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**LANGUAGE GAMES AND
SOUTHEAST ASIA-UNITED STATES RELATIONS
1954-2006**

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Abstract

Narratives of Southeast Asia-US relations usually depict the flow of power as unidirectional. In most instances, the relationship is seen as being led by the US, and the Southeast Asian states take on the role of free riders. In other accounts, power is held by the small Southeast Asian states when they are able to “pull” the US into the security architecture of the region. However, given that the flow of power is indeed unidirectional, what explains why sometimes it is the US that seems to shape, influence, or steer the relationship, while at other times it is the Southeast Asian nations? The relationship has also been described as following certain types of rule or order: sometimes it is described as hegemony, while at other times it is characterized by hierarchy. What explains this assortment of international orders? Moreover, what makes one type of rule hold in a particular time period?

It is offered in this dissertation that such a variation may be explained by the use of language games as a method of analysis. It is argued here that Southeast Asia-US relations have experienced various types of rule from 1954 to 2006 because of the change in the language games that these states play. Paying attention to language emphasizes the constant and active participation of actors in international relations, be they superpowers or members of the so-called Third World.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Argument

The flow of power in the relations between Southeast Asian nations and the United States is oftentimes depicted as unidirectional. In most instances, the relationship is seen as being led by the US, and the Southeast Asian states take on the role of free riders. In other accounts, power is held by the small Southeast Asian states when they are able to “pull” the United States into the security architecture of the region. However, given that the flow of power is indeed unidirectional, how does one explain the change of leadership in the relationship? In other words, what explains why sometimes it is the United States that seems to shape, influence, or steer the relationship, while at other times it is the Southeast Asian nations?

Throughout history, Southeast Asia-US relations have been described as following certain types of rule or order.¹ There have been times when the relationship was described as hegemony, while at other times it was characterized by hierarchy.

¹ Order here is meant a type of rule rather than the opposite of chaos or stability, i.e., following Nicholas Onuf's definition rather than Hedley Bull's. See Nicholas Greenwood Onuf, *World of Our Making: Rules and Rule in Social Theory and International Relations* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1989) and Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics*, 2nd ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995). Bull analyzed order by placing it opposite disorder. In contrast, this dissertation is concerned with the arrangement of units, that is, how they are positioned in relation to each other, how they are ordered, and not necessarily how orderly or disorderly the end result of their relations is. Focusing on order as the arrangement of units is arguably reminiscent of the Waltzian worldview, but postulating the succeeding analyses as such does not necessarily mean adopting a Structuralist stance. Indeed, Mark Hoffman underscores the value of understanding order thus: "...if we shift away from the focus on order as 'stability' to the 'facticity' of arrangements and the questions of who benefits from these, the 'problem' of order in international relations is revealed as a metaphorical mask for 'the problem of privilege'." See Mark Hoffman, "Restructuring, Reconstruction, Reinscription, Rearticulation: Four Voices in Critical International Theory," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 20, 2 (1991): 175. This dissertation is concentrated on precisely this manner of ordering the different units or types of states in the international system, which leads to the privileging of certain actors. The term order in this dissertation is also understood as different from the concept of a regime, as the latter is concerned mostly with principles and procedures in a particular issue area. See Michael Yahuda, *The International Politics of the Asia-Pacific*, 2nd ed. (London and New York: Routledge, 2004).

Various scholars do provide a wide range of orders with which to choose from, and most of their works are aligned with mainstream explanations of the international relations of Asia.² There is no doubt as to the authoritativeness and the soundness of these arguments, but using conventional International Relations explanations seem to result in very one-sided views in the sense that while one party of a certain relationship (in our case, the Southeast Asia and the United States) plays an active role, the other is at worst, weak and passive, and at best, simply a free rider. For instance, accounts that describe the Southeast Asia-US relationship as hegemonic – particularly those that were published in the early Cold War days and those that relied solely on material factors as sources of explanation – are almost always biased towards the leading role of the superpower. In the same vein, hierarchy entails a great power capable of exacting “punishment” via the threat of or the use of force to those who would dare oppose it. Again, this presupposes that said great power has material capabilities to carry out its threats. While valid in their own right, what is left unexplained in these accounts is the reason behind this assortment of international orders. In other words, why does hegemony, for instance, persist? Why does hierarchy? Can both coexist at any given point in history? Related to this is the more fundamental question of what makes one type of rule hold in a particular time period.

It is offered in this dissertation that such a variation in international orders may be explained through the use of language games as a method of analysis. It is

² Some of these scholars include Muthiah Alagappa, “The Study of International Order: An Analytical Framework,” in *Asian Security Order: Instrumental and Normative Features*, ed. Muthiah Alagappa (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 41-52; Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security in the Post-Cold War Era* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1991); Adam Watson, *The Evolution of International Society: A Comparative Historical Analysis* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992); Adam Watson, *The Limits of Independence: Relations Between States in the Modern World* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997); Ole Wæver, “Europe’s Three Empires: A Watsonian Interpretation of Post-Wall European Security,” in *International Society After the Cold War*, eds. Rick Fawn and Jeremy Larkins (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1996), 220-260.

argued here that Southeast Asia-US relations have experienced various types of rule from 1954 to 2006 because of the change in the language games that these states play.³ These types of rule include not just hegemony and hierarchy, but also what Nicholas Onuf and Frank F. Klink refer to as heteronomy.⁴ This is not to imply that Southeast Asia-US relations are reducible to language, i.e., that reality is defined by language alone. Admittedly, the materiality of the relationship is significant; in truth, traditional notions on various types of rule have been substantiated solely by material factors and they remain valid conceptualizations today. While this dissertation by no means denies their “brute” reality, it is the claim here that paying attention to the linguistic element accounts for subtle nuances and demonstrates that forms of rule take root and become grounded through language. Furthermore, this so-called linguistic turn in viewing the Southeast Asia-US relationship permits the active role of *both* parties in the maintenance and perpetuation of their ties; they are, in short, constitutive of each other.

Hence, without wanting to privilege language over material factors, the dissertation offers answers to two main questions. First, how are relations between Southeast Asia and the US ordered from the period 1954 to 2006? This is explored via the employment of Ludwig Wittgenstein’s language games. Rather than the usual fare of chronologically listing down and describing the events that highlight the evolution of Southeast Asia-US relations in the specified time period, the use of language as a tool of analysis here offers a fresh look at a relationship that has been

³ The term Southeast Asia as used in this dissertation encompasses the postures of both the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the individual states. When the term ASEAN is used, this is meant to imply the posture of the organization as a whole. The stance of particular member states is also dealt with individually.

⁴ Nicholas Onuf and Frank F. Klink, “Anarchy, Authority, Rule,” *International Studies Quarterly* 33 (1989): 149-173.

the subject of previous studies. Second, what accounts for continuity or change in their relations, and corollary to this, what are the implications to International Relations by forwarding such an argument?

The dissertation consists of seven chapters. Chapter 1 sets the theoretical and methodological tone that frames the succeeding empirical chapters, while chapter 2 puts the value of using language as a method of analysis into context. Chapters 3 to 6 deal with the relationship throughout the course of the time period specified above (1954-2006), but broken down into more manageable chunks. Thus, chapter 3 begins when the Cold War was heating up in East and Southeast Asia, i.e., with the impasse in the Korean War and the establishment of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) in 1954, until the establishment of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 1967, the fall of Saigon in 1976, and the formal institution of the ASEAN-US dialogue in 1977. The year 1954 is the entry point of analysis because by virtue of SEATO, it can reasonably be argued that this was also the commencement of the United States' overt, if not official, involvement with Southeast Asia as a region. The chapter's story ends in 1977 when the ramifications of the Fall of Saigon were felt across the region. More importantly, 1977 also marks the dissolution of SEATO.⁵ Chapter 3 suggests that consensual hegemony predominated the Southeast Asia-US relationship in the sense that while the United States was preoccupied with mounting and implementing its containment strategy, the Southeast Asian nations took this opportunity to assert their independence and form regional organizations.

⁵ Pushpa Thambipillai, personal communication with author, Jakarta, Indonesia, 27 October 2008.

Chapters 4 and 5 examine the contours of heteronomy as a type of rule. Chapter 4's inclusive dates are 1978-1991, and the focus is the narrative of the latter half of the Cold War and towards its end. More importantly, 1978 was when Vietnam invaded Kampuchea, which arguably set a new pace in Southeast Asian politics, as well as in the region's relations with the United States. With the Americans' "defeat" in Vietnam, the US allayed fears that it would withdraw from the region by giving assurances and promises of its continued commitment. Such commitments were put to the test in the issues surrounding Kampuchea, particularly the refugee crisis. By virtue of the salience of the act of giving promises, the 1978-1991 period is arguably characterized by heteronomy.

This moves our journey to chapter 5, which focuses on the 1992-2000 period when the ASEAN members embarked on a series of multilateral arrangements and formed the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). This period is also characterized by heteronomy, particularly in regard to the consequences of commitments. The creation of the ARF is hailed as an achievement insofar as the small states of Southeast Asia have managed to pull great powers aside from the United States into the security architecture of the region. However, the structure of the Forum created a divide between the ASEAN and non-ASEAN members, and this asymmetry (manifested in ASEAN's insistence in being in the "driver's seat") hampered the organization in dealing with regional crises, not least of which were the South China Sea dispute, ASEAN's enlargement, the Asian financial crisis, and East Timor's secession from Indonesia.

Finally, chapter 6 focuses on the War on Terror, sparked by the September 11 attacks on the US in 2001. What is interesting in the 2001-2006 time period is the mix or coexistence of two types of rule: hegemony and hierarchy. Hegemony

predominated especially in terms of the United States' conviction that its War on Terror was justified and morally right. At the same time, however, the United States' relations with the rest of the international community in general, and with Southeast Asia in particular, were suggestive of a hierarchic type of rule. US President George W. Bush made this clear in his "Either you are with us or with the terrorists" rhetoric, implying that states around the world were forced to take a stand and that if they so decide to side with the "terrorists," they would definitely suffer the wrath of a wronged superpower. Chapter 7 explores the reasons why and how one type of rule shifts to another. It also concludes by identifying the value of using language games to account for international relations.

There are benefits to be reaped from the acknowledgement that different types of rule obtain in Southeast Asia-US relations. Barry Buzan and Richard Little in their 2000 piece, *International Systems in World History*, support this when they push the limits of existing conceptualizations of order to account for the differences of international systems throughout time.⁶ But more important than simply being a tool in the study of history, questioning the possibility of different types of rule allows the resurfacing of previously marginalized areas and groups in international relations. Kenneth Waltz once explained that world politics is shaped by the great powers and hence in this formulation, smaller states drop out from the analytical picture. As a result, when certain concepts and phenomena are taken as a given in International Relations, the analysis becomes limited to great powers alone. Consequently, allowing the feasibility of the fluid nature of relations between a part of the Third World and a great power lets what has previously fallen by the wayside, i.e., smaller

⁶ Barry Buzan and Richard Little, *International Systems in World History: Remaking the Study of International Relations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

states, to come back into the picture. Tarak Barkawi and Mark Laffey put it more succinctly:

...once vision is shifted from the policies and politics of great powers to the ebb and flow of the social relations through which great powers and their societies are constituted, re-produced and transformed, the imperial and the non-European world more generally take on fundamental importance.⁷

Thus, by questioning the notion of rule in Third World-superpower relations, Southeast Asia can be seen in a different light. The value of perceiving the relationship thus is similar to the essence of the Melian dialogue centuries ago:

In our view, the Melian dialogue reveals the mutually constitutive nature of world politics, the numerous and diverse ways in which the weak and the strong are bound up together. The Athenian expeditions to Melos also draw attention to the many ways in which the resistance of the weak profoundly shapes events and outcomes.... [T]he Melian dialogue and the course and character of the Peloponnesian War draw attention to the dependence of Athens on its periphery, just as Sparta needed its helots and their labour. As centres of power, what Athens and Sparta *were* depended crucially on an ongoing set of relations with their peripheries.⁸

Whereas before the focus was only on the US, employing the notion of language may shed new light on the role that the states of Southeast Asia has also played – and continues to play – in the shaping of the said relationship.

The Framework

The Paradigm of Rule

Onuf's variant of Constructivism is adopted in this dissertation for two reasons. First, Onuf's propensity for looking at international relations in terms of

⁷ Tarak Barkawi and Mark Laffey, "Retrieving the Imperial: Empire and International Relations," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 31, 1 (2002): 114.

⁸ Tarak Barkawi and Mark Laffey, "The Postcolonial Moment in Security Studies," *Review of International Studies* 32 (2006): 345-346. Emphasis on the original.

relations between unequal parties implies a logic that revolves around language (manifested through deeds or speech acts) that generates rules, which thereafter engender different types of rule. This provides the necessary theoretical backdrop for the dissertation's argument. Second, Onuf's logic is premised around the existence of rules and because of this, the pitfalls of the agent-structure debate are avoided, if not escaped. In his words,

Recent discussions of the 'agent-structure problem'...have acquainted scholars with the claim that, at any given moment, agents and (what we see as) structure are the products of continuous co-constitution. The practical problem for scholars is deciding where to cut into the process. Beginning with agents tends to preclude adequate consideration of structure, and vice versa. Even scholars who are sensitive to this problem fall prey to it.... The solution to the problem is to emphasize rules, but never rules considered in a vacuum. To begin with rules leads simultaneously in two directions – toward agents and their choices, and toward social arrangements that eventuate from agents' choices.⁹

In other words, beginning the analysis with an appreciation of language that makes up rules avoids privileging either agents or structures. Given this, the following discussion explains the three-step logic of language games-rules-rule that is the heart of Onuf and Klink's paradigm of rule.

Language Games

Language games are clusters of related speech acts that actors utter. Speech acts, in turn, are defined as "utterances which do something in themselves..."¹⁰ They are "deeds formulated as words" that capture an understanding of human

⁹ Nicholas Onuf, "A Constructivist Manifesto," in *Constituting International Political Economy*, eds. Kurt Burch and Robert A. Denemark (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner, 1997), 7-8.

¹⁰ Onuf and Klink: 158.

intentionality through the co-constitution of agents and structures.¹¹ Speech acts are similar to saying “I do” in a marriage ceremony: “...I am ‘doing’ something. But different from fishing, or painting, this ‘doing’ does not exist aside from the utterance, and the meaning lies not in some descriptive accuracy or in some indication of preferences, but in the rule governed practice underlying the utterance.”¹²

Elsewhere in International Relations, speech acts are also an integral part of Buzan, Ole Waever, and Jaap de Wilde’s securitization approach.¹³ The difference between Buzan, et al.’s usage of the concept and Onuf’s is in regard to the motivation behind the utterance of speech acts. In securitization, speech acts are uttered to bring an issue above the normal workings of politics, ergo, to securitize an issue. This is to say that the end in sight is to instigate a response to an urgent and existential threat. Such an end goal is absent in Onuf’s analysis. Waever, in another publication, identifies that the elites play a central role as they are the instigators of speech acts that launch the entire securitization process.¹⁴ In other words, only members of the elite can initiate securitizing moves. Onuf’s formulation, meanwhile, does not limit the authors of speech acts to elites alone. Rather, he is clear that people in general – and here it is taken to mean both state and non-state actors (elites or otherwise) – can utter speech acts.

¹¹ Francois Debrix, “Language as Criticism: Assessing the Merits of Speech Acts and Discursive Formations in International Relations,” *New Political Science* 24, 2 (2002): 204.

¹² Friedrich V. Kratochwil, “Constructivism as an Approach,” in *Constructing International Relations: The Next Generation*, eds. Karin M. Fierke and Knud Erik Jorgensen (New York and London: ME Sharpe, 2001), 31.

¹³ Barry Buzan, Ole Waever, and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner, 1998).

¹⁴ Ole Waever, “Securitization and Desecuritization,” in *On Security*, ed. Ronnie D. Lipschutz (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 46-86.

Speech acts are powerful because these utterances, as Onuf argues, can be used to represent and perform deeds, and all this by mere words alone.¹⁵ However, speech acts only become social reality if they have meaning, and this “meaning” is provided by rules: “one’s ideas are identified *with* language, not as *preceding* language. The rules of language and thought are themselves derived from customary usage. The result is that sentences cannot say what they mean or what they do. Only rules and usage can do this: rules alone effectively constitute meaning.”¹⁶

Rules

Rules put speech acts into context; they provide meaning and the means with which to maintain order.¹⁷ Hedley Bull reminds us that rule usually takes the form of international law, but due consideration must also be paid to “rules that do not have the status of law.”¹⁸ Both Onuf and Friedrich Kratochwil seem to be in agreement regarding the interchangeability of rules and norms, that is, that they are synonymous. Both concede that rules/norms shape human behavior and give them meaning. Both also deploy the use of language in the Wittgensteinian sense. Where Kratochwil diverges is in his focus on norms as applied to legal discourses and international law.¹⁹ Rules and norms also form part of the works of Alexander Wendt, Peter Katzenstein, Audie Klotz, and Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink.²⁰ For these

¹⁵ Onuf (1989), 89.

¹⁶ Nicholas Onuf, “Do Rules Say What They Do? From Ordinary Language to International Law,” *Harvard International Law Journal* 26, 2 (Spring 1985): 390. Emphasis on the original.

¹⁷ Bull.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, xvii.

¹⁹ Friedrich V. Kratochwil, *Rules, Norms, and Decisions: On the Conditions of Practical and Legal Reasoning in International Relations and Domestic Affairs* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

²⁰ Alexander Wendt, “Anarchy is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics,” *International Organization* 46, 2 (Spring 1992): 394-395; Audie Klotz, *Norms in International Relations: The Struggle Against Apartheid* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995); Peter J.

scholars, norms are collective expectations about, and standards of, behavior. Norms also constrain action. While remaining valid, these works do not rely on language games as part of their analysis and for this regard, Onuf's and Kratochwil's conception of rules/norms is adopted instead in this dissertation.

Speech acts, and therefore, rules/norms, fall into three categories, which are extrapolated from John R. Searle's taxonomy of illocutionary acts: instruction-rules (assertives), directive-rules (directives), and commitment-rules (commissives).²¹ Instruction-rules make assertions, as well as offer instructions, about particular states of affairs.²² Searle argues, "The point or purpose of the members of the assertive class is to commit the speaker (in varying degrees) to something's being the case, to the truth of the expressed proposition."²³ Expressions of assertives include naming, declaring, informing, or asserting something.²⁴ Directive-rules issue orders and specify the consequences for disobeying the rules: "The illocutionary point of these consists in the fact that they are attempts...by the speaker to get the hearer to do something. They may be very 'modest' attempts as when I invite you to do it or suggest that you do it, or they may be very fierce attempts as when I insist that you do it."²⁵ Hence, expressions of directives may include requesting, ordering, or commanding someone or something.²⁶ Commitment-rules embody rights and duties

Katzenstein, ed., *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996); and Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink. "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change." *International Organization* 52, 4 (Autumn 1998): 887-917.

²¹ John R. Searle, *Expression and Meaning* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979). Searle also identifies two extra categories: expressives and declarations. Onuf drops these two on the basis that the three he has privileged (assertives, directives, and commissives) are generic types that can include the latter categories of expressives and declarations. See Onuf (1985): 400.

²² Onuf and Klink: 158; Onuf (1997), 10.

²³ Searle, 12.

²⁴ Kurt Burch, "Changing the Rules: Reconceiving Change in the Westphalian System," *International Studies Review* 2, 2 (Summer 2000): 197.

²⁵ Searle, 13.

²⁶ Burch (Summer 2000).

that commit speakers to a future course of action.²⁷ These rules “hold people to their promises by turning those promises into duties, which then become others’ rights to promised states of affairs....”²⁸ Expressions or manifestations of this category include promises, commitments, or obligations.²⁹

Rule

As mentioned earlier, the series or clusters of speech acts that actors utter are considered as language games, and their meaning or meanings are provided for by the rules surrounding their utterance. However, when multiple actors interact and express varying and oftentimes conflicting speech acts, the language games interface (hence, “interfacing games,” to borrow K.M. Fierke’s term). Interfacing games show the gradation of moves from each side, and the result is a particular type of rule. By virtue of such, no one language game by a particular actor predominates or “wins” the interface. Instead, the multiplicity of games at play at any one time suggests the presence and working of rules, which thereafter lead to the creation of certain types of rule. In short, speech acts constitute interfacing language games that follow rules, and these rules generate different types of rule:

...rules yield rule. Rules make agents and society what they are, and they make rule a necessary condition for agents in society. As a condition, rule is something agents do to and for other agents with rules, *and* it is something that happens to agents when they respond to rules....rule remains a pervasive condition.³⁰

Onuf and Klink offer three types of rule or order: hegemony, hierarchy, and heteronomy, each corresponding to the three categories of rules discussed above

²⁷ Searle, 14.

²⁸ Onuf and Klink: 158.

²⁹ Burch (Summer 2000).

³⁰ Onuf (1997), 15. Emphasis on the original.

(assertives, directives, and commissives).³¹ Based on the notion of rules, Onuf and Klink's paradigm puts language right at the center of their analysis because none of the three types of rule would hold if language games were absent. Hegemony is the embodiment of the salience of instruction-rules, while directive-rules predominate in hierarchy, and commitment-rules prevail in heteronomy.³² The table below helps clarify this.

Table 1
Speech Acts, Rules, and Rule

Speech Acts	Categories of Rules	Expressions of Rule	Forms of Rule
Directives	Directive-Rules	To request, order, command	Hierarchy
Assertives	Instruction-Rules	To name, declare, inform, assert	Hegemony
Commissives	Commitment-Rules	To promise, commit, oblige	Heteronomy

Source: Kurt Burch, "Changing the Rules: Reconceiving Change in the Westphalian System," *International Studies Review* 2, 2 (Summer 2000): 190.

As the succeeding chapters give the three types of rule more substance and make them more salient, it is only necessary at this point to set the parameters on how to distinguish them from each other. As explained previously, each *form* or *type* of rule corresponds to a particular *category* of rules. Notions of hegemony in International Relations typically depict a hegemonic/major power with satellite states surrounding it (reminiscent of the early Cold War era in Eastern Europe), and where "...the position of the ranking state is so overwhelming that it can dispense with the chain of command and cast directive-rules in a benign form as mere suggestions, and still have its rule effectuated."³³ Thus, hegemony is identified by the multiplicity of

³¹ Onuf and Klink.

³² Onuf (1997), 16.

³³ Onuf and Klink (1989): 164-165.

instruction-rules that are present and used during a particular point of analysis. These are coupled with material factors such as the presence of super-ordinate actors who redefine social reality through regimes, as well as subordinate groups who consent to such a rule. This is the subject of chapter 3, which traces Southeast Asia-US relations from 1954 to 1977. The main difference between hierarchy and hegemony is the absence of the threat of or the use of force in the latter.

Heteronomy, meanwhile, is premised on commitment-rules and it is identifiable by relations where the authority lines overlap and thus no one ruler seems readily apparent. The closest analogy one can make about heteronomy is in regard to property rights. Onuf and Klink explain that during feudal times, serfs needed the physical security that only lords could provide, and so they entered into agreements with them on the latter's terms. Heteronomy took place here because "...the coercive character of the exchange and the directive-rules substantiating it was concealed behind the formality of lord-serf relations based on exchange and reciprocity."³⁴

Similar situations pervaded bourgeois exchanges in the early modern period:

Exchanges between capitalists and workers take place because bourgeois property rights assign capitalists a monopoly on society's productive property and, therefore, upon the workers' means of physical and psychic sustenance. To gain access to the means of their sustenance, workers must enter into exchange relations with capitalists. In capitalist societies, however, the massively asymmetrical character of this exchange and of the content of property rights behind it is obscured by the fact that workers are generally free to choose the specific capitalist with whom they enter into exchange relations and even to organize themselves for collective bargaining.³⁵

While not purporting that Southeast Asia-US relations are feudal, it is argued here that the relationship is heteronomous from 1978 to 1991 (chapter 4) because of the

³⁴ Ibid., 163.

³⁵ Ibid.

salience of commissives in the rhetoric of the states involved. The ambiguity inherent in such a type of rule obliges actors to make commitments by entering into agreements, but it is these that also ensure the asymmetry of their relations, such as what happened to the subjects of our analysis from 1992 to 2000 (chapter 5).

Finally, hierarchy is easily likened to a bureaucracy where directives flow from one direction, i.e., from a higher officer to the one below.³⁶ Hierarchy in international relations, meanwhile, is identified through the prominence of directive-rules, but it is also distinguishable by the presence of other factors: asymmetry in power relations, the institutional expressions of the rule, and most importantly, the threat or the use of force or intervention. Southeast Asia and the US practiced a hierarchic order in the post-911 period, which is explored in chapter 6.

Scott Burch provides an excellent summary of Onuf's variant of Constructivism, which he terms rule-oriented constructivism (ROC), through six premises.³⁷ First, social creation is the ongoing co-constitution of, on one hand, agents and social arrangements, and material conditions and ideas, on the other. Second, considered as the "bedrock" of ROC, such co-constitution is achieved through speech acts and rules. Third, regulative and constitutive rules do not differ. Fourth, change is the necessary outcome of the continuing process of social construction. Fifth, rules give rise to rule where advantages are distributed unequally. This paves the way for the final premise, which states that this uneven distribution of advantages (resources) results in three types of rule: hegemony, hierarchy, and heteronomy.

³⁶ Ibid., 160.

³⁷ Burch (Summer 2000): 188-190.

Methodological Issues

Onuf's line of reasoning demands an appreciation of the linguistic element in international politics. Hence, the analysis of this dissertation necessarily focuses on a reconstruction of Southeast Asia-US relations through language games. However, a question arises as to whose language games matter? Given the parameters of the dissertation, the language games of states – particularly the United States and members of Southeast Asia – are used. To strengthen the case of the empirical data, a triangulation strategy is employed here. Hence, primary materials consulted for this study include official documents culled from the states of Southeast Asia and the United States, meetings of the ASEAN, agreements, joint press statements, communiqués, speeches, press briefings, presidential documents, and oral histories. The *Foreign Relations of the United States* (FRUS) also prove invaluable here. The two remaining legs of the triangulation strategy necessitate recourse to secondary materials, i.e., newspaper articles, Track 2 materials, and academic sources, which are also used to strengthen, and to a lesser extent, to validate the claims and arguments put forth by the primary materials.

The language games are extrapolated from official discourses, i.e., from the formal positions of states. Consequently, the interplay of various language games can be understood in the context of interfacing games. These games differ from the games of game theory, which focus on instrumental rationality. Constructivist games, on the other hand, are a relational concept that focus on the rationality of moves and counter-moves as belonging to a *context*. Rationality, in other words, is situated

within the context of specific games.³⁸ Proceeding in this manner remains loyal to the Critical Constructivist epistemology. As Francois Debrix expounds:

To obtain knowledge about social interactions, about the co-constitution of agents and structure through language, the constructivist scholar is interested in the reconstruction of rules. Indeed, the constructivist method of investigation of social phenomena...is to uncover how rules are produced and reproduced, constructed and reconstructed, in the speech acts of the agents and through the institutional presence of the structures.³⁹

Following the three-step logic of the paradigm of rule, a certain category of language games paves the way for the creation of rules, and consequently, to particular types of rule. What explains, however, the presence of different categories of speech acts – and ergo, language games – at any given point in time? What happens if, for instance, both assertives and commissives (see Table 1 above) exist at the same time? If it is posited that, for example, assertives/instruction-rules prevailed at one time and therefore hegemony ruled during that period, what explains the dominance of that particular language game, and therefore that type of rule, instead of another? Constructivists loyal to using language as a method of analysis would argue that which language games become salient depend on reception or on how other actors who are parties to an interaction acknowledge or reject these games. Consequently, how the language games are received becomes the basis of actors'

³⁸ Karin M. Fierke, *Changing Games, Changing Strategies: Critical Investigations in Security* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1998); Karin Fierke, "Multiple Identities, Interfacing Games: The Social Construction of Western Action in Bosnia," *European Journal of International Relations* 2 (1996): 467-497; Karin M. Fierke, "Critical Methodology and Constructivism," in *Constructing International Relations: The Next Generation*, eds. Karin M. Fierke and Knud Erik Jorgensen (New York and London: ME Sharpe, 2001), 115-135; Karin M. Fierke and Michael Nicholson, "Divided by a Common Language: Formal and Constructivist Approaches to Games," *Global Society* 15, 1 (2001): 7-25.

³⁹ Debrix (2002): 204-205.

succeeding interactions.⁴⁰ Thus, even if assertives and commissives are uttered at the same time, only one category of language games may prove to be more valid than the other because of the actors' positive reception of it. This reception is demonstrated in this dissertation via the salience of certain language games in official and secondary discourses.

Since language is the main tool of analysis, the application of the positivist act of falsification becomes problematic for two reasons. First, Wittgenstein emphasizes the impossibility of "getting behind our language" in order to see whether our words correspond with things we see in the world "out there." Hence, falsification, in the words of Fierke, is "highly unlikely" because "...language is constitutive of the world. Language use is a form of action in itself that is bound up with other kinds of practices."⁴¹ Second, the criteria for falsifying any set of hypotheses are found *outside* the context of examination or from an a priori theory. In the case of Critical Constructivism, the dichotomy between what is inside and what is outside is blurred as our words or our descriptions of the world are constitutive of each other.⁴² Words and worlds therefore merge, which makes falsification problematic.

In closing this chapter, the paradigm of rule's three-step logic that language games generate rules, which thereafter produce forms of rule, is adopted in this dissertation to account for why, in Southeast Asia-US relations, there is impermanence as to the "leader" of the relationship (i.e., why it is sometimes the US and why at times it is the Southeast Asian nations that seem to steer the relationship),

⁴⁰ Harry D. Gould, "Constructivist International Relations Theory and the Semantics of Performative Language," in *Language, Agency, and Politics in a Constructed World*, ed. Francois Debrix (Armonk and London: M.E. Sharpe, 2003), 50-65.

⁴¹ Fierke (2001), 126.

⁴² Ibid.

and also to determine why certain types of rule hold water during particular time periods. In other words, the paradigm of rule sheds light on the reasons behind the shifts in the types of rule practiced in the Southeast Asia-US relationship, i.e., it can explain transformations from hegemony to heteronomy to hierarchy or any combination thereof. Furthermore, one type of rule persists at any given point in time because of the similar clusters of language games that states utter. Using the paradigm of rule also helps in framing the main argument that Southeast Asia-US relations underwent various types of rule from 1954 to 2006 because of the multiple language games that these states played. Set against the backdrop of extant literature on Southeast Asia-US relations, the next chapter shows that language matters in analyses of Southeast Asia-US relations because it allows for the dual possibilities of change in the “leader” of their interaction, as well as change in the “nature” of their relationship.

CHAPTER 2

COUNTER-ARGUMENTS

The breadth and depth of extant literature on Southeast Asia-US relations is arguably vast, but a recurring theme appears to be in regard to who has the ability to shape and maneuver the relationship. At the risk of oversimplification, two broad understandings on the nature of the relationship seem to be on opposing ends. One advocates that the current juncture or context of Southeast Asia is due solely to the efforts of the United States. Implicit in this argument is the reactive, even passive, nature of the smaller states of Southeast Asia. Yet another bulk of literature appears to be arguing the exact opposite, i.e., that Southeast Asia has full agency and that the US role in the region is only at the behest of the smaller states. Both interpretations are sound, and yet it can be argued that they rely on assumptions and make arguments on the basis of various types of international orders that account for neither the question of who “leads” or shapes the relationship, nor the reason why one type of rule is perpetuated and thereafter is transformed into another as time goes by. In other words, while there is an acknowledgement that Southeast Asia-US relations can be explained by the multiplicity of international orders “out there,” the questions why the “leader” varies and why the form of rule changes are left out of the analytical picture.

In this regard, the present undertaking seeks to read Southeast Asia-US relations through the use of language. By paying attention to the linguistic element behind the materiality of the relationship, the rules of the game become more apparent, and consequently, the type of rule that predominates the Southeast Asia-US relationship emerges. The foundations or that which makes a certain order hold thus

become clear. Arguing in this manner also addresses the puzzles posed earlier: who defines Southeast Asia-US relations varies and the way in which their interaction is ordered changes as well because of the language games that they play. In short, this dissertation builds on previous studies and at the same time, offers a value-added in the sense that focusing on language as a method of analysis highlights that Southeast Asia-US relations are fluid and are always in constant flux. Hegemony as a type of rule, for instance, may have been true and valid immediately after World War II, but not so much at the height of the Cold War. To argue otherwise or to maintain that only one form of rule predominated the relationship all throughout history is to ignore other forces that are at work in Southeast Asia-US relations. Thus, change in the types of rule can be accounted for if we pay heed to language. The “picture of reality” is thus “brought to life”: “That which was frozen in place becomes capable of movement.”¹

This chapter proceeds by first looking at the two opposing poles found in the literature on Southeast Asia-US relations before highlighting how scholarship, as it stands, relies on certain understandings of international orders in particular, and international relations in general. Using the threefold umbrella of the paradigm of rule, the hope is to draw attention to the significance of non-material factors in the

¹ K.M. Fierke, “Links Across the Abyss: Language and Logic in International Relations,” *International Studies Quarterly* 46 (2002): 338. The “picture of reality” is how logical positivism applied language. Language was used as a “mirror of reality” because, as Friedrich V. Kratochwil points out, “[i]f language was supposed to be meaningful, it was so in virtue of its ability to depict accurately the things, actions, and properties of the ‘outer world.’ Thus, nouns stood for things, verbs for actions, and adjectives for properties.” All this changed with Wittgenstein’s “linguistic turn,” where the meaning of a term was then derived from its pragmatic nature and everyday usage. Kratochwil explains, “The meaning of a term consisted no longer in its exact correspondence to an object in the ‘outer world’ but in its use in speech.... Concepts meant something, not because they captured the ontological essences of ‘things’...but because they were used in a certain way among speakers who thereby communicated with one another....everyday language, as elicited from competent speakers, served as the authoritative guide to determining the bounds of sense.” See Friedrich V. Kratochwil, “Constructivism as an Approach,” in *Constructing International Relations: The Next Generation*, eds. Karin M. Fierke and Knud Erik Jorgensen (New York and London: ME Sharpe, 2001), 19-20.

shaping of the said relationship, without having to abandon the value of material elements.

Two Poles in Southeast Asia-US Relations

Given that Southeast Asia-US relations have had a long history, various schools of thought understandably color scholarly reflections on this relationship. Works that have been produced by external scholars looking into the region appear to be more biased towards the role played by the United States, while materials that have been published from and by scholars from within the region tend to see things from the opposite perspective. Both ends of the spectrum are discussed below. The literature as it stands overlooks two important aspects of Southeast Asia-US relations: that the question of who “leads” or shapes the relationship cannot simply be reduced to an either-or logic (either the United States or the Southeast Asian states), and that different types of rule order their relations.

The American Role in Southeast Asia’s Politics

The traditional literature on Southeast Asia’s international relations has generally been very biased towards the role of the United States. The theme that has run throughout the course of this literature, from the immediate post-1945 period until today, is the necessity of the United States’ presence and leadership in Southeast Asia. Given the fact that, as Donald K. Emmerson remarks, the idea of “Southeast Asia” became more visible only after World War II and was only thereafter given political connotation, there is little doubt that studies on the region were seen through the eyes

of outsiders.² This is precisely Tim Huxley's point when he characterized Southeast Asia's international relations in the 1960s and the 1970s as being dominated by Western scholarship, advocated and studied by non-Southeast Asian scholars, and concerned primarily with regional security and the strategic utility of the region.³ Indeed, Philip Charrier argues that the Southeast Asian region has been first and foremost a creation of Western academia, which has been subsequently perpetuated by the Cold War.⁴ Furthermore, James Tyner goes so far as to argue that the idea of a Southeast Asian region is imagined, created, and perpetuated to serve American economic, political, territorial, and moral interests.⁵ He strengthens his claim by tracing American involvement in Southeast Asian affairs from the onset of the Cold War, the first Indochina war, the Reagan era, and the post-911 period. In other words, Southeast Asia "has been a crucial component in the creation of the American empire."⁶ The same stance is implicit in Evelyn Colbert's work, which focuses on Southeast Asia from World War II to the Vietnam War, and describes how the region has become entangled in the East-West conflict of the Cold War.⁷ As the Cold War progressed, Southeast Asia became increasingly seen as merely a function of the American strategy of containment.⁸ Corollary to this, Werner Levi points out that Southeast Asia became important to the United States because of the rise of

² Donald K. Emmerson, "'Southeast Asia': What's in a Name?" *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 15, 1 (March 1984): 1-21.

³ Tim Huxley, "Southeast Asia in the Study of International Relations: The Rise and Decline of a Region," *The Pacific Review* 9, 2 (1996): 199-228.

⁴ Philip Charrier, "ASEAN's Inheritance: The Regionalization of Southeast Asia: 1941-61," *The Pacific Review* 14, 3 (2001): 313-338.

⁵ James Tyner, *America's Strategy in Southeast Asia: From the Cold War to the Terror War* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007).

⁶ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁷ Evelyn Colbert, *Southeast Asia in International Politics, 1941-1956* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1977).

⁸ Kai Dreisbach, "Between SEATO and ASEAN: The United States and the Regional Organization of Southeast Asia," in *The Transformation of Southeast Asia: International Perspectives on Decolonization*, eds. Marc Frey, Ronald W. Pruessen, and Tan Tai Yong (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 2004), 241-256.

communist China.⁹ The impact of the communist threat was examined more closely through the Vietnam War, as Michael Leifer does. Focusing on regional conflict, he identifies the interests and roles of external powers and regional states in the Vietnam War.¹⁰

When regionalism gained ground in Southeast Asia in the 1960s, studies still reflected the weight of extra-regional factors in general, and the United States in particular. Arnfinn Jorgensen-Dahl, for instance, makes it clear the gravity of the influence of the external environment in prodding Southeast Asia to form regional organizations.¹¹ Moreover, Leifer traces the evolution of ASEAN and embeds his analysis in Cold War politics.¹² The US, meanwhile, seemed to welcome the idea of regionalism because the “ideological underpinnings” of regional cooperation called “for a continued US presence and involvement in East and Southeast Asia...”¹³ Chintamani Mahapatra synthesizes the significance of the American influence in the formation of ASEAN: “ASEAN was the product of Asian initiative. But it was hardly an Asian creation. Behind the Asian initiative was the American ‘support’ and ‘discreet guidance.’ Washington almost acted like a mid-wife in the birth of ASEAN.”¹⁴

Regardless of the end of the Cold War in the 1990s, the strategic sphere still played a major role in the literature. In the wake of the East-West conflict, however,

⁹ Werner Levi, *The Challenge of World Politics in South and Southeast Asia* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1968).

¹⁰ Michael Leifer, *Conflict and Regional Order in South-East Asia*, Adelphi Paper 162 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1980).

¹¹ Arnfinn Jorgensen-Dahl, *Regional Organization and Order in South-East Asia* (London: Macmillan, 1982).

¹² Michael Leifer, *ASEAN and the Security of South-East Asia* (London and New York: Routledge, 1989).

¹³ Vincent K. Pollard, “ASA and ASEAN, 1961-1967: Southeast Asian Regionalism,” *Asian Survey* 10, 3 (March 1970): 244-255.

¹⁴ Chintamani Mahapatra, *American Role in the Origin and Growth of ASEAN* (New Delhi: ABC Publishing House, 1990), 6-7.

it seemed apparent that Asia in general slid down the US agenda. Richard K. Betts highlights this fact.¹⁵ Despite this, American dominance in the region is still necessary. Paul Dibb justifies US presence in Asia thus, “The middle powers will want power balanced in the region, hence their continuing interest in a US presence. Only the US can ensure that dangerous power symmetries do not emerge.”¹⁶

Perhaps it is because of this that scholars in Southeast Asia clamor for the necessity of American hegemony in the region, particularly after the September 11 terrorist attacks. Nicholas Khoo and Michael L. Smith point out that conceptions of a Concert of Asia would not be feasible. Instead, a clear pecking order led by the United States would be what is needed for preserving order in Asia.¹⁷ Vedi Hadiz likewise underscores the dominance of the United States in his edited volume *Empire and Neoliberalism in Asia*.¹⁸ In the same volume, Goran Therborn conceives world power as a multilateral configuration, with the US at the head.¹⁹ Furthermore, David A. Lake in a 2006 article imbues the US with an “authority of practice” from which it draws its hegemony.²⁰ Other calls for keeping the US in the region include Mark Beeson who acknowledges that there are resistances to American hegemony,

¹⁵ Richard K. Betts, “Wealth, Power, and Instability: East Asia and the United States After the Cold War,” *International Security* 18, 3 (Winter 1993-1994): 34-77.

¹⁶ Paul Dibb, *Towards a New Balance of Power in Asia*, Adelphi Paper No. 395 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 71. In two of his other works, Dibb explicitly stated that Southeast Asia is not strategically important to the United States. See Paul Dibb, “The Strategic Environment in the Asia-Pacific Region,” in *America’s Asian Alliances*, eds. Robert D. Blackwill and Paul Dibb (Cambridge and London: MIT Press, 2000), 1-17; Paul Dibb, *Will America’s Alliances in the Asia-Pacific Region Endure?* Strategic and Defence Studies Centre Working Paper 345 (Canberra: Australian National University, 2000).

¹⁷ Nicholas Khoo and Michael L. Smith, “The Future of American Hegemony in the Asia-Pacific: A Concert of Asia or a Clear Pecking Order?” *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 56, 1 (2002): 65-81.

¹⁸ Vedi R. Hadiz, ed., *Empire and Neoliberalism in Asia* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006).

¹⁹ Goran Therborn, “The Pole and the Triangle: US Power and the Triangle of the Americas, Asia and Europe,” in *Empire and Neoliberalism in Asia*, ed. Vedi R. Hadiz (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 23-37.

²⁰ David A. Lake, “American Hegemony and the Future of East-West Relations,” *International Studies Perspectives* 7 (2006): 23-30.

particularly in regard to the War on Terror. Nonetheless, these resistances are stanching because the US is becoming more and more unilateral.²¹ Moreover, these resistances would seem to be futile insofar as Southeast Asia is concerned because the region is still subjected to external issues.²²

Southeast Asia and the United States may now be more mindful of “gaps” in their relationship, this according to Satu P. Limaye, but this is only largely due to the structure created by the US.²³ Southeast Asia, at least insofar as the literature on this side of the spectrum projects, is therefore still left with no agency and no activism in the way it shapes its relationship with an external great power. Perhaps the United States’ dominance and influence in Southeast Asia is, as Robert J. McMahon intimates, a reflection of American society and values.²⁴ But as traditional Realists would argue, the presence of a great power, external or otherwise, in a region is only typical of international relations. Smaller powers would just have to learn to accept that fact.²⁵

Southeast Asia’s Role in its Relations with the United States

Another bulk of literature regarding Southeast Asia-US relations has the objective of infusing agency to the smaller states of Southeast Asia. Such a theme

²¹ Mark Beeson, “US Hegemony and Southeast Asia: The Impact of, and Limits to, US Power and Influence,” *Critical Asian Studies* 36, 3 (2004): 445-462.

²² Mark Beeson, “The United States and Southeast Asia: Change and Continuity in American Hegemony,” in *Asian Regional Governance: Crisis and Change*, ed. Kanishka Jayasuriya (London: Routledge, 2004), 215-231.

²³ Satu P. Limaye, “Minding the Gaps: The Bush Administration and US-Southeast Asia Relations,” *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 26, 1 (2004): 73-93.

²⁴ Robert J. McMahon, “The United States and Southeast Asia in an Era of Decolonization, 1945-1965,” in *The Transformation of Southeast Asia: International Perspectives on Decolonization*, eds. March Frey, Ronald W. Pruessen, and Tan Tai Yong (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 2004), 213-225.

²⁵ Renato Cruz de Castro, “Managing ‘Strategic Unpolarity’: The ASEAN States’ Responses to the Post-Cold War Regional Environment,” in *Southeast Asian Perspectives on Security*, ed. Derek da Cunha (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2000), 60-80.

has also been recurrent from the 1960s to the present period. At the height of the Cold War in Asia, Bernard K. Gordon draws attention to political conditions within the region, as opposed to the more general works that deal with Southeast Asia's involvement in the Cold War via the Vietnam War, thus analyzing regional politics through the lenses of the external great powers.²⁶ Granted that Gordon might have been making policy recommendations to the United States, but his proposals for American withdrawal take account of intricate regional politics by focusing on the domestic problems facing the Southeast Asian states, and by highlighting issues pervading intra-regional relations.²⁷ Robert C. Horn points to renewed US interest in Southeast Asia, which is brought about by the 1978 Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea, that pushed the smaller states to learn to play ball with the bigger powers.²⁸ Focusing particularly on ASEAN, Donald E. Weatherbee suggests that regionalism is Southeast Asia's way of keeping the United States in the region and dealing with changing balances of power.²⁹ This is also the point of Sheldon W. Simon's observation: that ASEAN is a way of balancing, and that Southeast Asia constrains and manipulates great power policies to serve the goals of "indigenous states."³⁰

In the post-Cold War era, the theme resurfaces. Evelyn Goh also advocates Southeast Asia's activist initiatives in engaging the United States. She demonstrates

²⁶ Bernard K. Gordon, *The Dimensions of Conflict in Southeast Asia* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1966).

²⁷ Bernard K. Gordon, *Toward Disengagement in Asia: A Strategy for American Foreign Policy* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1969).

²⁸ Robert C. Horn, "Southeast Asian Perceptions of US Foreign Policy," *Asian Survey* 25, 6 (June 1985): 678-691.

²⁹ Donald E. Weatherbee, "US Policy and the Two Southeast Asias," *Asian Survey* 18, 4 (April 1978): 408-421.

³⁰ Sheldon W. Simon, *The ASEAN States and Regional Security* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1982); Sheldon W. Simon, "Davids and Goliaths: Small Power-Great Power Security Relations in Southeast Asia," *Asian Survey* 23, 3 (March 1983): 302-315.

that Southeast Asia's strategies of omni-enmeshment and balance of influence result in a hierarchical order that appears to be akin to the Gramscian notion.³¹ Granted that the hierarchic order entails that the United States be on top, it is nonetheless "hegemony by consent." Thus, the US is exactly where the Southeast Asian states want it to be. Furthermore, in her edited monograph, *Betwixt and Between: Southeast Asian Strategic Relations with the US and China*, she argues that Southeast Asian states are "hedging their bets using a range of policies that have some countries leaning more to one side, but still pursuing options with the other side."³² This thus seems to suggest that while US presence in the region is necessary, such presence is only at the behest of Southeast Asia. Amitav Acharya and See Seng Tan's argument, meanwhile, rest on the shortcomings of the logic of the balance of power, particularly as applied to the US role in Southeast Asia.³³ They emphasize the fact that the security architecture of Southeast Asia does not rest entirely on American presence and influence in the region. Drawing from historical and contemporary instances, they prove that ASEAN has contributed greatly to the current state of regional politics. David Capie also grants agency to Southeast Asia vis-à-vis its relations with the United States.³⁴ He argues that rather than balancing against or bandwagoning with the United States in the wake of the 9/11, the Southeast Asian states instead

³¹ Evelyn Goh, *Great Powers and Southeast Asian Regional Security Strategies: Omni-Enmeshment, Balancing and Hierarchical Order*, Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies Working Paper No. 84 (Singapore: Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, July 2005); Evelyn Goh, "Great Powers and Hierarchical Order in Southeast Asia: Analyzing Regional Security Strategies," *International Security* 32, 2 (Winter 2007-2008): 113-157.

³² Evelyn Goh, *Betwixt and Between: Southeast Asian Strategic Relations with the US and China*, Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies Monograph No. 7 (Singapore: Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, 2005), 6-7.

³³ Amitav Acharya and See Seng Tan, "Betwixt Balance and Community: America, ASEAN, and the Security of Southeast Asia," *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 6 (2006): 37-59.

³⁴ David Capie, "Between a Hegemon and a Hard Place: The 'War on Terror' and Southeast Asian-US Relations," *The Pacific Review* 17, 2 (June 2004): 223-248.

practice a “mix of cooperation and constraint in bilateral ties.”³⁵ The cases of Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines showcase that these regional states are pragmatic in their response. Furthermore, domestic politics played a considerable role in the states’ stance.

Given this brief literature survey, it is inaccurate to characterize Southeast Asia-US relations as simply being led by either one of them all throughout the course of history. It is never completely the United States that shapes the relationship with Southeast Asia, nor is it absolutely the latter that defines its relations with the superpower. This thus implies that the lines between the “orderer” and “ordered” are fluid and move in constant flux. It is likewise inaccurate to define Southeast Asia-US relations as practicing only one type of rule. Since the formation of ASEAN in 1967, the region’s relations with the United States could not have been explained only by, for instance, the notion of hegemony. Rather, it is offered in this dissertation that not just one, but several types of rule have taken place in regard to the evolution of Southeast Asia-US relations. These shortcomings are understandable given the premises within which the assumptions of the above works are framed. The next section points out that these assumptions are made on the basis of particular understandings of international orders and international relations.

International Orders and International Relations

The academic literature details at least four alternative ways of ordering international relations. First, Muthiah Alagappa proposes a typology of order with

³⁵ Ibid., 223.

anarchy and world government at opposite ends of the spectrum.³⁶ In between lie the instrumental, normative-contractual, and solidarist orders. In the instrumental order, considerations of national identity, power, and interests predominate. In the normative-contractual order, while national identity still prevails, there are agreed upon norms and rules that govern international interaction. In the solidarist order, it is the community's common goals and collective identity that receive topmost priority. Relations here are based on trust, obligations to the community, and the rule of law. These orders are maintained through certain means, or what Alagappa calls "pathways to order." These pathways include hegemony, hierarchy, balance of power, collective security, and international regimes. It can be argued, however, that the *pathways* or means to achieve order that he identifies also produce orders and structures in their own right. For instance, hegemony is a structure all on its own, as well as hierarchy. Furthermore, the pathways can all be considered as, in a sense, international regimes. These "pathways" are reminiscent of Hedley Bull's "institutions" that serve to maintain order in the international system: the balance of power, international law, diplomacy, war, and the great powers.³⁷

The second alternative way of ordering international relations stems from Barry Buzan's 1991 work on *People, States and Fear* where he forwards the idea of superpower overlay.³⁸ Buzan explains that overlay occurs in the context of regional security complexes where the presence of external great powers conditions and to a certain extent, hampers local security dynamics. Overlay, however, becomes very

³⁶ Muthiah Alagappa, "The Study of International Order: An Analytical Framework," in *Asian Security Order: Instrumental and Normative Features*, ed. Muthiah Alagappa (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 41-52.

³⁷ Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics*, 2nd ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995).

³⁸ Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security in the Post-Cold War Era* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1991).

difficult to ascertain, particularly the extent to which the superpower shapes regional security dynamics. Also, arguing thus implies that the other members of a security complex are not able contribute to regional politics, as it is only the superpower that has the ability to define relations between them.

The third alternative type of rule or order is from Adam Watson's works. In *The Evolution of International Society* and *The Limits of Independence*, Watson uses the image of a pendulum to describe how international society "swings" between centralization and independence, or how it "tightens" or "loosens" over time.³⁹ In other words, Watson emphasizes how in some instances, the international system experiences multiple independencies, while in some other cases, it goes through the processes of hegemony, suzerainty, dominion, or empire. Watson's pendulum image, however, appears to argue that only one type of rule seems possible at any point in time. His analytical framework, in other words, does not seem to allow the coexistence of different types of rule.

To this, Ole Waever presents the fourth type of alternative rule in International Relations. Waever offers to look at international life as concentric circles consisting of, from the innermost to the outermost circle, direct rule, dominion, hegemony, and independent states and other imperial structures.⁴⁰ Waever justifies this extension of the Watsonian logic thus:

If we approach international relations from a broad perspective, spanning 5000 instead of the usual 300 years and incorporating different regions and civilisations other than those of Europe, the normal pattern that emerges is one of such mixed constellations;

³⁹ Adam Watson, *The Evolution of International Society: A Comparative Historical Analysis* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992); Adam Watson, *The Limits of Independence: Relations Between States in the Modern World* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997).

⁴⁰ Ole Waever, "Europe's Three Empires: A Watsonian Interpretation of Post-Wall European Security," in *International Society After the Cold War*, eds. Rick Fawn and Jeremy Larkins (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), 220-260.

neither multiple independencies nor tight empire, but the concentric circle patterns of gradated empires.⁴¹

Despite the ability of Waeber's model to account for the possibility of different types of rule at once, this begs the question of how to discern one type of rule from another. In other words, if direct rule, dominion, hegemony, and such orders exist at the same time, how can one be distinguished from another? Where does one draw the line between, for instance, direct rule and dominion?

The models of Alagappa, Buzan, Watson, and Waeber are some of the many and possible ways in which states interact with each other. The propositions of these forms of rule rest on a particular way of how international relations are conducted, and consequently, how these notions also feed into the assumptions of the extant literature on Southeast Asia-US relations. The resulting edifice of the scholarship on Southeast Asia-US relations, however, does not explain why (or how) power is negotiated between and among the parties involved, or why one form of rule transforms into another. Against this backdrop, this dissertation offers to look at the relationship by way of a linguistic method in the hopes that these lacunae can be addressed.

Related speech acts that both the Southeast Asian nations and the United States utter form clusters of language games. As each side enunciates and "makes moves," what results is an interface of these games (interfacing games) that stresses the rules of interaction. There are no predetermined rules of the game as these emerge only from the contextuality of the language and rhetoric used. Accordingly, these rules engender certain forms of rule (hegemony, hierarchy, or heteronomy) depending on the category of language used (assertives, directives, or commissives).

⁴¹ Ibid., 224-225.

With this in mind, the next few chapters delve into reconstructing Southeast Asia-US relations from 1954 to 2006.

CHAPTER 3

HEGEMONY 1954-1977

The period 1954-1977 marks the beginnings of the United States' formal engagement with the region via the establishment of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) in 1954 and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 1967; incidentally, these dates also mark the height of the Vietnam War, the establishment of the ASEAN-US (economic) dialogue, and the dissolution of SEATO in 1977. In short, the inclusive years highlight Southeast Asia's inevitable involvement in the Cold War. Bearing in mind the language games-rules-rule logic that is expounded in the previous chapters, the language games played by the United States depict how it has been able to co-opt the Southeast Asian states into being involved in its fight against communism. At the same time, the language games played by the Southeast Asian nations demonstrate how they have negotiated their engagement with the United States despite their very limited space of maneuver. The interface of these varied language games engenders rules of play or interaction; in this case, the parties' language games were expressed along the lines of instruction-rules or assertives, which therefore prompt hegemony as the type of rule that have prevailed during this period.

In order to substantiate this claim, this chapter is divided into two parts. The first finds recourse on how the literature understands and conceptualizes hegemony. This survey of the hegemony literature is necessary in order to extrapolate markers or criteria for identifying this type of rule. From here, the second part looks at language games that the United States and the Southeast Asian states have played with the aim of evaluating whether these language games are indeed a reflection of the presence

and existence of hegemony. The names of these games are not necessarily the same labels that the players involved used. Indeed, these are the author's own terms for the language games that are seen to be played out by the states involved. Arguably, taking this route begs the issue of this exercise being one possible description – among many – of how one can characterize the Southeast Asia-US relationship. However, the validity of the names of these games is rooted on their salience in official and secondary accounts and/or discourses, and their value-added is in terms of how they are framed against hegemony and against the broader language games-rules-rule umbrella.

Hegemony as a Type of Rule

Hegemony in International Relations takes two variants: on one hand are the materialist/strategic conceptions that include insights from Liberalism and Realism, and on the other are the more consensual approaches of Antonio Gramsci, Robert Cox, and Nicholas Onuf. This section provides an overview of these divergent schools of thought and demonstrates that the materialist/strategic conceptions are complemented by the insights of the Gramscian tradition, which Onuf adopts. These markers permeate relations between the Southeast Asia and the United States in the 1954-1977 period.

Materialist Conceptions of Hegemony

The hegemonic stability theory espouses the dominance of a hegemon to provide stability, maintain rules of interstate relations, and offer collective goods.¹

¹ A hegemon has two forms. The first is a “strong” version, which focuses on the role of a hegemon in producing order and maintaining stability in the world. The second is a “weak” version, which is actually a modification of the first, and which concedes that the presence of a hegemon is a necessary

Essentially a Liberal conceptualization of order that is rooted on the experiences of the Great Depression in the late 1920s, International Political Economy scholars maintain that a hegemon is needed to ensure an open market for surpluses in primary products, and ergo, a hegemon is necessary to avoid or resolve economic crises. In this regard, hegemons create institutional structures or regimes to maintain economic order, and thus in the process provide collective goods to other members of the system, reduce transaction costs, and increase certainty.² In short, hegemony is a situation where a major power provides public goods through the establishment of regimes, while the rest of the members of the system enjoy the role of free riders. In the words of Robert Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, a hegemonic system is “when one state is powerful enough to maintain the essential rules governing interstate relations, and willing to do so.”³

The hegemonic stability theory also owes much to the Realist tradition in International Relations, particularly in the logic of the rise and fall of hegemons, as well as the manifestation of an international system that swings from equilibrium to disequilibrium and back again.⁴ The tragedy is that hegemons plant the seeds of their

but not always sufficient condition for order. See Susan Strange, “The Persistent Myth of Lost Hegemony,” *International Organization* 41, 4 (Autumn 1987): 551-574.

² Stephen D. Krasner, ed., *International Regimes* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983); Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984). Here, the question of free riders comes in. Mancur Olson studies how the United States shouldered most of the defense expenditures of its Western allies, while the latter enjoyed the benefits of the security offered by the former. Theoretically, this meant that hegemony has the consequence of letting certain groups enjoy benefits and privileges that enable them to resist change. See Mancur Olson, *The Rise and Decline of Nations* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982).

³ Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, *Power and Interdependence*, 3rd ed. (New York: Longman, 2001), 38. Apart from the workings of a hegemonic system, it is also imperative to identify the characteristics of a hegemon. Here, Keohane and Strange are helpful. Keohane highlights that a hegemon must have control over material resources, particularly raw materials, sources of capital, markets, and competitive advantages in the production of highly valued goods, as well as military power. See Keohane (1984), 32-33, 39-41. Strange, meanwhile, discusses four aspects of structural power that a hegemon must have: power in the security, production, financial, and knowledge structures. See Strange, 565-571.

⁴ Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

own destruction by creating the opportunities (through regimes) for rising powers to challenge them. When such system disequilibrium takes place, the options open for the hegemon are either to increase its resources or reduce its costs.⁵

Despite the merits of the hegemonic stability theory, it is not without its critics. Bruce Russett, in arguing that American hegemony is far from over, points out that the shortcomings of the hegemonic stability theory rest on its vagueness concerning how much power is needed to produce a hegemon. Also, he emphasizes that the proponents of the theory remain unclear about power indicators.⁶ More importantly, Duncan Snidal points out that the theory only applies to very limited conditions.⁷ Aside from difficulties concerning empirical testing, the hegemonic stability theory also falls short in terms of it being extended or applied to various issue-areas. Snidal contends that doing so raises more questions about the assumptions of the theory. Finally, the theory is also static as it provides no explanation for the evolution of the system, as well as for times of “leadership lag.” If the above materialist conceptions of hegemony were applied to Southeast Asia-US relations from 1954 to 1977, it would appear to explain only one side of the equation.

⁵ If it can do neither, a hegemonic war ensues in which a new power emerges: “The conclusion of one hegemonic war is the beginning of another cycle of growth, expansion, and eventual decline. The law of uneven growth continues to redistribute power, thus undermining the status quo established by the last hegemonic struggle. Disequilibrium replaces equilibrium, and the world moves toward a new round of hegemonic conflict. It has always been thus and always will be, until men either destroy themselves or learn to develop an effective mechanism of peaceful change.” Ibid., 210.

⁶ Bruce Russett, “The Mysterious Case of Vanishing Hegemony; or, is Mark Twain Really Dead,” *International Organization* 39, 2 (Spring 1985): 207-231.

⁷ Duncan Snidal, “The Limits of Hegemonic Stability Theory,” *International Organization* 39, 4 (Autumn 1985): 579-614. The theory, according to him, forwards two propositions: that the presence of a hegemon results in stability in the system, and that all states benefit from this stability. Snidal argues, “Only if both propositions hold simultaneously is the theory supported.” Ibid., 582. This, however, is no easy task as data limitations hamper empirical testing of the second proposition. Although it is easier to test the first proposition, this does not translate to sufficient empirical support: “But even compelling evidence in support of the first proposition would not provide sufficient empirical support for the theory of hegemonic stability. By itself, such evidence establishes only that hegemonic leaders are associated with stable regimes. It does not show that such regimes have any of the (perhaps normatively desirable) distributive properties entailed in the second proposition. Without the second proposition as a ‘critical’ test, the theory cannot be distinguished from plausible contending explanations.” Ibid., 583.

This is so because the hegemonic stability theory utilizes a worldview from the perspective of the hegemon. To the extent that the other members of the system enter the picture, it is only to play the role of free riders.

Consensual Conceptions of Hegemony

The Gramscian tradition also contains within it notions about hegemony in the international system. Cox advances these insights, and Onuf and Frank F. Klink adopt them in their paradigm of rule. First, Cox distinguishes dominance from hegemony. According to Cox, the kind of hegemony espoused by Keohane and the others above can be construed as dominance, as it implies the preponderance of material power of a particular state. Hegemony in the Gramscian tradition, meanwhile, takes a consensual form. It is a *structure* of dominance, which leaves open the possibility of whether one state or a group of states dominates, and whether state and/or private power is used. Moreover, this structure is sustained through the acceptance of the members of the system of the hegemon's ideology and institutions.⁸

Cox explains:

Hegemony [is] a structure of values and understandings about the nature of order that permeates a whole system of states and non-state entities. In a hegemonic order these values and understandings are relatively stable and unquestioned. They appear to most actors as the natural order.⁹

Second, Cox argues that the mechanism through which hegemony is advanced is through international organizations.¹⁰ Specifically, these organizations embody rules

⁸ Robert W. Cox, "Social Forces, States and World Orders: Beyond International Relations Theory," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 10, 2 (1981): 126-155.

⁹ Robert W. Cox, "Towards a Posthegemonic Conceptualization of World Order: Reflections on the Relevancy of Ibn Khaldun," in *Approaches to World Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 151.

¹⁰ Robert W. Cox, "Gramsci, Hegemony, and International Relations: An Essay in Method," in *Approaches to World Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 137-139.

that facilitate the expansion of hegemonic world orders, are themselves the product of the same order, legitimate the norms of the hegemon, co-opt elites from the periphery, and absorb counter-hegemonic ideas.

Onuf also finds recourse in the Gramscian tradition when he explains that hegemony involves both political domination through directive-rules, and ideological domination through instruction-rules.¹¹ Coercion is thus contrasted with consent. This notion of consent is the critical factor that distinguishes the consensual from the materialist conceptions of hegemony. This points to the fact that the other members of the system do not simply enjoy a free ride with the hegemon. They instead reveal the mutually constitutive nature of this type of relationship.

Hence, with both materialist and consensual approaches in mind, the criteria for a hegemonic rule become dependent on four factors: (1) the presence of a super-ordinate actor who (2) redefines social reality through the establishment of international organizations or regimes, and (3) subordinate actors who (4) give their consent to the prevailing order. In other words, the Gramscian variant of hegemony provides the nuances and complexities of the relationship and thus offers a more comprehensive conception than the hegemonic stability theory. Arguably, this period could have been read or interpreted as heteronomous. However, the lines of authority are clear-cut: power flows from the US to the Southeast Asian states, albeit some form of resistance on the part of the latter. It is also possible to analyze this period as a hierarchic type of rule with the US at the top of the ladder, and the Southeast Asian states at the bottom rung. However, the double movement consisting of American containment actions and Southeast Asian states' ability to exact benefits on their terms demonstrates an order that closely resembles Gramsci's notion of hegemony,

¹¹ Nicholas Onuf and Frank F. Klink, "Anarchy, Authority, Rule," *International Studies Quarterly* 33 (1989): 149-173.

i.e., involving the consent factor. Also, central to the notion of hierarchy is the threat of the use of force should secondary powers question or challenge the dominant state. Such a factor is absent during Southeast Asia-US relations in this era. Thus, while hierarchic rule could possibly explain this period, it is still hegemony that predominated here.¹²

Language Games

Primary and secondary materials recount at least four language games at play during the 1954-1977 period in Southeast Asia-US relations: containment,

¹² Warring with North Vietnam can admittedly undermine the claim that the 1954-1977 period is characterized by US hegemony. However, hegemony must be understood as being created with an external threat in mind (in the case of the Cold War, it was the Soviet Union). In other words, a hegemonic rule is instituted to draw a line between “us” and “them.” Thus, America’s hegemonic efforts and the non-use of force were extended only to the extent that the Southeast Asian states resisted communism. With North Vietnam explicitly supporting the Soviet bloc, co-optation and assertive rules – the building blocks of a hegemonic rule – became inapplicable. This is reflected in this quote, “It is my judgment and that of my colleagues that the United States must decide how it will cope with Khrushchev’s ‘wars of liberation’ which are really pure-wars of guerrilla aggression. This is a new and dangerous Communist technique.... It is clear to me that the time may come in our relations with Southeast Asia when we must declare our intention to attack the source of guerrilla aggression in North Vietnam and impose on the Hanoi Government a price for participating in the current war which is commensurate with the damage being inflicted on its neighbors to the south....” From “Letter from the President’s Military Representative (Taylor) to the President,” dated 3 November 1961, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961-1963*, vol. 1 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1988). Available at http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_i_1961/u.html, accessed on 1 December 2008. In short, the moment North Vietnam decided to affiliate itself with the ideology of the Soviet Union, it ceased to be part of the United States’ hegemonic embrace, so to speak, in Southeast Asia. It is thus this that can explain how (and why) the notion of hegemony in the region is in no way undermined by the actions of North Vietnam.

Given this distinction, however, it is interesting to note the United States’ reluctance in immediately consolidating its hegemonic rule, a factor that is not elaborated in scholarly literature. This stance is manifested mostly in the years of the Vietnam War when US President Johnson, in conversations with US Senator Richard Russell and the President’s Special Assistant for National Security Affairs Ted Bundy, said, “I will tell you the more, I just stayed awake last night thinking of this thing, and the more that I think of it I don’t know what in the hell, it looks like to me that we’re getting into another Korea. It just worries the hell out of me. I don’t see what we can ever hope to get out of there with once we’re committed. I believe the Chinese Communists are coming into it. I don’t think that we can fight them 10,000 miles away from home and ever get anywhere in that area. I don’t think it’s worth fighting for and I don’t think we can get out. And it’s just the biggest damn mess that I ever saw....And what in the hell am I ordering them out there for? What in the hell is Vietnam worth to me? What is Laos worth to me? What is it worth to this country? We’ve got a treaty but hell, everybody else has got a treaty out there, and they’re not doing a thing about it.” See “Telephone Conversation Between President Johnson and the President’s Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy),” dated 27 May 1964, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. 27 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2000). Available at http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xxvii/h.html, accessed on 20 February 2009.

regionalism, threat, and assurance. The interface of these games shows that the move that the United States made in containing the spread of communism led the Southeast Asian states to assert their newly-found independence and form regional organizations. Moreover, when the smaller states threatened the United States that they would turn to the communist bloc if the latter were to withdraw from the region, the Americans responded by giving assurances that they would indeed maintain their presence in Southeast Asia. Thus, this section has two sub-parts: the first describes the interface between containment and regionalism, while the second discusses threats and assurances. The hope of the following narrative is to shed light on the intimate dynamics of the language games-rules-rule paradigm, i.e., that the hegemonic rule that prevailed during this period was the result of the active participation – gleaned through the stances of the parties involved and documented in official and/or formal discourses – of both the United States and the Southeast Asian nations.

Containment and Regionalism

There has never been any doubt that the United States has long had interests in Asia and has therefore consistently seen itself as a “Pacific” power. Its presence, in other words, remained in the region.¹³ It is instead its engagement and commitment that have been somewhat more erratic, even ambivalent. A case in point is a statement made by Dean Acheson, which inadvertently implied that South Korea was not strategically important to the United States, which the Soviets understood as a

¹³ Philip Zelikow, “American Engagement in Asia,” in *America’s Asian Alliances*, eds. Robert D. Blackwill and Paul Dibb (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000), 19-30.

“green light” for the North Koreans to move in.¹⁴ Still, when the Iron Curtain started to descend on Asia, the American strategy of containment was repeatedly asserted and effectively implemented with the analogy of a domino in mind. For example, US President Lyndon B. Johnson in a telephone conversation with Senator Richard Russell remarked on the Vietnam War: “That we are treaty bound, that we are there, this will be a domino that will kick off a whole list of others, and that we have just got to prepare for the worst.”¹⁵

The domino theory was enunciated in various texts and ran along the theme that communism would spread unless it was stopped. Oral histories emphasize this:

I think it probably figured that the rehabilitation of Japan was justified by a Washington notion that we needed a friend, an associate, for balancing purposes, vis-à-vis the Russians, and it would have been just marvelous if that could have turned out to be the Chinese, but Chiang Kai-shek was goofing it up. He was no good in dealing with the Communist problem and there was no evidence that the Chinese Communists were about to join us as a counterweight to the Russians. Japan was knocked out and in disorder and a depressed and despondent and disoriented society, but it was conceivable that with some help they could be put on their feet and would be of value in these terms.¹⁶

Well, we saw what happened in Communist China. We saw the way that China went. It was all happening at about the same time. At that time, either rightly or wrongly, most people thought it was a very bad thing for China to become a Communist state. We felt, as I remember, the dominant conceptual feeling that if you could have democratic states in Asia other than China, that would be

¹⁴ “Oral History Interview with Theodore Achilles,” *Harry S. Truman Library and Museum*, 13 November and 18 December 1972. Available at <http://www.trumanlibrary.org/oralhist/achilles.htm#82>, accessed on 23 November 2008.

¹⁵ “Telephone Conversation Between President Johnson and Senator Richard Russell,” dated 27 May 1964, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. 27 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2000). Available at http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xxvii/g.html, accessed on 20 February 2009.

¹⁶ “Oral History Interview with Robert W. Barnett,” *Harry S. Truman Library and Museum*, 26 January 1973. Available at <http://www.trumanlibrary.org/oralhist/barnett.htm#28>, accessed on 23 November 2008. Emphasis on the original.

helpful rather than a harmful thing to the United States interests.
This was just as easy as that.¹⁷

A US State Department report also forwarded that, "If [Southeast Asia] fell to Communist control, this would enormously add to the momentum of power of the expansionist Communist regimes in Communist China and North Viet-Nam and thus to the threat to the whole free-world position in the Pacific."¹⁸ Furthermore,

When Communist China came to power in the 1940's the U.S. analyzed the value of Southeast Asia and concluded that it was of vital importance to the security of the free world.... If Southeast Asia were seized by force, this would have an important impact on Japan, Indonesia, the Philippines, and the Indian sub-continent. For reasons of geography, resources and prestige, the importance of Southeast Asia could not be under-rated.¹⁹

In other words, the immediate post-World War II period was rife with concerns about what it would mean if the communists' worldview were to flourish. Against the backdrop of the collapse of the Yalta system and the events in China in 1948 and 1949, the United States then came to perceive communism as a grave threat, as reflected in a series of National Security Council (NSC) documents.²⁰ NSC 48/1 explicitly pointed to the Kremlin for targeting and gaining control of Southeast Asia. NSC 64 followed on the heels of the American recognition of the Bao Dai government in Vietnam, which was in itself a reaction to the Chinese and Soviet recognition of the Ho Chi Minh government. Thus, when the Korean War sparked in 1950, fears abound that the dominos were indeed starting to fall. Granted that Korea

¹⁷ "Oral History Interview with Harding F. Bancroft," *Harry S. Truman Library and Museum*, 25 June 1974. Available at <http://www.trumanlibrary.org/oralhist/bancroft.htm#28>, accessed on 23 November 2008.

¹⁸ "Our Policy in Southeast Asia: A Perspective," *Foreign Affairs Outline* (Washington: US Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, March 1965), 3.

¹⁹ "Memorandum of Conversation," dated 30 June 1966, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. 27 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2000). Available at http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xxvii/c.html, accessed on 22 February 2009.

²⁰ Yano Toru, "Who Set the Stage for the Cold War in Asia?" in *The Origins of the Cold War in Asia*, eds. Yonosuke Nagai and Akira Iriye (Tokyo: University of Tokyo, 1977), 321-337.

was beyond the US defense perimeter in the Pacific, the war nonetheless “jolted the United States right back into the Asian commitments it had foresworn.”²¹

In light of the containment strategy and the Korean War, the United States stepped up its efforts in forming alliances and reaching agreements with Asian states. Hence, agreements with Japan and the Philippines concerning military bases were reached, and the ANZUS pact with Australia and New Zealand was formed in 1951. In many ways, the ANZUS treaty is the United States’ way of ensuring the inclusion of Southeast Asia in its sphere of influence. This is manifest in the following paper prepared for an ANZUS Council Meeting in 1965:

U.S. Objectives

1. To help the Governments of Australia and New Zealand to demonstrate to their people that the United States considers the ANZUS Treaty highly significant and that we give full importance to the views of the two countries as expressed in the Council. To demonstrate our common concern for the security of the Southwest Pacific and, through the Council Meeting, to underline the closeness of our association and the importance we attach to Australian and New Zealand participation in Free World efforts in the Far East.
2. To indicate to the Communist Bloc and to potentially unfriendly nations that ANZUS is a going concern and to demonstrate that the ANZUS partners are deeply concerned over the general security situation in Southeast Asia.
3. To obtain Australian-New Zealand reactions to our policies, both present and projected, and to put across jointly to them our views.
4. To express our gratification that both countries have increased their outlays on defense and to express the hope that this trend will continue. To express our understanding of Australian and New Zealand commitments to Malaysia and to express our thanks to both countries for their commitment of military forces to South Viet-Nam.

²¹ Zelikow, 24.

5. To reaffirm to Australia and New Zealand our intention of continuing our policy towards Communist China until such time as the Chinese Communists abandon their policy of directing subversion and aggression against Free World nations. To reaffirm our determination to continue supporting the Government of the Republic of China.²²

More importantly, the United States in 1954 pushed for a multilateral security pact formally known as SEATO. An author explains,

...the most significant aspect of the SEATO treaty was that, under the cloak of the united action gesture, it was still a product of the postwar American tradition of unilateralism, a product of the Dullesian sense of mission that all tricky ventures by communists must be contained through America's unilateral commitment.²³

Similar to the ANZUS treaty, SEATO served as a support base for the Americans. In 1965 in particular, the support of the SEATO members was obtained in regard to the communist aggression in North Vietnam. These objectives were set out for the SEATO Council Meeting in 1965:

1. To obtain solid SEATO support for the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam in its struggle against Communist aggression from North Viet-Nam.
2. To take advantage of the fact that the meeting is in London and demonstrate to European governments and public opinion that the South Vietnamese Government and people strongly resist the Communist effort to control them, and that this is not simply a civil war within South Viet-Nam.
3. To demonstrate also to world public opinion that the Vietnamese and U.S. Governments have the firm political support of both Asian (e.g., Thailand and Philippines) and non-Asian (e.g., Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom) allies.
4. To reassure Thailand of firm SEATO backing against the incipient signs of externally-instigated Communist insurgency.

²² "Scope Paper Prepared for the ANZUS Council Meeting," dated 22 June 1965, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. 27 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2000). Available at http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xxvii/a.html, accessed on 20 February 2009.

²³ Toru, 332.

5. To keep SEATO's focus on Communist threats by diverting to bilateral discussion any Pakistan or Philippine efforts to raise the Indian and Indonesian threats.²⁴

Likewise,

...last year's Council communiqué had already committed SEATO members to further action "in fulfillment of their obligations under the Treaty." We cannot retrogress from this Council recognition that SEATO members have Treaty obligation in Viet-Nam crisis. If Viet-Nam problem not dealt with forthrightly by Council, public impression will be created that US is fairly isolated on this issue.²⁵

Aside from this, SEATO became the means with which to channel economic assistance to Southeast Asia, a move that was spearheaded by US President Johnson.²⁶ However, disputes and misunderstandings between certain members of the organization ensued, thus enabling the eventual and arguably inevitable demise of the alliance. It was reported that,

At the SEATO Council Meeting [of 1965] the US received firm support for its Viet-Nam policy from five other individual members of SEATO (Thailand, Philippines, Australia, New Zealand and the UK). Two individual members refused to endorse US policy – France openly and pointedly and Pakistan in an ambiguous manner. Because of UK opposition SEATO as an entity did not take any action on the Viet-Nam crisis, either collectively as an organization or through its individual members acting collectively under the Treaty, pursuant to their treaty

²⁴ "Action Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Bundy) to Secretary of State Rusk," dated 30 March 1965, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. 27 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2000). Available at http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xxvii/h.html, accessed on 20 February 2009.

²⁵ "Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom," dated 29 April 1965, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. 27 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2000). Available at http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xxvii/i.html, accessed on 22 February 2009.

²⁶ "National Security Action Memorandum No. 329," dated 9 April 1965, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. 27 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2000). Available at http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xxvii/i.html, accessed on 20 February 2009; "Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Thailand," dated 28 April 1965, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. 27 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2000). Available at http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xxvii/i.html, accessed on 20 February 2009; "Memorandum From the President's Special Assistant for Southeast Asia (Black) to President Johnson," dated 11 May 1965, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. 27 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2000). Available at http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xxvii/i.html, accessed on 22 February 2009.

obligations. This latter course is available, however, whenever the US and any of the other members care to use it.²⁷

On another occasion,

The [US] President spoke of the series of alliances which America had entered into since World War II – NATO, SEATO, ANZUS – so that members of these alliances could join in meeting aggression where it occurred. Once the United States had pledged its word, there would be no faltering – the would-be dictators of Asia should understand that. However, the United States had been disappointed in the SEATO alliance on the issue of Viet-Nam, in particular with Britain. It was a great disappointment to him that Prime Minister Wilson had dissociated Britain from the United States position in Viet-Nam.²⁸

Although the organization was abolished in 1977, SEATO represented the solidification of American engagement in the region. Furthermore, despite the abolition of the organization, its legacy, i.e., the American system of bilateral alliances, remains.²⁹ The point is that containment as a strategy had been consolidated at this time.

The assertion of the necessity of containment rested on presumptions about, on one hand, the threat that communism posed, and on another, the role that the United States must play in stemming such a contagion. For example, a US State Department report depicted its “enemy” (communism) as having the objectives of “domination and enslavement.”³⁰ Moreover, a participant in one of the SEATO meetings understood that “communism is the outmoded wave of the past.”³¹ In the

²⁷ “Circular Airgram From the Department of State to Certain Diplomatic and Other Posts,” dated 19 May 1965, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. 27 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2000). Available at http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xxvii/i.html, accessed on 22 February 2009.

²⁸ “Memorandum of Conversation,” dated 21 October 1966, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. 27 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2000). Available at http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xxvii/c.html, accessed on 20 February 2009.

²⁹ Michael Yahuda, *The International Politics of the Asia-Pacific*, 2nd ed. (London and New York: Routledge Curzon, 2004).

³⁰ “Our Policy in Southeast Asia,” 4.

³¹ “Memorandum for the Record,” dated 20 April 1967, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. 27 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2000). Available at http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xxvii/l.html, accessed on 22 February 2009.

same vein, consider these two intelligence reports issued in 1961. The first depicted communists as deploying a strategy in order to gain more allies in Southeast Asia, while the second hinted at American leadership in stemming such moves.

At the present time, the Communists are pursuing a clear and systematic strategy in Southeast Asia. It is a strategy of extending Communist power and influence in ways which bypass US nuclear strength, US conventional naval, air, and ground forces, and the conventional strength of indigenous forces in the area.... The Communists undoubtedly believe – and with good reason – that if the strategy succeeds in Laos and South Vietnam the enterprise will rapidly gather momentum throughout Southeast Asia.³²

The extent to which these [Southeast Asian] countries would go in resisting [Soviet] Bloc pressures or in withstanding local Communist threats would depend in great degree on whether they still assessed that the US could stem further Communist expansion in the area. They would feel more keenly than before a strong temptation to take a neutral position between the two power blocs, even though they recognized that the US is the only country with sufficient power to oppose the Communist Bloc in the area.³³

Similarly, advocates of communism were seen as employing sly tactics such as the dissemination of inaccurate information regarding President Ngo Dinh Diem of Vietnam. A military report related this:

Here in Saigon, in particular, as well as in the Provinces where you are stationed, you have heard many rumors and statements about the GVN and President Diem. These run the gamut from corruption of governmental officials, to nepotism, favoritism, political dogmatism, undue interference by Diem in military matters, and normally end with the statement or implication, that Diem "must go" if the country is to be saved.

These rumors and statements are normally instigated by dissatisfied politicians, misled intellectuals, Communists or certain elements of the foreign community. Human nature being what it is, these rumors are, unfortunately, picked up, repeated and elaborated upon by certain

³² "Paper Presented by the Members of the Taylor Mission," dated 3 November 1961, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961-1963*, vol. 1 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1988). Available at http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_i_1961/c.html, accessed on 1 December 2008.

³³ "National Intelligence Estimate, NIE 50-61, submitted by the Director of Central Intelligence and concurred in by the US Intelligence Board," dated 28 March 1961, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961-1963*, vol. 1 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1988). Available at http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_i_1961/c.html, accessed on 1 December 2008.

elements of the U.S. community here in Vietnam and by certain well meaning Vietnamese officers and civilians.

Although there may possibly be some degree of validity to some of these rumors – there always is – they are mostly based on the Communist technique of half truths and insinuations and are not supported by hard facts. It has been my observation over a period of years that our Armed Forces are not entirely immune to this questionable pastime. I am convinced that the best defense against rumor is truth. With this in mind, the U.S. policy towards the GVN and President Diem is clear and unequivocal. Briefly stated, it is that the U.S. supports the GVN and President Diem. That although Diem has certain shortcomings, as do we all, he is pro-U.S., definitely anti-Communist, and has done a remarkably fine job during his five years in office against terrific odds. He is the most tough minded, dedicated practicing anti-Communist leader among our friends today.³⁴

Also, the communist side was viewed as taking advantage of the state of “disarray” in

Southeast Asia:

We should not view an increased level of Communist activity in Laos as an isolated phenomenon. The Communist side almost certainly views the situation in all of Southeast Asia as one of change and opportunity. From the Communist point of view the Free World position is in disarray: Recurring coups in South Vietnam and American admissions that the military situation there is not good; continued speculation in the Western press about neutralist solutions for the area, which has received impetus from General de Gaulle's formulas for ending hostilities in the area; and apparent US indecision on how to respond to Prince Sihanouk's efforts to obtain guarantees of Cambodian neutrality by threatening to turn to Communist China. All of those who today seek to reduce or eliminate the US position in Southeast Asia--the Communist Chinese, the French, the North Vietnamese, the Cambodians--appear to have one view in common: the United States is either unable or unwilling to exert its vast power effectively to defend its positions in Southeast Asia. And in this, the Communists may see an opportunity for decisive action.

For all these reasons, we must, in my judgment, respond promptly and firmly to Communist initiatives in central Laos. We should consider encouraging further Thai reinforcements along the

³⁴ “Remarks by the Chief of the Military Assistance Advisory Group in Vietnam (McGarr),” dated 30 January 1961, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961-1963*, vol. 1 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1988). Available at http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_i_1961/a.html, accessed on 13 February 2009.

Mekong backed up by visible preparations to introduce US Marine landing battalions and air elements into Thailand.³⁵

Similarly,

The Communists had been making great efforts to influence the thinking of the peoples of the free world. They sought to induce in the public mind a false image that the United States was acting alone to impose its will on the people of Viet-Nam and that we had no reason to be there.

The President said he had not come to Australia to ask for a man or a dollar or anything else: Australia would continue to reach its own decisions in offering assistance. He paid tribute to the job Australian forces were doing. He was here, and the U.S. had committed forces, because the Communist aggression in Viet-Nam was dangerous for Australia, for America and for freedom everywhere. If the United States were to pull out of Viet-Nam tomorrow, other countries of Southeast Asia would quickly fall. The aggressor would get to Australia long before he got to San Francisco.³⁶

³⁵ "Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Hilsman) to Secretary of State Rusk," dated 15 February 1964, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. 27 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2000). Available at http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xxviii/01_24.html, accessed on 22 February 2009. The United States responded promptly by drafting this response: "The memorandum, which we understand is planned to be submitted to the Standing Group or Executive Committee of the National Security Council on 26 February 1964, first points out that recent events in Southeast Asia have given the Communists what may appear to them to be an opportunity for 'broad, forward movement.' The paper sets forth a series of actions intended to disabuse the Communists of this impression, discourage them from attempting further advance in Laos, and give them reason to believe the U.S. is prepared to escalate the conflict in order to defend its positions in Southeast Asia and reverse the recent course of developments." The said memorandum recommended additional troops to Thailand and South Vietnam coupled with some diplomatic actions. From "Memorandum From the Chief of the Far East Division, Directorate of Plans (Colby) to Director of Central Intelligence McCone," dated 25 February 1964, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. 27 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2000). Available at http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xxviii/01_24.html, accessed on 22 February 2009. See also, "Memorandum From the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Hilsman) to Secretary of State Rusk," dated 25 February 1964, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. 27 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2000). Available at http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xxviii/01_24.html, accessed on 22 February 2009.

³⁶ "Memorandum of Conversation," dated 21 October 1966. These sentiments, i.e., that the communists were taking advantage of the state of confusion in Southeast Asia, underlay the concerns that stemmed from a reported shift in Soviet policy towards Southeast Asia. See "Telegram From the Embassy in Laos to the Department of State," dated 1 November 1965, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. 27 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2000). Available at http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xxvii/i.html, accessed on 22 February 2009; and "Memorandum From the Director of the Office of Soviet Union Affairs (Toon) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Bundy)," dated 4 November 1965, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. 27 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2000). Available at http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xxvii/i.html, accessed on 22 February 2009.

Given its proximity to China and communist elements in the northern part, South Vietnam received special attention insofar as the containment strategy of the United States was concerned. In January 1961, US Deputy Assistant for Special Operations Edward G. Lansdale wrote a letter to President Diem of Vietnam. In it, Lansdale gave suggestions to Diem regarding ways to consolidate the latter's rule and to ensure South Vietnam's anti-communist leanings.

...there will be some here who will point out that much of the danger of your present situation comes about from your own actions. They say that you try to do too many things yourself, that you refuse to give real responsibility to others and keep interfering with what they do, that you feel you are infallible personally, and that too many of your organizations like the Republican Youth Corps and the Can Lao Party are actually formed by coercion – that is, people join because they are afraid not to – rather than being genuine organizations rooted in the hearts of the Vietnamese people. I believe there will be many of these criticisms voiced in private talks here as word gets around about favorable reactions to my report.

The best answer to these criticisms would be actions by you in Vietnam. The critics would then have to close their mouths in the face of your actions. One action would be for you to announce your reorganization of the government very soon. Also, you could make your Security Council become alive and dynamic. Please remember my suggestion: call the military commanders and province chiefs in from the 1st and 5th Military Regions – to meet with the Security Council. You could make a talk to this group, and broadcast it all over Vietnam to all of the people of Vietnam. Your country needs you to rouse spirits right now, the way Winston Churchill did for Britain at a dark hour. Your countrymen need to be told that Vietnam is in grave danger from the Communists, that the help of every citizen is welcomed by the government, and that Vietnam must and will be kept free and independent.

....

Perhaps the wisest move would be to call in the younger people among the opposition. It would be best if you talked to them personally. You might tell them that Vietnam stands to lose its freedom, that all Vietnamese must go to work now to save that freedom, that you know the oppositionists have not agreed with all your programs but that running a government which is under savage Communist attack is not as simple as critics apparently think. You want people not to merely criticize their government. If they believe they have good ideas, they

should write these down and agree to a program they believe would save the country. Not a Communist program, but a program by Free Vietnamese. If they go to work to write and agree upon such a program, you can assure them that you won't stand in their way – even if it means the formation of a strong, single opposition party.³⁷

Also,

In the meantime, somebody had come to the President and said, “Mr. Eisenhower, you’re building up a fine jewel here in the Orient, which the Chinese are going to come in and take over. And the only way in the world you can protect that is to have a modern Vietnamese Army which can repel an invasion from the north.”

And Ike understood military terms and he said, “So be it.”

There were 300 million dollars that had been programmed for credit. We had some marvelous credit things going in agriculture, rice, cleaning up, resettlement, and all kinds of things. But they were shoved aside. It was, I think, too much an American image, but it looked good anyhow. The money was drained out of these programs and put to building roads, such as Highway 19 from Saigon up to the central highlands and Highway 1 up to the border, along with airfields and harbors. The idea was that you could run tanks over those roads. Those roads cost an average 50 million dollars apiece. In the meantime, they were building harbors that would take ships three times as big as what was needed there. And they were building airfields up in the interior there that would take a B-52 bomber.

This was a time when we were supposed to be helping the people, but all the money was drained off into those things which were really preparing for war.³⁸

Moreover, a telegram from the American Embassy in Vietnam read,

We must do all we can to induce Diem to adopt, as many as practicable under the circumstances, liberal procedures and reforms which will plant the seeds of democracy and eventually create a solid enough base on which to build still further democratic institutions. There procedures should include safety

³⁷ “Letter From the Secretary of Defense's Deputy Assistant for Special Operations (Lansdale) to President Diem,” dated 30 January 1961, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961-1963*, vol. 1 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1988). Available at http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_i_1961/a.html, accessed on 13 February 2009.

³⁸ “Oral History Interview with Stanley Andrews,” *Harry S. Truman Library and Museum*, 31 October 1970. Available at <http://www.trumanlibrary.org/orallhist/andrewss.htm#110>, accessed on 23 November 2008.

valves for non-Communist opposition elements to make constructive criticism. These procedures cannot, however, be done overnight in a split country facing a most serious Communist internal threat.³⁹

Solidifying the containment strategy, was the purpose of Task Force Vietnam, the objective of which was “to prevent Communist domination of Viet-Nam by initiating, on an accelerated basis, a series of mutually supporting actions of a political, military, economic, psychological, and covert character, designed to create in that country a viable and increasingly democratic society and to keep Viet-Nam free....”⁴⁰ The plans under psychological actions are of interest here:

25. Assist the GVN to accelerate its public information program to help develop a broad public understanding of the actions required to combat the Communist insurgents and to build public confidence in the GVN’s determination and ability to deal with the Communist threat.
26. The US Country Team, in coordination with the GVN Ministry of Defense, should compile and declassify for use of media representatives in Viet-Nam and throughout the world documented facts concerning Communist infiltration and terrorist activities and the measures being taken by the GVN to counter such attacks.
27. In coordination with CIA and the appropriate GVN Ministry, USIS will increase the flow of information about unfavorable conditions in North Viet-Nam to media representatives.
28. Develop agricultural pilot-projects throughout the country, with a view toward exploiting their beneficial psychological effects.
29. Exploit as part of a planned psychological campaign the rehabilitation of Communist Viet Cong prisoners, stressing the errors of Communism, and broadcast this material to Communist-held areas, including North Viet-Nam, to induce defections.
30. Provide adequate funds for an impressive US participation in the Saigon Trade Fair of 1962.⁴¹

³⁹ “Telegram from the Embassy in Vietnam to the Department of State,” dated 31 January 1961, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961-1963*, vol. 1 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1988). Available at http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_i_1961/a.html, accessed on 1 December 2008.

⁴⁰ “Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Vietnam,” dated 20 May 1961, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1961-1963*, vol. 1 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1988). Available at http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_i_1961/f.html, accessed on 1 December 2008.

⁴¹ Ibid.

Hence, the US strategy of containment as applied to South Vietnam relied on reinforcing the benefits of democracy and liberal principles, and the disadvantages of communism.

Burma's role in the United States' containment strategy is also interesting. In 1966, Ne Win visited the US and the intelligence and diplomatic communities issued reports prior to and after the said sojourn.⁴² These reports revolved around the possibility of Ne Win requesting for aid from the United States, a request that the US was not prepared to grant given the geopolitical situation at the time. In particular,

Burma's 1200-mile frontier with Red China dictates her foreign policy of neutralism and non-involvement. However much Burma may fear Red China or sympathize with her neighbors who are fighting the expansion of communist influence in Southeast Asia, she will not publicly declare herself in support of others, let alone join others in a common cause. While standing up to Red Chinese pressures and harassments with dignity and firmness, Burma avoids outside entanglements in order not to give Red China additional cause for complaint or activity directed against her.⁴³

Apart from geographical factors, there were also considerations of domestic politics:

Should general economic conditions worsen and the internal danger grow, the Burmese Government will more and more be forced to turn to outside powers, especially Japan and the United States, and possibly Russia, for help – economic and military – to enable it to defend its national independence against these internal threats supported from China. But Burmese nationalism is so prickly, and her attachment to doctrinaire socialism so pervasive, that she would insist that help be without strings, that there be no

⁴² "Action Memorandum From the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Berger) to Secretary of State Rusk," dated 9 March 1966, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. 27 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2000). Available at http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xxvii/m.html, accessed on 20 February 2009; "Memorandum From Secretary of State Rusk to President Johnson," dated 3 September 1966, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. 27 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2000). Available at http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xxvii/m.html, accessed on 20 February 2009.

⁴³ "Draft Memorandum From the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs (Berger) to the Assistant Secretary of State (Bundy)," dated 13 December 1967, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. 27 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2000). Available at http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xxvii/m.html, accessed on 20 February 2009.

interference in her internal affairs, and that there be no obligation to abandon either her domestic policies or her neutralist and non-involvement foreign policy.

All the foregoing suggests that Burma is, at present, hardly a country to which we should give aid or commit ourselves to support. Yet the temptation to provide help to resist a growing communist-led insurgency within Burma will be great. And, one step leading to another, we could, if we pursued this course, find ourselves in a few years enmeshed in a situation which not only would be costly, frustrating and complicated, but most unpromising as to any successful outcome.⁴⁴

Despite these factors, the United States qualified its extension of a helping hand, especially since failure to do so would risk the neutral stance of Burma. Furthermore,

While in formal terms the Burmese have not done what is normally required, they would certainly interpret a failure to go forward on our part as a breach of faith, and the costs to us in Southeast Asian political terms would be substantially more than \$1 million worth of military equipment. Moreover, while Burmese neutrality under Ne Win leaves a great deal to be desired, it is angelic when compared to some other people we have to put up with.⁴⁵

Like Burma, Cambodia also had a neutral stance vis-à-vis the Vietnam War. However, what made the case of Cambodia unique was the possibility of the so-called “neutrality belt” spilling over to Thailand:

Thailand is not fighting a war, nor is it under direct or immediate pressure for inclusion in French proposed neutrality belt. There is however latent neutralism in Thai thinking. Since Thailand is gateway for application of US force in SEA we must thwart moves to neutralize Thailand if we wish to maintain our position in SEA. For this basic reason we cannot afford to let preoccupation with Sihanouk's demands damage our relations with Thailand.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ “Memorandum From the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy) to President Johnson,” dated 13 May 1964, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. 27 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2000). Available at http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xxvii/m.html, accessed on 20 February 2009.

⁴⁶ “Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Cambodia,” dated 8 February 1964, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. 27 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2000). Available at http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xxvii/n.html, accessed on 22 February 2009.

Secondary materials also argue along similar lines, and not just in terms of Vietnam, Burma, Cambodia, or Thailand. It is interesting to note the positioning of the West in relation to Southeast Asia since the latter is viewed as a weak and passive region that is vulnerable to the lures of communism, and that it is therefore up to the West to “rescue” Southeast Asia:

What is particularly noteworthy about the “Cold War” period in the regionalization of Southeast Asia is that the common elements that were seen to unify the region, namely underdevelopment and political instability, became incorporated into the domino theory and became a core feature to it. The downtrodden peasants of Southeast Asia were not a security risk to the West simply because they were perceived to be too weak militarily to resist the forces of international communism; rather, their poverty and weakness made them highly vulnerable to the *appeal* of communism.

The domino theory and the scholarship associated with it...[imagined] into the Southeast Asian political space a simplified political character that was more a reflection of Western Cold War paranoia about the appeal of communism among the poor and oppressed than it was a product of objective social scientific research. At a common level, the Southeast Asian political character was understood in the simplest of terms, the peoples of the region being seen as indifferent, weak, feeble, immature and simple.⁴⁷

Implicit in these accounts is the idea that it is up to the United States to stem the communist threat. In a similar vein, leaving Southeast Asia, specifically Vietnam, to stanch communism was out of the question. To quote:

There were in America some who thought the U.S. should bomb our way out of Viet-Nam and some who thought we should sell out. He did not want to get into a war with China, but equally he did not want to surrender. Between these extremes the United States would pursue a policy of putting pressure on the enemy to the point where they would be convinced that they could not win. The United States was committed to putting in whatever was needed to achieve its objective, not of unconditional surrender or the overthrow of the North Vietnamese regime, but of a solution such as had been achieved in Greece.

⁴⁷ Philip Charrier, “ASEAN’s Inheritance: The Regionalization of Southeast Asia, 1941-61,” *The Pacific Review* 14, 3 (2001): 329. Emphasis on the original.

....

The President said the United States intended to treat its obligations seriously in Viet-Nam, just as it had in Greece, Turkey and the Dominican Republic, and as it had not done in Cuba. They would put into Viet-Nam the resources needed to do the job.⁴⁸

US President Richard Nixon also said in one of his speeches,

When I took office 4 months ago, nothing has taken so much of my time and energy as the search for a way to lasting peace to Vietnam. I know that some believe that I should have ended the war immediately after the inauguration by simply ordering our forces home from Vietnam.

This would have been the easy thing to do. It might have been a popular thing to do. But I would have betrayed my solemn responsibility as President of the United States if had I done so.⁴⁹

In conjunction with this is the benevolent hand of the United States, seen especially in extending development aid and/or technical assistance to Southeast Asia, particularly to Vietnam, Indonesia, and the Philippines, among others. Some scholars argue that this move is simply a function of the United States' containment strategy.⁵⁰ In cooperation with Michigan State University, the US State Department, and the Agency for International Development (AID), South Vietnam established a modern police academy in Saigon (prior to this, "Saigon got its running money and paid its police force out of the brothel and opium fee at that time.").⁵¹ Aside from this, the Americans put US\$16-18 million in Indonesia, not including a US\$100 million loan in order to "...do those things that the country wanted to do to the end that living

⁴⁸ "Memorandum of Conversation," dated 21 October 1966.

⁴⁹ "Address to the Nation in Vietnam," dated 14 May 1969, *Public Papers at The Richard Nixon Library and Birthplace Foundation*. Available at http://www.nixonlibraryfoundation.org/clientuploads/directory/archive/1969_pdf_files/1969_0195.pdf, accessed on 17 December 2008.

⁵⁰ Arnfinn Jorgensen-Dahl, *Regional Organization and Order in South-East Asia* (Hampshire and London: Macmillan, 1982).

⁵¹ "Oral History Interview with Stanley Andrews."

standards could be raised and political stability should be improved.”⁵² Meanwhile, the Philippines also received some assistance from the United States:

I saw places where these technical assistance programs moved into processing and expanding industries and created miracles. Take the agricultural college in the Philippines. When I first went to Los Banos the only building that was standing on the campus was the poultry building. The only professor at that once great university was the poultry professor.

We toured the grounds; it was completely blasted down by the Japanese and burned. And he said, “Well, what do you think?”

I said, “We’re going to rebuild this university for you.” At the same time I was out looking for pilot projects, and I said, “The United States will help you put this thing back.”⁵³

In 1963, David Wurfel used American lenses to view Southeast Asia, and concluded that the Philippines had an image of the world that was “quite compatible” with the US and hence it seemed “rational from the Western point of view.”⁵⁴ Generally, though, it has often been pointed out in the secondary literature that during that time, the United States provided assistance to Southeast Asia for the latter’s “political, economic, and social development.”⁵⁵ Furthermore, the US Senate’s Clay Committee was of the opinion that,

...the people of the United States hope to see a world which is prosperous and at peace that we believe those nations which are seriously striving to promote their own development should be helped by us and by our partners to create and maintain the conditions conducive to steady economic progress and improved social well-being within the framework of political freedom.⁵⁶

⁵² Ibid., <http://www.trumanlibrary.org/oralhist/andrewss.htm#45>.

⁵³ Ibid., <http://www.trumanlibrary.org/oralhist/andrewss.htm#171>.

⁵⁴ David Wurfel, “The Pattern of Southeast Asian Response to International Politics,” in *Southeast Asia: Problems of United States Policy*, ed. William Henderson (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1963), 73 and 76.

⁵⁵ Roger M. Smith and Lionel Landry, “Some Southeast Asian Views of American Foreign Policy,” in *Southeast Asia: Problems of United States Policy*, ed. William Henderson (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1963), 108.

⁵⁶ John M. Allison, “United States Diplomacy in Southeast Asia: The Limits of Policy,” in *Southeast Asia: Problems of United States Policy*, ed. William Henderson (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1963), 184-185.

Also,

The concept...is to safeguard the independence of the Southeast Asian countries against the menace of Communist aggression and subversion, first and foremost by strengthening their military security, and secondly, by encouraging their political, economic, and social development in freedom behind the secure barrier of containment.⁵⁷

In short, the US' containment strategy was implemented not because it "envisaged a United States position of power in Southeast Asia," but because it gave "a commitment to do what [it] could to help [the Southeast Asian] nations attain and maintain the independence and security to which they were entitled...."⁵⁸

Interestingly, the Southeast Asian nations did not simply take the role of free riders. Conscious of their newly acquired independent status and of not appearing too pro-American, intra-regional factors and conditions made possible the formation of the Association of Southeast Asia (ASA) in 1961, Maphilindo in 1963, and eventually, ASEAN in 1967.⁵⁹ Despite this, some would argue that regionalism and regionalization efforts in Southeast Asia were initiated by a speech that US President Johnson made in 1965 where he strongly encouraged Asian regional cooperation to further economic development in the region. In return for such a cooperative effort, he promised to ask the US Congress to infuse major American investments in the region.⁶⁰ Indeed, one scholar even claimed that the United States acted as the "midwife" in ASEAN's birth.⁶¹ Continuing with this rhetoric, the ASEAN was, in

⁵⁷ William Henderson, "Some Reflections on United States Policy in Southeast Asia," in *Southeast Asia: Problems of United States Policy*, ed. William Henderson (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1963), 251-252.

⁵⁸ "Our Policy in Southeast Asia," 3.

⁵⁹ William Henderson, "The Development of Regionalism in Southeast Asia," *International Organization* 9, 4 (1955): 463-476; Bernard K. Gordon, "Problems of Regional Cooperation in Southeast Asia," *World Politics* 16, 2 (1964): 222-253.

⁶⁰ W.W. Rostow, *The United States and the Regional Organization of the Asia and the Pacific, 1965-1985* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986), 25.

⁶¹ Chintamani Mahapatra, *American Role in the Origin and Growth of ASEAN* (New Delhi: ABC Publishing House, 1990), 6.

other words, very much an American creation, and despite its character as an economic organization, the United States appreciated its strategic value.⁶²

To a certain extent, it was such a notion that prodded the Southeast Asian nations to reiterate their language of self-assertion, which was constantly laid down in the official documents of ASEAN. For instance, Indonesian President Suharto in the 1968 ASEAN Ministerial Meeting made reference to feelings of kinship that permeate the peoples of Southeast Asia. In his words, “Such feelings [of kinship] have in reality been always embedded deeply in the hearts of our peoples on account of the fact that since ancient times our forefathers have been in constant communication and that all of us have been most probably been descended from a common ancestry.”⁶³ Furthermore, this self-assertion also made use of a rhetoric that held colonialism and the great powers of the day responsible for stifling independent thought and actions. Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos during the Fourth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting pointed out:

The region was torn asunder, our various nations sequestered and bound by alien ties with no notice of the inherent closeness of the peoples in the region to one another. Our eyes were distinctly turned outward to sights dimly beyond us. And in the process, we were left with hardly more than a vague awareness of one another’s existence.

....

[But] these nations, known by all to have been hapless victims of some of the world powers, thought of by some as a veritable testing ground for contending ideologies, feared by a few to be the probable arena of future armed clashes, have at least reached a common awakening.⁶⁴

⁶² Vincent Pollard, “Meeting Whose Need?” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 18 September 1971, 25-26.

⁶³ Opening Statement by H.E. General Suharto at the Second ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, Jakarta, 6 August 1968.

⁶⁴ Opening Statement by Pres. Ferdinand E. Marcos at the Fourth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, Manila, 12 March 1971.

Malaysian Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman also spoke of this “awakening” in the form of regional organizations: “For too long our countries and our peoples have looked outside the region for assistance and have felt more drawn to those countries outside the region with which for historical and other reasons they have been associated. The formation of ASA in 1961 and of ASEAN in 1967 have reversed this tendency.”⁶⁵ Thus, the organization represented these states’ desires to band together in the hopes of solidifying their collective stance:

Such form of regional cooperation will safeguard our common interest and will promote cooperation on the basis of solidarity arising out from a common destiny.

....

Solidarity and the organization of close regional cooperation will undoubtedly lead towards the strengthening of our common position.

Our voice and interest will consequently be given more attention and will be more influential than if we would struggle individually in increasing the prosperity of our respective peoples.⁶⁶

Granting that its creation was an achievement in “emotion,” and that, as Singapore Foreign Minister S. Rajaratnam said, it was for the meantime a “skeleton,” there was nonetheless much optimism that such an “emotion” would “increase” and be “reinforced,” and that the “skeleton” would be infused with “flesh and blood.”⁶⁷

Apart from the official rhetoric, the ASEAN members also asserted their newfound independence by placing greater emphasis on the economic sphere rather than on security. This was made explicit in the aims and purposes of the organization as stipulated in the Bangkok Declaration: accelerating economic growth came first

⁶⁵ Opening Statement by H.E. Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra at the Third ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, Cameron Highlands, 16 December 1969.

⁶⁶ Opening Statement by H.E. General Suharto, 6 August 1968; Harvey Stockwin, “Tricky Negotiations,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 24 August 1967, 378-381.

⁶⁷ Stockwin, “Tricky Negotiations,” 330.

before promoting regional peace and stability.⁶⁸ In the Second ASEAN Ministerial Meeting in 1968, Suharto stated:

In comparison with Nations which have longer enjoyed their National Independence, the most important problem facing us is economic reconstruction.

It is for this reason that we are determined to work together in the economic field, for fulfillment of our respective interests as well as for the realization of our common goals.

....

What is more, Nations having weak economies will often be swept into a tense cold-war situation, even if such is contrary to their own national interest and beyond their own will.⁶⁹

Also, H.E. Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra in his opening statement at the Third ASEAN Ministerial Meeting in 1969 emphasized, "...it is only right that we should make our stand clear with regard to ASEAN, so that there can be no doubt as to the benefit of having this organization for the promotion of social and economic understanding among us..."⁷⁰ Adam Malik, Indonesia's foreign minister, was also quoted as saying a similar stance:

If you talk about defence arrangements, you must talk about weapons, airplanes, military equipment, etc. You create the need for more expenditure for weapons. But this is not the problem for us now. The problem is food for the stomachs of our people. The greatest danger lies in this direction. We need to give our peoples more hope and more strength. This doesn't mean we must forget the defence problem. But we don't give it priority now.⁷¹

The security sphere was never made explicit, as proven by a meeting between Philippine President Marcos and Singapore Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew ten years after the formation of ASEAN where they discussed security threats through a

⁶⁸ The ASEAN Declaration (Bangkok Declaration), 8 August 1967. From <http://www.aseansec.org/1629>, accessed on 10 May 2007.

⁶⁹ Opening Statement by H.E. General Suharto, 6 August 1968.

⁷⁰ Opening Statement by H.E. Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra, 16 December 1969.

⁷¹ Frances L. Starnes, "Friends and Neighbours," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 3 August 1967, 244.

language that a news report framed as “couched in discreet terms.”⁷² Despite this, defense issues were unavoidable, and ASEAN was never really able to escape them. This, according to an editorial, brings to mind the posture of the Bandung Declaration and of the Maphilindo Declaration.⁷³ What also seemed inescapable was its very pro-Western and anti-communist posture. As Rajaratnam said, ASEAN was “a haven of non-communist countries.”⁷⁴ Hence, it is evident that in ASEAN’s self-assertion move, it portrayed itself as an economic organization that is independent of external powers, despite its being unable to fully avoid the pitfalls of the Cold War.

In sum, the language games of containment and regionalism spoke of a double movement: the United States’ efforts to contain communism were met with a regional response from the Southeast Asian states in the form of the institutionalization of regional organizations. Also present during the 1954-1977 period are the games of threats and assurances, which found as their pivot the Vietnam War, and to these the discussion now turns.

Threats and Assurances

By the mid- to the late-1960s, the United States felt that fighting in Vietnam was futile, and gave hints of withdrawing. The implications caused the Southeast Asian states to actively voice their opinion. In particular, the neutrality proposals of Cambodian leader Norodom Sihanouk were at their height in early 1964. Initial American reactions were along these lines:

Although Sihanouk may consider it unimportant whether Thai and Vietnamese take part in an internationally negotiated neutrality for Cambodia, we disagree and consider that they are parties most

⁷² Rodney Tasker, “Marcos and Lee Call for Action,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 28 January 1977, 7.

⁷³ “Welcome ASEAN,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 17 August 1967, 311.

⁷⁴ Rodney Tasker, “All Hands on Deck,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 11 March 1977, 14.

vitality concerned. We cannot and will not disregard their interests merely to satisfy Sihanouk. Our commitment in Viet-Nam is so great that we must regard our other actions in SEA in light of their possible effect on achieving our objectives in Viet-Nam.

....

It is obvious that the more GVN and Vietnamese people feel that US is negotiating over neutralization of Cambodia the more difficult it will be to convince them that this does not alter our commitments and will to win in Viet-Nam. A conference to internationalize Cambodia's neutrality will in Vietnamese eyes be step two (after Laos) in eventual neutralization of all Indochina. If the US supports this, then their will to continue their struggle will diminish. We might be faced in SVN with the alternative of pulling out, putting in massive US force, or ourselves agreeing to some sort of neutralization. We have told the GVN we will not consider a Cambodian neutrality conference unless agreement is had beforehand on expected results. In view of what GVN now faces and our own commitment in Viet-Nam and our relations with Thailand we must at least maintain this position.

....

We believe it advisable to make our position on his proposals clear to Sihanouk as soon as possible and before he announces publicly his new May deadline. Otherwise we may appear to be responding to his blackmail.⁷⁵

Aside from the neutrality proposals, Sihanouk upped the ante, so to speak, when he issued a threat or an "ultimatum" that he would recognize and sign defensive agreements with North Vietnam and China, and that he would break relations with the United States.⁷⁶ Almost simultaneously, Sihanouk claimed that a way out of the breach in Cambodia-US relations was a new proposal that called for quadripartite negotiations involving the United States, South Vietnam, Thailand, and Cambodia, the goal of which was an agreement recognizing Cambodia's neutrality and borders. The US Department of State reported,

⁷⁵ "Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Cambodia," dated 8 February 1964.

⁷⁶ "Telegram From the Embassy in Cambodia to the Department of State," dated 19 February 1964, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. 27 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2000). Available at http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xxvii/n.html, accessed on 20 February 2009.

In return Cambodia would observe strict neutrality and prevent "the passage or presence of rebel bands across or on its territory." The solution envisioned normalization of diplomatic relations and a "gentlemen's agreement" by the United States to reimburse Cambodia in farm and heavy construction equipment for Cambodians killed in error by South Vietnamese armed forces.⁷⁷

By March of 1964, the United States focused on the draft proposals for a neutrality declaration and protocol. However, the American official response to Cambodian "threats" was not consolidated immediately:

Unfortunately, our drafts have only been given to the GVN and the Thais; so we have been caught flat-footed on two counts. We have made no public announcement of our agreement to the Quadripartite Conference, and Sihanouk has beaten us to the punch on the draft proposals.

....

In view of the inchoate state of these decisions in the Department, I think the best thing the President could do would be to philosophize a bit on the pressing need for military and diplomatic actions in the very near future to give some evidence that we are not just shooting off our mouths in Southeast Asia.⁷⁸

Later on, it became apparent what was at the heart of Sihanouk's "ultimatum":

...Sihanouk fundamentally fears dismemberment Cambodia at hands South Viet Nam and Thailand. His resolve above all is maintain integrity nation of his ancestors and if he cannot secure requisite assurances from West (which he would strongly prefer) then he will seek help to maintain Cambodia's integrity from Hanoi and Peking. (Souvanna did not mention Moscow at this point.) Sihanouk would not remain in Cambodia if this should occur and without him left wing forces would promptly take over country. (Souvanna said Sihanouk told him Communist already have military formations.) Sihanouk apparently believes it is intention South Vietnamese and particularly of Thais to drive him to point of seeking help from Communist Bloc so that they can use this as

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ "Memorandum From Michael V. Forrestal of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy)," dated 3 March 1964, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. 27 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2000). Available at http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xxvii/n.html, accessed on 22 February 2009.

pretext to move in, with U.S. help, and partition Cambodia between them.⁷⁹

Considering these fears, a telegram from the US embassy in Laos detailed that Sihanouk was in effect simply asking for “no more than was accorded to Laos in [the] Geneva Conference [of] 1961-62 and feels it ironic that he has met such continual rebuffs in this regard when he, organizer of that conference, seeks similar reassurances for himself.”⁸⁰ Furthermore, the same telegram recommended,

However misguided are Sihanouk's views about dangers he faces from Thailand and South Viet Nam, ...we have reached critical pass in relations with Cambodia and [the] West stands to lose severely if we do not find [the] means [of] providing reassurances of sort and in manner requested by Sihanouk.⁸¹

Apart from “threats” and “ultimatums” from Cambodia, Indonesian leader Suharto also said in 1967, “I have regarded [the] US as potentially our greatest friend, but if I cannot be sure of your assistance then I will have to make another plan.”⁸² Similarly, when Singapore Prime Minister Lee met with US President Johnson in 1967, he made an implicit threat when he said that he wanted to know “whether the United States has the stamina to see Viet-Nam through, and the subtlety and will to play the important but over time diminishing role that he envisages for [the US] in the area.”⁸³ This tug of war became more pronounced after three instances: the 1968 and 1969 speeches of US Presidents Johnson and Nixon, respectively, and the 1975 fall of Saigon. In all instances, the individual Southeast Asian states, as well as ASEAN as a

⁷⁹ “Telegram From the Embassy in Laos to the Department of State,” dated 9 March 1964, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. 27 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2000). Available at http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xxvii/n.html, accessed on 22 February 2009.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² “Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State,” Document 236, dated 7 July 1967, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. 26 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2001), 506.

⁸³ “Memorandum from Secretary of State Rusk to President Johnson,” Document 284, dated 13 October 1967, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. 26 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2001), 629.

whole, threatened that they would turn to the other side, and to this the US responded by giving them assurances.

The “threats” became less subtle following Johnson’s 1968 speech that called for a halt in the bombing in Vietnam. In particular,

Tonight, I renew the offer I made last August – to stop the bombardment of North Vietnam. We ask that talks begin promptly, that they be serious talks on the substance of peace. We assume that during those talks Hanoi will not take advantage of our restraint.

We are prepared to move immediately toward peace through negotiations.

So, tonight, in the hope that this action will lead to early talks, I am taking the first step to deescalate the conflict. We are reducing – substantially reducing – the present level of hostilities.

And we are doing so unilaterally, and at once.⁸⁴

The 1969 Nixon Doctrine in essence stipulated that while the United States would continue to be faithful to its treaty commitments, it “shall look to the nation directly threatened to assume the primary responsibility of providing the manpower for its defense.”⁸⁵ In the same way,

What we want is very little, but very fundamental. We seek the opportunity for the South Vietnamese people to determine their own political future without outside interference.

⁸⁴ “President Lyndon B. Johnson’s Address to the Nation Announcing Steps to Limit the War in Vietnam and Reporting His Decision Not to Seek Reelection,” dated 31 March 1968, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Lyndon B. Johnson, 1968-69*, volume II, entry 572, 1099-1103 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1970). Available from <http://www.lbjlib.utexas.edu/johnson/archives.hom/speeches.hom/680331.asp>, accessed on 22 February 2009. Also, “President Lyndon B. Johnson’s Address to the Nation Upon Announcing His Decision to Halt the Bombing of North Vietnam,” dated 31 October 1968, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Lyndon B. Johnson, 1968-69*, volume I, entry 170, 469-476 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1970). Available from <http://www.lbjlib.utexas.edu/johnson/archives.hom/speeches.hom/680331.asp>, accessed on 22 February 2009.

⁸⁵ Full text of the Nixon Doctrine is obtained from Sudershan Chawla, Melvin Gurtov, and Alain-Gerard Marsot, eds., *Southeast Asia Under the New Balance of Power* (London and New York: Praeger, 1974), 137-144. Also available as part of the public papers at The Richard Nixon Library and Birthplace Foundation, http://www.nixonlibraryfoundation.org/clientuploads/directory/archive/1969_pdf_files/1969_0195.pdf, dated 14 May 1969, accessed on 17 December 2008.

....

What kind of a settlement will permit the South Vietnamese people to determine freely their own political future? Such a settlement will require the withdrawal of all non-South Vietnamese forces, including our own, from South Vietnam, and procedures for political choice that give each significant group in South Vietnam a real opportunity to participate in the political life of the nation.

To implement these principles, I reaffirm now our willingness to withdraw our forces on a specified timetable. We ask only that North Vietnam withdraw its forces from South Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos into North Vietnam, also in accordance with a timetable.

We include Cambodia and Laos to ensure that these countries would not be used as bases for a renewed war.

Our offer provides for a simultaneous start on withdrawal by both sides, for agreement on a mutually acceptable timetable and for the withdrawal to be accomplished quickly.⁸⁶

The Nixon Doctrine also detailed a “peace plan” to end the Vietnam War. The specific measures are as follows:

- As soon as agreement can be reached, all non-South Vietnamese forces would begin withdrawals from South Vietnam.
- Over a period of 12 months, by agreed-upon stages, the major portions of all U.S., allied, and other non-South Vietnamese forces would be withdrawn. At the end of this 12-month period, the remaining U.S., allied, and other non-South Vietnamese forces would move into designated base areas and would not engage in combat operations.
- The remaining U.S. and allied forces would complete their withdrawals as the remaining North Vietnamese were withdrawn and returned to North Vietnam.
- An international supervisory body, acceptable to both sides, would be created for the purpose of verifying withdrawals, and for any other purposes agreed upon by the two sides.
- This international body would begin operating in accordance with an agreed timetable and would participate in arranging supervised cease-fires in Vietnam.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

- As soon as possible after the international body was functioning, elections would be held under agreed procedures and under the supervision of the international body.
- Arrangements would be made for the release of prisoners of war on both sides at the earliest time possible.
- All parties would agree to observe the Geneva Accords of 1954 regarding South Vietnam and Cambodia, and the Laos Accords of 1962.⁸⁷

Southeast Asian responses varied in utterance, although no less different in their rhetoric. A research project noted that it was because of this that Philippine President Marcos stated that this “might force the Philippines to seek an accommodation with China...”⁸⁸ It was also in this context that Marcos suggested “re-fashioning postures and positions,” which a news report in 1968 labeled as “a plea for a new defence pact.”⁸⁹ Thailand, on the other hand, lashed out at “the prophets of false liberalism who are unfortunately always liberal with other people’s liberty.”⁹⁰ The fear felt by these countries was very clear, particularly since they were the staunchest allies of the US in the region. The Americans, meanwhile, were set on giving assurances to the Thais. The US ambassador to Thailand at that time wrote a telegram to the Department of State regarding his desire to assure the Thais: “Decisions on...matters which cumulatively signal growing US disinterest and disengagement will surely undermine and perhaps in due course destroy the effective and constructive relations we have had with the Thais for so long. I hope this is not where we mean to be heading.”⁹¹ Hence, when US Vice President Spiro T. Agnew visited Thailand in December 1969, he was instructed to “reassure the Thai of the

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ David Maylor Purdy, “American Southeast Asian Foreign Policy: Perspectives from Asia” (PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1970), 333.

⁸⁹ S.M. Ali, “Bridging the Gap,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 8 February 1968, 228.

⁹⁰ As quoted in Purdy, 360.

⁹¹ “Telegram from the Embassy in Thailand to the Department of State,” Document 33, dated 1 November 1969, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976*, vol. 20 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2006), 75.

constancy of US backing.”⁹² Indonesia had quite a different cut, yet rode along the same rhetoric. It openly advocated self-reliance rather than depend “on two – or 10 – battalions from abroad.”⁹³ However, the US ambassador to Indonesia wrote in a memo that while the country wanted US withdrawal from Vietnam, it did not “wish the US to pull out quickly.” Indonesia, furthermore, played the communist trump card by hinting that “If the US withdraws rapidly, North Vietnam will certainly take over and neighboring countries will be wide open for Communist subversion.”⁹⁴ The best assurance that the US could give was in terms of emphasizing the positive aspects of its withdrawal. Nixon justified the doctrine thus: “In providing for a more responsible role for Asian nations in their own defence, the Nixon Doctrine means not only a more effective use of common resources, but also an American policy which can best be sustained over the long run.”⁹⁵ The Nixon Doctrine thus galvanized Asian states to become more self-reliant and more oriented towards regionalism.⁹⁶

Aside from Johnson’s 1968 speech and the 1969 Nixon Doctrine that portended American withdrawal, the fall of Saigon in 1975 had as much impact in the tug of war that Southeast Asia and the United States were playing. Thailand, being closest to the scene of battle, experienced a very strong “personal element” in

⁹² “Memorandum from the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to Vice President Agnew,” Document 39, dated 17 December 1969, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976*, vol. 20 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2006), 87.

⁹³ Frances L. Starnes, “Through Malik’s Eyes,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 5 September 1968, 468.

⁹⁴ “Telegram from the Embassy in Indonesia to the Department of State,” Document 272, dated 29 July 1969, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976*, vol. 20 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2006), 582.

⁹⁵ Pracha Guna-Kasem, “The Future Role of the United States in Southeast Asia,” in *New Directions in the International Relations of Southeast Asia*, ed. Soon Lau Teik (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1973), 94.

⁹⁶ Goh Cheng Teik, “The United States and Southeast Asia: Past, Present, and Future,” in *New Directions in the International Relations of Southeast Asia*, ed. Teik Soon Lau (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1973), 101.

America's hasty withdrawal.⁹⁷ Indonesia "saw the handwriting on the wall" a year ago and hence began opening up to investments from the Soviet Union and Indochina.⁹⁸ Singapore continued with its posture of calling for a continued American presence in the region, but the tone now was more focused towards commercial investments.⁹⁹ The Philippines, meanwhile, who thought of itself as a "friend" and as a "child" of the United States, started to rethink its strategic "friendship."¹⁰⁰ In revising the military bases agreement, President Marcos stated, "We want to put an end to the practice of extra-territoriality in our country in keeping with our dignity as a sovereign Republic and in keeping with the developments of our times. We want to assume control of all U.S. bases and put them to a productive economic, as well as military use."¹⁰¹ The unresolved issues to be discussed in the negotiations included rent, sovereignty, jurisdiction, base commander, operational control, consultation, labor, land, and defense-security.¹⁰² Coincidentally, ASEAN's response to the decisive events in Indochina came in the form of its first summit in 1976 in Bali, which resulted in the member states' signing of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) and the Declaration of ASEAN Concord. Essentially, these two key documents highlight the importance of the concepts of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and non-interference.

⁹⁷ Peter Bathurst, "Common Denominator: Captured Guns," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 4 July 1975, 8.

⁹⁸ Dan Coggin, "New Note of Caution," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 4 July 1975, 23.

⁹⁹ Arun Senkuttuvan, "Gratifying Stance," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 4 July 1975, 28.

¹⁰⁰ "Memorandum of Conversation," Document 186, dated 2 April 1969, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976*, vol. 20 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2006), 394-396; "Memorandum of Conversation," Document 227, dated 22 September 1970, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976*, vol. 20 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2006), 482-485; Bernardino Ronquillo, "Second Thoughts," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 4 July 1975, 26-27.

¹⁰¹ Quoted in Mike Mansfield, *Winds of Change: Evolving Relations and Interests in Southeast Asia*, A Report to the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate (Washington: US Government Printing Office, October 1975), 14.

¹⁰² Harvey Stockwin, "The Hurdles that Remain," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 17 December 1976, 14-15.

The immediate American reaction to the calls of Southeast Asian states to remain in the region was that of nonchalance. A conference organized by the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Indonesia reached such a conclusion: “It thus appeared that, disillusioned by its own errors, the US was washing its hands of the region...”¹⁰³ This was primarily due to the fact that the new leaders in Washington prioritized Southeast Asia less and they did not fall in the “help-us-or-we’ll-go-communist” trap.¹⁰⁴ In other words, it became futile for Southeast Asia to continue “crying the communist wolf.”¹⁰⁵

Nevertheless, the United States found new ways of “assuring” Southeast Asia, i.e., in the form of the formal ASEAN-US dialogue, which commenced in 1977. With the Carter administration in the US, private investment was preferred in uplifting the economies of Southeast Asia.¹⁰⁶ US Undersecretary Richard N. Cooper gave an assurance in his statement during the 1977 meeting:

Concerns have been expressed that the United States might withdraw from this part of the world or that we would abandon an active role in support of peace and stability in Southeast Asia. On the contrary, we are and will remain engaged with the nations of this region and with ASEAN. Our commitment comprises far more than our military presence – we are partners in trade, in multilateral development institutions, and in the continuing dialogue about the management of the world economy. Our current meeting is in itself an expression of our growing and fruitful interdependence with our longstanding friends in Southeast Asia.¹⁰⁷

But still, ASEAN was “unhappy” with the results of the meeting for reasons that the US officials who attended the conference comprised of a “lower level delegation,”

¹⁰³ Derek Davies, “The Message to Carter: ‘Yanks Come Home’,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 17 June 1977, 9.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 10.

¹⁰⁶ Stephen Barber, “Assurances from the White House,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 12 August 1977, 10-13.

¹⁰⁷ “United States and ASEAN Hold Economic Consultations in Manila,” *US Department of State Bulletin*, 31 October 1977, 596.

and also because of a general feeling of dissatisfaction that the United States had no concrete offers.¹⁰⁸ To this, US Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke replied,

Both sides knew in advance that this was just the beginning of the dialogue. The ASEAN countries knew in advance that we were not going to reach a final agreement. We are going to have more talks, we will have regular discussions at working levels in Washington and another full high-level consultation next summer in Washington when we look forward to hosting the ASEAN-US dialogue.¹⁰⁹

A variegated version of the threat and assurance maneuver involves a tangible factor. Thailand and the Philippines vis-à-vis the United States played this game. While the Vietnam War was still raging, Thailand in 1967 offered to send an additional 8,500 men thus increasing its contingent to 10,800. In exchange for such an offer, the Thais wanted the following: a US Hawk Battalion, a Helicopter Battalion, equipment for its contingent in Vietnam, and for the United States to assume all costs incurred in the equipping, training, and maintenance of the Thai contingent in Vietnam.¹¹⁰ In 1969, Thailand expressed the need for military equipment in order to cope with communist infiltrations. In this regard, the Thais requested for transport equipment, helicopters, signal equipment, and hand-held radar.¹¹¹ Such a request came at the heels of the Nixon Doctrine and the implication

¹⁰⁸ Larry A. Nicksch, *The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN): An Emerging Challenge in U.S. Policy Towards Asia*, Congressional Research Service Report No. 78-197F, 10 November 1978, 58.

¹⁰⁹ Susumu Awanohara, "Washington's Stake in Asia," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 18 November 1977, 46.

¹¹⁰ "Memorandum from Marshall Wright of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant (Rostow)," Document 359, dated 19 September 1967, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. 27 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2000), 796-798.

¹¹¹ "Telegram From the Embassy in Thailand to the Department of State," Document 11, dated 23 May 1969, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976*, vol. 20 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2006), 20-22. Available at <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/77889.pdf>, accessed on 17 December 2008. At this point, the Thai government has sent approximately 11,500 men to South Vietnam, not to mention army light division, small naval units, and an air force transport contingent. From "Department of State Briefing Paper," Document 16, dated 10 July 1969, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. 27 (Washington: US Government Printing Office,

that “Asian nations should determine their own destinies.”¹¹² The US ambassador to Thailand at the time, Leonard Unger, was concerned that the Thais might make a unilateral decision if consultations were not held with them regarding American withdrawal from Vietnam:

...it is the judgment of the U.S. and South Vietnamese Governments that the expansion and strengthening of the forces of South Viet-Nam have reached a stage which makes it possible to begin the withdrawal from Southeast Asia of some of the U.S. forces there. The U.S. Government would like to discuss this process with the Royal Thai Government in general, as it relates to our further actions on the ground and in negotiations toward a satisfactory solution of the Viet-Nam problem, and in particular as it relates to the U.S. air and army support forces presently stationed in Thailand.

2. We would also like to solicit the views of the Royal Thai Government concerning the continuing role of the division of the Thai Army now fighting in Viet-Nam.

....

I am persuaded, Mr. President, that unless we undertake to consult with the Thai Government on their forces presently deployed to Viet-Nam they may reach a decision unilaterally to begin the withdrawal of these forces. Since this would detract from the multinational force fighting there now and providing an important political symbol, I believe our consultations should begin promptly to avoid this.¹¹³

When communist efforts increased in Laos, a memorandum of conversation documented that according to Thailand Foreign Minister Thanat Khoman,

2000), 30-32. Available at <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/77889.pdf>, accessed on 17 December 2008. In fact, Thailand's request for helicopters has been documented since 1966 in discussions surrounding SEATO matters: “The Thais have been pressing us for U.S. manned helicopters and this is a need which the U.K. might fill, one relatively small in scale.” See in “Memorandum of Conversation,” dated 10 June 1966, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. 27 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2000). Available at http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/vol_xxvii/j.html, accessed on 22 February 2009.

¹¹² “Letter From the Ambassador to Thailand (Unger) to President Nixon,” Document 12, dated 17 June 1969, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. 27 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2000), 23-24. Available at <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/77889.pdf>, accessed on 17 December 2008.

¹¹³ Ibid.

...the Thai would be willing to help the effort in Laos by operating helicopter gunships and added that the RLG would also like them to do this. He said the Thai had trained personnel to operate them but would need help. He indicated vaguely that they might require additional helicopters (though he may have been referring to equipment needed to convert existing helicopters to gunships).¹¹⁴

The Philippines likewise wanted military assistance in exchange for sending a civic action group in Vietnam.¹¹⁵ The offer of sending Filipino troops/volunteers to Vietnam was documented as early as 1964 during Philippine President Diosdado Macapagal's administration. In a conversation with US President Johnson, Macapagal proffered "trained personnel in public health, medical, engineering, and military special forces."¹¹⁶ Later, it was specified that the 2,500-man contingent (this was later reduced to 2,000 troops) to be sent to Vietnam would require a "lump sum grant in advance" to finance the proposed Philippine level of per diem (US\$15 per day for field grade officers, US\$12 for company grade, and US\$8 for enlisted men).¹¹⁷ When the Americans expressed a desire to reduce the per diem payment, the Philippine delegate replied that "any reduction would have an adverse effect on the morale of the Philippine military and recruitment of volunteers for Vietnam, stating further that the Philippines has a higher living standard than those other countries of Asia, and that he did not feel it was proper to send the Philippine military to Vietnam with less money than they received at home."¹¹⁸ Apart from this, the Philippines'

¹¹⁴ "Memorandum of Conversation," Document 49, dated 25 February 1970, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. 27 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2000), 23-24. Available at <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/77889.pdf>, accessed on 17 December 2008.

¹¹⁵ "Memorandum from the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger) to President Nixon," Document 191, dated 17 July 1969, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976*, vol. 20 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2006), 404-408.

¹¹⁶ "Memorandum of Conversation," Document 300, dated 5 October 1964, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. 26 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2006). Available at <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/johnsonlb/xxvi/4426.htm>, accessed on 5 December 2008.

¹¹⁷ "Memorandum of Conversation," Document 303, dated 21 January 1965, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. 26 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2006). Available at <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/johnsonlb/xxvi/4426.htm>, accessed on 5 December 2008.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

“shopping list” in exchange for the contingent also included road construction equipment and helicopters for “pre-emptory counter-insurgency efforts” and the reinstatement of the Military Assistance Program (MAP).¹¹⁹ Despite these negotiations, the Philippine Congress did not approve Macapagal’s bill for sending said Filipino troops to Vietnam, and one of the primary reasons was because of the upcoming national elections where Macapagal was succeeded by Marcos.¹²⁰ However, the point of the matter was that the offer to help in Vietnam was in exchange for what a memorandum referred to as “tangible goodies:”

In brief, Marcos does not want to come to Washington unless he can return with some highly tangible goodies. He fears the juxtaposition of Philippine troops to Vietnam with a Washington visit, as this might tag him with the label of "American errand boy". In order to avoid such a label, he wants to extract from his Washington visit U.S. responsiveness on a number of new and old items: specifically, Philippine omnibus claims (a matter which we officially decreed a closed book under the Eisenhower Administration), base negotiations, veterans benefits (on which a joint U.S./Filipino Commission will be negotiating in the next few months), U.S. procurement for Vietnam, a stabilization fund, aid for the construction of a thermal power plant, more school houses, and a long new list of military equipment. This is not quite an all-or-nothing proposition, although obviously the Fils want as much as they can get.¹²¹

Interestingly, a US senator responded to this matter thus: “Why do we pay so much and get so little?”¹²² Furthermore,

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ “Memorandum From the President's Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (Bundy) to President Johnson,” Document 307, dated 7 July 1965; “Telegram From the Embassy in the Philippines to the Department of State,” Document 309, dated 9 July 1965; “Letter From President Macapagal to President Johnson,” Document 310, dated 24 July 1965, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. 26 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2006). Available at <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/johnsonlb/xxvi/4426.htm>, accessed on 5 December 2008.

¹²¹ “Memorandum From James C. Thomson, Jr., of the National Security Council Staff to the President's Special Assistant (Rostow),” Document 329, dated 4 May 1966, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964-1968*, vol. 26 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2006). Available at <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/frus/johnsonlb/xxvi/4426.htm>, accessed on 5 December 2008.

¹²² “Memorandum from the Chairman of the Interdepartmental Coordinating Group (McClintock) to the Under Secretary of State (Richardson),” Document 194, dated 3 October 1969, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1969-1976*, vol. 20 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2006), 413-416.

The main theme of protest that our client states receive so much from the US and contribute practically nothing in return was made repeatedly in the case of the Philippines where 'millions of dollars' had been poured into the country but even in a situation involving the SEATO Alliance, the government in Manila would not send even a token detachment unless backsheesh was paid in advance.¹²³

In sum, the narrative of Southeast Asia-US relations in the 1954-1977 era can be read via the three-step logic of the paradigm of rule (language games-rules-rule). The language games, which are based on and are extrapolated from official discourses, that are seen as being played out during this period are those of containment, regionalism, threats, and assurances. The language game of containment named communism as the enemy, and was articulated in official discourses via the consequences of the domino theory. Meanwhile, the language games of regionalism and threats signified the declaration and assertion of the small Southeast Asian states to negotiate their power position vis-à-vis the United States. Furthermore, the language game of giving assurances was in a sense an information-dissemination move on the part of the great power to pacify the fears of the subordinate states.

The proliferation of instruction-rules (to name, to declare, to inform, or to assert) and the resulting dynamics/interface of these games bring to mind the workings of a hegemonic rule, given the criteria extrapolated earlier from scholarly literature. To recall, the markers of hegemony are fourfold: on one hand, there are (1) super-ordinate actors who (2) redefine social reality, and on the other, (3) subordinate actors who (4) consent to the prevailing order. In the first instance, the interface of containment and regionalism spelled the efforts of the United States (super-ordinate actor) to persuade the Southeast Asian states (subordinate actors)

¹²³ Ibid., 415.

regarding the rightness of remaining well within the realm of the “free and democratic world” (redefinition of social reality). Rather than simply take the role of free riders, these Southeast Asian states demonstrated that while they might have agreed (consent) to a US-led rule, their formation and institutionalization of regional organizations signified their active participation in this hegemonic order. In the second instance, the interplay of threats and assurances further highlighted the Southeast Asian states’ ability to effectively negotiate with the United States so that benefits could be shared between them. This brings us back to the idea pointed out earlier that hegemony has both materialist and consensual conceptions. Furthermore, this type of rule held water or was maintained and perpetuated all throughout the inclusive years because the same themes kept resonating through the language games states played. When this rhetoric changed, as it did in the latter part of the Cold War, so did the form of rule that predominated in Southeast Asia-US relations. The next chapter explores this next stage.

CHAPTER 4

HETERONOMY

1978-1991

While the period covered in the previous chapter culminated in the end of the Vietnam war, which led the members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to Bali in 1976, the institutionalization of formal dialogues with external partners (with the United States in 1977), and also the dissolution of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) in 1977, it did not portend the end of the story. New situations that were admittedly external to the relationship under study cropped up, and this created a new context that required different rules for playing another game. In order to deal with these new situations, and to a certain extent, to minimize the uncertainty surrounding these new contexts, the Southeast Asian nations and the United States exchanged commitments with each other. In short, these commitments became the foundations of the relationship in the 1978-1991 period: our actors knew “how to go on” with their relations on the basis that the promises they have made to each other needed to be fulfilled.¹

Against the paradigm of rule’s language games-rules-rule premise, commitments and promises figure prominently during this period, the parties’ language games center on commissives (commitment-rules), and these point to heteronomy as a type of rule. Heteronomy as a form of rule may be understood as a two-step process, and the next two chapters deal with each of these. First, there is the presence and predominance of the act of making promises. Second, while actors are obliged to fulfill or deliver on these commitments, these agreements also ensure that relations between the parties involved are asymmetrical. There becomes less room to

¹ Karin Fierke, *Changing Games, Changing Strategies: Critical Investigations in Security* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1998).

maneuver because the entire relationship becomes structured around strictly what the promises call for. For instance, lord-serf relations entail that in exchange for security that the lord provides, the serf must labor or till the land. The relationship becomes disproportionate because the actors' commitments to each other (to protect and to work) constrain them from doing anything else apart from providing security and working the land. This twofold aspect of heteronomy needs to be dealt with separately. In this regard, this chapter focuses on the first step, i.e., that obligations are made, while chapter 5 demonstrates how asymmetry is ensured by virtue of commitments made. As before, this chapter consists of two parts: the first reverts to the literature in order to flesh out the contours of heteronomy as a type of rule, and the second illustrates the language games that Southeast Asian nations and the United States played during the 1978-1991 period.

Heteronomy as a Type of Rule

Unlike hegemony and hierarchy, heteronomy as a type of rule in International Relations is hardly recognized. Nicholas Onuf writes that heteronomy is unnamed and unimagined in IR.² Although some concepts come close, they by no means are able to appreciate heteronomy as it was understood by Immanuel Kant. What are offered here are, on one hand, the views of mainstream IR in understanding heteronomy, i.e., via the notions of the dependency theory and world-systems theory, and on the other, Onuf's development of Kant's concept.

² Nicholas Greenwood Onuf, *World of Our Making: Rules and Rule in Social Theory and International Relations* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1989).

Heteronomy as the Unnamed Rule in International Relations

Heteronomous relationships are typically seen through the worldview purported by dependency theory. Operating under the guise of formal (sovereign) autonomy of the units involved, dependency relations nonetheless limit the possible actions, particularly of the members of the periphery. James A. Caporaso clarifies that dependence is different from dependency in the sense that the former is commonly understood as reliance on others or as a reflection of asymmetric relations, whereas the latter connotes the absence of an actor's autonomy in making decisions.³ Moreover, if dependence were one extreme of a spectrum, its polar opposite would be autonomy or self-control. Caporaso also points out that dependency relationships reflect structural distortions that are manifested in "non-autonomous developmental possibilities...as the lack of true independence from foreign or transnational influences, or as the presence of related domestic, external, and transnational characteristics."⁴

The dependency model has the same trajectory as Immanuel Wallerstein's world-systems theory, where the world is divided into three spatial dimensions: the core, the periphery, and the semi-periphery. The core is generally embodied in the West, with its democratic governments, high wages, imports of raw materials, exports of manufactures, high investments, and welfare services. The periphery, meanwhile, constitutes the non-democratic governments of the global South with exports of raw materials, imports of manufactures, and those who live below subsistence wages, and have no welfare services. Consequently, the semi-periphery is hybrid in nature because "although [it is] penetrated by core economic interests, [it] has its own

³ James A. Caporaso, "Dependence, Dependency, and Power in the Global System: A Structural and Behavioral Analysis," *International Organization* 32, 1 (Winter 1978): 13-43.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 61.

relatively vibrant indigenously owned industrial base.”⁵ It consists of authoritarian governments, exports and imports “mature” manufactures and raw materials, provides low wages, as well as low welfare services.⁶ The basic assumptions of this school of thought are summarized as follows:

In the view of the dependency theorists, the relationship between the Northern core and the Southern periphery, far from being a relationship of mutual-interest cooperation, connotes both the subordination of the latter to the former and the exploitation of the latter by the former. Thus, in the eyes of *dependistas*, the poor countries do not lack capital and lag behind the rich because they lie outside or on the edge of the capitalist world but rather because they have been integrated into the international class structure of the capitalist system.⁷

Stressing that the unequal relations in the current capitalist world economy originated in the sixteenth century, J. Samuel Valenzuela and Arturo Valenzuela argue that the center not only benefits at the periphery’s expense, but also “the different functions of central and peripheral societies had a profound effect on the evolution of internal social and political structures.”⁸

While expedient as an analytical tool in the 1970s, the dependency and world-systems theories are not without critics. Tony Smith, in articles published from 1979 to 1985, argues and demonstrates the shortcomings of the *dependistas*. In his 1979 piece, “The Underdevelopment of Development Literature: The Case of Dependency Theory,” he points out dependency theory’s implicit exoneration of the South’s role

⁵ Stephen Hobden and Richard Wyn Jones, “Marxist Theories of International Relations,” in *The Globalization of World Politics*, eds. John Baylis and Steve Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 208.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 207.

⁷ James E. Dougherty and Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Jr., *Contending Theories of International Relations*, 4th ed. (New York: Longman, 1997), 241. Emphasis on the original.

⁸ J. Samuel Valenzuela and Arturo Valenzuela, “Modernization and Dependency: Alternative Perspectives in the Study of Latin American Underdevelopment,” *Comparative Politics* 10, 4 (July 1978): 545.

and influence over its own deleterious affairs.⁹ Come 1981, in his reply to Caporaso's 1980 article ("Dependency Theory: Continuities and Discontinuities in Development Studies"), his critique centers on dependency theory's bias towards reductionism in regard to economic imperialism.¹⁰ Finally, in 1985, while he acknowledges that dependency theory's strength lies in its parsimony, he also points out that its weaknesses rest on its ability to provide "a few simple premises."¹¹ Aside from Smith, however, Frank F. Klink also identifies a shortcoming in the form of the unproblematic assumption of the core-periphery structure.¹²

The dependency and world-systems approaches provide, at best, a cursory means to understanding the Southeast Asia-US relationship. The reason is because while these models posit unequal relations, they by no means say why asymmetry takes place or how it is perpetuated. Moreover, their analyses are biased towards economic relations, which therefore make transposing their logic to other spheres (such as the political and security realms) difficult. Onuf fills this gap by providing an appreciation of the significance of language and rules in the creation or constitution of the rule of heteronomy.

Heteronomy as Rule in International Relations

Onuf's application of Kant's idea of heteronomy rests on two things: the presence of commissive speech acts and the negation of autonomy, the latter of which is detailed in the next chapter. Commissive speech acts play a role in the functioning

⁹ Tony Smith, "The Underdevelopment of Development Literature: The Case of Dependency Theory," *World Politics* 31, 2 (January 1979): 247-288.

¹⁰ Tony Smith, "The Logic of Dependency Theory Revisited," *International Organization* 35, 4 (Autumn 1981): 755-761 in response to James A. Caporaso, "Dependency Theory: Continuities and Discontinuities in Development Studies," *International Organization* 34, 4 (Autumn 1980): 605-628.

¹¹ Tony Smith, "Requiem or New Agenda for Third World Studies?" *World Politics* 37, 4 (July 1985): 532-561.

¹² Frank F. Klink, "Rationalizing Core-Periphery Relations: The Analytical Foundations of Structural Inequality in World Politics," *International Studies Quarterly* 34, 2 (June 1990): 183-209.

of heteronomy in the sense that they become the basis of future interactions between and among actors. Actors who think of themselves as autonomous reduce risk and uncertainty by making commitments to guide future actions.¹³ By making commitments formal, the interactions that result take the form of duties and obligations.¹⁴ As actors or agents give and receive promises, they perform multiple social roles.¹⁵ This thus creates a “nonlinear web of social relations” where “The ruled join the rulers as authors and audience; rules rule their joint proceedings.”¹⁶ Being “nonlinear,” the lines of authority are therefore diffuse and overlap with each other: “From an agent’s point of view, authority seems fragmented, radiating from different sources. Promises convey an agent’s intention to commit to an action by the act of promising or accepting a promise. Commitments order social relations by coordinating agents’ activities.”¹⁷

Apart from the prevalence of commissives, heteronomy also spells the negation of autonomy. Heteronomous rule is not readily obvious in IR because it has been obscured by well-established concepts, such as sovereignty. By claiming that states are sovereign and therefore autonomous is to negate the possibility of heteronomy ever occurring. Kant referred to heteronomy as the condition of *not having* autonomy. In other words, since states are autonomous, this according to mainstream IR knowledge, there is no need to even imagine heteronomy taking place in international relations. Still, Onuf argues that heteronomy as a type of rule in international relations is not impossible, for several reasons. In the first place,

¹³ Onuf (1989), 214.

¹⁴ Kurt Burch, *“Property” and the Making of the International System* (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner, 1998).

¹⁵ Kurt Burch, “Changing the Rules: Reconceiving Change in the Westphalian System,” *International Studies Review* 2, 2 (Summer 2000): 181-210.

¹⁶ Ibid., 191; Onuf (1989), 217.

¹⁷ Burch (2000): 191.

autonomy is itself problematic. It is not that autonomy does not exist, but that when actors see themselves as acting autonomously, they are simply reaching conclusions or making rationalizations that are drawn from being in heteronomous relations: “The social reality of heteronomy begets an awareness of behavior that in turn begets the illusion of autonomy. Heteronomy prompts obfuscation of its own social reality.”¹⁸ In short, actors might see themselves as acting on their own free will but they are in fact only conscious of doing so (of being autonomous, that is) because they are already embedded in heteronomous social relationships. Since commitments that the agents made to each other are at the heart of heteronomous rule, and since these promises regulate and to a certain extent constrain the relations between the actors, commitments and promises become reified and asymmetry in the relations between actors is therefore guaranteed.

In sum, heteronomy occurs when (1) commissives are pervasive, and (2) autonomy is postulated. Despite this invocation of autonomy, beneath it is an assurance of asymmetry: “rules positing autonomy in relations ensure the asymmetry of those relations.”¹⁹ Examples of such types of relations include lord-serf relations under feudalism, where the serfs were obliged, even coerced, to enter into agreements with the landlords on the latter’s terms in exchange for physical security. Hence, “the coercive character of the exchange and the directive-rules substantiating it was concealed behind the formality of lord-serf relations based on exchange and reciprocity.”²⁰ Another example of a heteronomous relationship is that of worker and capitalist:

¹⁸ Onuf (1989), 213.

¹⁹ Ibid., 214.

²⁰ Nicholas Onuf and Frank F. Klink, “Anarchy, Authority, Rule,” *International Studies Quarterly* 33, 2 (1989): 163.

Exchanges between capitalists and workers take place because bourgeois property rights assign capitalists a monopoly on society's productive property and, therefore, upon the workers' means of physical and psychic sustenance. To gain access to the means of their sustenance, workers must enter into exchange relations with capitalists. In capitalist societies, however, the massively asymmetrical character of this exchange and of the content of property rights behind it is obscured by the fact that workers are generally free to choose the specific capitalist with whom they enter into exchange relations and even to organize themselves for collective bargaining.²¹

Heteronomy by no means implies that Southeast Asia-US relations are feudal. Rather, it only suggests that by virtue of past commitments that both sides gave each other commitment-rules ordered their relations in the 1978-1991 period. It is possible to argue that this period is hegemonic in nature. However, the basic parameters of hegemony that are discussed in the previous chapter – i.e., the presence of super-ordinate actors who redefine social reality, and the existence of subordinate actors who give their consent to the prevailing order – are missing here. Aside from this, the primary literature during the 1978-1991 period depicted the prevalence of commitment-rules more than assertive-rules (the latter being the hallmark of a hegemonic type of rule). Hierarchy also does not hold during this period because by virtue of the act of making promises, lines of authority are multiple and overlap with each other rather than being linear. Aside from this, the threat or the use of force is absent. Hence, heteronomy is the appropriate type of rule in Southeast Asia-US relations during this time.

Language Games

Pivoting on the Kampuchean issue, a survey of the primary literature on Southeast Asia-US relations reveals that the language games in the 1978-1991 period

²¹ Ibid.

are those of making promises and delivering on those promises. Given the Fall of Saigon in 1975 and the resulting “defeat” of the United States in the Vietnam War, there were fears that the Americans would withdraw from the Southeast Asian region. In this regard, the United States felt compelled to offer promises and to reiterate its commitments. When the Kampuchean issue arose, the resulting refugee crisis became the ground on which the United States fulfilled its commitment to remain engaged in the region. Of course, this promise was only delivered alongside the leading role that ASEAN played. Against this backdrop, the following discussion is divided into two sub-parts. The first revolves around the commitments that have been made, and the second shows how these obligations have been fulfilled.

Making Promises

The 1970s were noteworthy in Cold War history because it was during this time that relations were “normalized” between the United States on one hand, and the Soviet Union, China, and Japan on the other. By the end of the decade, however, Vietnam’s invasion of Kampuchea and the Soviets’ incursion in Afghanistan ended the period of détente. Considering the United States’ “over-commitment” in Southeast Asia in the past, many in the region now feared a lesser form of American engagement.²² Singapore Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew voiced his opinion thus,

The US has become a spectator in Indochina after being the principal participant until 1975. The Americans are not disinterested in the outcome, but they are careful to leave the burden of the costs of this new contest to these two adversaries. We, the non-communists of Southeast Asia, will have to carefully pick our way through the complexities of a new minefield of conflicting great power interests in Indochina.²³

²² Jusuf Wanandi, “Politico-Security Dimensions of Southeast Asia,” *Asian Survey* 17, 8 (August 1977): 771-792.

²³ Opening Address by His Excellency Mr. Lee Kuan Yew at the Fifteenth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, Singapore, 14-16 June 1982.

This concern was enunciated further in official discourse, and the rhetoric underscored the idea that Southeast Asia would not be able to sustain its progress, both in terms of addressing the threat posed by the Kampuchean crisis as well as in terms of economic growth, if the United States were to be protectionist in its stance:

Development and social justice in a secure and stable environment constitute our most fundamental goals. For our own development and internal security against the de-stabilizing effects of subversion and foreign infiltration, we assume full responsibility. It is the measure of ASEAN's progress that today it is widely regarded as one of the most rapidly growing regions in the developing world.

But in order to sustain this growth, we need the cooperation of the developed countries and we have thus in the last several years conducted dialogues with friendly countries, among them the United States. It is to the dialogue partners that ASEAN hopes for wider markets for their products, for investments, development aid, technological transfer and loans. Much remains to be done but the experience has been rewarding for ASEAN and beneficial to the dialogue countries.²⁴

By the same token,

Although we continue to hope that the United States will not succumb to protectionist pressures, we trust you will understand our fears in the light of developments in our bilateral trade.

....

We hope that your Government will maintain its support to international lending institutions such as the World Bank, the IDA, the IMF, and the ADB. A reduction in contributions to these institutions or new restrictions in the use of their funds must hamper the development efforts of Third World countries including ASEAN.²⁵

²⁴ Opening Statement of H.E. General Carlos P. Romulo at the ASEAN-US Dialogue, Manila, 20 June 1981.

²⁵ Statement by H.E. General Carlos P. Romulo at the ASEAN Dialogue with the United States, Singapore, 18 June 1982.

To this end, the United States reiterated its commitments to Southeast Asia in various fora. After all, it claimed that as one of the great powers, it has “a useful and important role to play in the restoration of stability.”²⁶ More specifically,

The United States continues to be the most powerful nation on Earth – militarily, economically, and politically. And I'm committed to preserving and even enhancing that power, not for its own sake, but for the sake of the values and the ideals of our Nation. We will make responsible use of that power where our interests are directly involved or where we can help to create conditions for peace and for the independent development of other nations and for the realization of the hopes of human beings who live there.²⁷

The idea of the US being a “global power” has proven to be an opportunity for the Southeast Asian states as they used this in the ASEAN-US dialogue as the justification for why the US ought to remain engaged in the peace and security concerns of the region:

Because it is a global power, the directions taken by the US whether in the field of arms control and disarmament, or in its political and economic relations with the Soviet Union, with the People's Republic of China, with Japan, with the Middle East States, and with the nations of South Asia, must perforce affect the security and stability of the developing ASEAN nations. For we all recognize that the security of the ASEAN Sub-region is intrinsically linked to the current global security situation and to developments in adjoining regions. It is the strategic elements of the seas joining Southeast Asia with the Pacific and Indian Oceans which provides this close connection.

We believe it important therefore for the United States to listen to the economic, political and security concerns of the ASEAN states, just as we believe it equally important for us to pay careful attention to American perceptions.

²⁶ “Atlanta, Georgia Remarks at a Special Convocation of the Georgia Institute of Technology,” dated 20 February 1979, John T. Woolley and Gerhard Peters, *The American Presidency Project* [online]. Santa Barbara, CA: University of California (hosted), Gerhard Peters (database). Available from the World Wide Web: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=31937>, accessed on 22 December 2008.

²⁷ “Foreign Policy Conference for Editors and Broadcasters Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session,” dated 22 February 1979, John T. Woolley and Gerhard Peters, *The American Presidency Project* [online]. Santa Barbara, CA: University of California (hosted), Gerhard Peters (database). Available from the World Wide Web: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=31941>, accessed on 21 December 2008.

....

Our desire for peace must be balanced by the quest for a system which can guarantee the legitimate security requirements of every state in the region. We believe that the United States, as a leader of the free world, has a key role to play in this quest.

We appreciate your government's assurance that it is committed to the defense of its ASEAN friends. We believe, moreover, that the United States' contribution to ASEAN's security lies not only in increased military assistance and sales to the ASEAN countries, but also in constructive and imaginative assistance which would accelerate the progress of ASEAN nations towards economic growth, stability and resiliency.²⁸

With worries permeating Southeast Asia-US relations, US Vice President Walter Mondale on his visit to the Philippines, Thailand, and Indonesia “[allayed fears] by stressing that the US intended to remain a power in the Asia-Pacific region.”²⁹ United States President Jimmy Carter also issued the following statement in a press conference,

Anyone with a knowledge of US history, geography, politics, and economics knows that the United States will not "retreat" from Asia. We are there. We are a major partner in the Pacific community. We are a Pacific nation. We firmly intend to remain one. Recent policy developments – normalization of relations with China, strengthening of ties with Japan, renegotiation of the Philippine base agreement, and our burgeoning economic ties with the region – all strengthen our relationship.

....

Our policy toward East Asia is based on several consistent principles designed to maintain stability, further prosperity, and take account of changes occurring in the region. The basic ingredients of that policy are well known to you: American determination to remain actively involved as a Pacific power; the cornerstone alliance with Japan; our firm security commitment to the Republic of Korea; improvement of relations with the People's Republic of China; strong support for ASEAN and ANZUS; encouragement of trade and economic development throughout the region.

²⁸ Statement by His Excellency General Carlos P. Romulo at the ASEAN Dialogue with the United States, Bangkok, 24-25 June 1983.

²⁹ Rodney Tasker, “Seeking a Sense of Direction,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 9 June 1978, 31.

....

Our Asian policy serves the interests of the United States and its Asian allies well. I have no plan to change it.³⁰

In a similar vein,

In any event, the United States is fully prepared to protect the vital interests of our people wherever they may be challenged. We are in close consultation with our friends and allies in the region, especially the members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the ASEAN nations. Their continued stability and prosperity are of great importance to us.

....

And let me repeat, in the Middle East, in Southeast Asia, and elsewhere in the world, we will stand by our friends. We will honor our commitments. And we will protect the vital interests of the United States, and you can depend on it.³¹

When Ronald Reagan took over the White House, the rhetoric of his administration remained the same as Carter's:

The front pages of newspapers these days may lead some to believe that the United States is so busy fighting brush fires and larger conflagrations around the world that it does not place value on its long-standing relationships in non-crisis areas. As a brush fire fighter for the Reagan Administration, I wish to disagree.³²

Similar themes pervaded Reagan's responses to questions from the media:

Q. On the Cambodian issue, the U.S. policy of passively supporting ASEAN is seen, even in ASEAN, as reflecting a less positive commitment to the region and even as a willingness for China to play a larger role in Southeast Asia (while the United States confronts the Soviet Union in Northeast Asia). Is there any justification for the feeling that, faced with the problems of relations with the Soviet Union, the Middle East, Central America,

³⁰ "Korean and East Asian Issues Questions and Answers for Publication in the Orient Press," dated 21 June 1979, John T. Woolley and Gerhard Peters, *The American Presidency Project* [online]. Santa Barbara, CA: University of California (hosted), Gerhard Peters (database). Available from the World Wide Web: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=32536>, accessed on 21 December 2008.

³¹ "Atlanta, Georgia Remarks at a Special Convocation of the Georgia Institute of Technology," dated 20 February 1979.

³² Statement by H.E. Mr. Walter J. Stossel at the ASEAN Dialogue with the United States, Singapore, 18 June 1982.

and Europe, the United States accords low priority to the former "dominoes" of Southeast Asia?

The President. Not at all. The United States has very important economic and security interests in Southeast Asia, particularly in the ASEAN [Association for South East Asian Nations] countries. ASEAN, as a group, is our fifth largest trading partner and the site of some \$10 billion in U.S. investment. We have bilateral security commitments to two ASEAN members, Thailand and the Philippines. If our involvement appears to be less than in other areas of the world, it is only because of the success the ASEAN countries have had in managing the economic and political issues they face, independent of a heavy U.S. presence.³³

Furthermore,

Q. There is some grumbling in the ASEAN States that, although you and your administration often talk of how important ASEAN is, you don't always back up those words.... Would you agree that the U.S. does overlook ASEAN's interests? And how would you respond to them when you meet the ASEAN foreign ministers in Bali?

The President. In fact, support for and cooperation with ASEAN remains the foundation of U.S. policy in Southeast Asia. Our relations with the ASEAN nations are based on our common dedication to the basic principles of freedom and independence and our shared recognition of the importance of free markets. My visit to Indonesia is intended to reaffirm the importance the United States places on our cooperation with ASEAN.³⁴

As the conflict in Kampuchea worsened, the United States continued to issue statements that stressed its support to ASEAN's leading role in addressing the problem. In 1981, Reagan conveyed to Thai Prime Minister Prem Tinsulanonda,

The nations in your region are cooperating to defend their security, and the way is open for ultimate success. I can assure you that America is ready to help you and ASEAN to maintain your independence against Communist aggression. The Manila Pact in

³³ "Written Responses to Questions Submitted by the Far Eastern Economic Review," dated 9 May 1984, John T. Woolley and Gerhard Peters, *The American Presidency Project* [online]. Santa Barbara, CA: University of California (hosted), Gerhard Peters (database). Available from the World Wide Web: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=39902>, accessed on 22 December 2008.

³⁴ "Written Responses to Questions Submitted by Southeast Asian Newspapers," dated 24 April 1986, John T. Woolley and Gerhard Peters, *The American Presidency Project* [online]. Santa Barbara, CA: University of California (hosted), Gerhard Peters (database). Available from the World Wide Web: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=37188>, accessed on 22 December 2008.

its clarification of our bilateral communique of 1962 is a living document. We will honor the obligations that it conveys.³⁵

Moreover, in Reagan's welcoming remarks to Indonesian President Suharto in 1982, he noted,

Since that time, the most important milestone for ASEAN has been the 1976 summit meeting in Bali, which demonstrated your personal commitment. Indeed, ASEAN now stands as a model for regional cooperation and, if I may use your term, Mr. President, of regional resilience. Let me assure you that support for ASEAN has been and will continue to be the keystone of American policy in Southeast Asia.

As we pursue our overall policy in Asia and the Pacific, we will never lose sight of ASEAN's concerns or neglect our commitments to the ASEAN countries.³⁶

The US continued to provide promises to ASEAN by emphasizing that it is a Pacific power and that it has an economic and military role to play in the development of Southeast Asia.³⁷ Such rhetoric was also embodied in US President Reagan's recounting of the "bear story" to the ASEAN ministers:

You know, there is a story back in the United States about two men out in the woods on a hike. They saw a large bear coming over the hill, directly toward them. And one of them sat down, took off his knapsack, reached in, got out a pair of tennis shoes, and started to put them on. And the other one looked and says, "You don't think that putting on those tennis shoes – you're going to be able to outrun that bear?" He said, "I don't have to outrun the bear; I only have to outrun you." Well, if there is a bear coming over the hill, unlike that hiker, the American people can be counted on to stick

³⁵ "Toast at a Luncheon Honoring Prime Minister Prem Tinsulanonda of Thailand," dated 6 October 1981, John T. Woolley and Gerhard Peters, *The American Presidency Project* [online]. Santa Barbara, CA: University of California (hosted), Gerhard Peters (database). Available from the World Wide Web: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=44343>, accessed on 22 December 2008.

³⁶ "Remarks at the Welcoming Ceremony for President Soeharto of Indonesia," dated 12 October 1982, John T. Woolley and Gerhard Peters, *The American Presidency Project* [online]. Santa Barbara, CA: University of California (hosted), Gerhard Peters (database). Available from the World Wide Web: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=43112>, accessed on 21 December 2008.

³⁷ "Radio Address to the Nation on the President's Trip to Indonesia and Japan, 26 April 1986," *The Public Papers of President Ronald W. Reagan*, Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, <http://www.reagan.utexas.edu/archives/speeches/1986/42686a.htm> (accessed on 8 July 2007); "Statement by Press Secretary Fitzwater on President Bush's Meeting with President Soeharto of Indonesia," dated 9 June 1989, John Woolley and Gerhard Peters, *The American Presidency Project* [online], Santa Barbara, CA: University of California (hosted), Gerhard Peters (database), available from the World Wide Web: (<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=17131>).

with our friends. We won't put on running shoes. Standing together, we can make certain the people of this region remain free and secure.³⁸

In sum, the rhetoric between the United States and Southeast Asia during this time suggested the language game of making promises. In the next section, how these promises are fulfilled is explored, particularly in light of the refugee crisis that resulted from the Kampuchea conflict, as well as ASEAN's leading role in finding a resolution to the issue.

Fulfilling Promises

The United States' fulfillment of its commitments to Southeast Asia may be analyzed along two axes. One concerns bilateral relations, and the case of Thailand is pertinent here. The second concerns the United States' involvement and participation in stemming the refugee crisis that resulted from the war in Kampuchea. Both instances point to the fact that the Southeast Asia-US relationship during the 1978-1991 period revolved around – and indeed, was founded on – certain promises and the fulfillment of these promises.

By virtue of being a member of the now-defunct SEATO, Thailand may be considered one of the United States' staunchest allies in the region. It was also a frontline state in the Indochina crisis, considering that it shares a border with Kampuchea. In early 1979, Carter signified the United States' commitment to Thailand's security:

We are very interested in seeing the integrity of Thailand protected, the borders not endangered or even threatened by the insurgent troops from Vietnam in Cambodia. We have joined in

³⁸ "Address to the Ministerial Meeting of the Association of South East Asian Nations in Bali, Indonesia, 1 May 1986," *The Public Papers of President Ronald W. Reagan*, Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, <http://www.reagan.utexas.edu/archives/speeches/1986/50186a.htm> (accessed on 8 July 2007).

with almost all other nations of the world in the United Nations in condemning the intrusion into Cambodia by Vietnamese forces. This obviously involves the adjacent country of Thailand.

Mr. Kriangsak [Thailand's Prime Minister] will be coming here to visit with me, and during that time, we will reassure him that our interests are in a stable and secure and peaceful Thailand. We have continuing trade relationships with Thailand. We provide them with some military arms for defensive purposes, as have been negotiated for a long period of time.³⁹

On another occasion, Carter also reiterated commitments made with Thailand via the Manila pact:

Our Nation is intensely interested and deeply committed to the integrity and to the freedom and the security of Thailand, and that your borders stay inviolate. And as you well know, the bilateral commitment and the multilateral commitments made in the Manila Pact are the bases for our security agreements with you and with your people....⁴⁰

The United States delivered on its promise by promptly carrying out the Thais' request for military equipment under an ongoing military assistance program.⁴¹ Thailand's military credits were also increased in 1979, and a further promise was made: "The US will consider sympathetically new Thai requests. The President also stated Congressional authorization would be sought for the cost-free transfer to Thailand of \$11.3 million of US-owned ammunition currently stored there."⁴² As the Kampuchean conflict worsened, an emergency airlift of small arms and artillery was approved. The White House reported:

³⁹ "The President's News Conference," dated 17 January 1979, John T. Woolley and Gerhard Peters, *The American Presidency Project* [online]. Santa Barbara, CA: University of California (hosted), Gerhard Peters (database). Available from the World Wide Web: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=32324>, accessed on 22 December 2008.

⁴⁰ "Visit of Prime Minister Kriangsak Choeuan of Thailand Remarks at the Welcoming Ceremony," dated 6 February 1979, John T. Woolley and Gerhard Peters, *The American Presidency Project* [online]. Santa Barbara, CA: University of California (hosted), Gerhard Peters (database). Available from the World Wide Web: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=31712>, accessed on 22 December 2008.

⁴¹ "Visit of Prime Minister Kriangsak of Thailand Joint Press Statement," dated 7 February 1979, John T. Woolley and Gerhard Peters, *The American Presidency Project* [online]. Santa Barbara, CA: University of California (hosted), Gerhard Peters (database). Available from the World Wide Web: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=31801>, accessed on 22 December 2008.

⁴² Ibid.

The decision was made in the wake of last week's Vietnamese attack across the Thai/Kampuchean border on refugee concentrations and Thai villages. The airlift responds to urgent Thai requests for accelerated delivery of equipment items purchased by Thailand under the foreign military sales (FMS) program. The airlift, which is expected to cost roughly \$1 million, will transport M-16 rifles, 106mm recoilless rifles, and 105mm howitzers.

The United States will also begin expediting surface shipments to Thailand of needed small arms and artillery ammunition and is making arrangements to accelerate the delivery by sea of 35 M48A5 tanks....⁴³

By the time Reagan came to power, the US Congress increased Thailand's foreign military sales credits by US\$30 million, which totaled to US\$80 million in 1982.⁴⁴ In 1984, Thailand made a request to buy US fighters. The Thais specifically wanted twelve F16A single-pilot jets, four F16B two-pilot aircrafts, and an option to buy four more F16As later on.⁴⁵ They reasoned that, "If Pakistan, a frontline state facing Afghanistan, [could] be granted 40 of the aircraft...why cannot frontline Thailand, facing 160,000-plus Vietnamese troops in Cambodia, have a similar defence capacity?"⁴⁶ The Americans were reluctant to approve the sale, considering that there was the question of flying skills, as well as the capability of the Thais to maintain the aircraft. Yet another concern was if the Thais could afford to buy and maintain them (each aircraft costs US\$32 million).⁴⁷ The decision to approve the request was left to hang for a few months. In the meantime, President Reagan announced that the United States would make available a number of M-48 tanks to

⁴³ "Airlift of Military Equipment to Thailand Announcement of the Airlift," dated 1 July 1980, John T. Woolley and Gerhard Peters, *The American Presidency Project* [online]. Santa Barbara, CA: University of California (hosted), Gerhard Peters (database). Available from the World Wide Web: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=44691>, accessed on 22 December 2008.

⁴⁴ Richard Nations, "Washington's Soft Line," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 3 April 1981, 10-11.

⁴⁵ Rodney Tasker, "Diplomatic Dog Fight," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 2 February 1984, 32.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

Thailand.⁴⁸ Finally, the US allowed the sale “if [Thailand] really insisted on having them.”⁴⁹

On the part of ASEAN, a statement was issued on 9 January 1979 “deploring” the Indochina conflict and “[reaffirming] that peace and stability are essential for the national development of the respective countries in the region of Southeast Asia.”⁵⁰ On the 12th of January, another statement was released that called for the withdrawal for Vietnamese forces given that the Kampuchean people have the right “to determine their future by themselves free from interference or influence from outside powers in the exercise of their rights of self-determination.”⁵¹ The question of refugees was also discussed in the ASEAN foreign ministers meeting. In particular, the ASEAN foreign ministers

...expressed their grave concern over the increasing influx of [refugees] into ASEAN countries. They emphasized that the influx is encountering severe economic, social, political and security problems particularly in the countries bearing the main brunt of the influx, such as Thailand and Malaysia. The ASEAN Foreign Ministers agreed on the urgency of intensifying joint ASEAN efforts to secure more expeditious and increased departure of such people for permanent settlement in Third Countries, as well as to secure a wider range of countries to offer permanent settlement opportunities to these people.⁵²

More importantly, ASEAN called on the international community’s obligation to lend a helping hand:

⁴⁸ “Remarks of the President and Prime Minister Prem Tinsulanonda of Thailand Following Their Meeting,” dated 14 April 1984, John T. Woolley and Gerhard Peters, *The American Presidency Project* [online]. Santa Barbara, CA: University of California (hosted), Gerhard Peters (database). Available from the World Wide Web: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=39762>, accessed on 22 December 2008.

⁴⁹ Nayan Chanda, “Take-Off for F16s,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 26 April 1984, 17-19.

⁵⁰ Statement by the Indonesian Foreign Minister as Chairman of the ASEAN Standing Committee on the Escalation of the Armed Conflict Between Vietnam and Kampuchea, Jakarta, 9 January 1979. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/5215.htm>, accessed on 10 May 2007.

⁵¹ Joint Statement [of] the Special ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting on the Current Political Development in the Southeast Asian Region, Bangkok, 12 January 1979. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/1873.htm>, accessed on 10 May 2007.

⁵² Joint Press Statement [of] the Special ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting on Indochinese Refugees, Bangkok, 13 January 1979. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/1882.htm>, accessed on 10 May 2007.

In this context the ASEAN Foreign Ministers welcomed the efforts of the UNHCR to solve the problem and urged the international community to give more meaningful support to the UNHCR as a following-up to the Consultative Meeting on Refugees and Displaced Person in Southeast Asia held in Geneva last December. The ASEAN Foreign Ministers urged the international community to recognize the heavy burden borne by ASEAN countries which have been forced by circumstances to become countries of transit.

[The ASEAN Foreign Ministers] stressed that all measures for the solution of the refugee problem must be based on guarantees that the countries of transit will not be burdened with any residual problem.⁵³

Also,

The ASEAN member-countries...are aware that the Indo-China refugee problem is a humanitarian problem which because of its magnitude and implications is no longer a problem of the Southeast Asia region alone but has become truly a matter of concern for the whole civilized world.⁵⁴

In the opening address of the Twelfth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting in 1979, Suharto asserted,

As to the refugee problem, we have in fact done a lot more. We have not only tried to offer our good offices, but we participated in concretely handling the problem. We have provided temporary accomodation [*sic*] to the refugees and we have made available a place as a processing centre prior to their settlement in other countries.... For the sake of fellow human beings and of humanitarianism, we are willing to do everything possible that are within our capability.

....

Well aware of the seriousness of this refugee problem, we would like to see the international community attach greater attention and take more concrete steps in order that this refugee problem could be settled thoroughly and in its entirety.⁵⁵

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Statement on Behalf of ASEAN by [the] Chairman of the ASEAN Standing Committee, Bangkok, 21 February 1979. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/5213.htm>, accessed on 10 May 2007.

⁵⁵ Opening Address by H.E. Soeharto at the Twelfth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, Bali, 28-30 June 1979.

By August of the same year, the ASEAN foreign ministers released a statement as a follow-up to the United Nations-sponsored meeting in Geneva on Refugees and Displaced Persons in Southeast Asia (held in July 1979). ASEAN officials justified its informal meeting thus:

The Foreign Ministers noted that the Geneva Meeting on refugees and displaced persons in Southeast Asia produced encouraging results which, however fell short of providing an overall and lasting solution of the refugee problem, in particular the question of the land cases which was inadequately treated. They welcomed the response of the government of Vietnam at the meeting to cooperate in tackling the problem at source and its decision to impose a moratorium on illegal departures. The Foreign Ministers strongly urged Vietnam to continue to prevent such departures, thereby discharging its responsibility to solve the problems at source.⁵⁶

When a new decade opened in 1980, events in Kampuchea took a turn for the worse. On 23 June 1980, reports were released detailing Vietnamese incursion along the Thai-Kampuchean border.⁵⁷ ASEAN condemned the incident and argued that “This irresponsible and dangerous act will have far-reaching and serious consequences and constitutes a grave and direct threat to the security of Thailand and

⁵⁶ Joint Statement of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers on the Indochinese Refugee Problem, Kuala Lumpur, 16 August 1979. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/5126.htm>, accessed on 23 February 2009.

⁵⁷ An ASEAN joint statement specified, “They noted that on 23 June 1980, at about 5 a.m., after attacking the encampments of Kampuchean civilians along the Thai-Kampuchean border, Vietnamese forces intruded deep inside Thai territory and attacked Ban Non Makmoon village in Prachinburi province and occupied the village. At that same time, another group of Vietnamese forces moved into Thai territory at Ban Non Sao-E, South of Ban Non Makmoon, and clashed with Thai military forces. [I]n these incidents, many innocent Kampuchean civilians and Thai villagers suffered heavy casualties before the intruders were repelled. [I]n the afternoon of 24 June 1980, a Thai reconnaissance plane and a Thai helicopter were shot down inside Thai territory. According to latest reports, the fighting still continues in some areas. The nature of these attacks demonstrates clearly that they were premeditated and coordinated.” From Joint Statement of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers on the Situation on the Thai-Kampuchean Border, Bangkok, 25 June 1980. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/5211.htm>, accessed on 23 February 2009. A Thai proposal was presented in 1983 for Vietnam to withdraw thirty kilometers from the border: “In April [Thai] Foreign Minister Siddhi Savetsila made a proposal to Vietnam to the effect that as a confidence building measure signifying Vietnam's sincerity in resolving the Kampuchean problem, Vietnamese forces should take a unilateral step in withdrawing thirty kilometers from the Thai- Kampuchean border. The proposed distance for the withdrawal is meant to put the Thai border outside Vietnamese artillery range.” From Statement by the Thai Foreign Ministers, Bangkok, 10 May 1983. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/5186.htm>, accessed on 23 February 2009.

the South East Asian region.”⁵⁸ Furthermore, ASEAN called on Vietnam to “desist from all such acts against Thailand.”⁵⁹ The organization likewise called on the United Nations to assist in the situation:

The Foreign Ministers were gravely concerned that these attacks would obstruct the repatriation of Kampuchean civilians carried out on a voluntary basis and in cooperation with the UNHCR. They reaffirmed that it is the legitimate right of these people – to return to their homeland to resume their livelihood, which is in full accord with humanitarian principles.

The Foreign Ministers fully supported Thailand's actions in the exercise of her legitimate right to self-defense and the steps taken by Thailand at the United Nations. They also reiterated their urgent request to the United Nations secretary-general for the stationing of United Nations observer teams on the Thai side of the Thai-Kampuchean border.⁶⁰

This border incident was exacerbated by India's decision to recognize the Heng Samrin regime in Kampuchea because “The decision undermines the search, and weakens the initiatives, by ASEAN for a durable political solution to the Kampuchean problem that would bring real peace and stability to Southeast Asia.”⁶¹ A month later, the fighting spilled over to the Thai-Lao border. Afterwards, ASEAN reiterated the necessity of implementing the United Nations General Assembly Resolution No. 34/22, which called for Vietnamese withdrawal from Kampuchea.⁶² When proposals have been presented regarding discussions between ASEAN on one

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid. In particular, ASEAN's official position was, “The Foreign Ministers registered their grave concern at the failure of the Vietnamese leaders to honour their repeated pledges to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Thailand. These latest acts of aggression against Thailand have further undermined Vietnam's own credibility and have seriously undercut the trust and confidence which ASEAN has patiently attempted to forge with Vietnam.”

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Statement by the [Philippine Foreign Minister] as Chairman of the ASEAN Standing Committee and [on] Behalf of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers, New York, 9 July 1980. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/5208.htm>, accessed on 23 February 2009.

⁶² Statement by the [Philippine Foreign Minister] as Chairman of the ASEAN Standing Committee, Manila, 1 August 1980. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/5207.htm>, accessed on 23 February 2009.

side and the Heng Samrin government on the other, ASEAN officials invoked their support of the principles enshrined in the Non-Aligned Movement:

A number of seemingly reasonable proposals about peace, friendship and cooperation amongst countries in Southeast Asia have lately been made and most recently statements proposing discussions between ASEAN on one side and [...] Laos and the illegal regime of Hang Samrin on the [other]. These proposals ... [present] a seemingly conciliatory approach to the problem, ignore the root cause of the problem the blatant breach in Kampuchea of the fundamental principles of the Non-Aligned Movement and the principles of the U.N. Charter.

The ASEAN States find these proposals unacceptable. Not only [are] these proposals ... misleading in character, [but] they also seek to justify and perpetuate the continued Vietnam[ese] military occupation of Kampuchea and to deny the right of the people of Kampuchea to determine their own future free from outside interference and coercion. They also disregard world opinion as expressed by the United Nations General Assembly in 1979 and 1980, when a large majority of Members of the Non-Aligned Movement made known their clear stand in opposition to Vietnam's military intervention in Kampuchea and their continued military occupation of the country.⁶³

Similarly, ASEAN refused to accept the validity of the 1981 Kampuchean elections.⁶⁴

Further condemnations and calls for help from the international community were issued by ASEAN in the course of the 1980s and the early 1990s.⁶⁵ In particular, this joint statement read:

⁶³ Statement by the [Philippine Foreign Minister] as Chairman of the ASEAN Standing Committee, Manila, 6 February 1981. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/5205.htm>, accessed on 23 February 2009.

⁶⁴ Statement by the Chairman of the ASEAN Standing Committee on the So-Called Elections in Kampuchea, Manila, 27 March 1981. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/5201.htm>, accessed on 23 February 2009.

⁶⁵ Joint Communique of the Thirteenth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, Kuala Lumpur, 25-26 June 1980. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/1771.htm>, accessed on 10 May 2007; An Appeal for Kampuchea Independence by the ASEAN Foreign Ministers, Jakarta, 20 September 1983. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/5180.htm>, accessed on 23 February 2009; The Informal Meeting of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers to Discuss the Recent Political and Military Developments with regard to the Kampuchean Problem, Jakarta, 8 May 1984. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/5175.htm>, accessed on 23 February 2009; Joint Statement of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers on the Kampuchean Problem, Jakarta, 9 July 1984. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/5177.htm>, accessed on 23 February 2009; ASEAN Statement on the Kampuchean Conflict, Kuala Lumpur, 10 January 1985. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/5172.htm>, accessed on 23 February 2009.

The ASEAN Foreign Ministers encouraged the Five Permanent Members of the United Nations Security Council to continue and intensify their efforts. ASEAN will continue to coordinate its efforts with the Permanent Five and the United Nations Secretary-General. They expressed the hope that the two Co-Chairman would be able to reconvene the Paris International Conference on Cambodia as soon as feasible. The Cambodian people have waited too long for a just and durable peace settlement. They deserve it now.⁶⁶

The plight of the refugees was also raised, and references to the United Nations and its permanent members were constantly invoked to assist in this humanitarian crisis.⁶⁷

By 1986, ASEAN discussed and supported the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea's (CGDK) eight-point proposal:

The Foreign Ministers supported the Eight-point proposal as it reaffirms ASEAN's resolve that the Kampuchean problem has to be solved by the Kampuchean people themselves. [I]t is a viable proposal originating from the Kampuchean people themselves with the merit that it can serve as a constructive framework for negotiation. For this reason the Foreign Ministers strongly urged the support of the international community for the Eight-point proposal as it is reasonable and reflects a genuine effort by the CGDK to find a just and durable solution to the Kampuchean problem.⁶⁸

In sum, ASEAN's response to the Kampuchean problem and its ensuing refugee crisis was to constantly and continuously refer to general international principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter, which subsequently necessitated – if only by

⁶⁶ Joint Statement of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers on the Cambodian Problem, Jakarta, 23 July 1990. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/5103.htm>, accessed on 23 February 2009. Also, Joint Statement of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers on the Cambodian Question, Kuala Lumpur, 19 July 1991. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/5101.htm>, accessed on 23 February 2009.

⁶⁷ Joint Statement [by] the ASEAN Foreign Ministers on Indochinese Refugees, Singapore, 14 June 1987. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/5122.htm>, accessed on 23 February 2009; Joint Statement [by] the ASEAN Foreign Ministers on Indochinese Refugees; Bangkok, 4 July 1988. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/5114.htm>, accessed on 23 February 2009; Joint Statement by the ASEAN Ministers on the Problem of [the] Vietnamese [*sic*] Boat People, Jakarta, 24 July 1990. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/4996.htm>, accessed on 23 February 2009.

⁶⁸ ASEAN Statement on the CGDK Eight-Point Proposal, Bali, 29 April 1986. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/5153.htm>, accessed on 23 February 2009.

default – the participation of the UN and its five permanent members, particularly the United States.

In response, the United States reiterated its commitment thus,

We will continue our efforts, both directly with the countries involved and through the United Nations, to secure an end to the fighting in the region, to bring about a withdrawal of Vietnam forces from Cambodia and of Chinese forces from Vietnam, and to gain the restoration of the independence and integrity of all nations involved.⁶⁹

In fulfillment of its promise, it doubled its intake of refugees, with the total in 1979 reaching to 168,000.⁷⁰ Carlos P. Romulo, the Philippines' foreign minister, commended this action in his statement during the 1979 ASEAN-US dialogue: "Knowing President Carter's difficulties with the US Congress, this was a courageous act. But on this point, I have been informed that there is complete understanding between President Carter and his Congress. This speaks well of the entire American people."⁷¹ Cyrus Vance, the United States' secretary of state, also stated this:

I wish to stress my government's strong support for the internationally recognized principle of temporary shelter and asylum. ASEAN's commitment to this and other humanitarian principles in the past is one of the reasons ASEAN has gained such strong support. Based in part on that commitment, a major international effort is now developing to help ASEAN meet the serious problems caused by the refugees.

You can count on continuing American help in dealing with the refugee crisis. We are committed to this course because of our deep concern for the suffering involved and because of our deep commitment to the well being of the nations of ASEAN.

....

We are increasing and accelerating military assistance for individual ASEAN states. And we will continue to strengthen our

⁶⁹ "Atlanta, Georgia Remarks at a Special Convocation of the Georgia Institute of Technology," dated 20 February 1979.

⁷⁰ Statement by H.E. Mr. Cyrus Vance at the Meeting Between the ASEAN/United States of America Foreign Ministers, Bali, 2 July 1979.

⁷¹ Statement by H.E. General Carlos P. Romulo on ASEAN/US Cooperation, Bali, 2 July 1979.

overall military capabilities in Asia, the Pacific and the Indian Ocean.⁷²

Apart from this, the US pledged US\$7 million for humanitarian aid, of which US\$2 million would be drawn from the United States Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance Fund, and US\$5 million from Food for Peace.⁷³ The said US\$2 million was later released under Presidential Determination No. 80-5.⁷⁴ Carter further ordered the release of additional relief efforts:

Here is what we must do, and this is what we will do: First, as to the Red Cross and United Nations joint appeal, I'm today directing that \$3 million in existing refugee aid funds be made available immediately to UNICEF and to the International Committee of the Red Cross, in addition to the \$2 million that I ordered transferred last week.

I'm urgently asking the Congress to enact a supplemental Food for Peace appropriation that will make available \$20 million in commodities for use in Kampuchea, subject only to assurances that it will reach its destination, that is, the human beings who are suffering. This is in addition to the \$5 million in food that I pledged for this purpose last week.

Today I'm also directing that \$9 million in U.S. refugee assistance funds go to meet about one-third of the total cost of Thailand's program to help starving refugees who are entering Thailand from Kampuchea. I commend the Thai Government on its decision to admit more refugees. They have already received tens of thousands of them.

Third, I've told Chairman Zablocki in the House and cosponsors that the administration supports their proposal to authorize \$30 million for the next phase of relief in Kampuchea. This would enable us, as a total, to raise our contributions to the continuing

⁷² Statement by H.E. Mr. Cyrus Vance, 2 July 1979. Emphasis on the original.

⁷³ "Aid for Kampuchians Statement Announcing United States Relief Effort Pledge," dated 15 October 1979, John T. Woolley and Gerhard Peters, *The American Presidency Project* [online]. Santa Barbara, CA: University of California (hosted), Gerhard Peters (database). Available from the World Wide Web: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=31531>, accessed on 27 December 2008.

⁷⁴ "Aid for Kampuchians Memorandum From the President," dated 13 November 1979, John T. Woolley and Gerhard Peters, *The American Presidency Project* [online]. Santa Barbara, CA: University of California (hosted), Gerhard Peters (database). Available from the World Wide Web: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=31678>, accessed on 22 December 2008.

program for the alleviation of suffering in Kampuchea as high as \$70 million.⁷⁵

ASEAN's efforts were noticeable, despite the fact that no resolution has yet been found at the time. A US statement read as follows,

The United States supports ASEAN's...efforts to achieve a comprehensive political settlement of the problem in Kampuchea based on the complete withdrawal of Vietnamese forces and internationally supervised elections. These principles have been adopted by the great majority of the world's nations in the declaration of the UN-sponsored International Conference on Kampuchea (ICK) and successive resolutions of the U.N. General Assembly.

....

The President will reaffirm our opposition to the Vietnamese occupation of Kampuchea and our support for ASEAN's efforts to achieve a settlement which will restore Kampuchea's independence. He will also seek their views on the present situation in Kampuchea and prospects for the current UN General Assembly. We have no plans to provide military assistance to the coalition or any of its members.⁷⁶

American support to ASEAN's call for the withdrawal of Vietnamese forces in Kampuchea was reechoed in meetings between ASEAN and the US:

We provide political, diplomatic and humanitarian support to the non-Communist resistance. We of course provide no assistance whatsoever to the Khmer Rouge, whose history of atrocities we continue to abhor. We are looking at ways, consistent with your leading role, in which we might provide more support, and we will consult with you.

In support of our shared goal of a negotiated settlement in Cambodia, the United States also will maintain trade restrictions and deny Vietnam the benefits of normalized relations until Hanoi is ready to live in peace with its neighbours. Specifically, Vietnam

⁷⁵ "Aid for Kampuchians Remarks Announcing Additional Relief Efforts," dated 24 October 1979, John T. Woolley and Gerhard Peters, *The American Presidency Project* [online]. Santa Barbara, CA: University of California (hosted), Gerhard Peters (database). Available from the World Wide Web: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=31581>, accessed on 27 December 2008.

⁷⁶ "Statement by Deputy Press Secretary Speakes [sic] on the Situation in Kampuchea," dated 22 September 1983, John T. Woolley and Gerhard Peters, *The American Presidency Project* [online]. Santa Barbara, CA: University of California (hosted), Gerhard Peters (database). Available from the World Wide Web: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=40511>, accessed on 21 December 2008.

will have to agree to a settlement in Cambodia acceptable to ASEAN, which includes the negotiated withdrawal of its forces. If Hanoi desires better relations with other countries, then let it agree to a satisfactory settlement in Cambodia. We are standing ready to play our constructive role.⁷⁷

In the same manner,

Let me note an important parallel: Both Cambodia and Central America are cases of Soviet-backed expansionism; both must be of concern to us. Vietnamese aggression in Cambodia has an immediate meaning for ASEAN states, which are directly affected by this threat to the peace and stability of the region. Soviet and Cuban-backed actions by Nicaragua have a comparable importance for the freedom and stability of Central American democracies.

....

Just as we fully support ASEAN's efforts against unacceptable Vietnamese expansionism, we seek ASEAN's support – in the United Nations and elsewhere – for efforts to resist a comparable threat in the Western Hemisphere.

....

For that reason, we welcome ASEAN's diplomatic efforts to negotiate a solution to the Cambodian problem. Your leadership since December, 1978 in putting forth reasonable proposals to end the suffering of the Khmer people and give them self-determination has garnered global proposals....

The United States has consistently supported your efforts. We will continue to do so.⁷⁸

Ultimately, the Kampuchean issue dominated Southeast Asia-US relations until its resolution in the early 1990s, which coincided with the end of the Cold War. The efforts both sides have exerted in this and other issues, not to mention their shared experiences, led some ASEAN officials to liken the Southeast Asia-US relationship to a marriage. The lesson, as Singapore Foreign Minister S. Dhanabalan pointed out in 1986, is to never take such a relationship for granted:

⁷⁷ Statement by H.E. Mr. George Shultz at the ASEAN-United States Discussions, Kuala Lumpur, 12-13 July 1985.

⁷⁸ Statement by H.E. Mr. George P. Shultz at the ASEAN-United States Dialogue Session, Manila, 26-28 June 1986.

I am certainly not suggesting that ASEAN-US relations [need to] face a crisis or that serious problems divide us. On the contrary, perhaps the real problem is that there are no big and obvious problems. It is therefore all too easy to seduce ourselves into believing that all we need do is to go on in our customary ways. Mr. Secretary [George P. Shultz], I understand that you have been married for forty years. Your [*sic*] therefore do not need me to remind you that the most invidious and corrosive influence on any human relationship is to take that relationship for granted. We in ASEAN do not expect candy and kisses every day, nor, I am sure, do you. But we should certainly consciously work together to keep our relationship fresh and vital. We are committed to building a brighter future for our peoples. Both ASEAN and the US share a stake in the economic prosperity and the political stability of Southeast Asia. We are hopeful that we can move ahead together with confidence and certainty.⁷⁹

In conclusion, the language games that have been played out between Southeast Asia and the United States during the 1978-1991 period revolved around commitments, both in terms of making those promises and delivering on those obligations. The logic behind these games discloses the salience of commissives or commitment-rules, and supports the claim that a heteronomous form of rule predominated this epoch. Earlier in the chapter, it was established that heteronomy takes place when (1) commitment-rules permeate the speech acts and the language games of the relevant actors and (2) autonomy is assumed. The 1978-1991 period demonstrated the first part of this twofold definition of heteronomy. Commissives have indeed been dominant in the speeches and rhetoric of official discourses. Interestingly, these commitments centered on the Kampuchean problem and the ramifications thereof. While there were fears in the late 1970s that the United States would lessen its presence and engagement with the Southeast Asian region, the Americans reiterated their commitments in various fora. In order to ensure that the United States would be obliged to remain in the region, the Southeast Asian nations

⁷⁹ Statement by H.E. Mr. S. Dhanabalan at the ASEAN-United States Dialogue Session, Manila, 26-28 June 1986.

played the great-power card: since the United States is one of the great powers in the world, it has the responsibility of keeping the peace. The United States has indeed kept its promises, as seen in its actions in stemming the refugee crisis, and in supporting ASEAN's leading role in the UN and other venues. Admittedly, other issues pervaded Southeast Asia-US relations during this time, not least of all was the burgeoning economic relationship documented in the ASEAN-US dialogue, but the themes of making and keeping promises regarding Kampuchea ran along the official literature, and arguably, it is these themes that fortified the argument that this period was indeed heteronomous. Commitments are, however, only one side of heteronomy. These commitments, usually documented in formal agreements, presuppose that the actors involved are acting autonomously. The consequences of these are discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

HETERONOMY REDUX 1992-2000

The end of the Cold War is oftentimes considered as a landmark in international history. However, the line that divides the Cold War from the post-Cold War era is perhaps clearer in Europe than it is in other parts of the world, not least in Southeast Asia. The security arrangement in the Asia-Pacific relied for the most part on the US-orchestrated hubs and spokes model and forward deployment.¹ Such an arrangement, oftentimes referred to as the San Francisco System, continued to exist in East Asia *despite* the end of the Cold War.² This has led one author to contend that “...the end of bipolarity was not simultaneously accompanied by the end of communist rule in the Asia-Pacific” as China, Vietnam, and North Korea remained staunch supporters, although they admittedly and to some extent embraced capitalism.³

It is this disjuncture that bred uncertainty about what this new era would mean to actors in the Southeast Asian region. The presence of rising powers such as China exacerbated these concerns, especially since the members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) are “lesser powers in a regional and global system dominated by larger ones.”⁴ When faced with such uncertainty, actors in general

¹ Sarasin Viraphol, “A Post-Cold War Architecture for Peace and Security,” in *The Making of a Security Community in the Asia-Pacific*, eds. Bunn Nagara and K.S. Balakrishnan (Kuala Lumpur: Institute of Strategic and International Studies, 1994), 89-95.

² Kimie Hara, “Rethinking the ‘Cold War’ in the Asia-Pacific,” *The Pacific Review* 12, 4 (1999): 515-536.

³ Michael Yahuda, *The International Politics of the Asia-Pacific*, 2nd ed. (London and New York: Routledge Curzon, 2004), 212.

⁴ Alice Ba, “Between China and America: ASEAN’s Great Power Dilemmas,” in *China, the United States, and Southeast Asia: Contending Perspectives on Politics, Security, and Economics*, eds. Evelyn Goh and Sheldon W. Simon (New York: Routledge, 2008), 107.

reduce risks by “exchanging commitments about future conduct.”⁵ For members of ASEAN, they embarked on multilateral arrangements in both the economic and security spheres. Some of these arrangements are the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) in 1989 and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in 1993. Focus is given on the latter as the dissertation limits itself to security relations.

The ARF in many ways symbolized the institutionalization of commitment, and as this chapter contends, it bound outside powers to Southeast Asia to the point that it created a structure in favor of ASEAN. While structurally sound on paper, the arrangement was put to the test in practice when it was faced with issues ranging from the South China Sea dispute, the enlargement of ASEAN, the Asian financial crisis, and East Timor’s secession from Indonesia, among others. In other words, regional security arrangements have put ASEAN on top of a proverbial chain of command. At the same time, however, putting ASEAN at the helm suggests that there is asymmetry between the ASEAN and the non-ASEAN members of the ARF, and this has become apparent in ASEAN’s way of addressing crises. By virtue of such language games that are founded on the notion of agreements, commitments, or promises, Southeast Asia-US relations in the 1992-2000 period may be argued to be rife with commissives or instruction-rules, which are the basic parameters of a heteronomous type of rule. This logic of language games-rules-rule is based on the paradigm of rule that argues that the relationships of states are the result of the constant participation, negotiation, and/or bargaining of the parties involved. In this regard, the first part of this chapter briefly reviews the twofold definition of heteronomy, and the second explores the language game of binding outside powers into the security architecture of the Southeast Asian region.

⁵ Nicholas Greenwood Onuf, *World of Our Making: Rules and Rule in Social Theory and International Relations* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1989), 214.

Heteronomy's Twofold Definition

The previous chapter detailed that heteronomy contains a twofold aspect. One is in regard to the pervasiveness of commissives or instruction-rules. Expressions of such include making promises or commitments and/or entering into obligations. The second aspect of heteronomy deals with the notion of autonomy. More specifically, heteronomy discloses how thin the concept of autonomy really is. States presuppose that they are autonomous, and in order to reduce risks and minimize the effects of uncertainty, they enter into agreements with each other. These agreements institutionalize their commitments and articulate in detail the nature of their obligations towards each other. Upon closer examination, these promises also regulate their behavior and constrain their actions, thereby guaranteeing asymmetric relations.

The prime example of heteronomy is lord-serf relations, although this by no means equates Southeast Asia-US relations to feudalism. Believing themselves autonomous, a lord and a serf enter into an agreement where the latter works the land in exchange for security that the former can provide. Here, asymmetry is guaranteed in the sense that the distinction between who is a lord and who is a serf is institutionalized in their agreement. In the same way, Southeast Asia-US relations in the 1992-2000 period are heteronomous because the states involved entered into regional security arrangements like the ARF in order to reduce the uncertainty of the immediate post-Cold War era. The arrangement also made sure that ASEAN and the ASEAN way were privileged, and accordingly, it drew a line between the ASEAN and the non-ASEAN states.

It would be rather easy to claim that this period is characterized by hegemony. After all, the four criteria of hegemony (super-ordinate actors, redefinition of social reality, subordinate actors, and consent) are also present here. However, one must recall that the super-ordinate actors' redefinition of social reality rests on the assumption that another "reality" exists, presumably a reality that an "enemy" regards as true and valid. Hence, such a "reality" needs to be redefined in favor of the super-ordinate actors. This factor is absent in Southeast Asia-US relations in the 1992-2000 period. If anything, Southeast Asia's insistence on the privileging of ASEAN and the ASEAN way was not so much borne out of a need to contradict an "enemy" but rather to ensure that it participates in the crafting of its own security environment. Hierarchy is also a possible type of rule during this period. On the surface, the manner in which ASEAN is placed on top is testament to the basic parameters of a hierarchic rule. However, it is not suitable in this period for the simple reason that the threat or the use of force is not present. Hence, heteronomy provides the nuances of the dynamics pervading Southeast Asia-US relations from 1992 to 2000. These dynamics are demonstrated in the next section on the language game of binding outside powers into Southeast Asia.

Language Games

The 1992-2000 period spells a language game that seemed to bind extra-regional powers into the security architecture of Southeast Asia. ASEAN achieved this in two ways. The first is in regard to the institutionalization of the ARF, while the second concerns the inclusion of states from outside the region into ASEAN's

Treaty of Amity and Cooperation.⁶ The commitments institutionalized in these agreements were, however, put to the test in the face of regional crises. Accordingly, this section consists of two sub-parts: one traces the origins and structure of the ARF, and the second discusses the issues.

Structure

The Asia-Pacific in general faced a host of concerns in the early 1990s. As far as Southeast Asia was concerned, the short-term sources of apprehension rested on the outcome of the Spratlys dispute, China's rise, the United States' Asia policy, and the Asian arms race, while concerns over the long run included Myanmar, what the post-Cold War Asian system would look (or be) like, and the nexus between economics and security.⁷ The new era forced the ASEAN member states "to ask themselves what they want the association to mean."⁸ Some scholars suggested that ASEAN could pursue either of these options: to enlarge, to cooperate based on a functional approach, or to engage in multilateralism to address new security issues. If enlargement were to be pursued, including the Indochina states in ASEAN would be an additional burden at a time when everyone was still grappling with intra-ASEAN economic cooperation.⁹ Furthermore, enlargement would weaken relations with external dialogue partners. Functional cooperation, on the other hand, seemed a more viable option, if only because this would buy member states some time to adjust their

⁶ The TAC was amended in 1987 and in 1998 in order to allow non-ASEAN members to accede to it. See Protocol Amending the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, Philippines, 15 December 1987. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/3632.htm>, accessed on 11 January 2009. See also Second Protocol Amending the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, Manila, 25 July 1998. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/3633.htm>, accessed on 11 January 2009.

⁷ Thomas W. Robinson, "Trends in the Post-Cold War Balance in the Asia-Pacific Region," in *The Making of a Security Community in the Asia-Pacific*, eds. Bunn Nagara and K.S. Balakrishnan (Kuala Lumpur: Institute of Strategic and International Studies, 1994), 97-126.

⁸ Michael Vatikiotis, "Yankee Please Stay," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 13 December 1990, 30.

⁹ Muthiah Alagappa, "Bringing Indochina into ASEAN," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 29 June 1989, 21.

relations.¹⁰ Another option for the organization was to engage in multilateralism.¹¹ Multilateral forums did indeed seem to take root in East Asia, as indicated by the multiplicity of institutions that cropped up in just a few years. The APEC was established in 1989 and the membership boasted of twenty-one Pacific Rim countries or regions. Initially, the ASEAN nations opposed the creation of APEC. Instead, Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad proposed the East Asia Economic Group (EAEG), supposedly a free trade zone that would exclude extra-regional nations such as the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. This proposal, however, met with severe criticisms on the part of Japan and the United States.

In terms of the security sphere, the idea of security organizations also started to take root in Asia. Around 1989 and 1990, Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans and Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs Joe Clark proposed arrangements based on cooperative security or the prevention of the emergence of threats. In particular, Evans advocated the creation of a Council for Security and Cooperation in Asia (CSCA), which was based on the Council for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).¹² Meanwhile, Clark forwarded the North Pacific Cooperative Security Dialogue, but Japan and ASEAN rejected the scheme.¹³ Despite this, the ASEAN foreign ministers were in agreement in terms of the need for a forum or a process where security issues could be discussed. In fact, they “were of the view that the security situation in the area required careful observation at all times. In that light, they agreed on the need to conduct [a] dialogue on the subject within the context

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Leszek Buszynski, “Southeast Asia in the Post-Cold War Era: Regionalism and Security,” *Asian Survey* 32, 9 (September 1992): 830-847.

¹² Shaun Narine, *Explaining ASEAN: Regionalism in Southeast Asia* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2002).

¹³ Suelo Sudo, *The International Relations of Japan and Southeast Asia: Forging a New Regionalism* (New York: Routledge, 2002).

of the Declaration of ASEAN Concord, Bali, 1976 and the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality of 1971.”¹⁴

By 1991, the ASEAN Institutes of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) released a report entitled *A Time for Initiative* and called for the hosting of a Conference on Stability and Peace in the Asia-Pacific after the annual meetings between ASEAN foreign ministers and their dialogue partners.¹⁵ Aiming to hold constructive discussions on issues concerning stability and peace, the conference would regularly include the participation and insights of China, Russia, North Korea, and Vietnam. The role of the ASEAN-ISIS networks proved invaluable during the early 1990s as they “[explored and developed] ideas for promoting and enhancing security cooperation among ASEAN members.”¹⁶ They and other nongovernmental bodies – not least of which was the holding an informal meeting of academics and ASEAN citizens held in Manila on 30-31 May 1994 that became the basis for the statement called *Southeast Asia Beyond Year 2000: A Statement of Vision* – “provided useful ideas and proposals for political and security cooperation in the region.”¹⁷

It was also roughly around 1991 when Japan Foreign Minister Taro Nakayama proposed a multilateral security forum, and that the platform of the ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conferences could be used as a forum for security discussions.¹⁸ However, the ASEAN-PMC was a product of the Cold War architecture to gain

¹⁴ Joint Communique of the Twenty-Third ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, Jakarta, 24-25 July 1990. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/1058.htm>, accessed on 6 January 2009.

¹⁵ “A Time for Initiative,” *ASEAN-ISIS Monitor*, 1 (July 1991).

¹⁶ Joint Communique of the Twenty-Sixth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, Singapore, 23-24 July 1993. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/2009.htm>, accessed on 6 January 2009.

¹⁷ Joint Communique of the Twenty-Seventh ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, Bangkok, 22-23 July 1994. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/2086.htm>, accessed on 6 January 2009; Joint Communique of the Twenty-Eighth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, Bandar Seri Begawan, 29-30 July 1995. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/2087.htm>, accessed on 6 January 2009.

¹⁸ The PMC is held after the annual ASEAN Ministerial Meetings involving the member states’ foreign ministers and their dialogue partners.

economic cooperation with the Western states. Thus, new security arrangements needed to be distinguished from the ASEAN-PMC while at the same time ensuring that “predictable and constructive relationships in the Asia-Pacific region” are developed.¹⁹ In short, it is these factors – proposals based on notions of cooperative security, the role of the ASEAN-ISIS networks, and using the PMC process as a forum – that became the building blocks of what became the ARF.

The ARF was established in 1993 via the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting and the Post-Ministerial Conference, and was inaugurated in 1994. In its concept paper, the ARF acknowledged the challenges it must face in the post-Cold War era:

To successfully preserve and enhance the peace and prosperity of the region, the ARF must dispassionately analyse the key challenges facing the region. Firstly, it should acknowledge that periods of rapid economic growth are often accompanied by significant shifts in power relations. This can lead to conflict. The ARF will have to carefully manage these transitions to preserve the peace. Secondly, the region is remarkably diverse. The ARF should recognise and accept the different approaches to peace and security and try to forge a consensual approach to security issues.

Thirdly, the region has a residue [of] unresolved territorial and other differences. Any one of these could spark conflagration that could undermine the peace and prosperity of the region. Over time, the ARF will have to gradually defuse these potential problems.²⁰

Meeting these challenges entailed that ASEAN be the “primary driving force of the ARF.”²¹ The same theme is also incorporated in other ASEAN documents:

ASEAN shall continue to play a central role, in cooperation with other participants, in developing the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) into an effective and meaningful process for ensuring peace

¹⁹ Alan Collins, *Security and Southeast Asia: Domestic, Regional, and Global Issues* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2003), 172.

²⁰ The ASEAN Regional Forum: A Concept Paper, 1995. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/3635.htm>, accessed on 16 January 2009.

²¹ Ibid.

and security in the Asia-Pacific region as conceived in the ASEAN Concept Paper on the ARF....²²

[The ASEAN Ministers] reemphasised ASEAN's role as the primary driving force of the ARF which is a high-level consultative forum to facilitate open dialogue and discussions on political and security issues of common interest and concern in the Asia-Pacific region.²³

A successful-ARF requires the active, full and equal participation and cooperation of all participants. However, ASEAN undertakes the obligation to be the primary driving force....²⁴

We reaffirm our view of ASEAN as indispensable to regional peace and prosperity, an association with a history of demonstrated dynamism and close cooperation, a force for peace and stability in our part of the world.²⁵

The 1998 Hanoi Plan of Action also detailed the central role that ASEAN must play in the ARF:

8.1 Maintain ASEAN's chairmanship in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) process.

8.2 Undertake, actively and energetically, measures to strengthen ASEAN's role as the primary driving force in the ARF, including directing the ASEAN Secretary-General to provide the necessary support and services to the ASC Chairman in coordinating ARF activities.²⁶

Given the abovementioned challenges and the necessity of placing ASEAN in the so-called driver's seat of the ARF, the organization laid down a "gradual evolutionary approach" in addressing issues. This approach consists of three tiers: the promotion of confidence-building measures, the development of preventive

²² Bangkok Summit Declaration of 1995, Bangkok, 14-15 December 1995. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/2081.htm>, accessed on 6 January 2009.

²³ Joint Communique of the Twenty-Eighth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, Bandar Seri Begawan, 29-30 July 1995.

²⁴ Chairman's Statement on the Second ASEAN Regional Forum, Brunei Darussalam, 1 August 1995. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/2106.htm>, accessed on 6 January 2009.

²⁵ Hanoi Declaration of 1998, Hanoi, 16 December 1998. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/686.htm>, accessed on 7 January 2009.

²⁶ Hanoi Plan of Action, Hanoi, 15 December 1998. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/687.htm>, accessed on 7 January 2009.

diplomacy mechanisms, and the development of conflict resolution mechanisms.²⁷

The attainment of confidence-building measures relies on the adoption and expansion of the ASEAN practices of consultation and consensus (*musyawarah* and *mufakat*). These practices are based on ASEAN's experiences and could justifiably "[provide] a valuable and proven guide for the ARF."²⁸ Furthermore, "In the Asian context, there is some merit to the ASEAN approach. It emphasises the need to develop trust and confidence among neighbouring states."²⁹ ASEAN thus took the task of guaranteeing that consultation and consensus would be the norm because "[in] a rapidly changing world, ASEAN shall remain bold, forward looking, dynamic and nimble in order to safeguard the vital interests of its diverse members...."³⁰ Years later, ASEAN would look back and argue that it was precisely the ASEAN way that led to economic growth. The Hanoi Declaration of 1998 notes,

ASEAN's success in promoting regional peace and stability, based on the cardinal principles of mutual respect, non-interference, consensus, dialogue and consultation. This has contributed substantially to many years of rapid economic growth and social development for our nations. We will not be complacent in the maintenance of regional peace but will seek to constantly reinforce the ties among us.³¹

Indeed, the ASEAN way became increasingly seen as unique to the region to the point that a slew of scholarly work was devoted to studying it.³²

One way of ensuring the expansion of the processes of consultation and consensus was to allow non-ASEAN countries to accede to the 1976 Treaty of Amity

²⁷ The ASEAN Regional Forum: A Concept Paper.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Bangkok Summit Declaration of 1995.

³¹ Hanoi Declaration of 1998.

³² Amitav Acharya, *Multilateralism: Is There an Asia-Pacific Way?* National Bureau of Asian Research Analysis, vol. 8 no. 2 (May 1997); Amitav Acharya, "Ideas, Identity, and Institution-Building: From the 'ASEAN Way' to the 'Asia-Pacific Way'," *The Pacific Review* 10, 3 (1997): 319-346; Amitav Acharya, "Culture, Security, Multilateralism: The 'ASEAN Way' and Regional Order," *Contemporary Security Policy* 19, 1 (1998): 55-84; Amitav Acharya, "Constructing Security and Identity in Southeast Asia," *Brown Journal of World Affairs* 12, 2 (Winter/Spring 2006): 155-163.

and Cooperation.³³ This was highlighted in the statement released after the first ARF meeting: “The meeting agreed to...endorse the purposes and principles of ASEAN’s Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, as a code of conduct governing relations between states and a unique diplomatic instrument for regional confidence-building, preventive diplomacy, and political and security cooperation.”³⁴ As early as 1992, however, there have already been calls to use the TAC as a means to bind other countries in ASEAN’s way of international relations. In the Singapore Declaration in 1992, it was announced that:

- ASEAN welcomes accession by all countries in Southeast Asia to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, which will provide a common framework for wider regional cooperation embracing the whole of Southeast Asia;
- ASEAN will also seek the cognizance of the United Nations for the Treaty through such means as an appropriate Resolution. This will signify ASEAN’s commitment to the centrality of the UN role in the maintenance of international peace and security as well as promoting cooperation for socioeconomic development....³⁵

The Treaty of Amity and Cooperation was adopted by consensus at the United Nations General Assembly in 1992 and the ASEAN foreign ministers welcomed this resolution in the Ministerial Meeting of 1993. More importantly, the foreign ministers believed that “The treaty is significant in that it establishes a code of conduct and provides a mechanism for peaceful resolution of disputes in the region. They commended the principles in the Treaty as a basis for preventive diplomacy in the region. The Treaty also contributes to community-building in the Southeast Asian

³³ The ASEAN Regional Forum: A Concept Paper. To date, the following countries have acceded to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation: Papua New Guinea, China, India, Japan, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea, Russia, Mongolia, New Zealand, Australia, East Timor; and France.

³⁴ Chairman’s Statement on the First ASEAN Regional Forum, Bangkok, 25 July 1994. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/2105.htm>, accessed on 6 January 2009.

³⁵ Singapore Declaration of 1992, Singapore, 28 January 1992. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/1163.htm>, accessed on 6 January 2009.

region.”³⁶ After the accession of Vietnam and Laos to the Treaty in July 1992, as well as Cambodia and Myanmar in July 1995, ASEAN reiterated its call to encourage non-ASEAN states to do the same:

ASEAN calls on all non-Southeast Asian countries to associate themselves with the TAC. ASEAN recognises that such an association will contribute positively towards the security and stability of the region and is working actively to finalise the modality for doing so....³⁷

The same can be said about the ASEAN Vision 2020 document: “We envision the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia functioning fully as a binding code of conduct for our governments and peoples, to which other states with interests in the region adhere.”³⁸

Apart from binding outside powers through the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in order to promote confidence-building measures, the transformation from one ARF stage to another was to be ushered by the Track I and Track II processes.³⁹ Track I, further subdivided into the intersessional support group (ISG) and the intersessional meetings (ISM), was the purview of government officials. Track 2, meanwhile, was spearheaded by the Councils for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific (CSCAP) and involved academics and nongovernmental specialists. This process, as specified in official documents, “shall move at a pace comfortable to all participants. The ARF should not move ‘too fast for those who want to go slow and not too slow for those who want to go too fast’.”⁴⁰ In regard to decisions, these would be “made by consensus after careful and extensive consultations.”⁴¹

³⁶ Joint Communique of the Twenty-Sixth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, Singapore, 23-24 July 1993.

³⁷ Bangkok Summit Declaration of 1995.

³⁸ ASEAN Vision 2020, Kuala Lumpur, 15 December 1997. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/1814.htm>, accessed on 7 January 2009.

³⁹ The ASEAN Regional Forum: A Concept Paper; Chairman's Statement on the Second ASEAN Regional Forum.

⁴⁰ The ASEAN Regional Forum: A Concept Paper.

⁴¹ Ibid.

The ARF was received with optimism and high hopes during the initial meetings in 1993 and 1994, particularly since the United States decided to jump into the multilateralism bandwagon despite its initial reluctance to do so.⁴² It was considered an achievement that ASEAN as an organization has been able to bring together all the major powers “to sit down together and talk about regional political and security issues.”⁴³ A news report also described ASEAN as offering its “good offices” via the ARF.⁴⁴ The 1994 ARF meeting took place despite the lack of a clear agenda. Still, “The very fact that all the major players will sit down and talk to each other about security issues is in itself a major achievement. It is also true that the important thing is to launch the process rather than to try to solve any specific problem.”⁴⁵

In sum, the early post-Cold War years were rife with uncertainty. The ASEAN states recognized the residual security guarantees of outside powers for what it was: the waning of their “affection” toward the region.⁴⁶ This led Southeast Asia to the realization that whatever form its relations with the major powers would take

⁴² There are several reasons for this turnabout. The US realized that the regional groupings that were springing up all over East Asia would continue to do so regardless of its participation. Hence, US Ambassador to Tokyo Michael Armacost urged his government to jump in: “Everyone will benefit from our involvement. This is an idea whose time has come.” See Susumu Awanohara, “Group Therapy,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 15 April 1993, 10. Similarly, joining multilateral forums would serve the US two purposes: “to legitimize American interests in the region, and to entrench the Asia-Pacific identity of the US.” See Evelyn Goh, “The ASEAN Regional Forum in United States East Asian Strategy,” *The Pacific Review* 17, 1 (March 2004): 48. Also, the US was a declining hegemon and it needed all the help it could get. This was perhaps the main reason why Asian regimes emerged at the decline of US hegemony. See Donald Crone, “Does Hegemony Matter? The Reorganization of the Pacific Political Economy,” *World Politics* 45, 4 (July 1993): 501-525. Finally, the US welcomed multilateral efforts because these would “complement US bilateral security relations and...convince regional allies to take a more active part in their own security.” See Ralf Emmers, *Cooperative Security and the Balance of Power in ASEAN and the ARF* (London and New York: Routledge Curzon, 2003), 116.

⁴³ Frank Ching, “Creation of a Security Forum is a Feather in ASEAN’s Cap,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 12 August 1993, 27.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Frank Ching, “Discussing Regional Security,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 12 May 1994, 38.

⁴⁶ Sheldon W. Simon, “Alternative Visions of Security in the Asia Pacific,” *Pacific Affairs* 69, 3 (Autumn 1996): 381-396.

depended on the harmonious relations between the so-called big guns themselves.⁴⁷ Hence, faced with uncertainty and the ebbing of great power attention, the Southeast Asian states needed to find a way to legitimate their status as “full-fledged social actors that deserve the same kinds of ‘rights and privileges’ which their European or North American counterparts enjoy.”⁴⁸ They did this by turning to multilateralism. Furthermore, ASEAN chose the multilateral path in order to “ensure its place as *primus inter pares* (first among equals) in the [post-Cold War] architecture, and in doing so, acquire a stake in the ensuing regional order.”⁴⁹ Despite ASEAN’s success in ensuring its place and primacy in an institutionalized security arrangement, regional issues in the 1990s revealed the weaknesses and shortcomings of this ASEAN-led structure.

Crises

The ARF’s concept paper states, “If the ARF is to become, over time, a meaningful vehicle to enhance the peace and prosperity of the region, it will have to demonstrate that it is a relevant instrument to be used in the event that a crisis or problem emerges.”⁵⁰ Considering its structural underpinnings, the ARF became hampered in addressing regional crises such as the consequences of including the Indochina states into ASEAN, the South China Sea dispute, the Asian financial crisis, and belatedly, East Timor’s secession from Indonesia.

⁴⁷ Mohamed Jawhar bin Hassan, “Southeast Asia and the Major Powers,” *The Pacific Review* 8, 3 (1995): 508-517.

⁴⁸ See Seng Tan, *The Role of Knowledge Communities in Constructing Asia-Pacific Security: How Thought and Talk Make War and Peace* (Lewiston/Queenston/Lampeter: Edwin Mellen, 2007).

⁴⁹ See Seng Tan, Ralf Emmers, Mely Caballero-Anthony, et al., *A New Agenda for the ASEAN Regional Forum*, Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies Monograph No. 4 (Singapore: Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, 2002), 21. Emphasis on the original.

⁵⁰ The ASEAN Regional Forum: A Concept Paper.

Critics pointed out that the underlying motive of ASEAN for creating the ARF was simply to keep the great powers, particularly the United States, in. At a public lecture, one scholar said, “The end of the Cold War has logically inclined the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand to doubt the utility of cleaving to a posture of neutrality regarding the military presence of the superpowers, when quite clearly they all want a closer relationship with the United States, and Russia has very little to offer.”⁵¹ Another stressed that while there was no doubt as to the role that extra-regional factors played in the search for alternative security arrangements, such as fears of a more assertive China and a rearmed Japan, the ARF was “another mechanism to tie the United States to Southeast Asian security....”⁵² Indeed, the purpose of the ARF might have been aimed at balancing against the major powers, specifically the US, China, and Japan, but bets were hedged on the US as the main stabilizer of the distribution of power in the Asia-Pacific.⁵³

Apart from these latent pro-US concerns, the ARF’s structure was also heavily criticized. It has already been established that the ARF was crafted with ASEAN in the driver’s seat: “...ASEAN has not wanted the great powers to set the ARF agenda and essentially create a concert of great powers that relegates ASEAN members to a second tier – in other words, making decisions that impact Southeast Asian affairs with the region’s states having little influence over those decisions.”⁵⁴ Hence, the adoption of the ASEAN way of consensus and consultation cemented the idea that the

⁵¹ Robert O’Neill, *Security Challenges for Southeast Asia After the Cold War* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1992).

⁵² Alice Ba, “The ASEAN Regional Forum: Maintaining the Regional Idea in Southeast Asia,” *International Journal* 52 (Autumn 1997): 643.

⁵³ Emmers (2003), 116; Ralf Emmers, “The Influence of the Balance of Power Factor Within the ASEAN Regional Forum,” *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 23, 2 (August 2001): 275-291.

⁵⁴ Collins, 175.

ARF “has been created in ASEAN’s image.”⁵⁵ An unnecessary consequence of the AESAN way was that it made the ARF “hamstrung” in the many issues that have arisen in the region.⁵⁶ An anomaly inherent in the ARF’s structure has also been revealed in the scholarly literature: “the ARF was founded and driven by a group of small to medium-sized states yet it aspires to major strategic goals involving the great powers.”⁵⁷ This could have either of two effects. It could either lead to myopia in the sense that since ASEAN controls the agenda, other problems affecting the region (Northeast Asian issues, for one) would not be discussed or even raised, or it could also spell the ultimate coup de grace of the ASEAN model. Indeed, “...the ASEAN model may have worked because ASEAN was small and its problems limited; it is unlikely to have much sway in a context of twenty extremely diverse states, many of whom are acutely conscious of their power position within the larger Asia Pacific system.”⁵⁸

Another outcome of ASEAN’s insistence in using the ASEAN way in the ARF was the slow movement in the attainment of its three-tiered goal or agenda, i.e., the promotion of confidence-building measures, the development of preventive diplomacy, as well as the development of conflict-resolution mechanisms. The movement from stage 1 to stage 2 was especially difficult because of problems surrounding the meaning of preventive diplomacy.⁵⁹ Although this “definitional impasse” was overcome, it took time and created a rift among members of the forum.

⁵⁵ Michael Leifer, *The ASEAN Regional Forum*, Adelphi Paper No. 302 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 57.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 176-177.

⁵⁷ Yuen Foong Khong, “Making Bricks Without Straw in the Asia Pacific?” *The Pacific Review*, 10, 2 (1997): 292.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 293.

⁵⁹ Mely Caballero-Anthony, *Regional Security in Southeast Asia: Beyond the ASEAN Way* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2005).

The Western countries and Japan wanted the ARF process to move at a faster rate, while China and the ASEAN states shared their desire in setting a slower pace.⁶⁰

Aside from the complications that have arisen from the insistence on the primacy of the ASEAN way as a mechanism in the running of the ARF, the decision to enlarge the organization also proved to have caused some tension among the member countries of the ARF. Vietnam became the seventh member of ASEAN in 1995, and Cambodia was granted observer status. Myanmar, meanwhile, acceded to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation also in 1995.⁶¹ The next year, Myanmar attended the foreign ministers' meeting as an official observer. Elsewhere, the United States and the European Union have been very vocal against Myanmar's human rights violations, particularly after Aung San Suu Kyi urged the international community to boycott Myanmar.⁶² Prior to the 1996 meeting, there were doubts as to how the US and the EU would react with Myanmar also present. This caused hints to be dropped that "the annual ASEAN get-together is turning into something of a world jamboree."⁶³ What was interesting, however, was how ASEAN handled the situation. The chairman of the 1996 meeting was Ali Alatas of Indonesia, and he declared, "You have to leave it to the people of the countries themselves to decide what kind of democracy they want and not be dictated to by the West."⁶⁴ Despite vehement opposition from the US and the EU, ASEAN went ahead and accepted Myanmar into its fold. A commentator pointed out that "the urgings of the West were put to one side and Burma, like Laos, and like Vietnam and Brunei in earlier years, was

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Joint Communique of the Twenty-Eighth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, Bandar Seri Begawan, 29-30 July 1995.

⁶² Sangwon Suh and Keith Loveard, "One Debut, Many Debates," *Asiaweek*, 2 August 1996, available from <http://www.asiaweek.com/asiaweek/96/0802/nat2.html>, accessed on 23 August 2007.

⁶³ Todd Cromwell, "Test of Wills," *Asiaweek*, 26 July 1996, available from <http://www.asiaweek.com/asiaweek/96/0726/nat1.html>, accessed on 23 August 2007.

⁶⁴ Suh and Loveard.

admitted on schedule and ‘as is,’ without being required to pay any internal political price.”⁶⁵ It was as if ASEAN was demonstrating that accepting Myanmar was its way of showing the West that it could and would do as it pleased.

The South China Sea dispute was not new but time and again, mild confrontations take place. In 1992, the ASEAN foreign ministers released a statement saying that “any adverse developments in the South China Sea directly affects the peace and security in the region.”⁶⁶ Also, they urged that any conflicts, be they territorial or jurisdictional, be solved via peaceful means. In this regard, they commended Indonesia’s hosting of the Workshops on Managing Potential Conflicts in the South China Sea.⁶⁷ Aside from the joint communiqué of the 25th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, the foreign ministers also released a Declaration on the South China Sea where they “[commended] all parties concerned to apply the principles contained in the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia as the basis for establishing a code of international conduct over the South China Sea....”⁶⁸

When the Mischief Reef incident took place in 1995, the United States refused to get involved because it claimed that it was not vital to its interests to do so.⁶⁹ From here on, the official statements of both ASEAN and the ARF revolved around urgings to resolve the problem via peaceful means, using the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea as the basis for claiming groups of islands in the South China Sea,

⁶⁵ Robert Cribb, “Burma’s Entry into ASEAN: Background and Implications,” *Asian Perspective* 22, 3 (1998): 49-62.

⁶⁶ Joint Communique of the Twenty-Fifth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, Manila, 21-22 July 1992. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/1167.htm>, accessed on 6 January 2009.

⁶⁷ The said workshop has also been mentioned in the Chairman’s Statement on the Second ASEAN Regional Forum. The workshop was commended “as a useful means of enhancing dialogue and cooperation.”

⁶⁸ ASEAN Declaration on the South China Sea, Manila, 22 July 1992. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/1196.htm>, accessed on 6 January 2009. The parties to this Declaration are Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand.

⁶⁹ Ian James Storey, “Creeping Assertiveness: China, the Philippines, and the South China Sea Dispute,” *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 21, 1 (April 1999).

and praising the platform provided by the Workshop Series on Managing Potential

Conflicts in the South China Sea. ASEAN released a statement thus:

We urge all concerned to remain faithful to the letter and spirit of the Manila Declaration on the South China Sea which we issued in July 1992 and which has been endorsed by other countries and the Non-Aligned Movement. The Manila Declaration urges all concerned to resolve differences in the South China Sea by peaceful means and to refrain from taking actions that de-stabilize the situation.

Also,

We call upon all parties to refrain from taking actions that destabilize the region and further threaten the peace and security of the South China Sea. We specifically call for the early resolution of the problems caused by recent developments in Mischief Reef.⁷⁰

The Foreign Ministers expressed their concern over recent events in the South China Sea. They encouraged all parties concerned to reaffirm their commitment to the principles contained in the 1992 ASEAN Declaration on the South China Sea, which urges all claimants to resolve their differences by peaceful means and to exercise self-restraint. They also called on them to refrain from taking actions that could destabilise the region, including possibly undermining the freedom of navigation and aviation in the affected areas. They also encouraged the claimants to address the issue in various bilateral and multilateral fora. In this regard, they reiterated the significance of promoting confidence-building measures (CBMs) and mutually beneficial cooperative ventures in the ongoing Informal Workshop Series on Managing Potential Conflicts in the South China Sea initiated by Indonesia.⁷¹

By December of the same year, a similar stance was incorporated in the Bangkok

Summit Declaration:

ASEAN shall seek an early, peaceful resolution of the South China Sea dispute and shall continue to explore ways and means to prevent conflict and enhance cooperation in the South China Sea consistent with the provisions of the TAC and the ASEAN Declaration on the South China Sea of 1992 as well as

⁷⁰ Recent Development in the South China Sea (1995), 18 March 1995. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/5232.htm>, accessed on 18 January 2009.

⁷¹ Joint Communiqué of the Twenty-Eighth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, Bandar Seri Begawan, 29-30 July 1995. Also, Statement by the ASEAN Foreign Ministers on the Recent Developments in the South China Sea, 18 March 1995. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/2089.htm>, accessed on 6 January 2009.

international law including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea....⁷²

On the part of the ARF, it “expressed concern on overlapping sovereignty claims in the region. [It] encouraged all claimants to reaffirm [*sic*] their commitment to the principles contained in relevant international laws and convention, and the ASEAN's 1992 Declaration on the South China Sea.”⁷³ A year later, the ASEAN foreign ministers

...expressed their concern over the situation in the South China Sea, and stressed that several outstanding issues remain a major concern for ASEAN. In the spirit of the Manila Declaration on the South China Sea, the Ministers called for the peaceful resolution of the dispute and self-restraint by parties concerned. The Ministers were pleased to observe, however, that the parties concerned have expressed their willingness to resolve the problem by peaceful means in [*sic*] accordance with recognized international law in general and the UNCLOS of 1982 in particular. The Ministers also reiterated the significance of the ongoing informal workshop series on Managing Potential Conflict in the South China Sea [*sic*], and welcomed the continuing bilateral cooperation and discussions among the claimant countries. They endorsed the idea of concluding a regional code of conduct in the South China Sea which will lay the foundation for long [*sic*] term stability in the area and foster understanding among claimant countries.⁷⁴

Also in 1996, the ARF reiterated, “...the Meeting welcomed the efforts by countries concerned to seek solutions by peaceful means in accordance with international law in general and with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 1982 in particular. The Meeting also noted the positive contributions made by the Workshop

⁷² Bangkok Summit Declaration of 1995.

⁷³ Chairman's Statement on the Second ASEAN Regional Forum.

⁷⁴ Joint Communique of the Twenty-Ninth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, Jakarta, 20-21 July 1996. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/1824.htm>, accessed on 7 January 2009.

Series on Managing Potential Conflicts in the South China Sea.”⁷⁵ The fourth ARF meeting in 1997 read almost the same as the previous year:

On the South [sic] China Sea, the Ministers welcomed the efforts by countries concerned to seek solutions by peaceful means in accordance with international law, the UNGLOS [sic], and the exercise of self restraint, in the interest of maintaining peace and stability in the region. The Ministers also noted the positive contributions made by the Workshop on Managing Potential Conflicts in South China Sea.

However, references to bilateral consultations and ASEAN-China senior officials’ discussions were mentioned in the 1998, 1999, and 2000 ARF meetings:

The Ministers welcomed the commitment of all the countries concerned to the peaceful settlement of the dispute on the South China Sea, in accordance with the recognized principles of international law, including the UNCLOS. The Ministers expressed satisfaction on the continued exercise of self-restraint by all the Countries concerned and noted the positive contributions made by the bilateral consultations between the countries concerned, the dialogue in the ASEAN-China Senior Officials Consultations, the regular exchange of views in the ARF, and the continuing work of the Informal Workshop on Managing Potential Conflicts in the South China Sea.⁷⁶

The Ministers welcomed the commitment of all the countries concerned to the peaceful settlement of disputes in the South China Sea in accordance with the recognized principles of international law and the UNCLOS. They stressed the importance of freedom of navigation in this area. The Ministers noted that some ARF countries were concerned that there could be increased tensions. They welcomed the continued exercise of self-restraint by all sides and the positive contributions made by the bilateral consultations between the countries concerned. They further welcomed the dialogue in the ASEAN-China Senior Officials Consultations, the regular exchange of views in the ARF, and the continuing work of the Informal Workshop on Managing Potential Conflicts in the South China Sea, which have enhanced confidence building. They

⁷⁵ Chairman’s Statement on the Third ASEAN Regional Forum, Jakarta, 23 July 1996. Available at <http://www.aseanregionalforum.org/PublicLibrary/ARFChairmansStatementsandReports/ChairmansStatementofthe3rdARF/tabid/196/Default.aspx>, accessed on 18 January 2009.

⁷⁶ Chairman’s Statement on the Fifth ASEAN Regional Forum, Manila, 27 July 1998. Available at <http://www.aseanregionalforum.org/PublicLibrary/ARFChairmansStatementsandReports/ChairmansStatementofthe5thMeetingoftheASE/tabid/180/Default.aspx>, accessed on 17 January 2009.

noted that ASEAN was working on a regional Code of Conduct in the South China Sea.⁷⁷

With regard to the situation in the South China Sea, the Ministers encouraged the exercise of self-restraint by all countries concerned and the promotion of confidence building measures in this area, and welcomed their commitment to resolving disputes by peaceful means in accordance with the recognized principles of international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), as well as to ensuring the freedom of navigation in this area. The Ministers welcomed dialogue and consultations, particularly dialogue in the ASEAN-China Senior Officials Consultations, the exchange of views in the ARF, as well as *[sic]* in the Informal Workshop on Managing Potential Conflicts in the South China Sea. The Ministers welcomed in particular the on-going efforts between ASEAN and China to develop and adopt the Regional Code of Conduct in the South China Sea.⁷⁸

The point here is that the ARF's role in abating the South China Sea dispute was simply to urge claimants to resolve the crisis via peaceful means, to rely on the stipulations of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and to continue to hold bilateral and/or dialogue consultations.

The 1997 financial crisis also seemed like a blow to the institutions of ASEAN. The so-called Asian economic miracle proved an ineffective way of attaining and maintaining success. The ASEAN leaders in a joint statement issued after the informal summit in 1997 agreed that what they needed most was "...greater national, regional and international efforts, including by the major economies such as the European Union, Japan and the United States, and international financial institutions, to overcome this situation as soon as possible and address the systemic

⁷⁷ Chairman's Statement on the Sixth ASEAN Regional Forum, Singapore, 26 July 1999. Available at <http://www.aseanregionalforum.org/PublicLibrary/ARFChairmansStatementsandReports/ChairmansStatementofthe6thMeetingoftheASE/tabid/177/Default.aspx>, accessed on 18 January 2009.

⁷⁸ Chairman's Statement on the Seventh ASEAN Regional Forum, Bangkok, 27 July 2000. Available at <http://www.aseanregionalforum.org/PublicLibrary/ARFChairmansStatementsandReports/ChairmansStatementofthe7thMeetingofASEANR/tabid/115/Default.aspx>, accessed on 18 January 2009.

issues underlying it.”⁷⁹ Elsewhere, Singapore’s Lee Kuan Yew said that in the face of the crisis, ASEAN could only show “a solidarity of fellow chicken sufferers.... We can’t help each other.”⁸⁰ The International Monetary Fund offered economic packages for the affected countries. At the same time, the US realized the aftereffects of the financial crisis on the region’s defense. Reiterating its commitment to its treaty allies, the US bought back eight F/A-18 fighter aircrafts from Thailand, and increased its military aid there.⁸¹ Ultimately, however, the 1997 financial crisis dealt a severe blow to ASEAN and the ARF: “In retrospect, it was the perceived prosperity of the ASEAN tigers that gave the ARF project its authority. The collapse of the ASEAN economies in 1997 thus also severely eroded the credibility of the ARF.”⁸²

Critics felt vindicated by the fact that the financial crisis proved them right and the ASEAN way wrong. The major stumbling block was ASEAN’s consensus approach and policy of non-interference. A news analysis pointed out that consensus and non-interference “...may have worked during rosy boom times, but the economic crisis exposed fundamental national and regional weaknesses, many of which have still to be fixed.”⁸³ Added to this was ASEAN’s desire to stay at the center of the ARF: “The formation of the ARF was ASEAN’s way of trying to stay at the center of regional security dialogue.... The ASEAN states worried that membership of APEC could dilute ASEAN’s importance, and hesitated about joining it. The ARF was a

⁷⁹ Joint Statement of the Heads of State/Government of the Member States of ASEAN on the Financial Situation, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 15 December 1997. Available from <http://www.aseansec.org/5221.htm>, accessed on 24 September 2007.

⁸⁰ “ASEAN’s Failure: The Limits of Politeness,” *The Economist* 28 February 1998, 43.

⁸¹ “US Reiterates Commitment to Bail Asia Out of Economic Rut,” *BusinessWorld*, 27 July 1998, 1; Graeme Cheeseman, “Asian-Pacific Security Discourse in the Wake of the Asian Economic Crisis,” *The Pacific Review* 12, 3 (1999): 333-356.

⁸² “Why the Protectorate Survives,” *BusinessWorld*, 23 August 1999, 1.

⁸³ “Words, Not Deeds,” *Business Asia*, 7 August 2000, 12.

means of trying to ensure that ASEAN would not be bypassed.”⁸⁴ Hence, the values upon which the ARF were built seemed to be the very things that led to its downfall.

John Garofano extended this argument when he identified six fallacies concerning the ASEAN model: that inclusivity and unanimity are desirable, that identity-building and problem-solving are related sequentially, that the solution to the more difficult issues should be delayed, that these same issues should be left to track 2 discussions, that transparency is a foundation for confidence-building, and that the ASEAN Way is more relevant than the European model.⁸⁵ In a series of articles published between 1997 and 1999, Shaun Narine offered a pessimistic view of ASEAN and the ARF. Drawing on instances when ASEAN was unable to manage conflict during the Cold War period, Narine advanced the argument that it was doubtful that the organization could do so now.⁸⁶ Also, given the fact that the great powers have always defined the parameters of ASEAN’s security policies, divergent views within ASEAN exacerbated the problem and limited its significance.⁸⁷ Finally, against the backdrop of the financial crisis, Narine argues that the pillars of post-Cold War ASEAN – the ARF, APEC and the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA), and enlargement – have all failed.⁸⁸

By the turn of the century, it was apparent that the pre-1997 economic boom could not be replicated. A news analysis observed that “...while the ASEAN Regional Forum is no doubt playing an important role, ASEAN’s problem is that,

⁸⁴ Robyn Lim, “The ASEAN Regional Forum: Building on Sand,” *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 20, 2 (August 1998): 115-126.

⁸⁵ John Garofano, “Flexibility of Irrelevance: Ways Forward for the ARF,” *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 21, 1 (April 1999): 74-94.

⁸⁶ Shaun Narine, “ASEAN and the ARF: The Limits of the ‘ASEAN Way’,” *Asian Survey* 37, 10 (October 1997): 961-978.

⁸⁷ Shaun Narine, “ASEAN and the Management of Regional Security,” *Pacific Affairs* 71, 2 (Summer 1998): 195-214.

⁸⁸ Shaun Narine, “ASEAN Into the Twenty-First Century: Problems and Prospects,” *The Pacific Review* 12, 3 (1999): 357-380.

despite having recovered from the financial crisis, the region isn't attracting the attention and investment it used to get."⁸⁹ ASEAN's experiments with multilateralism, the ASEAN way, and comprehensive security thus seem to have failed.⁹⁰ Admittedly, resolving crises that are financial in nature are beyond the purview of the ARF, but the fact remains that ASEAN in general, and the ARF in particular, have not been able to present sound proposals on how to address the problem despite its insistence to lead in the established institutions and arrangements.

The crisis in East Timor sparked in 1999. It presented diplomatic challenges to the United States and ASEAN. On one hand, the US was willing to help Indonesia in achieving economic recovery and gaining democracy, but such depended on the outcomes of a legislative election to be held towards the end of 1999. On the other hand, the US could not approve of the actions of military-backed militias in East Timor.⁹¹ It became increasingly necessary to support an international intervention under UN auspices. Reports showed that the US did not want to play a substantial role because "US forces were already deeply committed in Bosnia and Kosovo, and East Timor – on a far away island – had little resonance with the American public."⁹² Australia's offer to lead the intervention was thus welcome.

ASEAN released its official statement in 2000 and the underlying tone was that "...stable relations among the major powers had been a factor contributing to...positive developments [in the region]."⁹³ ASEAN's stance thus read:

⁸⁹ Frank Ching, "ASEAN Needs to Revitalize Itself," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 17 August 2000, 28.

⁹⁰ Cheeseman.

⁹¹ Sheldon Simon, *US-ASEAN Relations: Relations with Vietnam and the East Timor Tragedy*, Center for Strategic and International Studies Report, 1 October 1999. Available at http://www.csis.org/media/isis/pubs/9902qus_seasia.pdf, accessed on 18 January 2009.

⁹² Ibid., 3.

⁹³ Joint Communique of the Thirty-Third ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, Bangkok, 24-25 July 2000. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/13413.htm>, accessed on 18 January 2009.

The Foreign Ministers commended Indonesia for all its efforts in resolving the East Timor issue, and noted the key role of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) in ensuring the territory's smooth transition to full independence. They reaffirmed ASEAN's support for and encouraged the international community to remain engaged in, the process of reconciliation, rehabilitation and reconstruction that is essential for a peaceful and stable East Timor.⁹⁴

Meanwhile, an ARF statement was as follows:

The Ministers reviewed developments in East Timor [and] welcomed the positive trends which had taken place there as well as cooperation between Indonesia and the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET). They deplored the death of a UN peacekeeper in East Timor. The Ministers stressed the need for the international community to help East Timor promote peace, stability and prosperity during the latter's transition to full independence, which would contribute to the overall stability of the region. The Ministers also underscored the need for continued international attention to and support for the reconstruction, rehabilitation and nation building of East Timor as well as cooperation with the UNTAET.⁹⁵

In short, ASEAN and the ARF's response in regard to the East Timor crisis rested on passing the buck, so to speak, to other actors in the international system, specifically the UN and Australia.

In closing this chapter, the ARF in many ways symbolized the fact that the Southeast Asian states and other extra-regional nations came together and agreed on the various facets of acceptable (and accordingly, unacceptable) state behavior in the post-Cold War era. By virtue of entering into this agreement, i.e., the language game of binding outside powers into the Southeast Asian region, it can be argued that the ARF is the epitome of instruction-rules and a heteronomous type of rule. Indeed, as demonstrated in the narrative above, the language game during the 1992-2000 period was that of ensuring that extra-regional powers are committed to the security architecture of Southeast Asia. ASEAN achieved this by establishing the ARF,

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Chairman's Statement on the Seventh ASEAN Regional Forum.

putting itself in the driver's seat by insisting that members of the forum accede to ASEAN's Treaty of Amity and Cooperation, and by making sure that the ASEAN way of consensus and consultation was adopted in the running of the forum. The result of these actions was a structure that put ASEAN on top of a proverbial chain of command, while the rest of the ARF members (particularly the non-ASEAN ones) remained on the sidelines. This brings us back to the definition of heteronomy discussed earlier in this chapter. If at the heart of a heteronomous rule is the assumption of autonomy, then it can be concluded that the notion of being autonomous is what drove actors to enter into and institutionalize the ARF. Heteronomy also discloses that once arrangements or agreements are institutionalized, this guarantees asymmetric relations, precisely what ASEAN did in distinguishing itself from the non-ASEAN members of the ARF.

However, the ARF narrative reveals the tenuousness of the ASEAN-led structure. This is demonstrated in the crises situations that ASEAN and the ARF have had to deal with in the post-Cold War era, among which were the ramifications of enlarging ASEAN, the South China Sea dispute, the Asian financial crisis, and East Timor's secession from Indonesia. These problems conveyed the idea that while an ASEAN-led security architecture seemed sound, it was still rather shaky in practice. To be fair though, the fact that the ARF managed to bring great powers together, not to mention that said extra-regional powers acceded into the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation, augurs well for the region.

As the new millennium dawned, Southeast Asia-US relations seemed relatively harmonious with no serious threats on the horizon. This changed in 2001 when terrorists targeted the United States. Due to this, the Southeast Asia-US

relationship transformed from hegemony to heteronomy to hierarchy. This transformation is the purview of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 6

HIERARCHY AND HEGEMONY 2001-2006

The September 11 attacks and the ensuing US campaign on the War on Terror involved the invasion of Afghanistan to topple the al-Qaeda-sponsored Taliban regime, as well as the occupation of Iraq to eliminate the latter's possession of weapons of mass destruction. At the outset, states in the international community sympathized with the plight of the United States. This sympathy, however, came with a price. As the War on Terror waxed, sympathy turned to antipathy as resistance to American leadership strengthened. The worldwide cry is echoed in the words of Ken Booth and Tim Dunne,

It does not dishonour those murdered in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania to point out...that the dead that day numbered less than half the total of children who die somewhere in the world each day from diarrhoea (caused by the lack of clean water). The point is not about forgetting September 11, *but of remembering what the world is like every day.*¹

Also, 911 came after a long string of violence in international relations, so the phenomenon was not really all that new:

...rather than signifying a sudden historical break, the events of 9/11 represent only the most recent and dramatic manifestation of global political dynamics that have become increasingly evident over the past decade.... Rather, the astonishing impact of those events...[signifies] ultimately inadequate responses to deeper structural forces that pose a fundamental challenge to the current state-based international order.²

¹ Ken Booth and Tim Dunne, "Worlds in Collision," in *Worlds in Collision: Terror and the Future of Global Order*, eds. Ken Booth and Tim Dunne (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 6. Emphasis added.

² Marika Vicziany, David Wright-Neville, and Pete Lentini, "What Has Changed, and What Hasn't Changed, Since 9/11?" in *Regional Security in the Asia Pacific: 9/11 and After*, eds. Marika Vicziany, David Wright-Neville, and Pete Lentini (Cheltenham/Northampton: Edward Elgar, 2004), 10-11.

Given these sentiments, resistance to the US-led fight was inevitably first concentrated among the Muslim populations around the globe, and as a consequence, public opinion on the War on Terror spoke in terms of the negative. As the war in Iraq worsened, this resistance spilled over to states' suspicion of, if not aversion to, US foreign policy. The United States tried to placate its allies by shifting its tone towards more "universal" grounds.

Arguably, the fact that the United States faced resentment on various fronts and on different levels has already been pointed out, not least by noted Realist scholars.³ Hence, while the themes of US dominance and worldwide – in this case and for our purposes, Southeast Asian – resistance provide the meat for this chapter, emphasis is placed on the mix of hierarchy and hegemony, i.e., on the types of rule that are produced by our actors from 2001 to 2006. It is argued here that the oscillating movement between, on one hand, the United States' projection and imposition of its values, and on the other, Southeast Asian accommodation, negotiation, and thereafter resistance, depicts two things. First, that the United States is clear on the hierarchy necessary to carry out the War on Terror implies that it would be on the topmost rung, and that should secondary powers veer away from this course of action, sanctions would be meted out. This threat of sanctions or the use of force underlay American discourse in the immediate aftermath of 9/11, most clearly seen in US President George W. Bush's "Either you are with us or against us" statements. It is precisely language like this that differentiates hierarchy from hegemony. Still, and this is the second matter, the hierarchic order was enfeebled by worldwide resistance and so the United States was obliged to fortify the righteousness of its fight against terrorism by applying hegemonic strategies, i.e., by appealing to

³ Stephen M. Walt, *Taming American Power: The Global Response to US Primacy* (New York/London: W.W. Norton, 2005).

the world that values like freedom and justice were at stake, and that going on the offense was better than being on the defense. Thus, by appealing to the sympathy of its allies, the United States in this instance was projecting a hegemonic type of rule. In other words, in order for the United States to ensure its place in the hierarchy, it had to resort to projecting itself as a benign hegemon. This is not to say, however, that the Southeast Asian states were simply free riding with the Americans. Rather, the point of the argument is that hierarchy and hegemony as types of rule in Southeast Asia-US relations from 2001 to 2006 ensued from the Southeast Asian states' ability to negotiate power relations.

Two parts comprise this chapter. As before, the first constitutes existing IR knowledge on hierarchy, and explains how (and why) our version of the narrative diverged by mixing hierarchy and hegemony. The second part deals with the language games that permeated official discourses of the United States and the Southeast Asian nations. These language games solidify the claim that the types of rule that dominated Southeast Asia-US relations during this time were indeed a combination of both hierarchy and hegemony.

Hierarchy and Hegemony as Types of Rule

The 2001-2006 era is unique in the sense that no one rule could have accurately characterized Southeast Asia-US relations then. Instead, what becomes apparent after a critical reading of the events during this period is a combination of both hierarchy and hegemony as types of rule. In this regard, this part of the chapter consists of two sub-sections. The first discusses hierarchy as it is understood in the IR literature, while the second explores notions of empire that have recently found resonance in the post-9/11 era, and compares this with the concept of hegemony.

Hierarchy

The positioning of actors in a hierarchic order is rather simple since all that is needed is (1) a ruler or a dominant state, and (2) the ruled or secondary powers. Relations herein are arranged vertically, similar to how bureaucracies and militaries are ordered.⁴ In the literature, hierarchy is understood to have a materialist as well as an ideational conception. The more rationalist-inclined scholars find themselves defending the materialist conception of hierarchy, while the Constructivists locate themselves on forwarding the argument that it is the ideational basis of hierarchy that gives it such power and continuity.

David C. Kang makes the case for a materialist conception of hierarchy. He defines hierarchy as constituting four factors: a dominant power with special sets of rights, secondary powers, shared expectations between the two that are based on continually updated information on state preferences and intentions, shared experiences, and history, and the threat or the use of force to restore order if the secondary powers go astray.⁵ To quote:

Hierarchy is stable and order is preserved through a combination of benefits and sanctions that the dominant powers provides to the lesser powers. Good relations with the dominant states ensure the survival and even the prosperity of the secondary states through a continual flow of goods, trade, and technology. Rejection of the hierarchy brings conflict as the dominant power intervenes to reestablish the hierarchic order.⁶

Meanwhile, Constructivist conceptions of hierarchy point to its ideational character. While not discounting the significance of material capability (specifically,

⁴ Kurt Burch, "Changing the Rules: Reconceiving Change in the Westphalian System," *International Studies Review* 2, 2 (Summer 2000): 181-210.

⁵ David C. Kang, "The Theoretical Roots of Hierarchy in International Relations," *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 58, 3 (September 2004): 337-352.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 346-347.

military power) in the functioning of hierarchy, these scholars nevertheless argue that it is not a “sufficient condition” to pave the way for hierarchy; rather, hierarchy is driven by ideas. Alexander Wendt and Daniel Friedheim focus on what they refer to as informal empires as a manifestation of hierarchy in international relations. They define informal empires as “structures of transnational political authority that combine an egalitarian principle of de jure sovereignty with a hierarchical principle of de facto control.”⁷ Wendt and Freidheim further their argument by identifying several institutional expressions of hierarchy, such as in the intersubjective understandings in treaties, norms, and shared ideology. Another institutional expression is found in inter-organizational linkages, which may take the form of military, political, economic, and cultural ties. A third expression is consultations between state leaders.

Like Kang, Wendt and Freidheim also mention the threat or the use of force if the subordinate states challenge the dominant powers. Although Wendt and Freidheim do not use the word force, they however employ the concept of intervention.⁸ In particular, they argue that in order for the dominant power to legitimize its rule, it can manufacture consent through overt coercion, the provision of security assistance, the deployment of a hegemonic ideology, the institution of sovereignty (if necessary), and the support of outside powers.⁹ Similarly, Carlos Escude talks about the use of force or intervention through sanction-linkages. Sanction-linkages related to peace and security, Escude emphasizes, “tend to be unidirectional, from the strong to the weak. Strong states tend to be the ‘initiator states’ of sanction-linkages, whereas weak states will tend to be the ‘target states’ of

⁷ Alexander Wendt and Daniel Freidheim, “Hierarchy Under Anarchy: Informal Empire and the East German State,” *International Organization* 49, 4 (Autumn 1995): 700-701.

⁸ Ibid., 698.

⁹ Ibid., 702-705.

such linkages.”¹⁰ In short, the threat or the use of force, intervention, or sanction-linkages should the secondary powers challenge the dominant state is what differentiates the workings of hierarchy from that of hegemony.

Pursuing the ideational conception of hierarchy, John M. Hobson and J.C. Sharman support the Constructivist cause when they argue that hierarchic orders have been taking place all throughout history.¹¹ The most contemporary manifestations of hierarchy are those of the Soviet bloc and the European Union. Hobson and Sharman’s contribution to the hierarchy literature, however, rests on their claim that hierarchies, like hegemons, rise and fall due to social logics. These social logics are associated with identity-formation processes and hence accompanied the changes in the decline of Christendom and imperialism, for instance. Hobson and Sharman point out that these hierarchies “finally ended once [their discourses] had become illegitimate.”¹²

The question remains, however, whether the concept of hierarchy is sufficient to explain Southeast Asia-US relations from 2001 to 2006, particularly since the literature demonstrates the soft variations therein (i.e., that of drawing the line between formal and informal hierarchies). Wendt and Freidheim’s idea about “informal empires” is indeed valid if applied to the relationship under analysis here, but only to a certain extent. They are very clear that any dominant power resorts to manufacturing consent, providing security assistance, deploying a hegemonic ideology, etc. in order to *legitimize its rule*. True enough, the United States was

¹⁰ Carlos Escude, “An Introduction to Peripheral Realism and Its Implications for the Interstate System: Argentina and the Condor II Missile Project,” in *International Relations Theory and the Third World*, ed. Stephanie G. Neuman (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1998), 55-75.

¹¹ John M. Hobson and J.C. Sharman, “The Enduring Place of Hierarchy in World Politics: Tracing the Social Logics of Hierarchy and Political Change,” *European Journal of International Relations* 11, 1 (March 2005): 63-98.

¹² *Ibid.*, 90.

doing this: in order to legitimize its War on Terror, it was indeed resorting to these tactics. However, and this is the reason why this time period is a mix between hierarchy and hegemony, the United States was not only legitimizing its rule, but was also convincing and assuring its allies that it was on the righteous path in exacting revenge and violence. This very act of redefining social reality is a trademark of hegemonic rule, and hence, hierarchy alone is insufficient to explain or characterize Southeast Asia-US relations circa 2001-2006. Rather, it is more accurate to argue that this particular time shares elements of both hierarchy and hegemony. How different (or the same) hegemony is from the concept of “empire” is discussed below.

Empire or Hegemony?

Arguing that Southeast Asia-US relations in the 2001-2006 period are a clear case of hierarchy does indeed sound valid. However, one cannot dismiss offhand the many scholarly works that have been published elucidating that because of 911, the United States is “back in town” as an empire. Andrew Hurrell asserts that empire is central to studying international order.¹³ He draws distinctions between formal and informal empire, and also between direct political control and informal economic control. The United States, he contends, is an informal empire. Cox is also of similar opinion. He explains,

Many Empires, including the American, have not always been benign and they have not always been sensitive. However, the more successful, including the American, have lasted not just because they were feared, but because they performed a series of broader political and economic functions which no other state or combination of states was willing or able to undertake. This in

¹³ Andrew Hurrell, “Pax Americana or the Empire of Insecurity?” *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 5 (2005): 153-176.

large part is why many feel the US Empire might continue for a good deal longer.¹⁴

In contrast to these scholars, there are also those who maintain that today's world is best explained by hegemony. G. John Ikenberry asserts that because the US-led international order is based on the liberal notions of rules and institutions, it is most definitely not empire but rather hegemony.¹⁵ Using East Asia as a case study, Michael Mastanduno also demonstrates hegemony's workings in the region, although 9/11 complicated this process.¹⁶ In the same way, Mark Beeson and Richard Higgott begin their analysis with hegemony and suggest that America's unilateralism put a dent on its power and influence.¹⁷

Both views are undeniably sound. To use "empire," however, is to resurrect notions about the age of imperialism. In the same vein, to use "hegemony" is to be blind to the United States' threat of the use of force if states would refuse to side with its War on Terror. Hence, the only way in which the nuances of the 2001-2006 period can be seen is if hierarchy is blended with hegemony. Mixing the two results in a more comprehensive understanding of Southeast Asia-US relations during this period.

¹⁴ Michael Cox, "The Empire's Back in Town: Or America's Imperial Temptation – Again," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 32, 1 (2003): 22.

¹⁵ G. John Ikenberry, "Power and Liberal Order: America's Postwar World Order in Transition," *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 5 (2003): 133-152.

¹⁶ Michael Mastanduno, "Hegemonic Order, September 11, and the Consequences of the Bush Revolution," *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* (5) 2003: 177-196.

¹⁷ Mark Beeson and Richard Higgott, "Hegemony, Institutionalism and US Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice in Comparative Historical Perspective," *Third World Quarterly* 26, 7 (2005): 1173-1188. Also Mark Beeson, "American Ascendancy: Conceptualizing Contemporary Hegemony," in *Bush and Asia: America's Evolving Relations with East Asia*, ed. Mark Beeson (London/New York: Routledge, 2006), 3-23.

Language Games

The themes that permeate the language games here are those of the opposing forces of imposition and negotiation/resistance. In this regard, these two forces make up the two language games that have become pertinent in the 2001-2006 period. Each of these games is discussed below.

Imposition

American confidence had never been more intact than in the 1990s, which Michael Cox aptly referred to as the era of “American renaissance.”¹⁸ US confidence then rested on the collapse of the Soviet Union, the economic boom that America experienced, the collapse of the Pacific century beginning in 1997, and the United States’ military preponderance.¹⁹ It was these sources, and this confidence, that ultimately became the foundation for the new strategy that resulted from the September 11 attacks. This new strategy entailed the presumption that the United States was the only current hegemon, and by virtue of such, it was able to dismiss the importance of upholding international rules for the sake of stability. More importantly, this new strategy justified the United States’ unconstrained role in facing “global” threats like terrorism.²⁰

The American post-9/11 rhetoric rested on three themes: that the values of freedom and justice were at stake, that righteous violence was justified, and that the necessity of going to war was thrust upon the United States. A few days after the September 11 attacks, US President Bush pointed out:

¹⁸ Michael Cox, “American Power Before and After 11 September: Dizzy with Success?” *International Affairs* 78, 2 (2002): 261-276.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ G. John Ikenberry, “America’s Imperial Ambition: The Lures of Preemption,” *Foreign Affairs* 81, 5 (September-October 2002), 44-60.

Tonight we are a country awakened to danger and called to defend freedom. Our grief has turned to anger and anger to resolution. Whether we bring our enemies to justice or bring justice to our enemies, justice will be done.

....

On September 11th, enemies of freedom committed an act of war against our country. Americans have known wars, but for the past 136 years, they have been wars on foreign soil, except for one Sunday in 1941. Americans have known the casualties of war, but not at the center of a great city on a peaceful morning. Americans have known surprise attacks but never before on thousands of civilians. All of this was brought upon us in a single day, and night fell on a different world, a world where freedom itself is under attack.

....

This is not, however, just America's fight, and what is at stake is not just America's freedom. This is the world's fight. This is civilization's fight. This is the fight of all who believe in progress and pluralism, tolerance and freedom.²¹

References to “freedom” and “justice” were again made a couple of months later at the height of the war in Afghanistan, but this time the focus was on ensuring that the citizens of the latter country be “liberated” from the clutches of the terrorists:

I am pleased with the progress we're making in Afghanistan.... We have liberated, literally liberated village after village from incredible barbaric behavior toward women and children. I think one of the joyous parts of this war, if there is such a thing as a joyous part of a war, is to see...what it means for our country and our alliance to free people.²²

The last time we met in this chamber, the mothers and daughters of Afghanistan were captives in their own homes, forbidden from

²¹ “Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the United States Response to the Terrorist Attacks of September 11,” dated 20 September 2001, John T. Woolley and Gerhard Peters, *The American Presidency Project* [online]. Santa Barbara, CA: University of California (hosted), Gerhard Peters (database). Available from the World Wide Web: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=64731>, accessed 23 January 2009.

²² *Prime Minister of Thailand Reiterates Full Support to US: Remarks by the President and Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra in Photo Opportunity, The Oval Office* (Office of the Press Secretary, The White House, 14 December 2001), available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/12/20011214-5.html>, accessed 2 November 2007.

working or going to school. Today women are free, and are part of Afghanistan's new government.... So long as training camps operate, so long as nations harbor terrorists, freedom is at risk.²³

By September 2002, the United States released the National Security Strategy, otherwise known as the Bush Doctrine. Upholding freedom remained the foundation for resisting terrorism:

The United States will stand beside any nation determined to build a better future by seeking the rewards of liberty for its people. Free trade and free markets have proven their ability to lift whole societies out of poverty—so the United States will work with individual nations, entire regions, and the entire global trading community to build a world that trades in freedom and therefore grows in prosperity. The United States will deliver greater development assistance through the New Millennium Challenge Account to nations that govern justly, invest in their people, and encourage economic freedom. We will also continue to lead the world in efforts to reduce the terrible toll of HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases.²⁴

Equally interesting, however, was one of the means with which the United States was battling terrorism:

We will also wage a war of ideas to win the battle against international terrorism. This includes:

- using the full influence of the United States, and working closely with allies and friends, to make clear that all acts of terrorism are illegitimate so that terrorism will be viewed in the same light as slavery, piracy, or genocide: behavior that no respectable government can condone or support and all must oppose;
- supporting moderate and modern government, especially in the Muslim world, to ensure that the conditions and ideologies that promote terrorism do not find fertile ground in any nation;
- diminishing the underlying conditions that spawn terrorism by enlisting the international community to focus its efforts and resources on areas most at risk; and

²³ *President Delivers State of the Union Address* (Office of the Press Secretary, The White House, 29 January 2002), available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/01/20020129-11.html>, accessed 28 October 2007.

²⁴ *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, September 2002. Available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.pdf>, accessed 20 October 2007.

- using effective public diplomacy to promote the free flow of information and ideas to kindle the hopes and aspirations of freedom of those in societies ruled by the sponsors of global terrorism.²⁵

Hence, what the United States appeared to be doing in the abovementioned statements was convincing the international community of the correctness, if not the universality of its fight. This, in other words, is the objective of hegemony. The United States appealed to the values of freedom and justice, which thus drove the point home that it was fighting the good fight against freedom-haters and that it was therefore only just that these elements be defeated. Hence, in naming the enemy, the hijackers, and the categories and rhetoric used to describe the attacks, binary oppositions were created.²⁶

With freedom and justice at stake, American rhetoric also demonstrated the righteousness of exacting violence. In a news briefing, US Secretary of State Donald Rumsfeld said,

I guess I'm kind of old-fashioned. I'm inclined to think that if you're going to cock it, you throw it, and you don't talk about it a lot. So my instinct is that what you do, you should go about your business and do what you think you have to do. I think anyone who thinks it's easy is wrong. I think that it will require a sustained and broadly based effort. And I don't think that people ought to judge outcomes until a sufficient time is passed to address what is clearly a very serious problem for the world. And it's not

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Simon Dalby, "Calling 911: Geopolitics, Security and America's New War," *Geopolitics* 8, 3 (Autumn 2003): 66-67. A quarter of a century ago, Edward Said has already argued that such distinctions can only lead to exacerbating what are already sore conditions: "When one uses categories like Oriental and Western [or Islamic fundamentalists and (American) upholders of justice] as both the starting and the end points of analysis, research, public policy..., the result is usually to polarize the distinction – the Oriental becomes more Oriental, the Westerner more Western – and limit the human encounter between different cultures, traditions, and societies." See Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 1979), 45-46. In a similar study, Mat Coleman argues that uttering "terrorism" conjures negative characteristics of terrorists and plays up the importance of how the state responds to them. He also suggests that putting the label "terrorism" on an event implies that the state has failed to protect its citizens from certain threats, but interestingly, the state maintains its monopoly on violence and this thereby legitimizes its status as the sole defender of the territory and its constituents. See Mat Coleman, "The Naming of 'Terrorism' and the Evil 'Outlaws': Geopolitical Place-Making After 11 September," *Geopolitics* 8, 3 (Autumn 2003): 87-104.

restricted to a single entity, state or non-state entity. It is an attack on a way of life.

The purpose of terrorism is to terrorize. It is to alter behavior. It is to force people who believe in freedom to be less free by altering their behavior and redressing a balance between freedom and security. Anyone who's ever been in a war zone, as I know most of you have, you know that when you walk out of a building you don't walk out with your head high whistling, you look around the corner and see what's out there. And that's not the way Americans live, and it's not the way we want to live.²⁷

In a similar vein, Bush made the following statements:

Anybody who harbors a terrorist needs to fear the United States and the rest of the free world. Anybody who houses a terrorist, encourages terrorism will be held accountable.... [T]he real challenge for America and our allies in this effort is to do a couple of things: one, condition the world, starting with our own country, that this will be a different kind of battle, series of battles; that they will be fought visibly sometimes, and sometimes we'll never see what may be taking place...and that we fully understand that some nations will be comfortable supporting overt activities, some nations will be comfortable supporting covert activities, some nations will only be comfortable in providing information, others will be helpful and only feel comfortable helping on financial matters. I understand that. Thirdly...as the campaign evolves, some nations may take a more active role than others.²⁸

Q: Would you rather take [Osama bin Laden] alive so you can question him, or dead so you don't have to deal with him?

Pres. Bush: I don't care. Dead or alive, either way.... It doesn't matter to me.²⁹

Even 7,000 miles away, across oceans and continents, on mountaintops and in caves – you [the terrorists] will not escape the justice of this nation.³⁰

²⁷ US Department of Defense New Briefing, Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, 12 September 2001. Available at <http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=1619>, accessed on 25 January 2009.

²⁸ *President Building Worldwide Campaign Against Terrorism: Remarks by President Bush and President Megawati of Indonesia in a Photo Opportunity, The Oval Office* (Office of the Press Secretary, The White House, 19 September 2001), available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010919-1.html>, accessed 2 November 2007.

²⁹ *Prime Minister of Thailand Reiterates Full Support to US*, 14 December 2001.

On the other hand, people have just got to understand that we've got to fight those who are willing to kill. As you can tell from my language, terrorists who take innocent life must be treated as coldblooded [*sic*] killers, because that's what they are. And we will continue to work with our friends who understand that, to bring people to justice, so we don't go to funerals and lay wreaths, so we don't commemorate anniversaries of the brutal slaughter of innocent people in the name of a religion or in the name of—with any attempt to instill fear. That's all they're trying to do. They want us to crumple and go away, so they can then spread their false ideology based upon hate. And America's ideology is based upon compassion and decency and justice. And I look forward to making that case.³¹

The language of “righteous violence” thus “[structured] the dominant narratives and the political justifications for action.”³² In media discussions and official statements, war was projected as the only option, and to suggest otherwise would be considered treasonous.³³ This had the inevitable implication in regard to the positioning of other states in the fight against terror. Of course, such positioning put the United States at the helm, while the rest of the so-called free world was far behind, if not left in the dust. The hierarchic order was thus formed: the United States led, while its allies acted in a supporting role. This hierarchic type of rule was substantiated further by the presence of sanctions should the allies veer off the American course of exacting justice to the terrorists. This was clear in Bush's either-or statements: “Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists. From this day forward, any nation that continues to harbor or support

³⁰ *President Delivers State of the Union Address*, 29 January 2002.

³¹ “Interview with Asian Print Journalists, 14 October 2003,” *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George W. Bush*, vol. 2 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2003, 1322).

³² Dalby: 63.

³³ *Ibid.*, 71.

terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime.³⁴ US Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz reiterated the implicit threat when he said in a news briefing that America's allies would inevitably be asked to choose sides: "We're going to be coming to each one of them, I'm sure, with a variety of different requests. Some of those are being developed, many more we're going to develop as we proceed. And I think so far we've seen indications from a wide variety of sources that people will step up when asked. And believe me, they will be asked."³⁵ The threat of the use of force was therefore very explicit as no state, at least in Southeast Asia, would want to be known as a terrorist haven, much less to incur the wrath of a superpower.

Thus, despite suggestions that the fight for freedom and justice was "universal," the War on Terror would be led primarily by the United States. This hierarchy was reflected in official discourses:

States like those [North Korea, Iran, and Iraq], and their terrorist allies, constitute an axis of evil, arming to threaten the peace of the world. By seeking weapons of mass destruction, these regimes pose a grave and growing danger. They could provide these arms to terrorists, giving them the means to match their hatred. They could attack our allies or attempt to blackmail the United States. In any of these cases, the price of indifference would be catastrophic.... History has called on America and our allies to action, and it is both our responsibility and our privilege to fight freedom's fight.³⁶

In a speech delivered at West Point in June 2002, Bush laid down the task of the United States in leading the fight:

Our Nation's cause has always been larger than our Nation's defense. We fight, as we always fight, for a just peace—a peace that favors liberty. We will defend the peace against the threats from terrorists and tyrants. We will preserve the peace by building

³⁴ "Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the United States Response to the Terrorist Attacks of September 11," 20 September 2001.

³⁵ US Department of Defense New Briefing, Deputy Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, 13 September 2001. Available at <http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=1622>, accessed on 25 January 2009.

³⁶ *President Delivers State of the Union Address*, 29 January 2002.

good relations among the great powers. And we will extend the peace by encouraging free and open societies on every continent.³⁷

The Bush Doctrine specified more clearly the leading role of the United States as it advocated preemption and unilateralism:

In building a balance of power that favors freedom, the United States is guided by the conviction that all nations have important responsibilities. Nations that enjoy freedom must actively fight terror. Nations that depend on international stability must help prevent the spread of weapons of mass destruction. Nations that seek international aid must govern themselves wisely, so that aid is well spent. For freedom to thrive, accountability must be expected and required.

....

Freedom is the non-negotiable demand of human dignity; the birthright of every person—in every civilization. Throughout history, freedom has been threatened by war and terror; it has been challenged by the clashing wills of powerful states and the evil designs of tyrants; and it has been tested by widespread poverty and disease. Today, humanity holds in its hands the opportunity to further freedom's triumph over all these foes. The United States welcomes our responsibility to lead in this great mission.

The U.S. national security strategy will be based on a distinctly American internationalism that reflects the union of our values and our national interests.

....

While the United States will constantly strive to enlist the support of the international community, we will not hesitate to act alone, if necessary, to exercise our right of selfdefense [*sic*] by acting preemptively against such terrorists, to prevent them from doing harm against our people and our country....³⁸

Implicit in the abovementioned statements was the fact that the United States did not really seem to want to get embroiled in this war. On the contrary, the duty has been thrust upon it, leaving it without a choice but to take up arms against the terrorists. This attitude was propped up by American exceptionalism, specifically, the United

³⁷ Speech by US President George W. Bush at West Point, New York, 1 June 2002. From *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, September 2002, 1.

³⁸ Ibid.

States' feeling that it was exonerated from having to justify the correctness of its actions and the consequences of the War on Terror.³⁹ Combined together, these three themes (freedom and justice, righteous violence, and that the necessity of going to war was thrust upon the US) outlined the stance of the United States that was imposed on the international community. How this was received in Southeast Asia was, however, subject to certain qualifications.

Negotiation and Resistance

Southeast Asian countries' immediate response to the 9/11 attacks was, to use Barry Buzan's concept, to securitize the threat posed by Muslim extremist groups in Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Thailand. News reports have made the connection between poverty in the region, but mostly in these states, and Islamic extremism.⁴⁰ Indonesia is not only the country with the most number of Muslims in its population (about 90 percent of its 210 million people), but also the first foreign leader to visit the United States since 9/11.⁴¹ Indonesian President Megawati Sukarnoputri condemned the attacks as "barbaric and indiscriminate."⁴²

In return for such support, President Bush made the following pledges to Indonesia: US\$130 million in bilateral assistance for 2002, US\$10 million to assist internally displaced persons in Moluccas, US\$5 million in Aceh, and US\$10 million to provide police training. In terms of trade, the American agencies of Export Import Bank (ExIm), the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), and the US Trade

³⁹ Dalby: 70-71.

⁴⁰ Michael Richardson, "Attack Against US Widens Fears in Southeast Asia," *International Herald Tribune*, 14 September 2001. Available at http://www.iht.com/articles/2001/09/14/suspect_ed3_.php, accessed 4 November 2007.

⁴¹ Michael Richardson, "Asians, Wary of a Muslim Backlash, are Fearful of Military Action," *International Herald Tribune*, 18 September 2001. Available at http://www.iht.com/articles/2001/09/18/fallout_ed3_.php, accessed 4 November 2007.

⁴² Ibid.

and Development Agency (TDA) would infuse US\$400 million in Indonesia's oil and gas sector. Moreover, Bush also stated that Indonesia would have an additional US\$100 million in benefits under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP). Finally, military-wise, Bush promised to work with the US Congress to allot US\$400,000 for the Expanded International Military Education and Training.⁴³ Apparently, however, what Indonesia desired in return for its cooperation was the lifting of restrictions on military sales, aid, and training that have been imposed on it long ago.⁴⁴ This quid pro quo seemed understandable, given that Indonesia's general public remained suspicious of US foreign policy.⁴⁵

Indonesia might have been the first to pay a visit to the United States following the attacks, but it was the Philippines that was most explicit about giving all-out support to the Americans. Bush narrated,

Yes, I remember right after September the 11th, President Arroyo called me, and there was no doubt in my mind where she stood. It was more than the condolence call. It was a let's-get-after-them call. And I knew that we had – I had a strong ally and friend when it came to chasing these people down, which is precisely what we have to do. And she knows that, and that's the strategy she's employed.⁴⁶

The Philippines was also quoted as saying that it would “back the American response by allowing their armed forces, airports, seaports and military bases to be used, if needed, in the campaign to hunt down terrorists and to punish those who harbor

⁴³ These statistics are from *US and Indonesia Pledge Cooperation: Joint Statement Between the United States of America and the Republic of Indonesia* (Office of the Press Secretary, The White House, 19 September 2001), available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010919-5.html>, accessed on 2 November 2007.

⁴⁴ Michael Richardson, “Anti-Terrorist Training Despite Ban by Congress: US to Aid Jakarta Army,” *International Herald Tribune*, 27 December 2001, available at http://www.iht.com/articles/2001/12/27/subindo_ed3_.php, accessed on 4 November 2007.

⁴⁵ Anthony L. Smith, “A Glass Half Full: Indonesia-US Relations in the Age of Terror,” *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 25, 3 (2003): 449-472.

⁴⁶ “The President's News Conference With President Macapagal-Arroyo of the Philippines,” dated May 19, 2003, John T. Woolley and Gerhard Peters, *The American Presidency Project* [online]. Santa Barbara, CA: University of California (hosted), Gerhard Peters (database). Available from the World Wide Web: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=64449>, accessed on 23 January 2009.

them.”⁴⁷ This unqualified backing inevitably put the Abu Sayyaf under the spotlight.

Reports have it that this was what the Philippines actually wanted without having to voice it out, i.e., to press the United States into defeating the group.⁴⁸ However, Bush remarked on a conversation he and Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo had:

This weekend I called Gloria Arroyo, the President of the Philippines, to congratulate her on her country's steadfast desire to rout out the Abu Sayyaf killer organization. This is the organization which captured the Burnhams. They're nothing but coldblooded [*sic*] killers, again. They may espouse some kind of doctrine, but they have no regard for innocent life. I told Gloria early on in the fight that we'd help her. If she wanted us to take on the enemy without her, we'd be glad to do that too. And she said, "No, we'd like your help to train so we can go get them." And she did.⁴⁹

Like Indonesia, the Philippines was “rewarded” for its unstinting support. In terms of trade, President Bush promised to ask the US Congress to provide the Philippines an estimated US\$1 billion in benefits under the GSP. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) would also give US\$150 million to support the modernization of Philippine agriculture and fisheries. Bush also announced that he would seek US\$29 million for poverty alleviation in the Philippines, and that the OPIC would extend a US\$200 million line of credit for private sector investment, particularly in the housing sector. The military sector, however, received the most substantial support. Bush pledged the following: at least a tenfold increase in Foreign Military Financing (FMF) from US\$1.9 million to US\$19 million for 2002, US\$10 million in goods and/or services to assist the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP),

⁴⁷ Michael Richardson, “US Allies in Asia Will Support Action, But Within Limits They Set,” *International Herald Tribune*, 19 September 2001, available at http://www.iht.com/articles/2001/09/19/fallout_ed3_0.php, accessed on 4 November 2007.

⁴⁸ Deidre Sheehan and David Plott, “A War Grows,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 11 October 2001, 24.

⁴⁹ “Remarks on Homeland Security in Port Elizabeth, New Jersey, 24 June 2002,” *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George W. Bush*, vol. 1 (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 2002, 1053).

and an additional US\$10 million for counter-terrorism and law enforcement assistance. In security assistance alone, the total offered and/or delivered was expected to be worth as much as US\$100 million for 2001-2002. On top of this, the Bush administration committed to infuse US\$38 million in the Mindanao Assistance Package, including US\$825,000 in educational and cultural exchanges.⁵⁰ Given this long list, news reports described the situation thus: “The red carpet is being rolled out for Southeast Asian leaders at the White House.”⁵¹

One thing that the United States hoped for, however, was that it be allowed to station troops in the Philippines, and to this Macapagal-Arroyo declined. Officials said that permitting US troops to fight local groups would be tantamount to flouting the nation’s sovereignty, not to mention that it could enflame anti-American sentiment among the Muslim population.⁵² For Arroyo, the military and financial assistance from the United States was sufficient to fight the Abu Sayyaf.⁵³ However, an editorial in the *Far Eastern Economic Review* commented, “Whether in the southern Philippines or the capital, there’s little to inspire confidence in us that authorities know what to do with their new weapons.”⁵⁴ Nevertheless, by the time 2002 began, US soldiers were allowed into the country to “assess” the military

⁵⁰ These statistics are from *Joint Statement Between the US and the Philippines* (Office of the Press Secretary, The White House, 20 November 2001), available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/11/20011120-13.html>, accessed on 2 November 2007.

⁵¹ Michael Richardson, “America’s War on Terror Ends Years of Indifference to Region: US Woos Southeast Asian Allies,” *International Herald Tribune*, 29 November 2001, available at http://www.iht.com/articles/2001/11/29/allies_ed3_2.php, accessed on 4 November 2007.

⁵² Michael Richardson, “Southeast Asia Bars Help by US Troops in Fighting Terror,” *International Herald Tribune*, 14 December 2001, available at http://www.iht.com/articles/2001/12/14/troops_ed3_.php, accessed on 4 November 2007.

⁵³ When asked by reporters how her trip to the US went, President Arroyo reportedly beamed when she replied, “Four billion dollars and counting.” From James Hookway, “Just Say ‘No’ to US Troops,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 6 December 2001, 24-25.

⁵⁴ “Aiding the Philippines: Manila Needs Direct Military Help,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 6 December 2001, 8.

operations against the Abu Sayyaf.⁵⁵ This move was also part of the Balikatan 02-1 exercise where US troop deployment totaled 660 personnel, ten aircraft, three C-130s, and seven medium and heavy helicopters.⁵⁶ This exercise, according to a news analysis, provided both the Philippines and the United States several advantages.⁵⁷ For the Philippines, this meant that it could mobilize a superpower ally. For the United States, this was “a military segue out of Afghanistan,” as well as a major contribution to the anti-terror campaign in Southeast Asia.⁵⁸ Thus, by 2003, the components of post-911 cooperation between the United States and the Philippines included joint military exercises, military assistance, access agreements and politico-military consultations.⁵⁹ This “revitalized alliance” was strengthened even further when the White House designated the Philippines as a Major Non-NATO Ally (MNNA).⁶⁰

US-Malaysia relations hinged on the Nonproliferation, Anti-terrorism, Demining and Related Programs (NADR) assistance from the United States, as well as Malaysian participation in the US Customs Service’s Container Security Initiative (CSI) and in efforts to curb money laundering and other transnational crimes.⁶¹ Meanwhile, Thailand was cautious in supporting the US War on Terror. In the immediate aftermath of the attacks, Thai Foreign Minister Surakiart Sathirathai said that he would “like to see the United States obtain clear-cut evidence from a thorough

⁵⁵ John Gershman, “US Takes Anti-Terror War to the Philippines,” *Asia Times Online*, 17 January 2002, available at <http://www.atimes.com/se-asia/DA17Ae01.html>, accessed on 10 October 2007.

⁵⁶ Renato Cruz de Castro, “The Revitalized Philippine-US Security Relations: A Ghost from the Cold War or an Alliance for the 21st Century?” *Asian Survey* 43, 6 (2003): 971-988.

⁵⁷ Catharin E. Dalpino, “Second Front, Second Time: Counter-Terrorism and US Policy Toward Southeast Asia,” *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 15, 2 (2002): 345-354.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 352.

⁵⁹ Renato Cruz de Castro, “Philippine Defense Policy in the 21st Century: Autonomous Defense or Back to the Alliance?” *Pacific Affairs* 78, 3 (Fall 2005): 403-422.

⁶⁰ *Fact Sheet: Announcements Related to the Visit of President Arroyo* (Office of the Press Secretary, The White House, 19 May 2003), available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/05/20030519-2.html>, accessed on 2 November 2007.

⁶¹ Pamela Sodhy, “US-Malaysian Relations During the Bush Administration: The Political, Economic, and Security Aspects,” *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 25, 3 (2003): 363-386.

investigation before starting any military operations.”⁶² This circumspection was warranted by the fear of not incurring the wrath of Thailand’s Muslim minority.⁶³ Moreover, it could also be due to the fact that, as reported in the news, “Thailand was still sore at Washington for not bailing it out of its financial morass in 1997.”⁶⁴ Indeed, Kraisak Choonhavan, the chairman of the senate foreign affairs committee, remarked, “The US did nothing to help when the economic crisis started with Thailand.” Also, a Thai opposition leader warned, “The government should take care where enemies may turn against us.”⁶⁵ Despite this, Thailand signed counter-terrorism conventions and signified its participation in rebuilding Afghanistan.⁶⁶

The biggest problem for Southeast Asia hinged on its sizeable Muslim population. Indonesia, with its Muslim majority, had the most to fear from backlash. Analysts pointed out that American support for Megawati’s government could likely inflame Islamic opposition. At the same time, however, without military and financial help from the United States, Indonesia lacked the wherewithal to revive its economy.⁶⁷ A week after the September 11 attacks, most of the countries in the region have already extended their support to the United States, but Singapore was

⁶² Richardson, “Asians, Wary of a Muslim Backlash, are Fearful of Military Action,” 18 September 2001.

⁶³ Richardson, “US Allies in Asia Will Support Action, But Within Limits They Set,” 19 September 2001.

⁶⁴ Hookway, “Just Say ‘No’ to US Troops,” 6 December 2001.

⁶⁵ Penny Crisp, “The War of the Worlds,” *Asiaweek.com*, 28 September 2001, available from <http://www.asiaweek.com/asiaweek/magazine/Dateline/0.8782.175612.00.html>, accessed on 12 October 2007.

⁶⁶ “Joint Statement Between the United States of America and the Kingdom of Thailand,” dated December 14, 2001, John T. Woolley and Gerhard Peters, *The American Presidency Project* [online]. Santa Barbara, CA: University of California (hosted), Gerhard Peters (database). Available from World Wide Web: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=64748>, accessed on 23 January 2009.

⁶⁷ Michael Richardson, “Anti-Terror Effort May Provoke Her Foes: Megawati Faces Risk in Backing the US,” *International Herald Tribune*, 24 September 2001, available at http://www.iht.com/articles/2001/09/24/a5_82.php, accessed on 4 November 2007; Michael Richardson, “Fearing Backlash, Jakarta Doesn’t Join in Crackdown on Radicals: Indonesia Divided Over Extremists,” *International Herald Tribune*, 23 January 2002, available at http://www.iht.com/articles/2002/01/23/jakarta_ed2_php, accessed on 4 November 2007.

mun on whether it would back American military action.⁶⁸ The reason behind this stance was because it was encircled by Islamic nations, and so it had to tread carefully that its support for the United States would not offend any of its neighbors or its own Muslim population. Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew worried, “If it [extremist groups] takes root in Indonesia and they go up to the islands south of us, and if they take root in Malaysia and come down to Johor, then we are vulnerable.”⁶⁹ Furthermore, Singapore was concerned that closer ties with the United States would attract reprisal from bin Laden’s terror network.⁷⁰ Singapore acknowledged its hamstrung position when Foreign Affairs Minister S. Jayakumar remarked:

Therefore, America’s pre-eminence means that there is no real alternative for any Southeast Asian government than to try to forge good relations with the US. Good relations with the US are not possible unless governments cooperate in the anti-terrorism campaign. But many Southeast Asian governments will also have to find ways of assuaging the anxieties of their Muslim ground which may be uneasy or unhappy about US policies while at the same time taking firm action to neutralise extremist Islamic elements in their societies. But how governments deal with this matter is a political conundrum. How they deal with this will have a profound influence on Southeast Asia now.⁷¹

Similarly, Philippine support was also limited by domestic factors, including national leftist politicians, groups like the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the National People’s Army (NPA), and most significantly the Catholic Church.⁷²

In regard to collective responses from the Southeast Asian region, ASEAN released declarations that emphasized caution in linking terrorism with Islam.

⁶⁸ Bruce Gilley, “The Region Takes Sides,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 22 September 2001, 24-25.

⁶⁹ John McBeth, “The Danger Within,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 27 September 2001, 20-23.

⁷⁰ Michael Richardson, “Singapore Frets Over Security Implications of Its Anti-Terror Support for US,” *International Herald Tribune*, 20 October 2001, available at http://www.iht.com/articles/2001/10/20/a9_11.php, accessed on 4 November 2007.

⁷¹ *Remarks on the Strategic Situation in the Region by Minister for Foreign Affairs, Prof. S. Jayakumar in Parliament, 16 May 2002* (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Singapore), available at http://app.mfa.gov.sg/2006/press/view_press_print.asp?post_id=619, accessed on 12 October 2007.

⁷² James Hookway, “Manila Proves Key US Ally in Terror War: Bush Responds with Aid, But There are Limits to Philippine Support,” *Wall Street Journal*, 29 November 2001, A15.

Specifically, the 2001 Joint Action to Counter Terrorism “*Reject[ed]* any attempt to link terrorism with any religion or race....⁷³ Similarly,

We call on the international community to avoid indiscriminately advising their citizens to refrain from visiting or otherwise dealing with our countries, in the absence of established evidence to substantiate rumors of possible terrorist attacks, as such measures could help achieve the objectives of the terrorists.⁷⁴

In general, terrorism fell under the aegis of transnational crime, and so in August 2002, ASEAN released a joint declaration with the United States and focused on the following activities:

1. Continue and improve intelligence and terrorist financing information sharing on counter-terrorism measures, including the development of more effective counter-terrorism policies and legal, regulatory and administrative counter-terrorism regimes.
2. Enhance liaison relationships amongst their law enforcement agencies to engender practical counter-terrorism regimes.
3. Strengthen capacity-building efforts through training and education; consultations between officials, analysts and field operators; and seminars, conferences and joint operations as appropriate.
4. Provide assistance on transportation, border and immigration control challenges, including document and identity fraud to stem effectively the flow of terrorist-related material, money and people.
5. Comply with United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1373, 1267, 1390 and other United Nations resolutions or declarations on international terrorism.
6. Explore on a mutual basis additional areas of cooperation.⁷⁵

When the blasts in Bali occurred in October 2002, they vindicated those who have been pointing out the threats posed by the Islamic extremist groups in the region. One editorial indicated, “The Bali...bombings show clearly that Southeast

⁷³ 2001 ASEAN Declaration on Joint Action to Counter Terrorism, Bandar Seri Begawan, 5 November 2001. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/5318.htm>, accessed on 30 January 2009. Emphasis on the original.

⁷⁴ Declaration on Terrorism by the 8th ASEAN Summit, Phnom Penh, 3 November 2002. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/13154.htm>, accessed on 30 January 2009.

⁷⁵ ASEAN-United States of America Joint Declaration for Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism, Bandar Seri Begawan, 1 August 2002. Available at <http://www.aseansec.org/7424.htm>, accessed on 30 January 2009.

Asia is vulnerable to extremist violence. Suicidal explosions, most probably aided by foreign terrorist training and expertise, have spread to Southeast Asian countries from South and Central Asia and the Middle East.”⁷⁶ The securitization of the problem might have worked for a little while, but anti-American sentiment within Southeast Asia became so strong that the campaign against terrorism soon found little resonance within the region, particularly since the Muslim population saw the US military action as an attack against Islam.⁷⁷ Things turned worse when no direct link could be established between al-Qaeda and the domestic insurgencies in the Philippines and Indonesia.⁷⁸ The United States contended that Jemaah Islamiah (JI) has had contacts with al-Qaeda, but the precise relationship remained difficult to pinpoint.⁷⁹ Hence, without this so-called direct link, the argument that Southeast Asia was the second front in the war against terror became unsustainable. The *Far Eastern Economic Review* reported,

The label is dismissed as absurd by a broad spectrum of analysts and politicians in the region. Absent from the US rhetoric is a sense of proportion, or a recognition that Southeast Asia has long battled home-grown terrorism. Washington has tried – but failed – to persuade the region that the world changed on Sept. 11 and that international terrorism has become worthy of a new Cold War.⁸⁰

Apart from unnecessarily extending the War on Terror to the shores of Southeast Asia since there was no direct link with the al-Qaeda anyway, the United States received more ire from countries in the region, but from Indonesia in particular, when it refused the latter access to the captured terrorists whom the

⁷⁶ Eric Teo, “The Enemy has Come,” *International Herald Tribune*, 4 November 2002, available at http://www.iht.com/articles/2002/11/04/ederic_ed3_.php, accessed on 4 November 2007.

⁷⁷ David I. Steinberg, “Islam Seen Under Threat,” *International Herald Tribune*, 13 March 2003, available at http://www.iht.com/articles/2003/03/13/eddavid_ed3_.php, accessed on 4 November 2007.

⁷⁸ Philip Bowring, “Stretching the ‘War on Terror’,” *International Herald Tribune*, 14 August 2002, available at http://www.iht.com/articles/2002/08/14/edbow_ed3_0.php, accessed on 4 November 2007.

⁷⁹ Barry Wain, “Unfriendly Fire,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 12 September 2002, 15-22.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 16.

Americans kept at undisclosed locations. For instance, Omar al Farouq was captured by Indonesian authorities in 2002 and handed over to the United States. His testimony could have had some bearing on the charges brought against Abu Bakar Bashir had the United States allowed him to speak as a witness. Also, Hambali, who was alleged to be the operations leader of JI, was secreted away and the Americans were not saying where. Due to this, editorials in Southeast Asia were written with tones like, "...cooperation seems to us to be a two-way enterprise.... It would be good if Washington reciprocated this cooperation at crucial times."⁸¹ Moreover, an Indonesian reporter commented to a US State Department Official, "He [Hambali] is Indonesian, he did his crimes in Indonesia; I think the Indonesians have the right to have access to him."⁸²

Eventually, the Southeast Asian states of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Singapore openly criticized the United States' campaign on terror. This was especially evident once fighting in Iraq started. The Indonesian government reportedly referred to US actions as "an act of aggression" and called on the United Nations to do something.⁸³ While Malaysia has generally cooperated with American efforts, anti-Western rhetoric has become more pronounced since the US-led invasion of Iraq.⁸⁴ Former Prime Minister Mahathir condemned US actions and described

⁸¹ "Helping Out Works Both Ways," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 16 September 2003, 8. JI is said to have about 750 operatives across Southeast Asia, and around 140 have been arrested in 2003. Carlos H. Conde, "New Fears on Southeast Asia Terror Ring," *International Herald Tribune*, 11 October 2003, available at <http://www.iht.com/articles/2003/10/11/jeemah.php>, accessed on 4 November 2007.

⁸² Raymond Bonner, "US Antiterrorism Envoy Challenged in Indonesia," *International Herald Tribune*, 18 October 2005, available at <http://www.iht.com/articles/2005/10/18/news/indo.php>, accessed on 4 November 2007.

⁸³ David Capie, "Between a Hegemon and a Hard Place: The 'War on Terror' and Southeast Asian-US Relations," *The Pacific Review* 17, 2 (June 2004): 223-248.

⁸⁴ Ioannis Gatsiounis, "Malaysia Tweaks Its Terror Compass," *Asia Times Online*, 25 June 2004, available at http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Southeast_Asia/FF25Ae06.html, accessed on 15 November 2007.

them as “the wanton killing of Muslims.”⁸⁵ For the Philippines, which was said to be the staunchest supporter of the United States in the region, resistance came in the form of nationalist opposition against the Pentagon’s announcement that it would deploy 3,000 combat troops to the Philippines in February 2003. With this came the threat of impeachment hanging over Arroyo’s head, and so the Pentagon withdrew its announcement.⁸⁶ In 2004 when US Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld participated in a conference in Singapore, Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong in his opening address to the conference admonished the United States against rising anti-American sentiment. Furthermore, he also said that “Washington’s pro-Israel policies in the Middle East are part of the problem.”⁸⁷

In the face of all these criticisms, the United States signed a free trade agreement with Singapore in May 2003.⁸⁸ The US praised Indonesia for capturing Azhari Husin, one of the well-known bomb-makers in Asia in November 2005.⁸⁹ Almost immediately after this, the United States lifted restrictions of arms sales to Indonesia, even if the latter admitted that it did not have the money to buy military equipment.⁹⁰ Michael Vatikiotis, in an opinion piece in the *International Herald Tribune* explained this turnaround: “Perhaps in a world where support for the US-led war on terrorism is shrinking, Indonesia...is considered a more useful ally.”⁹¹ Soon

⁸⁵ Capie (June 2004): 231.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 235.

⁸⁷ Murray Hiebert, “Same Planet, Different World,” *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 17 June 2004, 26.

⁸⁸ *President Signed US-Singapore Free Trade Agreement* (Office of the Press Secretary, The White House, 6 May 2003). Available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/05/20030506-11.html>, accessed on 2 November 2007.

⁸⁹ Raymond Bonner, “Indonesia Hailed for Efforts on Terrorism,” *International Herald Tribune*, 16 November 2005, available at <http://www.iht.com/articles/2005/11/16/news/indo.php>, accessed on 4 November 2007.

⁹⁰ Peter Gelling, “US to Allow Sale of Arms to Indonesia,” *International Herald Tribune*, 24 November 2005, available at <http://www.iht.com/articles/2005/11/23/news/indo.php>, accessed on 4 November 2007.

⁹¹ Michael Vatikiotis, “Washington’s Turnaround in Indonesia,” *International Herald Tribune*, 6 January 2006, available at <http://www.iht.com/articles/2006/01/06/opinion/edvatik.php>, accessed on 4 November 2007.

after the lifting of the arms embargo, US Defense Secretary Rumsfeld visited Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono to “strengthen their bilateral friendship.”⁹² Meanwhile, the US signed a new anti-terror pact with the Philippines in May 2005. Philippine officials clarified that this new joint panel, called the Security Engagement Board (SEB), “implements existing bilateral treaties with the US,” and therefore should not be seen as a new treaty.⁹³ With ASEAN as a whole, the United States agreed on a five-year plan for closer ties in politics, security, trade, and investment.⁹⁴ Commercial diplomacy therefore seemed to be Washington’s new stance towards the region.⁹⁵ In closing, the US campaign against terror was unsustainable given the disjuncture with regional and domestic politics. At the close of 2006, the United States thus seemed to be showing signs of, as a news analysis described it, “superpower fatigue.”⁹⁶ Similarly, John Ravenhill came to the conclusion that the United States’ economic policies towards East Asia portray the actions of a hegemon in decline.⁹⁷ This is similar to Evelyn Goh’s argument that the grounds on which American soft power stands are now challenged. Its values and ideology, benignity, and legitimacy have all been questioned following the events of September 11.⁹⁸

⁹² “Rumsfeld Holds Talks with Top Indonesians,” *International Herald Tribune*, 6 June 2006, available at <http://www.ihf.com/articles/2006/06/06/news/rumsfeld.php>, accessed on 4 November 2007.

⁹³ Dona Z. Pazzibugan and Nikko Dizon, “RP, US Sign New Anti-Terror Pact,” *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 25 May 2006.

⁹⁴ Leslie Lau, “US, ASEAN Agree on Five-Year Plan for Closer Ties,” *The Straits Times*, 28 July 2006.

⁹⁵ Shawn W. Crispin, “Stand Up to Uncle Bully,” *Asiatimes Online*, 7 September 2006, available at http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Southeast_Asia/HI07Ae01.html, accessed on 10 October 2007.

⁹⁶ David E. Sanger, “Bush Agenda Shows ‘Superpower Fatigue’,” *International Herald Tribune*, 21 November 2006, available at <http://www.ihf.com/articles/2006/11/21/news/assess.php>, accessed on 4 November 2007.

⁹⁷ John Ravenhill, “US Economic Relations with East Asia: From Hegemony to Complex Interdependence?” in *Bush and Asia: America’s Evolving Relations with East Asia*, ed. Mark Beeson (London/New York: Routledge, 2006), 42-63.

⁹⁸ Evelyn Goh, “Hegemonic Constraints: The Implications of 11 September for American Power,” *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 57, 1 (2003): 77-97.

In conclusion, the dominant language games played by the United States and Southeast Asian nations during the 2001-2006 period spelled imposition and negotiation/resistance. The United States marshaled support for its War on Terror by making reference to the universality of values like freedom and justice. Since these two were at stake, the United States moved to justifying the righteousness of its response to the 9/11 attacks, which necessitated its leadership in the campaign. At the same time, while the Southeast Asian states sympathized with the plight of the United States, they did not give their unqualified support to the American effort. Arguably, the qualifications were due to the sizeable Muslim population in the region, and because of this, the smaller nations joined the campaign but only to a certain extent.

These language games point to the existence of two categories of rules (assertives and directives) and two types of rule (hegemony and hierarchy). On one hand, a hegemonic rule was at play. To recall, hegemony required (1) super-ordinate actors who (2) redefine social reality, and (3) subordinate actors who (4) consent to the prevailing order. The redefinition of social reality is key here, as seen in the United States' reference to the universality and necessity of upholding freedom and justice. In the same vein, the language games discussed above also demonstrated that a hierarchic rule was at play. At the beginning of this chapter, it was established that hierarchy needs, on one hand, a ruler or a dominant state and on the other, the ruled or secondary powers. What differentiates hegemony from hierarchy is the threat of the use of force practiced in the latter type of rule. The element of the use of force was present in Southeast Asia-US relations in the 2001-2006 period, as seen in the United States' "Either you are with us or against us" rhetoric. This chapter thus forwarded the idea that relations between Southeast Asia and the US during this time are not so easily reducible to an either-or logic, i.e., either hierarchy or hegemony/empire.

Instead, it demonstrated how elements of hierarchy and hegemony blended together, and how hegemonic strategies were used to fortify the hierarchic order.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

The narratives of Southeast Asia-US relations highlighted the flow of power. Oftentimes, this movement was seen and thus depicted in scholarly literature in a unidirectional manner. Hence, some narratives inevitably (although understandably) emphasized the leadership of the United States, in the sense that it was the superpower that shaped, influenced, or steered the course of its relationship with Southeast Asia. Other narratives stressed the opposite: that it was the Southeast Asian nations that held the power since they were able to ensure the involvement of the US in the region's security architecture. At bottom, the type of rule practiced in the relationship in question depended on which perspective one began the analysis. Thus, in accounts that were inclined towards the leadership role of the superpower, the forms of rule that predominated were either hegemony or hierarchy. Similarly, accounts that were biased towards the active role of the Southeast Asian states argued for a hierarchic rule. It was at this juncture that this dissertation raised its central puzzle: why did the "leader" of the relationship vary? As a corollary, what made one type of rule hold at any given point in time? Answers to these questions were framed against the use of language games. Thus, from 1954 to 2006, Southeast Asia and the United States have negotiated the role of "leader" in their relationship and in this regard, have gone through hegemony, heteronomy, and hierarchy because of the variety of language games that these states played. The focus of this dissertation was not meant to reduce Southeast Asia-US relations to language alone; indeed, material factors played into the criteria that made up the different types of rule.

The division of the dissertation into seven chapters reflected the value-added of using this method of analysis in the reconstruction of Southeast Asia-US relations. The first two chapters were conceptualized to set the stage for the empirical analyses later on. Chapter 1 introduced the parameters of Nicholas Onuf and Frank F. Klink's paradigm of rule, which was constituted by the three-step process of language games, rules, and rule. This framework rested on the assumption that language games, as clusters of related speech acts, could be categorized into three: directive-rules (directives), instruction-rules (assertives), or commitment-rules (commissives). Following this logic, language games that follow specific rules inevitably formed different types of rule. In this case, directives were expressed through hierarchy, assertives through hegemony, and commissives through heteronomy. Chapter 2 took into consideration extant accounts of the Southeast Asia-US relationship and argued that these relied on certain understandings of international orders. As a result, the scholarship on Southeast Asia-US relations neglected to examine why and how power was negotiated between the actors, and why one form of rule transformed into another.

Empirics and a historical reconstruction of the Southeast Asia-US relationship were examined in chapters 3 to 6. Chapter 3's parameters were the period between 1954 and 1977, and the claim was that this was characterized by hegemony. The materialist and consensual conceptions of this form of rule that have been extrapolated from the literature were juxtaposed with language games culled from official documents and secondary materials. Specifically, the Southeast Asian states and the US were seen to be playing the interfacing games of containment and regionalism, and threat and assurance. The analysis suggested that in the face of the Soviet Union and the rise of communism, the United States implemented a

containment strategy in Southeast Asia, but that the latter used this opportunity to assert its independence in the form of regional organizations. The period was characterized by hegemony because the dynamics of the relationship met the fourfold criteria involving (1) the presence of a super-ordinate actor who (2) redefined social reality, and (3) subordinate actors who (4) gave their consent to the prevailing order. As the lines of authority were clear-cut, i.e., despite some resistance, power flowed from the US to the Southeast Asian states, this period could not have been read as heteronomous. Neither could it have been hierarchic because of the double movement of American containment and Southeast Asian assertion of independence, as well as the absence of the threat of the use of force.

At this point, Southeast Asia-US relations were transformed into a heteronomous type of rule, and chapters 4 and 5 were devoted to exploring its twofold definition. Usually depicted in mainstream International Relations as part of dependency theories, heteronomy relied on (1) the pervasiveness of commissives and (2) the postulation of autonomy. The gist of a heteronomous rule was that by virtue of making promises or entering into agreements, actors ensure inequality in their relations. The 1978-1991 period was the subject of chapter 4 and the language games of the states involved revolved around the issue of Kampuchea, particularly on making promises and delivering on those commitments. After the so-called defeat of the Americans in the Vietnam War, they were compelled to allay fears that they would withdraw from the region. Such required offering promises and reiterating commitments to their allies. The issues surrounding Kampuchea became the ground with which said promises were fulfilled, especially in regard to addressing the refugee crisis. Given that the markers for hegemony were absent during this period, this timeframe could not have been read as hegemony. Also, lines of authority were

multiple and overlap (a consequence of the act of making promises), and the threat of the use of force was missing, thereby negating the possibility of this being a hierarchic rule.

Chapter 5 probed into the second definition of heteronomy. Since commitments – normally expressed in international relations through formal agreements – were premised on the idea that actors involved were autonomous, i.e., that they entered into said agreements out of their own volition, chapter 5 centered on the consequences of these actions. The pivot was the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) because its institutionalization symbolized the commitment of states to reduce the uncertainty of the immediate post-Cold War period. Interestingly, the language game played during this time was binding outside powers into the region, which thereafter created a structure in favor of ASEAN. In this case, a line was drawn to distinguish the ASEAN from the non-ASEAN members, and therefore asymmetry was ensured and formalized in the ARF. As a consequence, the organization became hampered in dealing with regional crises, such as the South China Sea dispute, the enlargement of ASEAN, the Asian financial crisis, and the secession of East Timor from Indonesia. While the fourfold criteria of hegemony were present during this time, it would be inaccurate to argue that the 1992-2000 period was thus because in order for super-ordinate actors to redefine social reality, there must be another opposing “reality.” In the case of the 1954-1977 period, the United States’ redefinition was in contrast to the communist worldview purported by the Soviet Union. In the post-Cold War era, however, such a factor was absent. Southeast Asia’s insistence of the privileging of Asian values was less about needing to counterbalance an opponent’s version of social reality, and more about ensuring the smaller states’ participation in the crafting of its own security environment. Also, while on the surface the privileging of

ASEAN might reflect the dynamics of hierarchy, what was lacking was the threat of or the use of force during this period.

Hegemony made a comeback in the 2001-2006 period (chapter 6), but interestingly, this type of rule was mixed with hierarchy. A hierarchic rule was easily identifiable by the presence of (1) a ruler or dominant state and (2) the ruled or secondary powers. The key to the functioning of a hierarchic rule, and that which differentiated it from hegemony, was the threat of or the use of force. In the wake of the September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States, the language games of imposition and negotiation/resistance mirrored the workings of two types of rule. On one hand, American imposition of the righteousness of its War on Terror and the references to values like freedom and justice were reminiscent of a super-ordinate actor's efforts to redefine social reality (hegemony), i.e., to redefine it vis-à-vis the reality posited by the terrorists. On the other hand, the United States' insistence that it must necessarily lead the fight was compounded by its rhetoric that should members of the international community refuse to join the "good" fight, they were automatically relegated to siding with the perpetrators of the attacks and deserved the wrath of the superpower. In short, the hierarchy was evident in the threat of the use of force should states refuse to ally with the United States. With the lines of authority clearly drawn and with less reliance on commissives, this period could not have been accurately captured by heteronomy.

The shifts in the types of rule that took place in Southeast Asia-US relations from 1954 to 2006 also necessitated the movement in terms of the "leader" of the relationship. Indeed, sometimes it was the United States and other times it was also the Southeast Asian nations. What explained such shifts were the variations in the language games that these states played. As the historical contexts changed, so did

the rhetoric of the actors, and in turn, the rules of the game and the type/s of rule that predominated were likewise transformed. Each rule took root at particular points in time because of the reception and salience of a category of language games (as seen mainly from official discourses). However, once they changed, a new form of rule was practiced. By paying attention to the linguistic element, the reconstructed edifice of Southeast Asia-US relations emphasized the constant and active participation of actors, be they superpowers or members of the so-called Third World. It was built on existing narratives of the relationship but at the same time, embedded these accounts in a Critical Constructivist logic that stressed the constant negotiation of power relations.

As a final note, there are, admittedly, many narratives of the Southeast Asia-US relationship that come from varying theoretical/conceptual perspectives. However, the said relationship cannot be reduced to either-or logics, i.e., either it is the United States that leads the pack, so to speak, or it is the smaller Southeast Asian nations. Mainstream International Relations theories normally underlie the narratives that favor the United States, while the contemporary study of Asian security underscores the ingenuity of the lesser powers to have a stake in the crafting of their international relations. What a study focusing on the linguistic element offers is the acknowledgement that by virtue of language games, both the Southeast Asian nations and the United States were and continue to be *active* parties to the creation, maintenance, and perpetuation of their ties. Thus, the issue becomes less about who “leads” the relationship, and more of how the same relationship is constitutive of the actors that are party to it.

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