

ASEAN Way in Communitarianism Perspective

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Abstract—Discussion on the ASEAN issue generally becomes the theme among political elite state officials (state-oriented). Each ASEAN member country resolves problems based on its concerns which has never been a problem for ASEAN as an international organization (supranatural organization). The participation of other countries in solving such problems can be seen as interfering in the domestic affairs of the country concerned even though the problem involves several ASEAN member countries. The principle and non-interference and respect to member state sovereignty is a kind characteristic of the ASEAN Way which is believed to be their foundation in solving the problem among member countries. The new development of ASEAN is marked through ASEAN Conference in Bali, which agreed with a Bali Concord II. This conference established the formation of the ASEAN Community with the vision of 2025 becoming a “One Vision, One Identity, One Community” society. Here, we can see a shift in orientation from the state to a people-centered orientation. ASEAN Community has three pillars of the community, namely, ASEAN Security and Defense Community, Economic Community, and ASEAN Social and Cultural Community. This research uses a juridical method with a philosophical approach. Then the analysis is carried out with a qualitative approach and in reading the text using the hermeneutic method. The results showed that the ASEAN Way is in terms of the ideal concept toward the ASEAN Community, but at the practical level problems arise because each country has its interest. The ASEAN Community based on the values of Communitarianism faces obstacles, it is not yet visible that is real to take with the community, even though in the ASEAN Community, ASEAN vision is people-centered.

Keywords—ASEAN way, asean community, communitarianism

I. INTRODUCTION

The formation of ASEAN was motivated by the strong desire of the initiators of ASEAN to create a Southeast Asia region that is peaceful, safe, stable, and prosperous. These emerged because the situation in this region, in the 1960s, was faced with a conflict-prone situation, namely the struggle for ideological influence between the military powers of majority countries and conflicts among them in the region that, if left unchecked it could disrupt regional stability, making it to implement development [1]. The formation of ASEAN was carried out through the Bangkok Declaration in 1967 that was a form of state awareness to face problems in the region together.

Then in realizing the desire for a unified Southeast Asia, ASEAN, which initially consisted of five countries, later developed into ten countries. Although, it was originally aspired to be a security community founded with a political impulse so that members feel as a community that can work together in various fields.

Subsequent developments show that through the Bali Declaration of Agreement II in 2003, the heads of government of all ASEAN member countries agreed on the membership of an ASEAN Community with the vision of 2025 becoming a “One Vision, One Identity, One Community” society. Here, we see a shift in orientation from state-oriented to people-centered.

One of the essential steps is to change the paradigm of the organization, which was from a state-based organization to a community-based organization. Paradigm changes for the sustainability of ASEAN and the changes that occur in ASEAN, relating to the resolution of problems involving ASEAN member countries, especially to maintain political, economic, and socio-cultural stability of the ASEAN community.

The community-based paradigm was affected by the theme of the ASEAN hymn, namely, “a Community of Opportunities for All.” The purpose of the community-based paradigm is to encourage and increase mobility among the peoples of ASEAN member countries by providing convenience to travel. Then, provide opportunities to take part in training and skills education to improve the skills of the ASEAN community. In addition, to increase mobility among university students in ASEAN [2].

This community-based paradigm protects its communitarian identity and provides space for non-state communities to participate. Community participation is to anticipate the dominance of the interests of the government and big business players so that the problems of income inequality, development, and welfare, will have been resolved.

Although the paradigm has changed to a community-based organization, ASEAN in reality still uses a state-based organizational paradigm. The aforementioned seems when ASEAN as an entity as well as ASEAN member countries, faces a problem. Efforts to solve problems are remained in

countries based on the principles of the ASEAN-Way, especially the principle of non-interference.

When the resolution of problems has not been carried out jointly by ASEAN countries as an organization, this is certainly not according to the objectives of the establishment of ASEAN, namely for regional security, economic progress, socio-cultural development. Likewise, it is not according to the motto, namely one vision, one identity, and one community to unite the countries in Southeast Asia through ownership of the same vision and identity and form a colloquial community.

Based on the explanation above, there are problems in ASEAN, especially related to the ASEAN Way and the values of togetherness as an ASEAN community as follows:

1. How to understand the ASEAN Way in the context of the ASEAN community?
2. What are the efforts to create an ASEAN Community based on the values of Communitarianism?

II. METHODS

This study wants to examine and understand the principles of the ASEAN Way in the way the ASEAN community works, which transforms from state-oriented to people-oriented. This study is juridical research using a hermeneutic approach as a philosophical method. That is to support an understanding of the truth and philosophical interpretation [3] regarding the reality of the ASEAN community. The characteristics of philosophical research are critical, reflexive, radical, and integral. Critical in dismantling assumptions that have become ideological. Criticizing in precipitating whatever is absorbed by the senses to be processed through ratios, thoroughgoing in seeking basic understanding to its roots [4]. The word "hermeneutics" can be conceivable as "interpreter" or "interpretation." From a philosophical perspective, hermeneutics is a school of philosophy that studies the nature of things to understand/understand "something." "Something" in hermeneutic interpretation, can be formulated in the texts, ancient manuscripts, papyrus, events, thoughts, and revelations or scriptures. If the object of interpretation is a legal text, legal doctrine, legal principle, or legal norm, then its essence is legal hermeneutics. The hermeneutical approach according to Paul Ricoeur, hermeneutics is about the theory of the rules that organize an exegesis, in other words, an interpretation of a particular text or a collection of potential signs of existence which is seen as a text. The use of this approach (chosen) as explained, at least the emergence of modern hermeneutics is related to the rejection/resistance of (inadequate) positivism as a methodology and school of thought (interpretive method) in the social sciences and humanity which has been very dominant since the seventeenth century.

This research will collect, study and review existing paradigms/theories/concepts related to the ASEAN Way, ASEAN community, and communitarianism. This collection is not yet a philosophical reflection but provides the raw material for philosophical research. Data collection in this study will be

carried out through a detailed recording process of available literature data [5], especially regarding philosophical values in the thinking of the ASEAN Way, ASEAN community, and communitarianism. Qualitative data collection is completed through correspondence with several thinkers who have competence in the paradigm/theory/concept being studied.

Existing data is linked with new developments to see the problem more clearly than the philosophical analysis is carried out through: First, interpretation, which is trying to break through and capture the hidden philosophy in it, namely the essential structures, and then on that understanding a critical evaluation is carried out and presents a more complete and appropriate alternative view. Second, internal coherence, seeing the interrelationships of all elements in the hidden philosophy behind the various problems faced to find out which elements are central and dominant, and which are marginal. Third, Comparison with other different philosophical views. Fourth, Heuristics, researchers will gain a broader and new understanding wherever possible.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. *Understanding the Asean way in the context of the Asean community*

As already stated, the ASEAN way is believed to be a path to peace, progress, and prosperity based on the spirit of partnership between neighbors and mutually beneficial cooperation as emphasized by Thanat Khomann. Meanwhile, Ali Murtopo stated that Asean's success cannot be separated from the consultation system that has marked at many occasions, what he called the ASEAN way in dealing with various problems faced by member countries [6].

This means that the Asean Way is very helpful for Asean in diverting conflicts to areas of cooperation. And even then the cooperation referred to is not only limited to defense and security issues, but has expanded to other collaborations, which will be seen later in the building of the three pillars of the Asean Community. Murtopo also criticizes the excessive informal pattern (personal approach). which has been running among the leaders of Asean countries, he called for efforts. . . towards the further institutionalization of regionalism in Southeast Asia. Ironically, it is precisely what he criticizes that is recognized as the main strength of ASEAN [7].

'Meanwhile, according to Ghazalie Shafie, 'our common cultural heritage', especially the spirit of 'togetherness' in the village, is the basis for the establishment of ASEAN. Estrella Solidum, a Filipino scholar who is perhaps the first academic to seriously investigate the term, asserts that the ASEAN way of 'consists of cultural elements that are found to be congruent with some of the values of each (Asean) member state [7].

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Singapore S. Jayakumar stated that:

'The Asean Way stresses informality, organization minimalism, inclusiveness, intensive consultations leading to consensus and peaceful resolution of disputes [7].

The ASEAN way is usually described as a decision-making process featuring a high level of consultation and consensus. These are claims about processes of regional interaction and cooperation based on discretion, informality, consensus building, and non-confrontational bargaining styles. Regarding consensus, there are many highlights from the experts, because the notion of consensus, in this case is not absolute in the sense that all members must agree with what is being discussed, consensus can be interpreted only with the approval of 7, 8 or 9 countries, meaning that if there is who do not agree, get no consequences, it is not a problem for Asean. It seems Asean has no decision-making mechanism [8].

Perhaps this is the embodiment of a very careful attitude in the definition of the Asean Way proposed by Ali Alatas not to discuss sensitive matters. And as mentioned in the characteristics of the Asean way, namely face-saving behavior [6].

Deliberation in reaching consensus is a part of communitarianism values. The pattern of consensus has reached a level of solidarity that was unimaginable at the time of the founding of ASEAN and a further journey. This solidarity has increased ASEAN's influence in the world to a level that is impossible for each individual member to do. ASEAN's influence was most pronounced in the group's handling of Vietnam's incursions into and presence in Cambodia in the 1980s. Despite the genocidal nature of the regime that Vietnam had expelled from Phnom Penh and the skepticism of some ASEAN members, ASEAN led international efforts to retain Cambodia's seat at the United Nations for the coalition that opposed the Vietnamese regime and prevented the regime from gaining power. Asean's leadership role is evident at the UN in the Cambodian issue, where ASEAN does not take military action but uses its diplomatic skills and solidarity and prestige — with much-needed support, of course, from the permanent members of the UN Security Council — to bring about a settlement that gives rise to an independent Cambodia [8].

Although criticized for the lack of internal cohesion and binding rules within Asean, ASEAN has been able to take a central position in the Asian institutional architecture for cooperation. It plays an important role in Asia and global integration [9].

By bringing together forces big and small, it can serve as a catalyst for multiple interests in the region. Asean officials, through regular meetings of ministers and secretariats, provide a unique platform for channeling efforts to expand regionalism throughout Asia and around the world. ASEAN's important role in the region can be easily mapped. This can be seen from the large number of trans-regional, regional, and subregional groups de facto centered in ASEAN. For example, the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) connects East Asia with Europe, while relations with America are organized under the Asia-

Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and the East Asia-Latin America Cooperation Forum (APEC). Forum for East Asia-Latin America Cooperation - FEALAC).

ASEAN has proven over time to be quite effective in asserting itself as a family of countries that share common values, based on consensus, openness, and pragmatism through the adoption of non-binding informal rules among its members and external partners. The increasingly central role that ASEAN plays in broad Asian cooperation has emerged more as a result of its pragmatic approach to problem-solving and its own evolution, moving in tandem with the changing international political and economic environment [9].

Apart from very limited powers that are delegated to public institutions because the interests of the state are above the interests of Asean as an organization. The ASEAN Way has created a unique model, enabling high internal flexibility through the multi-track, multi-speed approach used to implement the regional commitments of its members. Some academics see the ASEAN Way as very important to ensure long-term resilience and sustainability. The principles of non-interference in domestic affairs, respect for national sovereignty, secrecy, and informality are frequently cited — along with the use of extensive consultation — as hallmarks of undertaking a unique and successful regional approach to multilateralism. The Asean Way is also seen as strengthening the principle of peace, diplomatic resolution of conflicts based on rejection of the threat or use of force [9].

However, some academics have also criticized the Asean way. They emphasized the importance of updating some of its principles to increase group efficiency and effectiveness. It must be admitted that the principles governing the so-called ASEAN Way have served the region well so far. But these principles need to be reformed to improve group institutional efficiency, maintain centrality, and lead ASEAN to the next phase of integration — moving beyond the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) in 2015, towards a truly borderless economic community by 2030. And while strong leadership is needed to introduce institutional reforms, areas for improvement include a basic group approach to decision-making, financial contributions, and the delegation of power from national to regional bodies. The current system also does not provide proper treatment of sanctions, feedback and compensation mechanisms for those affected by integration costs [9].

ASEAN centrality can also be seen as a strategy that seeks to coordinate decisions among member states to promote their common interests, both within the group and in their relations with external powers [10].

ASEAN's efforts to always try to maintain a leading position in trade negotiations, investment, and economic partnership agreements with external parties, the concept of centrality has practical implications because it implies close coordination between members. However, there are also many dubious issues about how to define coordination among ASEAN members as far as external partnership agreements are

concerned – calling for institutional reform and innovation. Asean's resilience to be able to continue to maintain its centrality along with the expansion of Asian integration is difficult to answer at this time. It must also be acknowledged that its flexible approach articulated through the ASEAN Way has the advantage of enabling member states with diverse interests to remain nominally united. However, at the same time, ASEAN's informality and consensus decision-making are also its biggest limitations due to the difficulty of strengthening regional cooperation when members can exercise their veto power to maintain the status quo. Finding the right balance between these two opposing forces is a major challenge for ASEAN policymakers. It is the threat of losing centrality that provides a compelling reason to push institutional reform and innovation to the next stage [9].

Despite this past performance, the ASEAN Way does not and has not guaranteed cooperation due to two important limitations in the use of the ASEAN Way. First, ASEAN's consensus decision-making process limits the scope of cooperation and agility to cooperative action, especially when institutions face disagreements. For example, ASEAN-led institutions have never succeeded in discussing high political issues, such as the Korean Peninsula and the Taiwan Strait. While the institution can serve as a forum for disputing countries to discuss controversial issues bilaterally, the institution itself does not serve as a focal point for cooperation among member states [11].

In Asean legal instruments, the term Asean way is not found, although in the Hanoi Declaration of 1998 it was emphasized: We shall endeavor to resolve outstanding problems and prevent the emergence of disputes in the ASEAN way and in accordance with international law and practice. However, its meaning never appears in the Asean legal instruments. However, the basic principles of the Asean way can be found in the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation, which includes: respect the sovereignty of the state; guarantee freedom from external interference; not interfering in internal affairs; peaceful settlement of disputes; rejection of the use of coercion; and cooperation between members [9].

The ASEAN cooperation process then continued in the form of the formation of the Asean Community in 2003 through the Bali Concord II. The ASEAN Community would be based on three pillars:

(i) the ASEAN Political and Security Community (APSC); (ii) the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC); and (iii) the Asean Economic Community (AEC)

The ASEAN Community Vision 2025 is a stable and resilient community with a scalable capacity to respond effectively to challenges, as well as an outward-looking ASEAN within the global community, while maintaining ASEAN centrality.

The ASEAN Community Vision 2025 consists of three pillars of ASEAN cooperation. First, the APSC 2025 consists of a rules-based, people-oriented and people-centered

community, a resilient community, in a peaceful, secure and stable area, and a community with strong institutional capacities. Second pillar, the AEC2025 is highly integrated and cohesive, a competitive, innovative and dynamic ASEAN, increased connectivity and sectoral cooperation, as well as a resilient, inclusive, and people-centered ASEAN. Third, the ASCC includes communities that promote a high quality of life, equal access to opportunities for all, and promote and protect human rights. In addition, a sustainable society that promotes social development and environmental protection through effective mechanisms; a dynamic and harmonious society, and awareness of and pride of its identity, culture and heritage. A resilient society with enhanced community and capacity to adapt and respond to social and economic vulnerabilities, disasters, climate change, and emerging threats and challenges.

The prospects and challenges of the ASEAN Security Community can make this security community able to improve itself. The norms (ASEAN WAY) which are always put forward by ASEAN certainly have pluses and minuses. It can be said that the ASEAN security community is only focused on Cooperative Security, thus this community has never been promoted to the grades or degrees of collective security and collective defense. However, it is possible that the regional security complex faced by ASEAN may change at any time if necessary. With the signing of the ASEAN Charter, this previously loose regional association will enter a new chapter as a regional organization that has a more binding legal basis. Regarding the focus of this study, whether ASEAN has shifted from "state-oriented" to "people-oriented" with the existence of the ASEAN Charter, the answer is not very clear. On the one hand, the ASEAN Charter is committed "to strengthen democracy, promote clean governance and legal systems, promote and protect human rights", which provides a solid legal basis for more pro-people and pro-human security policies. The ASEAN Charter also raises one of the ASC agendas to establish a regional human rights commission as an important tool for advancing human rights in the region. On the other hand, the ASEAN Charter also explicitly reaffirms the importance of ASEAN's "sacred" principles such as non-interference in each other's domestic affairs, policy-making based on consensus and respect for the sovereignty of each member state. The proposal of the Eminent Persons Group (EPG) to prepare a draft Charter, so that parties who violate the values and basic principles of ASEAN are subject to sanctions, for example, their membership is temporarily suspended, excluded from the final agreement. The charter only states that in the event that there is no consensus, or there is a violation of ASEAN values by one of the members that needs to be addressed, the final decision is left to the highest leaders at the ASEAN Summit.

Looking at the characteristics of the Asean way and how the Asean way works in the experience of Asean which has been established for 54 years, it can be said that this principle is in accordance with the character of the Asean nations, despite the inability of Asean to resolve conflicts between member countries, such as the conflict between Indonesia and Malaysia

over the islands. Sipadan and Ligitan were finally decided by the International Court of Justice (ICJ). however, it should be acknowledged that many issues with potential conflicts can be resolved through consensus [12].

However, looking at the vision of the Asean community 2025, it can be predicted that interactions between Asean countries will be increasingly intense, including interactions between Asean citizens, considering the orientation change brought by the Asean community is from state-centered to people-centered, this will certainly affect the increase in the frequency of mobility and interaction between people. countries, in this interaction it is very possible the emergence of conflict. In this context, the Asean Way should find a new formula so that it can resolve the predicted conflicts that may arise. In Asean, this can be resolved, but it should be remembered that the Asean community brings new values into Asean society, namely the value of liberalism which gives respect to individual rights. This is also one of the triggers for the emergence of these conflicts. In the end, the dispute resolution mechanism, both between Asean citizens and between countries, becomes a hope that must be realized.

B. Realizing An ASEAN Community Based on Communitarian Values

The establishment of the ASEAN Community is not an easy attempt given the diversity of the ASEAN member countries. In addition to miscellany, the form of ASEAN cooperation is still characterized by respect for national sovereignty and the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries. In a community, these differences must unite as a unit. Following the community concept that the ASEAN community is a group of people who interact with each other and community formation is a procedure of forming a state of mind. The bond between them is manifested in the form of commitment, mutual care, sharing experiences, caring for each other, sharing ownership, feeling belonging to each other, participating in each other, as a community.

The attachment will be realized if the hearts, minds, and hopes or ideals of all Asean components are united. This will give rise to a feeling of togetherness or we-feeling as an ASEAN Community, basic knowledge is needed, namely the values of togetherness among ASEAN member countries, such as helping each other, needing each other, or being dependent on each other. Each ASEAN member country must prioritize existing similarities, such as multiplying and holding joint activities involving all components of ASEAN member countries. Not on the other hand, only prioritizing differences that will result in counter-productivity and conflict.

If looking at the existing reality, our feeling or we-feeling as an ASEAN Community still needs to be intensified by all ASEAN member countries. Such a condition is because concrete steps for that are still limited at the level of state government or state actors and have not involved non-state actors. To form an ASEAN Community where all citizens of ASEAN member countries will have feelings for us, it must involve all components of ASEAN citizens.

While still limited to the level of state government, the situation is still not compatible with the main elements of communitarianism. We-feeling must be shared by all components of ASEAN member countries' citizens. One of the key elements in communitarianism is the mutual responsibility. The involvement of all elements of ASEAN citizens, especially non-state actors, needs to be intensified.

To intensify it, the role of the government of ASEAN member countries is needed in their respective countries as a stimulant that is supported by civil societies such as universities, non-governmental organizations and so on. When the government and civil societies synergize both in official and informal forums, it is hoped that they can embrace and invite the community to build a sense of belonging or we-feeling of the ASEAN Community at the community level.

We-feeling that has been embedded in the community will make it easier to build an ASEAN Community. The ASEAN Community is a unit to strengthen ASEAN integration. It builds a caring community, among others, in social development, education, human resource development, skilled workers, and so on. All of this is to achieve the welfare of the ASEAN community.

The leaders of ASEAN member countries have brought the main principles or keys of communitarianism. These principles include emphasizing the responsibility of individuals or ASEAN member countries in building agreements to resolve the problems faced to avoid open conflicts. In addition, when facing and resolving a problem between ASEAN member countries, no one is harmed or disappointed.

For example, the settlement of the Rohingya case indicates that the cooperative inquiry still requires a breakthrough, which is to look at the essence of the problem. When the problem cannot be categorized as a particular problem in the sense that it only relates to Myanmar's internal problems. That is when it is associated with the ASEAN Way, other ASEAN member countries cannot interfere or intervene. The Rohingya issue is a universal humanitarian issue, so according to international law, ASEAN member countries can intervene to solve it.

Regarding the principle of citizen participation from communitarianism, it can be seen from the actions of Malaysia and Singapore offering assistance to Indonesia to extinguish forest fires in several provinces to reduce the haze. Forest fires in Indonesia caused smog in several ASEAN member countries, especially countries adjacent to Indonesia, such as Malaysia and Singapore. These two countries are the countries most affected by forest fires in Indonesia.

Forest fires in Indonesia are a regional disaster with the impact of forest fires has spread to neighboring countries. The gases from these fires have the potential to cause global warming. To help fight forest fires, Malaysia and Singapore took the initiative to provide assistance as needed by Indonesia. The relief will depend on Indonesia to accept or reject it. Nevertheless, the offer of relief is a form of citizen participation from ASEAN member countries.

IV. CONCLUSION

- ASEAN Way as a basis for the formation and operation of ASEAN in solving a problem internally has brought ASEAN to survive until now, some characteristics of the ASEAN way such as consensus can be ASEAN basic capital internally and externally, externally this pattern has succeeded in making ASEAN became the center of several activity initiatives at the international level, such as at the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) connecting East Asia with Europe, while relations with America were held under the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and the Forum for East Asia–Latin America Cooperation (FEALAC). The principle of non-interference, on the one hand, becomes a problem when there is a humanitarian event that occurs in a member country, that cannot be interfered with by other member countries because it is their internal affairs. The principles of the ASEAN Way at the theoretical level are some of the principles are linear with the achievements to be achieved by the ASEAN Community, (politics and security, economy, and socio-culture). However, the ASEAN Way can be a barrier in resolving conflicts that arise from the freedoms that arise in the ASEAN Community 2025.
- Conceptually in a community, these differences must unite as a unit, and the same should happen in the ASEAN community as a group of people who interact with each other based on their shared values. The bond between them is manifested in the form of commitment, mutual care, sharing experiences, caring for each other, sharing ownership, mutual ownership, mutual participation, as a community, which later can grow we-feeling. To achieve the goal of an ASEAN community based on communitarianism, it is necessary to build we feeling that begins with basic knowledge which will then lead to understanding and awareness of being ASEAN so that citizens can create themselves as ASEAN citizens. Efforts towards that must be made by all parties, both the Government of each member country, the community, NGOs, and universities. This becomes important because the objective reality shows that there is still a lack of knowledge about the values of communitarianism related to the ASEAN society.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This research was supported financially by Research and Community Service and the faculty of Law Bandung Islamic University. Also, we would like to thank the faculty of law for allowing us to examine the importance of the involvement of cultural background to overcome the pandemic Covid-19 by supporting to write this article. Also, we would like to thank anonymous reviewers for the input and comments while assessing our manuscript and grateful for the work they have done.

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