging argument claim that Southeast Asian states' apply soft balancing against China. However, as I showed above, Vietnam pursues hard balancing by increasing its defensive capabilities and forming military cooperation with India, Japan, the United States and the Philippines. Simultaneous application of hard balancing and political-economic cooperation is contradictory with rationalist assumptions about state behaviour. Political and economic cooperation with a threatening actor increase the relative power of it. Such behaviour also renders balancing policy futile. As Lim and Cooper put it (2015, p. 699), from rationalist point of view, cooperation and balancing are two contradictory responses to a powerful aggressor. Thus, political engagement along with balancing in order to convince a powerful aggressor to conform to international law or alter its behaviour cannot be a satisfactory explanation for Vietnam's deference and cooperative behaviour towards China. Rather, a constructivist reading of the role of the ASEAN Way in Vietnam's China policy can provide an accurate answer for it.

6.3.2 Constructivist explanations

The Vietnamese adherence to the ASEAN Way during the 2005-2015 period can be understood with the employment of constructivist approach. As mentioned above, realist theory cannot provide an adequate answer because of its focus on pure material interests and balance of power. Policies that are seen from realist perspective as ineffective and aimless can be explained with ideology, tradition and identity. Constructivist approach can explain the Vietnamese insistence on the ASEAN Way vis-a-vis the growing assertiveness of China towards the South China Sea. The transformation that started in 1986 with Doi Moi policy, the membership process with ASEAN and socialization process within the Association are the three factors that heavily impacted Vietnam's response to an assertive China. In the first part of this section, the transformation in Vietnam's identity and foreign policy understanding from an ideology-exporting country to an ASEAN member will be evaluated. This will help to understand the ideational foundations of Vietnamese policy makers' loyalty to the ASEAN Way. However, as examined in the first and second sections of this chapter, the empirical evidence reflects that this loyalty is not absolute but it is maintained in a weaker form. The second part will be focused on the consolidation of ASEAN identity after the membership.

6.3.2.1 Vietnam's identity in transition

It is possible to observe that, during the period between 1986 and 1995, Vietnam's identity altered from a socialist country that saw hard power as primary means to solve its disputes with external actors, to a responsible ASEAN member. However, it does not mean to imply that Vietnam dropped its socialist identity. Rather, it can be argued that Vietnam gave up its intention to export its own version of socialism into Indochina and limited its socialist agenda to the borders of the country. Furthermore, as Tung observed, states can have more than one identity (Tung, 2007, p. 496). The initiation of Doi Moi policy in 1986 at the Sixth Party Congress and adoption of Politburo Resolution No. 13 and No. 32 and the modifications to these documents at the later congresses are the main indicators of the change in Vietnamese foreign policy priorities and the policy makers' perception of international order (Thanh, 2012, p. 41). The details of such policy documents will be provided below. The withdrawal from Cambodia, normalization of diplomatic relations with China, the

United States, ASEAN and the initiation of ASEAN membership process can be seen as the examples of this change.

As it mentioned in chapter four, Vietnam's history since the end of World War II can be defined as a perpetual war. Such a historical burden ended up with a deep socio-economic crisis in the middle of 1980's. To solve this problem, Vietnamese leadership introduced Doi Moi policy in 1986. With these reforms, Vietnam decided to open up its economy for foreign direct investment and adopted key principles of market economy. According to Tung, regime survival was the main aim behind such reforms and this perception paved the way for reconciliation with ASEAN in the following years. The term regime survival can be understood in the sense that prevention of a total economic collapse and/or regime change by a popular uprising. Since the end of the War in Cambodia, Vietnamese leaders began to understand that ASEAN's main focus was on the economic development of its members or with other words, comprehensive security to achieve regime survival and legitimacy in the eyes of their peoples. Comprehensive security concept focuses on non-military or non-traditional security threats from inside the country such as economic instability, ethnic or religious conflict or ideological strife. Several countries developed their own versions of comprehensive security. ASEAN in particular is not alien to the concept; the discussions on the issue in Indonesia can be traced back to late 1960's and early 1970's. Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand also focused on such security understandings (Capie and Evans 2007, pp. 67-68). Thus Vietnamese and ASEAN aims, namely the legitimacy of the ruling regimes via economic development were compatible and this facilitated Vietnamese membership to the association (Tung, 2007; Sutherland, 2009).

However, Vietnam did not only change its aims but the methods it employed to reach them. The reorientation of foreign policy in 1986 and 1988 with Politburo Resolutions No. 32 and No. 13 were extensions of such efforts. Before the issue of these resolutions, the perceptions of Vietnamese decision makers towards the foreign policy were conditioned by Marxist-Leninist ideological suppositions, namely a struggle between capitalist (enemy) and communist (friend) forces until the final triumph of the latter. The international relations of these two were a struggle of "who will defeat whom" (Porter, 1990, p. 1). Vietnam was considering itself within the socialist camp and materialized such view with its membership to COMECON and a

formal alliance with the USSR in 1978. With the Resolution No. 32 Vietnam clearly showed signs of its intention to diversify the relations with external powers and the emerging tendency to give up Marxist-Leninist “struggle of two forces” understanding. The Resolution No.32 outlines the necessity to “move prove proactively a new stage of development, and peaceful coexistence with China, ASEAN, and the United States, and build Southeast Asia into a region of peace, stability and cooperation.” The goal of Vietnam’s external engagements was determined as “proactively create a condition for stability and economic construction” (Thayer, 2015, p. 4).

Politburo Resolution No. 13 was issued in 1988. The term “national interest” was introduced into the Vietnamese foreign policy literature for the first time and took place of the term “ideology objective” (Thanh, 2012, p. 41). This shows that the old Vietnamese political agenda of exporting ideology to all Indochina gave way to an understanding that focuses on Vietnam’s own development. The resolution was emphasizing maintenance of peace, taking advantage of favourable world conditions in order to stabilize the domestic situation and set the base for economic development over the next ten to fifteen years (Thayer, 2015, p. 5). Another important concept that introduced with the resolution was “more friends, fewer enemies”. It reflects Vietnamese intentions to normalize relations with other countries and diversify its external links. This concept later modified in 1991 with the Seventh National Congress. Vietnamese foreign policy goal was set as “being friends with all countries in the world”. At this point, it is possible to argue that Vietnam began to see countries with different socio-economic systems as potential partners not ideological enemies. This marks the emergence of a new Vietnamese perception towards the Southeast Asia region. With these changes in the ideational structure and the fragmentation of presuppositions about the neighbouring countries, the engagement with ASEAN emerged as a possible option. As will be elaborated below, the harmony between Vietnamese sensitivity about its sovereignty, its concentration of economic development and ASEAN norms and principles paved the way to its quick and rigorous adoption of the ASEAN Way.

The former Vietnamese foreign minister Nguyen Co Thach’s views can provide an important insight for changing opinions of Vietnamese leadership towards the world system. He is known as the architect of Resolution No. 13. Thach’s views were

published in Vietnamese journals in forms of interviews and articles in this era. According to Thach's views in 1990, Cold War was transformed from a conflict into a competition and cooperation within coexistence. He argued that economic independence was not the key to the economic development. For him, having as much as economic links with other countries was the formula for increasing economic development capabilities. He was also implicitly referring to globalization by claiming that the free movement of products and services across national and ideological boundaries created a single world market and high level economic cooperation between nations with different social systems. This kind of cooperation rendered military and political alliances from Cold War obsolete and led to security interdependence. The focus of countries shifted from military competition to economic competition and states need to concentrate on economic development. He stated that other countries and Vietnam especially need to refrain from military confrontation and reduce defence spending and that was the tendency among the global actors. Finally, recent economic and political changes rendered old way of thinking that has prevailed over the past seventy years obsolete (Porter, 1990, p. 10-12). This point is crucial because it shows that Vietnam's Marxist-Leninist codification of the world system shattered among the top leadership of the country and foreign policy of Vietnam would be at the hands of flexible decision makers instead of ideologically determined cadres. Thus this ideational transformation accelerated Vietnamese withdrawal from Cambodia, facilitated making compromises on the issue and much more importantly allowed the Vietnam-ASEAN rapprochement and the appreciation of ASEAN values by Vietnamese decision makers.

Again, former foreign minister Thach mentioned a missed opportunity for Vietnam to become a developed industrialized state. For him, the invasion of Cambodia instead of opening up the country to foreign direct investment after the Vietnam War was a bad decision for the economic well-being of the country (Porter, 1990, p. 12). The statements of Thach and Politburo resolutions show that Vietnamese concentration has shifted from military security to comprehensive and economic security and also cooperation with Vietnam became much easier on this channel with ASEAN.

From the introduction of Doi Moi policy in 1986 to the eve of ASEAN membership in 1995, Vietnam continued its reorientation of foreign policy via resolutions, national congresses and Communist Party's plenums. In 1989, the Sixth Plenum of the Communist Party Central Committee issued a resolution. According to the document, there was a need to strongly shift the focus of foreign policy from political relations to political-economic relations (Thayer, 2015, p.5). As mentioned above, Seventh National Party Congress in 1991 was another important step in showing Vietnamese intention to be recognized as a partner for the international community. Political report of the Congress declared that "Vietnam wants to become the friend of all countries in the world community, the struggle for peace, independence and development". Creating "favourable international opportunities for national construction and defence towards building socialism" was defined as the objective of Vietnamese foreign policy. The report sees two methods for Vietnam as suitable to its needs, namely "diversification and multilateralisation of economic relations with all countries and economic organizations on the principle of respecting each other's independence and sovereignty" and "pursuing equality and mutual benefit" (Lye and Hofmeister, 2011, p. 72). It can be observed that some of key ASEAN principles such as pacific solution of disputes, non-intervention, and respect for sovereignty were already found a place for themselves in a date as early as 1991. It can be thought as a factor that facilitated Vietnamese adoption of other norms, values and traditions of ASEAN through the engagement process. The report underlines Vietnam's intention to form "equal and mutually beneficial co-operation with all countries regardless of different socio-political systems and on the basis of the principle of peaceful co-existence" (Thanh, 2012, p. 41). When these messages were compared to the Sixth Congress's concept of "more friends, fewer enemies", it can be seen that Vietnamese leaders have dropped the category of enemy and they have begun to see every other country as a potential partner, regardless of their ideological structure. Five years later, at the Eighth National Congress in 1996, Vietnam's goal of "befriending every country in the world community, striving for peace, independence and development; and accelerating bilateral and multilateral cooperation with countries, and international and regional organizations" was reiterated. (Lye and Hofmeister, 2011, p. 72).

During the normalization process with ASEAN, Vietnam's expectations and the values that emphasized by it were compatible with ASEAN norms, principles and methods. Moreover Vietnamese leadership convinced by the idea that the socialist characteristics of the government was not in contradiction with the ASEAN Way during the membership negotiations with ASEAN. For instance, according to a 1994 Vietnamese Ministry of Foreign Affairs report:

ASEAN basic documents do not have any point that is openly or tacitly suggestive of the anti-communist, anti-socialist and anti-Vietnamese nature of the organization. ASEAN is not aimed at opposing any other country and are in principles in accordance with the principles in our Party's and State's foreign policy (Tung, 2007, p. 493).

According to an interview with Vietnamese External Relations officers, the ASEAN countries were more similar to them than they had thought. They stated that "ASEAN political documents and cooperative projects have proved that ASEAN is not an anti-communist military alliance and the ASEAN countries' objectives in terms of nation-building and external relations are 80 per cent similar to us" (Tung 2007, 494). Also, there are examples about Vietnamese endorsement of ASEAN principles even with a greater endorsement than other ASEAN members. For instance, Vietnamese reluctance to join attempts to weaken ASEAN norms and principles of non-interference and consensus shows its determination on the matter. For Dosch, Vietnam's refusal to participate UN mission in East Timor in 1999 and its avoidance to discuss reforms in ASEAN methods are two examples about the issue (Dosch, 2006, p. 247).

According to Sutherland, Vietnam and other Southeast Asian nations are experiencing a nation-building process and Vietnamese leadership forms its legitimacy on a strong emphasis of sovereignty and independence (Sutherland, 2009, p. 318). It is possible to observe such stress in Vietnamese official documents such as White Papers and National Congress policy reports. ASEAN principles of non-interference, respect for sovereignty and internal affairs were in harmony with Vietnamese expectations. 1992 Study Report on "ASEAN Political Structures and Systems" supports this point. According to the document, "the nation building formula of ASEAN is not totally different from ours [Vietnam's], namely planned market economy under the leadership of the Communist Party, with some commonalties in political structures and practices" (Tung, 2007, p. 491).

As a result, the harmony between Vietnam's expectations from the promises of basic Westphalian principles towards sovereignty and independence and ASEAN norms and principles was an important factor in Vietnam's membership to ASEAN and a facilitator during the adoption process of the ASEAN Way. The Vietnamese foreign policy towards China regarding the South China issue was shaped by such ideational foundations of Vietnamese ruling elite. Their insistence to sustain the ASEAN norms and principles even in a weaker form can be traced back to these deep seated changes in the foreign policy understanding.

As can be seen, Vietnam's identity changed from an ideology-exporting socialist vanguard to a responsible partner for the regional and extra-regional countries. This point was elaborated in chapter four. The change from a confrontational stance to a cooperative posture reflected itself as pursuing membership for a regional grouping once identified as an enemy and adopting its norms, principles and methods. It is fair to argue that Vietnam presents its new cooperative image to the world with its ASEAN member title. A total abandonment of the ASEAN Way by leaving negotiation table between ASEAN and China, naming the South China Sea problem as a crucial security problem, branding China as a threat, halting cooperation with it on other fields would create deterioration in Vietnamese image of a country that set its highest international interests as "to protect an international environment of peace and stability" (Elliot, 2012, p. 252). In the next section, further consolidation of ASEAN identity and the ASEAN Way as a part of Vietnamese foreign policy after the membership will be elaborated.

6.3.2.2 Further consolidation of ASEAN identity

Vietnam's perception of itself and ASEAN is an important dimension of forming its identity. Its perception of ASEAN as self before the other, namely China, is an important reason of its adherence to the ASEAN Way. For instance, in the top public national security documents, Vietnam makes special references to ASEAN's vital role in regional peace and stability and its own contribution to the organization. In the political report that prepared for the 11th National party Congress, it is predicted that ASEAN will continue to play an important role in the region. In 2004 National Defence White Paper, some special sections were devoted to ASEAN's and ASEAN-associated institutions' achievements. The ASEAN members' efforts to reach an

economic integration between new and old members are seen as a contributing factor for the peace and stability of the region. Apart from the economic sphere, ASEAN's efforts to insert the ASEAN norms and principles into the ARF's own development process are seen as a positive development by Vietnam. Finally Vietnam explains its own contributions to the peace and stability of the region and the world by its active participation to the processes that conducted by ASEAN, ARF and APEC (The Socialist Republic of Vietnam Ministry of National Defence, 2004, p. 14).

2009 White Paper continues to make observations and enhance its evaluation on ASEAN's performance in the region and its own contribution to it. The ASEAN Charter's coming into effect is hailed by the document as an important step for the formation of a more integrated ASEAN or the ASEAN Community. The White Paper even provides specifics about the contents of the charter. According to the document the cooperation for peace, stability and development between ASEAN and extra-ASEAN actors has been enhanced. The paper observes that "ASEAN continues to take a leading role in the motivation and development of the ARF and other security mechanisms" (The Socialist Republic of Vietnam Ministry of National Defence, 2004, p. 16). About the defensive field, the document devotes special sections to the defensive cooperation between other ASEAN countries and Vietnam and sees it as an important step towards the ASEAN Community. According to Vietnam their partnership on defensive issues are based on the ASEAN principles and norms of consensus, non-interference, refraining from turning ASEAN into a military alliance and other main principles of the ASEAN Charter. The document also underlines Vietnam's participation to ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting and support for "initiatives that enhance cooperation among ASEAN militaries to settle common security issues" (The Socialist Republic of Vietnam Ministry of National Defence, 2004, p. 30). 2009 White Paper elaborates the defence cooperation between Vietnam and ASEAN in many fields, such as non-traditional security issues, meetings and sharing experiences.

In both documents, there is no other serious reference to the importance of an organization or regional-international actor. ASEAN's place is unique in this sense. The presence of references to the ASEAN norms and principles and the role of them in coordinating the cooperation between ASEAN, Vietnam and extra-ASEAN partners in Vietnam's defensive white papers show that the country sees itself as an

internal part of the organization. The ASEAN Way in this sense diffused into the general Vietnamese diplomacy. For instance, according to Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung, ASEAN owes its standing and visibility to the “ASEAN Way”. About the role of it for Vietnam, he said “ASEAN has been and will be an important pillar in Viet Nam’s foreign policy of independence, sovereignty, diversification and multilateralisation of international relations.” (PM: ASEAN, 2012). In 2005, Prime Minister stated that, Vietnam joined ASEAN in 1995 in order to ensure an environment in the region favourable for the sake of national development and prosperity. Another member of Vietnam’s ruling elite, Foreign Minister Nguyen Manh Cam sees the Vietnam’s hosting of 1998 ASEAN Summit, the production of the Hanoi Plan of Action as a result of the Summit and other Vietnamese efforts to “play its part in resolving global issues” as the steps that “elevated the role and prestige of Vietnam on the world stage” (Elliot, 2012, p. 42). As can be seen, Vietnam perceives itself as an internal part of ASEAN and adopted ASEAN membership as a source of its state identity. Its adherence to the ASEAN Way in the post-2005 period is an extension of this perception.

On the other hand, Vietnam is one of the most active carriers of ASEAN banner in the period between 2005 and 2015. In 2010 during its hosting of ASEAN Summit, it showed great enthusiasm to create a united ASEAN voice on the issue, during the negotiations that aimed to implement DOC on the South China Sea and create a COC, it reiterated same efforts. On the other hand, it shows willingness to contribute the establishment process of ASEAN Community (Hao, 2015). It is important to note that, since 2007 ASEAN’s efforts toward regional integration accelerated and it is building a Political-Security Community and Socio-Cultural Community. It already established the Economic Community in 2015. Vietnam’s efforts to show deference for the ASEAN Way is also a part of its presence within this process. Acting unilaterally without a consultation with any of ASEAN norms and principles could harm Vietnam’s role in this process too. Even the incumbent Secretary General of the association is a Vietnamese politician for the period between 2013 and 2017. Thus, it is not surprising that Vietnam did not break all of its ties to the ASEAN’s methods to deal with external hardships. The preservation of it, even though in a weakened form, is compatible with Vietnam’s determination to remain within the community and present itself to the region and the world as an ASEAN member.

Another important point is that, Vietnam socialized within ASEAN, learned and adopted ASEAN's diplomatic traditions. As mentioned above, its interaction with ASEAN principles can be traced back to the pre-1995 period. It signed ASEAN's Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in 1992 and it declared its intention to join the association in 1993 (Tung, 2007, p. 485). The initiation of visits to ASEAN members and others, namely Japan and South Korea in this period by top Vietnamese leaders and construction of personal contacts with them can be thought as the beginning of the learning process (Elliot, 2012, p. 125). As Acharya (1998) notes it, personal non-formal ties are an important feature of the ASEAN Way. After the membership in 1995, through formal and non-formal interactions with ASEAN members and other regional actors via ASEAN-affiliated platforms such as ASEAN Regional Forum, East Asian Summit, ASEAN + 3 and ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting it became accustomed to ASEAN Way of diplomacy. Through its participation to reiterated meetings, track II diplomacy and personal connections among the Southeast Asian state elite, Vietnam practiced the ASEAN Way through two decades and maintained to apply it in its relations with China regarding the South China Sea Dispute. It is not very likely for Vietnam to completely abandon such a deep-seated foreign policy tradition.

The Vietnamese top leader's perceptions after the ASEAN membership can also provide insight about Vietnam's socialization process. For instance, in 1995, Vietnam's Deputy Foreign Minister Dinh Nho Liem sees an increase in chance of states to live peacefully. He said (Elliot, 2012, p. 120) "the nations have reduced their military commitments and are focusing on internal consolidation" and adds that "the trajectory of struggle and cooperation within peaceful coexistence among countries with different regimes is expanding daily". This statement reflects that Vietnam showed its readiness to learn and play the game of diplomacy according to the rules of ASEAN and other international actors. It is also important to note that the emphasis on internal consolidation shows Vietnam's appreciation of comprehensive security concept, which is the dominant security understanding within ASEAN.

Similarly in a 1996 analysis of the party ideologist from Ho Chi Minh University Nguyen Huu Cat, Vietnam's only option for survival and development is presented as "carrying out a policy of opening up and diversification and multilateralisation of

external relations with all countries” (Elliot, 2012, p. 135). Through the understanding of the need to opening up the country for new methods and ideas, Vietnam met the first condition to learn how to act according to the ASEAN Way. Vietnamese foreign minister’s stress on opening a new page also reflects this new perception. After the membership to the association he said “our war period is over, we are now speaking of the post-Cold War era where the tendencies of peace and economic cooperation are predominant, not the balance of forces. Cooperation could bring benefit all” (Elliot, 2012, p. 149). These words are clear signs of the willingness of Vietnamese leaders to forget old grievances and learning from their former enemies. Moreover, it shows that their perception towards the international relations shifted from a zero-sum view to positive sum view.

Vietnam’s Deputy Foreign Minister Vu Khoan’s statement on Vietnam’s entry into ASEAN outlines these two points. He sees Vietnam’s entry into ASEAN as a development that “will finally end a decades-long period of antagonistic interregional relations” and does not see standing “outside internal organizations to see their members surging ahead” as an option for the country (Elliot, 2012, p. 150). Even the Vietnamese army, which is known for their conservative tendencies towards reform and change, defined Vietnam’s ASEAN membership as “the beginning of an integration for both sides” (Elliot, 2012, p. 151). A Vietnamese Foreign Ministry official defines the Vietnamese relations between ASEAN and Vietnam as “being in the same meeting, being in the same boat”. He adds that “after Vietnam joined ASEAN the relations between Vietnam and the ASEAN nations completely changed, and had no longer a confrontational character as before”. For him membership enhanced Vietnam’s international influence and prestige and participation to ARF meetings increased its chances to deal with great powers more effectively (Elliot, 2012, p. 154). This observation implies that Vietnamese membership and learning ASEAN Way of diplomacy led the country to employ more than power politics and use polished and sophisticated ways to deal with a strong neighbour like China.

The reintroduction of power politics into the Vietnamese foreign policy towards China after 2005 does seem to contest the argument that ASEAN Way was influential in shaping Vietnamese foreign policy. However as discussed above, because of its reiterated employment and its harmony with the way that chosen by

Vietnam with resolution No.13 and No.32, it is still maintained by Vietnam in its relations with China in a revised form. The statements of two anonymous senior officers from Vietnamese Ministry of Foreign Affairs also reflect this point. According to the first anonymous officer, his country sees “integration to international community as the most effective way to achieve development and security” (Hien, 2015, p. 33). For the second anonymous officer, Vietnam even conducts its cooperation with the United States and Japan according to the ASEAN norms and principles. He states that “Vietnam sees military cooperation, rather than military actions that use force to threaten other countries, with ASEAN’s partners particularly the US and Japan as an important track to cooperate with them in the region under ASEAN norms and identity” (Hien, 2015, pp. 34-35). Although as ASEAN’s de facto leader Indonesia implied that (Shoji, 2012, p. 21) Vietnam’s engagement with the United States and Japan is not compatible with the ASEAN Way and it unveiled its concerns about the American and Japanese “interference” in the South China Sea, Vietnamese side tried to expose its deference to the ASEAN Way.

All these statements from Vietnam’s governing body reflect that Vietnam did accept the need to learn from its fellow ASEAN peers and it had willingness to do that. Through 20 years, such learning and socialization process continued and shaped Vietnam’s ASEAN member identity.

As elaborated above, Vietnam continued to avoid mentioning China in its important strategic documents, such as white papers and political reports. Along with this reflection of the ASEAN Way, the discourse of top political leaders also was very careful and did not directly target China. Instead the statements generally described the situation without naming China and when they did, they put effort to not to antagonize China, even when accusing it with activities that violate international law.

For instance, in a 2010 interview with Vietnam’s Defense Minister Phung Quang Thang stressed the necessity to consider the interests of the whole region, the usage of self-restraint and the importance of reaching a peaceful solution based on a Code of Conduct. He added that China should exercise self-restraint to prevent the radicalization of the issue (Shoji, 2012, p. 10). In 2011, during the presentation of the Political Report of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, General Secretary Manh mentioned the South China Sea issue indirectly; he did not

mentioned Chinese actions. Manh only stated that “the defence of strategic areas, such as territorial waters and islands, is still insufficient” (Shoji, 2012, p. 9). In an interview, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Pham Binh Minh described their policy towards the South China Sea as “to settle disputes in line with international law”. He said “our [Vietnam’s] unchanged stance is peace and stability and that our sovereignty is ensured” (Vietnam’s foreign, 2015).

Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung used a similar language. He showed Vietnamese discomfort from China’s expansionist policies in the South China Sea, such as land reclamation efforts and construction of islands without naming China. On the other hand, he stated that peace, stability, security and freedom of navigation are the common interest of ASEAN and others. He called for the employment of peaceful means and international law, the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea in particular, self-restraint and refraining from use of force. He urged the parties involved to take confidence building measures and usage of ASEAN mechanisms (PM urges, 2015). In another interview, Prime Minister Dung stressed that Vietnam “are [is] never the first to use military means and would never unilaterally start a military confrontation unless we are forced to take self-defence actions.” On the other hand, even explaining their motives behind the armament efforts, more specifically the purchase of six Kilo-class submarines from Russia in 2009, Dung used a mild language and did not refer to the South China Sea (Shoji, 2012, p. 11).

One can argue that, Vietnamese bureaucrats’ and decision makers’ discourse may not reflect their commitment to the ASEAN Way, rather we should focus on actor behaviour. However, as Katsumata (2003, p. 108) put it, constructivists see the discourse that used by the actor in attempting legitimate its actions as most significant indicator of norms. Thus, Vietnamese officers’ justification of the security cooperation with the United States and Japan with ASEAN norms and identity is significant in showing Vietnam’s concern for the ASEAN Way in its foreign policy. Moreover, it is not very reasonable to dismiss actors’ discourse as merely rhetoric especially in Vietnam’s case. During the Cold War, Vietnam used a direct language towards other countries and it was consistent with its employment of power politics. For instance, in the preamble of its 1959 constitution, the Japanese fascists, the French and the U.S. imperialists are mentioned. In 2000’s, it is hard to find a direct reference to Chinese threat in Vietnamese discourse. In both cases, rhetoric reflects

the state identity and ideational influence on Vietnamese foreign policy decisions. It was socialism and resistance against imperialism during the Cold War, and it became the ASEAN Way and its norm of avoiding from tagging other actors as enemies after its participation to the Association.

6.4 Conclusion

In section 6.1 of this chapter, I provided a historical overview of Vietnamese foreign policy during the years between 1995 and 2005 and showed that Vietnam adopted and applied the ASEAN Way of diplomacy towards China. Vietnam's foreign policy was cooperative and showed self-restraint. In this period, Chinese policies were relatively cooperative except a few incidents, such as occupation of Mischief Reef in 1995.

In section 6.2, I documented the way in which increasing Chinese assertiveness and expansionist policies between the years 2005 and 2015 led Vietnam to adopt policies aimed at balancing China. During this period Vietnam pursued a weaker form of the ASEAN Way. The weaker form can be understood as tolerating the violation of some key ASEAN norms and principles, such as peaceful settlement of disputes, non-confrontation, consensus and consultation.

Despite its application of balancing policies, namely the enhancement its own military capabilities and cooperation with the external powers, however, Vietnam also tried to show deference for some methods of the ASEAN Way, such as keeping contact with all sides of the dispute, (in this case, with China), focusing on the fields that can enhance relations with China, avoiding from naming the latter as a threat or enemy and using a mild language. Vietnam also tried to multilateralize the South China Sea dispute and showed a great willingness to discuss the issue within the ASEAN framework. In this period, it employed a rhetoric that pursued settlement of the dispute according to international law.

In the last section, I provided a theoretical analysis of Vietnamese foreign policy and employed realist and constructivist lenses to analyse the dynamics behind the continuity and change. Realist theory shows convenience in explanation of Vietnam's reintroduction of balancing tactics into its arsenal against China. However, it is not very successful in explaining the preservation of some key

principles of the ASEAN Way and cooperation with China. Constructivist point of view shows that the influence of the ASEAN Way as an ideational force had an impact on the Vietnamese identity even before the participation to the organization. The transformation of Vietnamese identity from a socialist vanguard country to a responsible ASEAN member and reliable international partner shows itself in some key strategic documents and discourse of Vietnam's ruling elite. The learning and socialization process and reiterated practices after the membership to ASEAN consolidated such adoption of the ASEAN identity. The rhetoric that has been chosen by Vietnam's key political leaders towards the South China Sea dispute and China also shows these deep seated tendencies. Thus, Vietnamese cooperation with China in some areas can be explained with the influence of ASEAN Way on Vietnamese foreign policy.

All in all, both realist and constructivist theories can be used to solve different parts of the puzzle. By borrowing methods from realists the impact of brute material differences on state policies can be explained. However, in order to understand state behaviours that cannot be explained with raw distribution of powers; the influence of ideas, ideologies, traditions and culture can provide a clearer picture. The ASEAN Way is such an ideational power that influenced Vietnamese foreign policy since the early 1990's and constructivist lenses are convenient tools to examine it.



7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The aim of this thesis has been to examine the impact of normative values on state policies. South East Asia has been chosen because of its dynamic interstate relations, constant change and abundance of values, doctrines and norms that states and regional groupings created and followed. The ASEAN Way and its impact on Vietnam's South China Sea policy towards China emerged as a case for examination.

After providing the necessary preliminary information about the case and the theoretical framework of the thesis, the key parts of the problem were examined in the chapters three, four and five and six. In chapter three, the ASEAN Way's ontology was elaborated, its norms and principles were detailed. The discussion on the concept among theorists was provided in order to offer clear a definition for it.

In order to appreciate Vietnam's identity before its recalibration according to post-cold war climate, the socio-economic needs of the country and ASEAN grouping in late 1980's and early 1990's, the historical background of ASEAN-Vietnamese relations and their first interaction, which occurred during the invasion of Cambodia, were examined in chapter four. The specifics of the membership process between 1991 and 1995 were also provided.

For both constructivist and realist perspectives, material conditions such as distribution of power among actors or prize in question are significant. To help the reader to appreciate the dispute in general and provide the necessary details to apply theoretical perspectives, chapter five elaborated the South China Sea dispute. The claims of actors on disputed islands and other sea features, especially those of Vietnam and China and the commercial-military activities towards them were elaborated.

Chapter six can be seen as the backbone of this work. Vietnam's behaviour and discourse towards China's activities in the South China Sea in two historical periods were analysed. Realist and constructivist theories were used to make an assessment on both change and continuity in Vietnamese policies. It was observed that in the

years between 1995 and 2005, Vietnam respected ASEAN's norms and principles, such as non-confrontation, consensus, consultation, non-use of force. She contributed to the solution efforts for the South China Sea and looked for ways to enhance the relations with China. Vietnam maintained this attitude even towards China's aggressive stance in some incidents in the disputed region. On the other hand, Vietnam's policies showed both change and persistence in the following decade, the 2005-2015 period. Vietnam began to follow a balancing policy against China by using various channels. Realist theory is convenient to explain such change. The theory explains it as Vietnam's effort to protect its territorial integrity towards China's aggressive stance and growing military power. However, there is an important part of Vietnamese policy that could not be expained with realism or rational choice theory. This is Vietnam's deference to the ASEAN Way in this period. She sustained and developed cooperation with China in many fields including the military partnership. The standards that offered by the ASEAN Way on foreign policy discourse were followed. Moreover, Vietnam remained within the framework that ASEAN formed for the resolution in the South China Sea. It worked as a vanguard for producing a COC in the region. However, Vietnam's balancing policies were in conflict with key norms and principles of the ASEAN Way, namely, non-confrontation and consensus, consultation. At best, it can be argued that Vietnam followed a weaker version of the ASEAN Way against Chinese assertiveness in the South China Sea.

The expectation from this work was to find the ASEAN Way's impact on Vietnam's South China Sea policy. The observation of a two decade period showed that Vietnam's interaction with ASEAN during the final stage of Cambodian peace process, its further recognition of the Association's methods and identity until 1995 and its socialization and learning process within the organization since that year influenced Vietnamese rulers' perception of the identity and interests of their country. Vietnam's adoption of ASEAN identity and recognition of the ASEAN Way as a method of foreign policy were observed in the years between 1995 and 2015. Moreover, Vietnam's insistance on sticking with the ASEAN Way, despite its employment of balancing policy can be explained with the constructivist assumption that ideational factors such as identity, ideas, ideologies and historical legacy matter in state leaders' decision making process (Wendt, 1999, p. 1). Despite its usefulness

in explaining Vietnam's return to power politics in the 2005-2015 period, realist theory cannot illuminate the country's deference to particular norms and principles of the ASEAN Way. It is mainly because of the realist assumption that merely material structure conditions rational actors' interests.

As a result, constructivist theory helps to understand significant sides of change and continuity in state behaviour. A consideration on state behaviour especially in Southeast Asia needs taking normative values into account. On the other hand, realist perspective is helpful and complementary in explaining other dimensions of state behavior.

The ASEAN Way is overlooked in general as a factor for Southeast Asian states' foreign policy. This work can contribute to the efforts for explaining the role of ideational factors in Vietnam's foreign policy decisions towards the South China Sea. Moreover it can be complementary to constructivist works on other elements of Vietnamese foreign policy, such as anti-Chinese sentiment, socialism and Ho Chi Minh Thought.

On the other hand, since 2000's there is a tendency among scholars to explain Vietnam's policy towards China as hedging strategy. According to this explanation Vietnam applies both balancing and cooperative overtures towards China. Vietnam's hedging is seen as a tactic for coping with the huge power asymmetry between itself and China. This explanation can be thought as a part of realist claims, in which cooperation is seen as a trick to cloak balancing and delay the stronger side. On the other hand, this thesis also observes balancing and cooperation in Vietnamese policy. However, Vietnam's cooperation with China is not seen as a rational choice to survive before China's aggression but a reflection of the ASEAN Way's influence of Vietnamese decision makers. In this respect, this thesis offers a constructivist alternative to the rational choice explanation of Vietnam's concurrent balancing and cooperation with China.

Finally, in the IR discussions on rise of China, the regional countries' response and South China Sea dispute are overwhelmingly examined from geopolitical lenses. The importance of sea routes in the region, commercial-military value of disputed islands for major players and their tactics to cement their presence in there, such as China's Island Chain Strategy or other area denial doctrines of various countries, are the

major themes that considered as most important or vital when examining Southeast Asian international relations. This thesis aims to explore some of the other elements that take part in regional developments, namely ASEAN's norms and principles.

All in all, this thesis is an exploration of the ASEAN Way's impact on Vietnam's South China Sea policy vis-a-vis China. It was found that Vietnam showed deference to the ASEAN Way in the 1995-2005 period. In the 2005-2015 era, her balancing policies towards China led to a weakened loyalty to the ASEAN Way. However, even its weak loyalty to the ASEAN Way can explain its tendency to cooperate with an assertive China.



REFERENCES

- Acharya, A.** (1998). Culture, security , multilateralism: The ‘ASEAN Way’ and regional order, *Contemporary Security Policy*, 19:1, pp. 55-84.
- Acharya, A.** (2001). *Constructing a Security Community in Southeast Asia: ASEAN and the Problem of Regional Order*, Routledge: London
- Acharya, A.** (2005). Do norms and identity matter? Community and power in Southeast Asia’s regional order, *The Pacific Review*, 18.1, pp. 95-118.
- Acharya, A. & Layug, A.** (2012, 8-12 July). Collective Identity Formation in Asian Regionalism: ASEAN Identity and the Construction of the Asia-Pacific Regional Order. Paper Presented at the World Congress of International Political Science Association, Madrid.
- Amer, R.** (2014). China, Vietnam and the South China Sea: Disputes and Dispute Management, *Ocean Development & International Law*, 45, pp. 17-40.
- Amer, R. & Jianwei, L.** (2013, April 18) *How to Manage China-Vietnam Territorial Disputes*. Retrieved from <http://www.chinausfocus.com/peace-security/how-to-manage-china-vietnam-territorial-disputes/>
- Athens Rules out joint sea patrols with Turkey.** (2015, October 13). Retrieved 19 May 2017, from <http://www.ekathimerini.com/202434/article/ekathimerini/news/athens-rules-out-joint-sea-patrols-with-turkey>
- Aydın, G. & Demirbaş, Ç. E.** (2014). Bir Örgütlenme Çerçevesi Olarak ‘ASEAN Yolu’nun Başarısı, *Uluslararası Hukuk ve Politika*, 10:37, pp. 71-107.
- Ba, A. D.** (2006). Who’s socializing whom? Complex engagement in Sino-ASEAN relations, *The Pacific Review*, 19:2, pp. 157-179.
- Bagchi, I.** (2011) *China harasses Indian naval ship on South China Sea*. Retrieved from <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/China-harasses-Indian-naval-ship-on-South-China-Sea/articleshow/9829900.cms>
- Barta, P.** (2011, July 16). *U.S., Vietnam in Exercises Amid Tensions With China*. Retrieved from <http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052702304223804576447412748465574>
- Bateman, S. & Emmers, R. (Eds.).** (2009). *Security and International Politics in the South China Sea*, Routledge: Oxon.
- Bateman, S.** (2011). Regime Building in the South China Sea-current situation and outlook, *Australian Journal of Maritime and Ocean Affairs*, 3:1, pp. 25-33.
- Bhutia, J.** (2013, December 13). *South China Sea: Chinese navy conducts more drills*. Retrieved from <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/south-china-sea-chinese-navy-conducts-more-drills-1533090>
- Borger, J. & Phillips, T.** (2015, October 27) *How China's artificial islands led to tension in the South China Sea*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/oct/27/tensions-and-territorial-claims-in-the-south-china-sea-the-guardian-briefing>
- Brewster, D.** (2012). *India as an Asia Pacific Power*, Routledge: Oxon

- Buszynski, L. & Roberts, C. B. (Eds.).** (2015). *The South China Sea Maritime Dispute*, Routledge:Oxon
- Busse, N.** (1999). Constructivism and Southeast Asian Security, *The Pacific Review*, 12:1, pp. 39-60.
- Carr, E. H.** (1946). *The Twenty Years' Crisis 1919–1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations* (2nd ed.). Macmillan Co. & Ltd: London
- Capie, D. & Evans, P.** (2007) *The Asia-Pacific Security Lexicon*, ISEAS: Singapore
- Castro, R. C.** (2012). The Risk of Applying Realpolitik in Resolving the South China Sea Dispute: Implications on Regional Security, *Pacific Focus*, pp. 262-289.
- Center for Strategic & International Studies.** (2015). *Chinese Strategy and Military Modernization in 2015: A Comparative Analysis*, Washington, DC: Cordesman, A.H. & Colley, S.
- Chakraborti, T.** (2012). China and Vietnam in the South China Sea Dispute: A Creeping 'Conflict-Peace-Trepidation' Syndrome, *China Report*, 48:3, pp. 283-301.
- Chachavalpongpun, P. (Ed.).** (2014). *Entering Uncharted Waters?: ASEAN and the South China Sea*, ISEAS: Singapore
- Chan, M.** (2009, December 17). *Vietnam buys submarines to counter China*. Retrieved from <http://www.scmp.com/article/701525/vietnam-buys-submarines-counter-china>
- Chan, M.** (2010, December 12) *China refuses to yield on Paracels*. Retrieved from <http://www.scmp.com/article/733189/china-refuses-yield-paracels>
- Cheng, J. Y. S.** (2011). Sino-Vietnamese Relations in the Early Twenty-first Century, *Asian Survey*, 51:2, pp. 379-405.
- China frees Vietnamese fishermen held on Paracel Islands.** (2012, April 21). Retrieved March 12, 2017, from <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-17796451>
- China's navy holds landing exercises near disputed islands.** (2013, March 27). Retrieved March 12, 2017, from <http://www.foxnews.com/world/2013/03/27/china-navy-conducts-island-landing-exercises-in-disputed-south-china-sea.html>
- China, Vietnam complete joint patrol on Beibu Gulf.** (2015, December 6). Retrieved from April 20, 2016, <http://english.cntv.cn/2015/06/12/VIDE1434112560274816.shtml>
- China, Vietnam sign accord on resolving maritime issues.** (2011, October 12) Retrieved April 20, 2016, from http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/china/2011-10/12/c_131185606.htm
- China Sinking Fishing Vessel Raises Tensions With Vietnam.** (2014, May 27). Retrieved April 20, 2016 from <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2014-05-27/chinese-boat-attacks-sinks-vietnam-fishing-vessel-vietnam-says>
- China's submission to UN.** (2009) Retrieved September 3, 2016, from http://www.un.org/depts/los/clcs_new/submissions_files/mysvnm33_09/chn_2009re_mys_vnm_e.pdf
- Collins, A.** (2013). *Building a People-oriented Security Community the ASEAN Way*, Routledge: Oxon
- Cornut, J.** (2015). Analytic Eclecticism in Practice: A Method for Combining International Relations Theories, *International Studies Perspectives*, 16, pp. 50-66.

- Defence cooperation: An important component in Vietnam - Japan strategic partnership.** (2013, September 14). Retrieved 8 October, 2016, from <http://en.qdnd.vn/defence-cooperation/defence-cooperation-an-important-component-in-vietnamjapan-strategic-partnership/262401.html>
- Dillow, C.** (2015, October 13). *How China's military buildup threatens the US.* Retrieved from <http://www.cnbc.com/2015/10/12/chinas-military-and-naval-buildup-in-south-china-sea-threatens-the-us.html>
- Dosch, J.** (2006). Vietnam's ASEAN Membership Revisited: Golden Opportunity or Golden Cage?, *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, 28:2, pp. 234-258.
- Dunne, T., Kurki, M. & Smith, S. (Eds.).** (2013) *International Relations Theories Discipline and Diversity* (3rd ed.). Oxford U.P. : Oxford
- Elliott, D.W.P.** (2012). *Changing Worlds Vietnam's Transition from Cold War to Globalization*, Oxford U.P. : New York
- Emmers, R.** (2010). *Geopolitics and Maritime Territorial Disputes in East Asia*, Routledge:Oxon
- Emmers, R.** (2010). The changing power distribution in the South China Sea: Implications of conflict and management and avoidance, *Political Science*, 62:2, pp. 118-131.
- Friedberg, A. L.** (1993). Ripe for Rivalry: Prospects for Peace in a Multipolar Asia, *International Security*, 18:3, pp. 5-33.
- Gady, F.** (2015, September 4). *How Russia Is Helping China Develop its Naval Power.* Retrieved from <http://thediplomat.com/2015/09/how-russia-is-helping-china-develop-its-naval-power/>
- Ganesan, N. (Ed.).** (2015). *Bilateral Legacies in East and Southeast Asia*, ISEAS: Singapore.
- Goh, E.** (2005). *Meeting the China Challenge: The U.S. in Southeast Asian Regional Security Strategies*, East-West Center Washington: Washington D.C.
- Goh, G.** (2003). "The ASEAN Way": Non-Intervention and ASEAN's Role in Conflict Management, *Stanford Journal of East Asian Affairs*, 3, pp. 113-118.
- Goodman, A. E.** (1996). Vietnam and ASEAN: Who Would Have Thought It Possible?, *Asian Survey*, 36:6, p. 592-600.
- Guan, A. C.** (1998). Vietnam-China Relations since the End of the Cold War, *Asian Survey*, 38:12, pp. 1122-1141.
- Guanqun, W.** (2011, June 28). *China insists on bilateral talks to resolve South China Sea disputes.* Retrieved from http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/china/2011-06/28/c_13954651.htm
- Guo, R.** (2015). *Cross-Border Management: Theory, Method and Application*, Springer: Berlin
- Hang, V. T. M.** (2013). *Vietnam's ASEAN Chairmanship in Dispute Management of the South China Sea in 2010* (Master's Thesis). Retrieved from <http://researcharchive.vuw.ac.nz/xmlui/handle/10063/3287>
- Hao, N. T.** (2015). *Vietnam's 5 Priorities for the ASEAN Community.* Retrieved from <http://thediplomat.com/2015/04/vietnams-5-priorities-for-the-asean-community/>
- Hemmer, C. & Katzenstein, P. J.** (2002). Why is There No NATO in Asia? Collective Identity, Regionalism, and the Origins of Multilateralism, *International Organization*, 56.3, pp. 575-607.
- Hien, N. V.** (2015). *Vietnam foreign policy: the rationale of its instruments towards China in Solving South China Sea disputes since HD-981 incident in 2014* (Master's thesis). Retrieved from <https://thesis.eur.nl/pub/32940/>

- Hiep, L. H.** (2013). Vietnam's Hedging Strategy against China since Normalization, *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, 35:3, pp. 333-368.
- Ho, J. & Bateman, S. (Eds.).** (2012) *Maritime Challenges and Priorities in Asia: Implications for Regional Security*, Routledge:Oxon
- Hong, Z.** (2013). The South China Sea Dispute and China-ASEAN Relations, *Asian Affairs*, 44:1, pp. 27-43.
- Hsiung, J. C.** (2004). *Comprehensive Security: Challenge for Pacific Asia*, University of Indianapolis Press: Indianapolis
- India, Vietnam Coast Guards hold rescue drill at sea.** (2015, August 31). Retrieved October 14, 2016, from <http://english.vietnamnet.vn/fms/government/140162/india--vietnam-coast-guards-hold-rescue-drill-at-sea.html>
- Indian Navy ship begins visit to Da Nang.** (2015, October 2). Retrieved October 14, 2016, from <http://vietnamnews.vn/society/276566/indian-navy-ship-begins-visit-to-da-nang.html#cPIubcTrcwJthFg6.97>
- Jeffries, I.** (2011). *Contemporary Vietnam: A Guide to Economic and Political Developments*, Routledge: Oxon
- Johnson, C.** (2011, October 17). *China; Vietnam: South China Sea Agreement*. Retrieved from <http://www.loc.gov/law/foreign-news/article/china-vietnam-south-china-sea-agreement/>
- Jones, D. M. & Smith, M. L. R.** (2007). Making Process, Not Progress: ASEAN and the Evolving East Asian Regional Order, *International Security*, 32:1, pp. 148-184.
- Jones, L.** (2010). ASEAN's unchanged melody? The theory and practice of 'non-interference' in Southeast Asia, *The Pacific Review*, 23:4, pp. 479-502.
- Johnston, D. M. & Ferguson, G. (Eds.).** (1998). *Asia-Pacific Legal Development*, UBC: Vancouver
- Kaplan, R. D.** (2014). *Asia's Cauldron: The South China Sea and the End of a Stable Pacific*, Random House: New York
- Katsumata, H.** (2003). Reconstruction of Diplomatic Norms in Southeast Asia: The Case for Strict Adherence to the 'ASEAN Way', *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, 25:1, pp. 104-121.
- Kelly, T. and Petty, M.** (2015, November 6). *Vietnam agrees to Japanese warship visit, naval exercise: Kyodo*. Retrieved from <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-southchinasea-vietnam-japan-idUSKCN0SV0NW20151106>
- Khoo, N.** (2014). Is Realism Dead? Academic Myths and Asia's International Politics, *Orbis*, 58:2 pp. 182-197.
- LaGrone, S.** (2015, April 5). *U.S. and Vietnam Start Limited Naval Training On 20th Anniversary of Establishing Diplomatic Relations*. Retrieved from <https://news.usni.org/2015/04/06/u-s-and-vietnam-start-limited-naval-training-with-vietnam-on-20th-anniversary-of-establishing-diplomatic-relations>
- Leng, T. & Liao, N. C.** (2016). Hedging, Strategic Partnership, and Taiwan's Relations with Japan Under the Ma Ying-jeou Administration, *Pacific Focus*, 31:3, pp. 357-382.
- Levy, J. S. & Barbieri, K.** (2004). Trading with the enemy during wartime, *Security Studies*, 13:3, pp. 1-47.
- Lim, D. J. & Cooper, Z.** (2015). Reassessing Hedging: The Logic of Alignment in East Asia, *Security Studies*, 24:4, pp. 696-727.

- Lye, L. F. & Hofmeister, W. (Eds.).** (2011). *Political Parties, Party Systems and Democratization in East Asia*, World Scientific: Singapore
- Mandhana, N.** (2014, August 6) *Indian Warship Visiting Vietnam on 'Goodwill Trip'*. Retrieved from <http://www.wsj.com/articles/indian-warship-visiting-vietnam-on-goodwill-trip-1407333414>
- Majumdar, M.** (2015). The ASEAN Way of Conflict Management in the South China Sea, *Strategic Analysis*, 39:1, pp. 73-87.
- Marsh, I. (Ed).** (2006). *Democratisation, Governance and Regionalism in East and Southeast Asia*, Routledge: Oxon
- Mearsheimer, J. J. (2010).** The Gathering Storm: China's Challenge to US Power in Asia, *The Chinese Journal of International Politics*, 3, pp. 381-396.
- Mearsheimer, J. J.** (2014). *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics Updated Edition*, W. W. Norton & Company: New York
- McGregor, C.** (1990) China, Vietnam, and the Cambodian Conflict: Beijing's End Game Strategy, *Asian Survey*, 30:3, pp. 266-283.
- Miglani, S.** (2014, October 28). *India to supply Vietnam with naval vessels amid China disputes*. Retrieved from <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-india-vietnam-idUSKBN0IH0LE20141028>
- Moore, M. and Swami, P.** (2010, November 8). *Vietnam offers navy base to foil China*. Retrieved from <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/vietnam/8116192/Vietnam-offers-navy-base-to-foil-China.html>
- More than the Sum of Its Parts: Dutch SIGMA Ships for Vietnam.** (2013, November 5). Retrieved January 8, 2017, from <http://www.defenseindustrydaily.com/more-than-the-sum-of-its-parts-dutch-sigma-ships-for-vietnam-07173/>
- Morgenthau, H. J.** (1948). *Politics among Nations*, Alfred A. Knopf. Inc: New York
- Murphy, A. M. & Welsh, B. (Eds.).** (2008). *Legacy of Engagement in Southeast Asia*, ISEAS: Singapore.
- Nesadurai, H. E. (Ed.).** (2006). *Globalisation and Economic Security in East Asia*, Routledge: Oxon
- Narine, S.** (1997). ASEAN and the ARF: The Limits of the 'ASEAN Way', *Asian Survey*, 37:10, pp. 961-978.
- Nguyen dynasty woodblock confirms VN's sovereignty over Paracel Islands.** (2016). Retrieved February 4, 2017, from <http://vietnamnews.vn/life-style/280643/nguyen-dynasty-woodblock-confirms-vns-sovereignty-over-paracel-islands.html#i08AQ4DZBGQFOCYG.97>
- Ninh, K. N. B.** (2010, October 27). *Vietnam Hosts Final Summit as ASEAN Chair*. Retrieved from <http://asiafoundation.org/2010/10/27/vietnam-hosts-final-summit-as-asean-chair/>
- Nischalke, T. I.** (2000). Insights from ASEAN's Foreign Policy Co-operation: The "ASEAN Way", a Real Spirit or a Phantom?, *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, 22:1, pp. 89-112.
- Obama lifts US embargo on lethal arms sales to Vietnam.** (2016, May 23) Retrieved 24 May, 2016, from <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-36356695>
- ONGC Videsh Ltd not to exit Vietnam block despite poor prospectivity.** (2015). Retrieved April 2, 2017, from <http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/energy/oil-gas/ongc-videsh-ltd->

- not-to-exit-vietnam-block-despite-poor-prospectivity/articleshow/48040029.cms?intenttarget=no*
- Page, J.** (2012, December 3). *Vietnam Accuses Chinese Ships*. Retrieved from <http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424127887323717004578157033857113510>
- Panda, A.** (2015). *China Steps Up Harassment of Vietnamese Fishermen*. Retrieved from <http://thediplomat.com/2015/07/china-steps-up-harassment-of-vietnamese-fishermen/>
- Pao-Min, C.** (1987-1988). The Sino-Vietnamese Conflict and Its Implications for ASEAN, *Pacific Affairs*, 60:4, pp. 629-638.
- Petty, M. & Blanchard, B.** (2015). *Vietnam talks trust with China, invites Japanese warship*. Retrieved from <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-vietnam-china-idUSKCN0SV0FY20151106>
- PM: ASEAN still be an important pillar of Vietnam's foreign policy.** (2012, August 7). Retrieved March 9, 2016, from <http://news.chinhphu.vn/Home/PM-ASEAN-still-be-an-important-pillar-of-Vietnams-foreign-policy/20128/15284.vgp>
- PM urges peaceful East Sea resolution.** (2015, November 23). Retrieved April 8, 2017, from <http://vietnamnews.vn/politics-laws/278879/pm-urges-peaceful-east-sea-resolution.html#7o7JKUjociYFIHgU.97>
- Pollmann, M.** (2015, January 25). *Japan's First Steps Into the World of Arms Exports*. Retrieved from <http://thediplomat.com/2015/01/japans-first-steps-into-the-world-of-arms-exports/>
- Porter, G.** (1990). The Transformation of Vietnam's World-view: From Two Camps to Interdependence, *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, 12:1, pp. 1-19.
- Rahman, C. & Tsamenyi, M.** (2010). A Strategic Perspective on Security and Naval Issues in the South China Sea, *Ocean Development & International Law*, 41, pp. 315-333.
- Robles, R.** (2015, 27 April). *Vietnam asked Philippines to form pact to counter China, Aquino reveals*. Retrieved from <http://www.scmp.com/news/asia/diplomacy/article/1771526/vietnam-asked-philippines-form-pact-counter-china-aquino-reveals?page=all>
- Salman, M., Pieper, M., & Geeraerts, G.** (2015). Hedging in the Middle East and China-U.S. Competition, *Asian Politics & Policy*, 7:4, pp. 575-596.
- Saravanamuttu, J. & Thambipillai, P.** (1985). *ASEAN Negotiations: Two Insights*, ISEAS: Singapore
- Scott, D.** (2012). "Conflict Irresolution in the South China Sea", *Asian Survey*, 52:6, pp. 1019-1042.
- Severino, R. C.** (2006). *Southeast Asia in Search of an ASEAN Community: Insights from the former ASEAN Secretary-General*, ISEAS: Singapore
- Sharma, R.** (2011) *India, China Navies Face-Off*, Retrieved from <http://thediplomat.com/2011/09/india-china-navies-face-off/>
- Sharma, R.** (2015, May 27). *Taking on China: India's defence ties with Vietnam need to be lauded*. Retrieved from <http://www.firstpost.com/world/taking-on-china-indias-defence-ties-with-vietnam-need-to-be-lauded-2264902.html>
- Shoji, T.** (2012). Vietnam, ASEAN and the South China Sea: Unity or Diversiveness?, *NIDS Journal of Defense and Security*, 13, pp. 3-21.
- Sigh, D. (Ed.).** (2009) *Southeast Asian Affairs 2009*, ISEAS: Singapore
- Singh, A.** (2012). South China Sea Disputes: Regional Issue, Global Concerns, *Maritime Affairs*, 8:1, pp. 116-135.

- Singh, H.** (1997). Vietnam and ASEAN: The Politics of Accommodation, *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 51:2, pp. 215-229.
- Simon, S. W.** (2012). Conflict and Diplomacy in the South China Sea, *Asian Survey*, 52:6, pp. 995-1018.
- Sothriak, P., Wade, G. & Hong, M. (Eds.).** (2012). *Cambodia: Progress and Challenges Since 1991*, ISEAS: Singapore
- Stedman, S. J., Rotchild, D. & Cousens, E. M. (Eds.).** (2002). *Ending Civil Wars: The Implementation of Peace Agreements*, Lynne Rienner: London
- Sundararaman, S.** (1997). ASEAN Diplomacy in Conflict Resolution: The Cambodian Case, *Strategic Analysis*, 21:7, pp. 1047-1058.
- Sutherland, C.** (2009). Reconciling Nation and Region: Vietnamese Nation Building and ASEAN Regionalism, *Political Studies*, 57, pp. 316-336.
- Tamaki, T.** (2006, 9-13 July). *Making Sense of 'ASEAN Way': A Constructivist Approach*. Paper Presented at the Annual Conference of the International Political Science Association, Fukuoka.
- Thanh, L. N.** (2012). Vietnam in the Post-Cold War era: New Foreign Policy Directions, *Journal of International Development and Cooperation*, 18:2, pp. 31-52.
- Thao, H. N.** (2001). Vietnam and the Code of Conduct for the South China Sea, *Ocean Development & International Law*, 32, pp. 105-130.
- Thayer, C. A.** (2011). The Tyranny of Geography: Vietnamese Strategies to Constrain China in the South China Sea, *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, 33:3, pp. 348-369.
- Thayer, C. A.** (2012). Asean's Code of Conduct in the South China Sea: A Litmus Test for Community Building, *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, 10:34, pp. 1-22.
- Thayer, C. A.** (2013, 5-6 June) *South China Sea in Regional Politics: Indonesia's Efforts to Forge ASEAN Unity on a Code of Conduct*. Paper Presented at the 3rd Annual Center for Strategic & International Studies Conference: Managing Tensions in the South China Sea, Washington D.C.
- Thayer, C. A.,** (2014). *India and Vietnam Advance Their Strategic Partnership*. Retrieved from <http://thediplomat.com/2014/12/india-and-vietnam-advance-their-strategic-partnership/>
- Thayer, C. A.** (2015). Vietnamese Diplomacy, 1975-2015: From Member of the Socialist Camp to Proactive International Integration, *Vietnam Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 1:3, pp. 194-214
- The Communist Party of Vietnam Central Committee's Political report to the tenth National Congress** (April 18-25, 2006). (2006, May 11) Retrieved from <http://vietnamlawmagazine.vn/the-communist-party-of-vietnam-central-committees-political-report-to-the-tenth-national-congress-april-18-25-2006-3389.html>
- The Socialist Republic of Vietnam Ministry of National Defence.** (2004). *Vietnam's National Defence in the Early Years of 21st Century*. Retrieved from <http://www.mod.gov.vn/wps/wcm/connect/d9939b1f-354f-49fc-ab40-28f5db9aec13/2004eng.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CACHEID=d9939b1f-354f-49fc-ab40-28f5db9aec13>
- The Socialist Republic of Vietnam Ministry of National Defence.** (2009). *Vietnam National Defence*. Retrieved from <http://www.mod.gov.vn/wps/wcm/connect/caadf77c-2fb4-48c1-8f20-8d3216ad2513/2009eng.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CACHEID=caadf77c-2fb4-48c1-8f20-8d3216ad2513>

- Tønnesson, S.** (2015). "The South China Sea Law Trumps Power", *Asian Survey*, 55:3, pp. 455-477
- Tuan, H. A.** (1996). ASEAN Dispute Management: Implications for Vietnam and an Expanded ASEAN, *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, 18:1, pp. 61-80.
- Tung, N.V.** (2007). Vietnam's Membership of ASEAN: A Constructivist Interpretation, *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, 29:3, pp. 483-505.
- Two more used Japanese ships delivered to Vietnam.** (2015, November 3). Retrieved May 10, 2016, from http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/11/03/national/politics-diplomacy/two-used-japanese-ships-delivered-vietnam/#.WAX6l_mLRD8
- Url-1.** (2016, January 27). Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia. Retrieved from <http://www.asean.org/treaty-amity-cooperation-southeast-asia-indonesia-24-february-1976/>
- Url-2.** (2007). The ASEAN Charter. Retrieved from http://www.asean.org/storage/images/ASEAN_RTK_2014/ASEAN_Charter.pdf
- Url-3.** (2016, January 27). The ASEAN Declaration. Retrieved from <http://asean.org/the-asean-declaration-bangkok-declaration-bangkok-8-august-1967/>
- Url-4.** (n.d.). Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality. Retrieved (2016, March 13) from <http://www.icnl.org/research/library/files/Transnational/zone.pdf>
- Url-5.** (2011). Formation of ASEAN. Retrieved from <http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/history/events/65bc5474-afba-4fcc-afc1-345457fa41a9>
- Url-6.** (2011, July 19). Joint Communiqué of the 44th ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting. Retrieved from <http://www.asean.org/wp-content/uploads/images/archive/documents/44thAMM-PMC-18thARF/44thAMM-JC.pdf>
- Url-7.** (2010). Dialogue and Research Monitor. Retrieved from Japan Center for International Exchange [JCIE]: <http://www.jcie.or.jp/drm/>
- Url-8.** (1998, August 11). Speech by H.E. Dr. Surin Pitsuwan Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand at the Foreign Correspondents Club of Thailand. Retrieved from <http://boonhod.50megs.com/SurinFCCT.htm>
- Url-9.** (n.d.). 1992 Joint Communiqué of 25th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting. Retrieved from <https://cil.nus.edu.sg/rp/pdf/1992%20Joint%20Communique%20of%20the%2025th%20ASEAN%20Ministerial%20Meeting-pdf.pdf>
- Url-10.** (2010). *China's National Defense in 2004* Retrieved from :Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China <http://www.china.org.cn/e-white/20041227/I.htm>
- Url-11.** (n.d.). *About Us*. Retrieved from Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific: <http://www.cscap.org/index.php?page=aEabout-us>
- Url-12.** (2010). Index of Meetings, July-December 1997. Retrieved from Japan Center for International Exchange [JCIE]: <http://www.jcie.or.jp/drm/1998/>
- Url-13.** (2010). II. Multilateral Nongovernmental/Track II Meetings. Retrieved from Japan Center for International Exchange [JCIE]: <http://www.jcie.or.jp/drm/Feb99/track2.html>

- Url-14.** (2014). *The Global Reported Arms Trade*. Retrieved from The UN Register for Conventional Arms. <http://www.un-register.org/HeavyWeapons/CountrySummaryReports.aspx?CoI=211>
- Url-15.** (2017). *SIPRI Military Expenditure Database*. Retrieved from Stockholm International Peace Research Institute [SIPRI]: <https://www.sipri.org/databases/milex>
- Url-16.** (2016). *Military expenditure (% of GDP)*. Retrieved from The World Bank: <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/MS.MIL.XPND.GD.ZS>
- Url-17.** (2015). *Announcement for the 7th South China Sea International Conference*. Retrieved from Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam: <http://www.dav.edu.vn/en/news/1232-announcement-for-the-7th-south-china-sea-international-conference.html>
- Url-18.** (2015, October 8). Political Report of the Communist Party of Vietnam's 10th Central Committee to the 11th National Party Congress. Retrieved from <http://vietnamlawmagazine.vn/political-report-of-the-communist-party-of-vietnams-10th-central-committee-to-the-11th-national-party-congress-5022.html>
- Url-19.** (2011). *Russian defense industry and arms trade: facts and figures*. Retrieved from Centre for Analysis of Strategies & Technologies: http://www.cast.ru/files/all-stats_eng.pdf
- Url-20.** (n.d.). *PH-Vietnam MOA on Defense Cooperation*. Retrieved October 18, 2016, from Department of National Defense Republic of The Phillipines <http://www.dndph.org/press-releases/ph-vietnam-mou-on-defense-cooperation>
- US and Vietnam stage joint naval activities.** (2010, August 10). Retrieved 23 April, 2016, from <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-10925061>
- U.S. Department of State.** (2016). U.S. Relations With Vietnam [Fact Sheet] Retrieved from <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/4130.htm>
- US-Vietnam naval exercises begin.** (2014). Retrieved January 6, 2017, from <http://www.smh.com.au/world/usvietnam-naval-exercises-begin-20140408-zqsfg.html>
- Vietnam accuses China in seas dispute.** (2011, May 30). Retrieved March 4, 2016, from <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-13592508>
- Vietnam begins naval exercises with the US.** (2012, April 23). Retrieved January 6, 2017, from <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/vietnam/9220224/Vietnam-begins-naval-exercises-with-the-US.html>
- Vietnam counters Chinese aggression.** (2011, September 2). Retrieved 7 March, 2016, from <http://www.timesnow.tv/Vietnam-counters-Chinese-aggression/articleshow/4382852.cms>
- Vietnamese naval ships visit China's Nanhai Fleet.** (2013, June 26). Retrieved May 14, 2016, from <http://vietnamnews.vn/politics-laws/241292/vietnamese-naval-ships-visit-chinas-nanhai-fleet.html#XxWugpQgfhOz1KAe.97>
- Vietnam, India sign Joint Vision Statement on Defence Cooperation for 2015-2020 period.** (2015, May 26). Retrieved May 19, 2016 from <http://en.qdnd.vn/defence-cooperation/vietnam-india-sign-joint-vision-statement-on-defence-cooperation-for-2015-2020-period/361311.html>
- Vietnam, Japan boosts defence cooperation.** (2011, October 25). Vietnam, Japan boosts defence cooperation. Retrieved May 19, 2016 from

- <http://en.qdnd.vn/defence-cooperation/vietnam-japan-boosts-defence-cooperation/164726.html>
- Viet Nam, Philippines issue joint statement on strategic partnership.** (2015, November 19). Retrieved February 17, 2017, from <http://vietnamnews.vn/politics-laws/278770/viet-nam-philippines-issue-joint-statement-on-strategic-partnership.html#k5kJIhwxeTolqCZe.97>
- Vietnam, Russia closing in on deal for 2 Gepard-class frigates.** (2015, July 3). Retrieved April 5, 2016, from http://rbth.com/news/2015/07/03/vietnam_russia_closing_in_on_deal_for_2_gepard-class_frigates_47445.html
- Vietnam's foreign affairs sector and its flexible policy.** (2015, August 22). Retrieved March 28, 2016, from <http://vovworld.vn/en-us/News/Vietnams-foreign-affairs-sector-and-its-flexible-policy/361756.vov>
- Viet Nam's present Foreign Policy. (nd.).** Retrieved April 7, 2016, from <http://www.chinhphu.vn/portal/page/portal/English/strategies/strategiesdetails?categoryId=29&articleId=10050664>
- Vietnam's submission to UN.** (2009) Retrieved May 5 2016, from http://www.un.org/depts/los/clcs_new/submissions_files/mysvnm33_09/vnm_c hn_2009re_mys_vnm_e.pdf
- Vuving, A. L.** (2006). Strategy and Evolution of Vietnam's China Policy: A Changing Mixture of Pathways, *Asian Survey*, 46:6, pp. 805-824.
- Vuving, A. L.** (2016). *South China Sea: Who Occupies What in the Spratlys?*, Retrieved from <http://thediplomat.com/2016/05/south-china-sea-who-claims-what-in-the-spratlys/>
- Waltz, K.** (1979). *Theory of International Politics*, Addison-Wesley Publishing Company: Boston
- Watkins, D.** (2015, October 27). *What China Has Been Building in the South China Sea.* Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2015/07/30/world/asia/what-china-has-been-building-in-the-south-china-sea.html?_r=1
- Wendt, A.** (1992). Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics, *International Organization*, 46:2, pp. 391-425.
- Wendt, A.** (1999). *Social Theory of International Relations*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge
- Wendt, A.** (2000). On the Via Media: A response to the critics, *Review of International Studies*, 26, pp. 165-180.
- Wong, E.** (2010, 23 April). *Chinese Military Seeks to Extend Its Naval Power.* Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/24/world/asia/24navy.html>
- Wu, S. & Zou, K. (Eds.).** (2013). *Securing the Safety of Navigation in East Asia: Legal and Political Dimensions*, Chandos: Oxford
- Yahuda, M.** (2013). China's New Assertiveness in the South China Sea, *Journal of Contemporary China*, 22:81, pp. 446-459.
- Yang, A.** (2010, February 11). *Vietnam seeks ASEAN discussion over South China Sea.* Retrieved from http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/cndy/2010-02/11/content_9460290.htm

CURRICULUM VITAE

Name-Surname: Yılmaz Durmaz

Place and Date of Birth: İstanbul/1990

e-mail: durmazyilmaz@yahoo.com

B.A: Yeditepe University
Faculty of Economics and Administrative
Science
The Department of Political Science and
International Relations 2008-2013

M.A: Istanbul Technical University
Political Studies Program 2014-2017