



ASEAN CONVERGENCE

*Towards an ASEAN Identity:
Discourses on Communication and Culture*

Alexander G. Flor
Benjamina Gonzalez-Flor

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Faculty of Information and Communication Studies
University of the Philippines
OPEN UNIVERSITY
2019

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Published by:
Faculty of Information and Communication Studies
University of the Philippines
OPEN UNIVERSITY
Los Baños, Laguna 4031, Philippines
Tel/Fax: (6349) 536 6014
Email: fics@upou.edu.ph

ISBN: 978-971-767-221-2 (Softbound)
ISBN: 978-971-767-222-9 (EPUB)

First edition, 2019

Managing Editor: Ma. Gian Rose D. Cerdena
Associate Editor and Book Layout Artist: Bernabe M. Remoquillo
Language Editor: Ma. Gian Rose D. Cerdena
Book Cover Designer: Bernabe M. Remoquillo
Production Coordinator: Jennifer P. Pareja

Icons from the cover made by Bernabe M. Remoquillo

Printed in the Philippines

to our friends and colleagues
Narong Sompong
Jumnongruk Udomsade
Djuara Lubis
Hafied Cangara
Phiengphaneth Chantalangsy

Acknowledgement

Our sincere thanks to: the University of the Philippines Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, for supporting this knowledge sharing project through the Academic Productivity Improvement (API) facility; Chancellor Melinda Bandalaria, who championed Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and Open Educational Resources (OERs) at the UP Open University; and the ASEAN Studies Program of the UPOU Faculty of Management and Development Studies.

The authors also wish to acknowledge the contribution of the following: our artist-illustrator, Bernie Remoquillo; our associates, Gian Rose Cerdena, Emely M. Amoloza, Margaret Jarmin-Suarez and Jennifer Pareja; our students, Ayo Ujorongbe, Phonevilay Keopaseuth, Ruth Moselle Tumangil, Angel Magsino, April Camacho and Ailyn Capuno who assisted in data gathering and analysis; and our peer reviewers from Chulalongkorn University, Sukhothai Thammathirat University and the Colombo Plan Staff College who, while remaining anonymous, have substantively made us reconsider our respective positions reflected in these chapters.

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Foreword

ASEAN Convergence is a volume that explores the ASEAN identity from the perspective of communication and culture. It was prepared as an eBook for a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) on the same subject offered by the Faculty of Information and Communication Studies through UPOU's MODeL platform. This open educational resource may now be used as a reference for DEVC 242. Media and Communication from an ASEAN Perspective, offered under the Master of Development Communication Program cross-listed as AS 231 in the UPOU Faculty of Management and Development Studies.

DEVC 242/AS 231 was conceived as a specialized course in the Master of ASEAN Studies (MAS) Joint Program of the five open universities in Southeast Asia: the UP Open University; Universitas Terbuka in Jakarta; Sukhothai Open University in Bangkok; the Hanoi Open University; and the Open University of Malaysia. The MAS was meant as a major initiative for the regionalization of education in the ASEAN region. Hence, this course takes on a regional outlook on communication. By communication, we refer to information and communication technologies and media (traditional, mass and new media).

The book is made up of four papers independently prepared by the authors, hence, the individual chapter ascription. These chapters argue that a prerequisite to ASEAN Integration is an ASEAN identity, a sense of self that extends beyond the concept of regionalizing ten independent nations. That sense of self is formed and crystalized through communication. As Luhmann asserts in his *Theory of Society* (1997), the entire social world is constituted through communication and through communication only. ASEAN as a regional body



came before the societal communication process that would have constituted the community, formed it as an entity, or developed it as an organism. Conception precedes birth. Convergence comes before formation. However, in this case, conceptualization of the ASEAN identity came later in the day. Nevertheless, it is never too late as the four chapters of this book maintain.

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List of Acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AIBD	Asian Institute for Broadcasting Development
ANEX	ASEAN News Exchange
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CNN	Cable News Network
COCI	Committee on Culture and Information
Devcom	Development Communication
EU	European Union
F2F	Face-to-face communication
GIS	Geographic Information System
HBO	Home Box Office
HDI	Human Development Index
HDR	Human Development Report
HPI	Human Poverty Index
IBM	International Business Machines
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
ICT4D	Information and Communication Technology for Development
ISP	Internet Service Provider
IT	Information Technology
K+12	Kindergarten to 12th grade
KM	Knowledge Management
MAGS	My ASEAN Guide Supporter-mobile
MIS	Management Information Systems
MTV	Music Television
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
Pace Conference	Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
PC	Personal computer
PNA	Philippines News Agency
SEAMEO	South East Asian Ministers of Education Organization
TADS	Trans boundary diseases
TCON	Ten Countries, One Nation
TNA	Thai News Agency
TV	Television
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UPLB	University of the Philippines Los Baños
UPOU	University of the Philippines Open University
US	United States
USA	United States of America
WIVS	Worldviews, ideologies, values, and social structure
XML	Extensive Markup Language



COMMUNICATION, CULTURE, AND THE COLLECTIVE MIND: A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE EXTRA-ECONOMIC DIMENSION OF ASEAN INTEGRATION¹

Alexander G. Flor²

INTRODUCTION

In 1995, as the inaugural lecture for a Metro Manila Commission Professorial Chair on Development Communication, I gave a presentation titled *Communication, Culture, and the Collective Mind*. The paper was inspired by a seven-year, seven-country study that we were conducting with Dr. Godwin Chu of the East West Center Institute of Culture and Communication. The underlying thesis of that paper is that history was a function of what Chu referred to as the “national character.” It was dictated by a *zeitgeist*, a ghost of the times; Collective Mind, if you will. And that this Mind is molded by societal communication. This is the gist of the course, Communication and Media from an ASEAN Perspective, which I have developed and am teaching for both the Master of Development Communication and ASEAN Studies Programs. The course title itself appears counter-intuitive since I cannot grasp the concept of an “ASEAN perspective.”

¹ Paper presented during the Second International Conference on ASEAN Studies (ICONAS2), 3-5 August 2015 Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand.

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In my professorial lecture, I cited European integration as a product of the Collective Mind. When the countries of Europe decided to formally integrate as the European Union from its initial status as a geopolitical association under the European Commission, there was an element present that we do not see in the case of the ASEAN. That element is a center that would hold a union together.

The initial group of countries in the European Union was predominantly Christian in outlook. This common worldview is absent in the case of the ASEAN. Many Thai Muslims identify themselves more with Malaysia than Thailand. The same may be true with many Filipino Muslims. Perhaps, the Timorese seceded from Indonesia because of the exclusion they felt with their Christian cultural roots from mainstream Muslim Indonesian culture. On the other hand, the Thai, Lao, Vietnamese and Burmese hardly identify themselves with one another even if all of them share the Buddhist faith. And Catholic Philippines does not identify with anyone else for that matter. Ideology-wise, there are significant differences within ASEAN. There is socialism (Mekong Subregion), emergent fundamentalism (Malaysia-Indonesia-Brunei), communitarianism (Singapore), authoritarianism (Myanmar) and libertarianism cum oligarchy (Philippines) represented in the region, hardly bi-polar outlooks.

At present, one cannot discern a Collective ASEAN Mind. It is difficult to conceive of a distinct ASEANess compared to Asianess or Europeaness. The ASEAN concept appears to lack a genuine socio-cultural dimension. By definition, it is an association wherein membership is determined geographically rather than

ideologically. Further, it does not extend to individuals nor the populace (there are no ASEANs, only Filipinos, Vietnamese, Indonesians, Thais nor, at most, Southeast Asians). Hence, the ASEAN sense of self is non-existent. The lack of an ideological center is manifested in the manner by which the ASEANization discourse plays out even in this forum, where participants attach different meanings to the concept. ASEAN does not have a *center*, a Collective Mind that may hold this Integration together.

THE COLLECTIVE MIND

Historians refer to it as the *zeitgeist*, the ghost or spirit of the times, determining social outlook and historical events. Psychologists, specifically those associated with the Jungian school of thought, call it the Collective Unconscious. Marxists allude to it as class-consciousness. The concept of the Collective Mind is nothing new. It is an extension of the holistic principle that nature has a built-in tendency to produce wholes from the ordered grouping of units. It may follow that an “ordered grouping” of individual minds give way to a Collective Mind.

In 1928, the British physicist Sir Arthur Eddington wrote in his book, ***The Nature of the Physical World***:

The idea of a Universal Mind or Logos would be, I think, a fairly plausible inference from the present state of scientific theory; at least it is in harmony with it.

Exploring the unconsummated but possible unification of Europe, Baigent, Leigh and Lincoln (1982) wrote:

A Europe of this sort would constitute a new and unified political force in international affairs - an entity whose status would ultimately be comparable to that of the Soviet Union, or the United States. Indeed, it might well emerge stronger than either, because it would rest on deep-rooted spiritual and emotional foundations, rather than abstract, theoretical or ideological ones. It would appeal not only to man's head, but to his heart as well. It would draw its strength from tapping the collective psyche of Western Europe, awakening the fundamental religious impulse.

Such a program may well appear quixotic. But history by now should have taught us not to underestimate the potential of the collective psyche, and the power to be obtained by harnessing it.

Recent history provide many illustrations of the manifestation of the Collective Mind: the rise of the Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran in 1979; the people power revolution in the Philippines in 1986; the toppling of the Iron Curtain in 1990; the Arab Spring of 2011. These are concrete illustrations of the power of the collective psyche. Such a force without the benefit of an army, a political party and logistical support are able to topple modern, superbly equipped and well-funded regimes.

Perhaps, the most recent and most extensively written accounts on collective psychology may be found in literature dealing with Sarkar's Progressive Utilization Theory (1959). In the book, ***The Great Depression of the 1990's*** (1986), Southern Methodist University economist

Ravi Batra describes the four general types of collective mentalities forwarded by Sarkar. Towsey (1986), another student of Sarkar, writes:

Why do people keep voting for politicians who obviously do not have their best interests at heart? Why is there a worldwide trend for democratic countries to vote in conservative and reactionary governments even when those governments make no secret of their monetarist policies which leave the majority of people worse off? Why are young people taking up smoking in increasing numbers when the ill effects are better known than ever? Why was Coca Cola, the global symbol of capitalist culture, amongst the first Western commercial products to be marketed in communist China? There are apparently simple answers to these questions. . . But there is more here than the simple answers suggest. A more subtle phenomenon is involved; little known but beginning to attract the attention of historians, sociologists and political scientists, this is the phenomenon of the Collective Mind.

Politicians would be the first to brush away talks about the Collective Mind. Yet their calling is the most concrete manifestation of its existence. Much of politics deals with the manipulation of the Collective Mind. The next to deny its existence are the behaviorists, and the scientific and dialectic materialists.

Indeed, collective consciousness has become a recognized factor in Marxists-Leninist social dynamics. Progressive ideologies have even extolled on the dialectic superiority and social desirability of class-consciousness

over individual consciousness. Yet, their theoreticians would argue that class-consciousness exists at the individual level. Extending this concept further to an actual “Mind” of society would be taking it out of context.

Scientific and dialectic materialists reject its existence mainly because one cannot find a material basis, a physical “brain” wherein the social psyche resides. Like the behaviorists, they contend that mind is a product of physical, biological, and chemical processes in the brain and the central nervous system. “How does this Collective Mind function? What ideas does it generate,” they would ask.

Idealists, on the other hand, would argue that consciousness may be equated with idea, and idea may be equated to mind. How can we ascertain the existence of the Collective Mind? By the same manner by which we are sure of our individual mind’s existence. *Cogito, ergo sum*. By experiencing it. By being conscious of it. And to those who experienced it, corporeal proof would seem inutile.

The Collective Mind is at work whenever a group, or a collective, functions as one. It could be subtly discerned in rallies, parades, in the celebration of the holy mass, even in rock concerts. Experiences such as these have demonstrated and brought to popular awareness this prime force in social dynamics. Perhaps, the most moving aspect of these events is the exhilaration and inspiration that these afford to all those who participate in and witness it. It is a feeling difficult to describe, a feeling of oneness with the multitudes that are there and a grand realization of being an integral part of a profound social force.

What exactly is the Collective Mind? Before this question can be answered, first, we should note that there is not one statement on the nature of the mind, which is generally acceptable to all branches of contemporary science, even among neurologists themselves. The conservative belief that mind is a product of neurological processes, that it is created by the body -- specifically, the brain (Damasio, 1994).

This theory has been challenged by respected neurologists such as Wilder Penfield, the founder of the Montreal Institute of Neurosurgery. In his book, *The Mystery of the Mind*, Penfield describes how his research has led him to the conclusion that mind is made up of an entirely different essence altogether and, supporting Descartes’ assertion, that the mind is independent from the brain.

Some scientific treatises have adopted a middle path. The first forwards a Concentric Theory of Consciousness (Greenfield, 1995) that acknowledges the dependence of the mind on the brain but suggests that its workings are guided by networking behavior and “gestalts” parallel to social interactions. The second comes from the co-discoverer of the structure of DNA, Sir Francis Crick (1994). He offers in his book, *The Astonishing Hypothesis*, that although the mind is a by-product of the simultaneous, high-frequency firing of neurons in different parts of the brain, it is in the meshing of these frequencies that it is produced. In other words, the mind is not a function of fixed electro-chemical processes but of *interrelationships* between these processes.

Psychologists likewise come to a disagreement on this point depending upon their professed tradition, i.e., behaviorism, Freudianism, transpersonalism or

differentialism. Psychologists from the psychosynthesis tradition refer to the mind as the distinctly rational aspect of the human psyche from whence conscious thought and reason arise as in “the polarity between the mind and the heart. “ If such is the case, then social systems cannot have a mind since the Collective Psyche can be characterized as everything but rational (as in instances of mob rule).

One popular view is that the mind is a quality that emerges or comes into being when organisms reach a certain level of complexity in development (Kobler, 1986). If we may relate this to the systems view that society is an organism, then the possibility of it developing a mind becomes less far-fetched.

Fritjof Capra writes in ***The Turning Point***:

Because the systems view of mind is not limited to individual organisms but can be extended to social and ecological systems, we may say that groups of people, societies, and cultures have a collective mind, and therefore also possess a collective consciousness. We may also follow Jung in the assumption that the collective mind, or collective psyche, also includes a collective unconscious. As individuals, we participate in these collective patterns, are influenced by them, and shape them in turn. In addition, the concepts of a planetary mind and a cosmic mind may be associated with planetary and cosmic levels of consciousness.

Fritjof Capra represents another sector that may lend a measure of qualified support to this argument

- the physicists, if only for their refutation of scientific materialism at the quantum or sub-atomic level. Physicists have observed that elementary particles are not solid material objects but “patterns,” “interconnections,” or “sets of relationships.” In other words, matter is not made up of concrete materials but of “abstractions,” as the physicist Niels Bohr puts it. Indeed, the quantum physics of Heisenberg, Planck and Bohr has forwarded a new association between matter, energy, and information. In fact, a novel theory known as the Superstring Theory just falls short of proposing that matter, energy, and thought may have sprung from the same cosmic stuff altogether. Hence, mind may be a dormant property of all things.

Sarkar’s cosmology is not inconsistent with this view. He maintains that every cell in the human body, every object - even a sand particle - has an independent mind, although it is in an extremely undeveloped and unexpressed state.

Generally, contemporary science accepts that mind is some form of *energy* since thoughts are physically observed as waves (i. e. alpha, beta, theta). Similarly, the Collective Mind is the *synergy* produced by the individual minds that make up a social system, not unlike what quantum physicists refer to as relationships, patterns, and abstractions. As Jan C. Smuts and the Organicists declare, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, and the determining factors in nature are these “wholes.” Society cannot be reduced to the individuals who comprise it. The Collective Psyche, as a distinct force in social dynamics, exists and its corpus is the social system.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

How does the Collective Mind relate to communication? How does it relate to culture?

We submit that the collective psyche has three dimensions. This is what we refer to as the social dynamics triad. Social dynamics is a function of a triad of factors – societal communication, culture, and social policy. The triad concept here relates to the continuity of these three variables, that is, their interrelations are in the nature of a continuum.

Within this triad, not unlike the “all seeing eye” on the apex of the pyramid printed on a one-dollar bill, is the Collective Psyche, the social mind that we discussed at length earlier. In effect, this triad of factors represents dimensions of the Collective Psyche.

The validity of enumerating three dimensions that are not mutually exclusive may be questioned. As a matter of fact, it would be difficult to draw the line between communication and culture. The anthropologists among us would argue that communication is subsumed under culture. On the other hand, the communication scientists among us would say that culture is nothing but the expression of collectivity, expression being part of communication. We could argue ourselves blue in the face without ever reaching a consensus.

However, these are not operationalized variables but constituent concepts. In fact, we propose that these three dimensions exist in a three-way continuum.

Dimensions of the Collective Psyche

The conscious dimension is societal communication. This encompasses sectoral communication, mass media, inter and cross cultural communication. Its point of intersection with social policy is at the sectoral communication end. Its point of intersection with culture is at the indigenous communication end.

The intuitive dimension is culture. This includes society’s concepts of morality and virtue, values, perceptions (of family, environment, religion, land, etc.) and worldview. Its point of intersection with social policy is at the perception level.

The influence of culture on social dynamics is no less profound as may be deduced from Chu (1989). Similarly, relating culture to the collective psyche form part of the gist of Senate Committee Report No.415 (Shahani et al, 1989).

The rational dimension is social policy. Within this category are the national ideology, the Constitution, the laws of the land, the social agenda, and the leadership.

Societies as Living Systems

Systems theorists such as Emery define living systems as systems made up of living organisms. Any social system is a living system by virtue of the fact that it is made up of live interacting human beings. Hence, organizations, gangs, clans and communities are living systems. We may add that these social systems have their respective collective mentalities and their own sub-cultures developed in various degrees depending upon

their cohesiveness. Society, being a macro-system is an organism with a distinct, albeit often dormant, psyche. Its subtle expression is called culture.

Miller, the high priest of general systems theory, posits that all living systems, from the smallest protozoa to the largest organization, perform certain critical functions or processes that are necessary for their existence and survival. Communication, the transfer of information from one point in time or space to another, is one of these critical functions. According to K. Thayer (1968), another leading systems theorist, communication is “a dynamic process underlying the existence, growth, the behavior of all living beings... Communication is as fundamental to the living system. . . as the ingestion and consumption of *food* and *fuel* to run its physical and physiological machinery.” Obviously, this statement likewise applies to social systems and collectives. Communication allows an individual to acquire a sense of self. Mass communication allows a society to acquire a sense of self.

Communication is one of the major variables of social transformation and should thus be employed to achieve the highest social goals at the shortest amount of time. This argument originated from the writings of Lasswell (1948), Lerner (1963) and Schramm (1967). Theories such as the Agenda-Setting Function of Media and the Media Dependency Model are supportive of this line.

Contemporary studies (e.g. Flor, 1989) and current events have contributed to the validation of the Media Dependency Theory of DeFleur and Ball-Rokeach (1982). This model proposes that correlations exist between the degree of societal stability, the centrality of information of media systems, and media dependency. This dependency in turn brings about certain effects on the audience, which feedback on societal stability and media systems.

At the empirical level, we may relate this to the Gulf War. This crisis situation has a direct bearing on the degree of societal stability. Decreased stability has prompted a change in programming among television networks all over the world. The shift is particularly felt in the United States and the Philippines, wherein public affairs/ special events programs have preempted entertainment programs. This may be interpreted as an increase in the centrality of information offered by media systems. Media dependency has likewise increased, prompting CNN to declare that Americans have become TV addicts overnight.

The effects are particularly obvious in terms of consumer behavior. Panic buying has become widespread, which has feedback on societal stability as well as the media systems. In the Philippines, panic buying has increased the prices of prime commodities. In the US, on the other hand, both advertisers and network executives have voluntarily withdrawn their scheduled commercials because these might be found by the public to be in “poor taste.”

PROPOSITIONS

This paper forwards that every society, every social system, every collectivity, has a mind, a Collective Psyche. The degree of development of this Mind is directly proportional to the degree of collective consciousness among the individuals who make up the social system. Culture, being the manifestation of collectivity, is the expression of this Collective Mind.

Communication, among other things, is the basic mechanism of integration into any social system or collectivity. What the anthropologist calls acculturation

or what the sociologist calls socialization, is only achieved through communication. A child learns about his culture and is subsequently acculturated through subtle messages transmitted to him by his environment. Similarly, an individual newly transplanted into a different community gets to socialize only after a series of communication-initiated rites and rituals.

Social control and consequently **social equilibrium**, twin concepts of Talcott Parsons, are likewise functions of communication. The Collective Mind is not only sustained by, but manifested as culture through communication. Furthermore, communication contributes to the regeneration or the disintegration of culture and subsequently, society.

By virtue of the above propositions, communication and culture are inextricably linked. One cannot study communication without touching upon culture. Similarly, the study of culture oftentimes becomes an attempt to study communication patterns such as in the case of linguistics.

The central factor in this conceptual schema, however, is the Collective Mind in whose workings culture is possible. The psychology of the Collective Mind is, in effect, the science of social dynamics. Since the state of the social psyche is a function of communication, it follows that social transformation is likewise determined by communication.

At the macro level, this may be exemplified by relating cultural dominance (at times called cultural imperialism) and communication. Communication between and among cultures is of two types: cross-cultural communication and inter-cultural communication. The

difference between these two is the manner by which each is initiated. In the communication scientist's jargon, cross-cultural communication is "one-way," while inter-cultural communication is "interactive." In other words, one is imposed while the other is a natural process of exchange.

Insofar as social dynamics is concerned, cross-cultural communication results to any of the following: cultural diffusion, cultural subservience, or cultural integration. On the other hand, inter-cultural communication results to cultural convergence. This is not to say, however, that dominance is achieved through the manner of communication. Dominance or social power is equated to social will, a property of the Collective Mind. The degree to which a culture succumbs to the onslaught of cross-cultural communication is a function of the strength and magnitude of its Collective Mind, variables that are inversely related to the decadence of society.

In terms of collective psychology, cultural diffusion and subservience mean the absorption of one Collective Mind by another. Cultural integration refers to the integration of individual minds to the dominant Collective Psyche. Cultural convergence means the unification, the merging of Collective Minds.

We can apply these propositions within the context of cultural convergence of the 11 Southeast Asian nations and deduce the fate and outcomes of ASEAN Integration.

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TEN COUNTRIES, ONE NATION?¹

Benjamina Gonzalez Flor²

INTRODUCTION

Collectivity is a cultural manifestation of homogeneity, at least at a certain level. The ASEAN community as a phenomenon adheres to imaginary borders that set these countries apart. While community building is possible politically and economically, much needs to be done socio-culturally.

Since the vision of the ASEAN is to have One Community, it implies that the Ten-member country must have a common understanding of being a citizen of this amalgamation. Such coming together cannot be left to policy decision-makers alone or entirely be decided on by its political leaders if the ideal state cannot be communicated to each and every citizen of the ASEAN community. Farmers, housewives, students, teachers, technocrats, scientists, and policymakers cannot be treated in isolation, because each one has the right to know and understand the implication of being a member of a consummation that happened between and among heads of countries or have been agreed upon in their behalf.

¹ Best paper awardee, *International Conference on ASEAN Studies*, 2-4 August 2015, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand. Findings derived from a class project, DEVC 215 (Communication and Culture) for the first semester of SY 2014-2015 of UP Los Baños composed of Ayo Ujorongbe (Nigeria), Phonevilay Keopaseuth (Lao PDR), and from the Philippines, Ruth Moselle Tumangil, Angel Magsino, April Camacho, and Ailyn Capuno.

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Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Thailand, Singapore, and Vietnam have forged to be one through the efforts of their leaders to strengthen economic growth in Southeast Asia. Little did they know that their constituents have limited, if not have any, idea on the expectations or implications of what it means to be a member of the ASEAN community. For policymakers, this is nothing to be wary about, but for an ordinary citizen of each member country, this could be an added layer of confusion especially among indigenous groups and the grassroots, which comprise a relatively large proportion of the ASEAN community.

The diverse cultural profile of each country when combined together is unthinkable, given the inherent differences and idiosyncrasies they possess. Each member country has their own worldviews, ideologies, values, and social structures that make them different from other countries. Putting them together as one is not only absurd but also seems impossible. However, these arguments are no longer up for debate since the ASEAN had been in existence since 1964. It envisions creating political-security, economic, and socio-cultural community by 2015. The vision would like to ensure a strong, peaceful, stable, and prosperous region. “The grand goal is to transform the 10-member organization into a genuine ASEAN community” (www.asean.org). Despite the provision, it seems that this is not happening. By definition, a community refers to a “group of people having cultural, religious, ethnic, or other characteristics in common” (Dictionary.com). Thus, what is of value right now is how to create an ASEAN culture that will truly depict who is an “ASEAN national” as perceived by the world.

Therefore, the questions needing some answers are: How can ASEAN culture be contextualized using communication as lens? What are the cultural determinants of ASEAN integration; and what are the ways for cultural integration?

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Studies about ASEAN cultural integration are limited if not nil, since the plan for integration was more focused on economic affairs. However, little has been done, if none at all, to ensure socio-cultural integration. This review will look at cultural integration through communication. Hence, a discussion on the cultural determinants of communication with ASEAN as context will be theorized. The cultural determinants of communication in point include worldviews, ideologies, values, and social structures or WIVS. Each of these determinants will be discussed separately and will end with how these concepts can hasten or impede ASEAN integration through communication.

Worldview. Worldviews deal with a culture’s most fundamental beliefs about its place in the cosmos, beliefs about God, and beliefs about the purpose of life, nature of humanity, and nature (Sarbaugh, 1987). According to Pope Paul VI (1967), “there is more to progress than economic growth. Genuine progress must be complete. No one can be left out. No part of anyone can be left out.” Alkire (2007) forwards that “despite being neglected in the post-war Western-centered development discourse, religion remains a significant force in public and private spheres.” Deneulin and Rakodi (2011) further add that “religion is a key aspect

of the majority of the world's population (more visible in the global south), and it influences millions of people's lives in multi-level ways." James (2009) concurs that religion can offer an alternative to a secular development discourse, bringing back focus on the human being as its center, revising its values, meanings and goals, and links into people's sense of well-being. Eilers (2009a) emphasizes that religion is an integral part of the social system; it should have the potential for grounding values beyond individualism, power, and consumerism.

The worldview tabulation of ASEAN countries (Magsino, 2014) reveals varied perceptions about the world. A Moslem-dominated country like Indonesia strongly believes in God and a penchant for social justice; Malaysia is marked with an acceptance of fate and a belief in self-discipline, and a respect for ritual and Islam. Brunei Darussalam, on the other, prides the concept of God, revelation, religion, and morality. The Philippines, being predominantly Christian, has a transpersonal worldview where human beings are seen as part of a bigger collectivity. Singapore puts premium on community support and respect for the individual, while Thailand looks at group orientation, which sees that group welfare supersedes individual concerns. Vietnam that cannot be outdone takes comfort from their traditional values stemming from Confucianism. Lao PDR practices Buddhism Philosophy and like its neighboring country, Myanmar highly regards the monks. Cambodia adheres to "The Noble Eightfold Path" of: right views, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration.

It can be implied then that human beings by nature are governed by trust, fear, belief, or faith in a supreme being to guide one's behavior regardless of what religion one belongs to. Some people are born to a specific religion, but others get to choose as they reflect on its epistemology. Worldviews as cultural determinant may be a deterrent to ASEAN integration since all nations have their respective beliefs as to how one should live their lives. How then can the ASEAN be integrated in this regard?

Ideology. Ideology as cultural determinant refers to the press system that always takes on the form and coloration of the social and political structures within which it operates (Siebert and Schramm, 1956). Hewison (1999) summarizes the political ideology of Southeast Asia as follows: Brunei (absolute monarch); Vietnam and Laos (authoritarian post-socialist regimes); Myanmar (military-dominated dictatorship); Indonesia (crumbling authoritarianism); Singapore and Malaysia (electoral authoritarianism); Thailand and the Philippines (various versions of elected representative governments); and Cambodia (unclassified oddity). Currently, much have changed. Myanmar, Laos, and Cambodia have embraced democracy or in transition. Post-conflict societies find it difficult to mainstream democratic processes given their historical roots. Efforts from these countries, however, show that leaders try to implement the tenets of true democracy to some degree. Thus, the press systems in these countries also vary.

Of the cultural determinants, perhaps ideology is the most sensitive and complex. It is something that people do not openly discuss, but should be taken into account if the intention is to have One Community, which the press normally talks about. The power that

media and communication have in any form of society can be explained by the concept of media imperialism. Media imperialism refers to the use of media to advance the interests of a dominant country over a subordinate nation; or of a dominant organization or group of people over subordinated and marginalized groups. Critical theorists such as Habermas (German), Schiller (American), Beltran, and Bordanave (South American) have extensively theorized on media imperialism.

Transnational media like CNN, BBC, Hollywood, Bollywood, MTV, HBO, and Korean novelas are some of the examples that display the power of information societies and the ways in which they tell the audience what to watch, what to think, what to consume, how to dress, how to look, what to eat, and so on. In most cases, people's decisions in life are being taken based on the information that is being transmitted by commercial media culture, and recently also by social media. Think about it, why so many people from different Asian countries "worship" Chinese/ Korean styles? Or, why are people obsessed with buying expensive branded clothes and accessories (promoted as coming from the "West"...but produced in most ASEAN countries)? Media culture and the world of advertising indeed play a strong role in driving consumers' decisions on what to buy, what to choose, how to look, and so on.

The Structural Theory of Imperialism formulated by Johann Galtung in the 1970s, takes as a point of departure the key fact that inequality between and within nations exists at all levels of human existence and it is difficult to eradicate these inequalities and bring about change. In the context of the ASEAN, how should the press system work? With the advancement in ICT (Information and Communication Technology), the

likelihood of communicating with each other is hastened, but what information to disseminate is something that should be decided on. It is not only the message that should matter, but also the manner, and who should receive those messages. What does this imply? For the Asian media, this consolidation and transnationalization of media means is a **tough competition**. The challenge, therefore, is to find niche and add value in providing news, information, and entertainment to targeted audiences. Beyond competition, however, both Asian and global media companies have a stake in the continued economic progress of countries in the region, which translates into greater and sustained purchasing power of the people. Temptations to sensationalize and exaggerate issues or even demonize some countries must be mitigated with some sense of responsibility, if not in moderation, for the common good.

Values. Values are set of beliefs about what is important or unimportant, good or bad, right or wrong - that strongly influence what, when, how, and with whom one does those things (Sarbaugh, 1987). Values are material or immaterial things that people regard as important. What is important to Cambodia may not be important to the Philippines for instance. According to Eilers (1987), people's behaviors as offshoots of values are reflections of learning and acculturation. Meaning, most of these are inborn or inherent among cultures. Suffice to say that values vary from culture to culture. However, Lasswell (1948) had developed a value classification framework with eight categories that could perhaps lead to a better understanding of ASEAN culture: power, respect, rectitude, affection, wealth, well-being, skills, and enlightenment. With these categories, no doubt, the Magic 10 has different values.

The first category is power. Lasswell describes power as the strongest political value in cognizance of the ability to participate in decision-making, especially when it comes to politics. Some follow a democratic form of government, while others employ “democratic-like” since they still practice their authoritarian, monarchical, or communism roots. These differences in political power will definitely affect relationships.

The second category is respect. It refers to how one treats or regards another. This could refer to matters like religion, belief systems, or anything that is important to the person, or in this case, country. In countries like Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Thailand, Buddhism is prevalent. Hence, respect for monks is highly regarded. In the Philippines, being predominantly Catholic, Filipinos give high regard to the priest, the bishop, or the pope by kissing their ring as show of respect. In Buddhist countries, walking alongside the monks is prohibited; normally people give way to them. One cannot also sit beside them inside a *tuktuk* or bus as a sign of respect. In Thailand, when the King or the Princess is in front, one cannot look at them straight in the eye as a show of respect. In Lao PDR, when the minister is about to enter the building, one has to step aside to give way to him/her as a show of respect. In these countries, the “nop” or placing hands together in a prayer like position with tips of fingers touching the forehead with the head bowed, is given to the king or Buddha; for teachers or high officials, the fingers touch the tip of the nose and arms are in triangle form just above the waist that comes with saying “*sawadee kha*” in Thai or “*sabaidee*” in Lao as a form of greetings. In the Philippines, respect is shown to elders by putting their hands on one’s forehead or kissing their hand and saying “*mano po*” or saying the words “*po*” or “*opo*” when

talking to people with high regard. This could sound strange to some foreigners because unlike in European countries, greetings are shown by a handshake or *beso-beso* (rubbing the cheeks of each other). In Buddhist countries, one cannot enter a temple in shorts or sleeveless; in like manner, entering the mosque is not for everyone. The Catholic Church also prohibits wearing spaghetti straps or mini skirts inside, especially when attending church services. These are practices that ASEAN member nations should be familiar with not only because they want to show respect, but also because one should value what member countries do to have a harmonious relationship. Respecting one another’s practices no matter how strange, is having an open mind, thus could possibly embrace each other’s values.

The third category is rectitude. This refers to behavior that is correct, upright, and honorable. All 10 nations value rectitude. Each country upholds righteousness, which more often than not, is bound by their religion. Thus, religion plays a key role in building a community. While each religion carries their own beliefs and practices, one thing common is the belief in a supreme being, which is enough to guide the moral values of a nation. However, sometimes, rectitude is relative especially if a national is an atheist. Fear of God guides a person’s uprightness.

The fourth category is affection. It alludes to how one likes or loves something. Visits to different ASEAN countries like Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, and Indonesia revealed citizens’ attitudes towards foreigners. They are warm and loving people. Word of mouth also conveys that Burmese are the same warm and loving people, so are the Filipinos. Singaporeans are a bit formal and reserved, much like Vietnamese and Malaysians even in department stores, hotels, or malls.

The fifth category is wealth. As the name suggests, assets can make or unmake a country. This is precisely the reason why ASEAN integration was envisioned. Country leaders want to synergize their efforts to gain a foothold on economic growth in this part of the region. Some members are rich while others are not so rich. Wealth, however, does not only refer to economic or material possessions. Each country's culture is wealth in itself. Its people are its wealth. These can serve as showcase to visitors to these countries. Each one can brag about their cultural heritage, artifacts, customs, and traditions, especially their ecotourism sites. However, according to Accenture.com, there are several factors that need to be addressed such as: the lack of an effective supra-national authority; strong nationalism; persistent political tensions and instability; wide disparity in social economic progress; and ambiguity in building an ASEAN identity. How then, can this be leveled-off?

The sixth category is well-being. Etymologically, well-being refers to one's state of being healthy, happy, or comfortable. The question now is "what is the status of the well-being of the ASEAN?" Well-being can refer to status of climatic conditions, health risks, environment, disasters –manmade or natural–, and mental health. A landlocked country like Lao PDR is vulnerable to airborne and water diseases. Transboundary diseases or TADS from neighboring countries can easily spread to the Greater Mekong Sub-region, given their geographical location. With climate change, all countries can be greatly affected, but others like the Philippines bear the brunt more. According to Hashim et al (2012), looming chronic disease epidemics in all regions remain to be a challenge. In the poorest countries, non-communicable diseases kill more people than do communicable, maternal and perinatal conditions combined. These deaths mostly occur before old age.

The seventh category is skills. Skills refer to one's abilities and capacities to perform a given function or role. The ASEAN needs a complex labor force to propel its economy. However, with differing levels of skills and the cultural differences of workers, how can integration materialize especially if a foreign worker gets a higher pay compared to the locals? At present, all 10 countries have adopted K+12 as basic education system. This implies that learning standards or competencies across countries are the same, and can be assumed as equal. Is this the case? Fernandez and Powell (2010) noted that there is a gap between skills acquisition and business needs in the region.

The last category is enlightenment. This refers to education. Education is being valued by all ASEAN member nations. However, there is that grim reality that quality could be a problem. It is assumed that shifting to K+12 can remedy the condition to some degree, but there is no guarantee that this will be the case. Differences in content, manner of teaching, instructional materials provided, learning resources, and teacher-student relationship may pose as a problem. A graduate student from Lao PDR studying in the Philippines, for instance, cannot directly ask a teacher for guidance because this is something that is frowned upon in their country. In the Philippines, students are encouraged to discuss their problems or clarifications inside or outside the classroom. This is not seen as a gesture of weakness but learning, unlike in Laos. Hence, it becomes more difficult for a student to study abroad because of this cultural view of education.

Social Structures. Social structures are equated with social institutions: family, religion, education, government, economics (Eilers, 1987); and are

dependent on types of society (tribal, peasant, modern). Filbeck (1985) as cited by Eilers, defines social institutions as “a comparable, durable system of interrelated folk ways and laws organized around a given function of society.” Looking at the social structures, one can surmise the parallelism with what cultures value. Given the role social structures play in a country’s culture, what similarities and differences can be drawn among the ASEAN?

Eilers (1987) further forwards that social institutions such as governments, economics, education, family, and religion have five basic functions: maintenance of law and order; production and distribution of goods and services; dissemination of knowledge and skills especially for the next generation; procreation and nurture of the young, including the establishment of obligation and privileges of kinship in view of providing for the aged in society; and provision of a rationale for group cohesion, including an explanation of one’s ultimate destiny as a member of the group. Government promulgates laws; economics takes care of wealth; education provides enlightenment; the family, as the basic unit of society, is the nurturing ground for culture; and belief in God as moral guidance of society. Filbeck (1987) categorizes societies into three types: tribal, peasant, and modern. Tribal society involves a holistic interrelation between the government, economy, education, family, and religion. Peasant society depends on the urban elite; and modern society is where “social institutions of government and economics share the heaviest and most important functional load in maintaining the society.”

WIVS, then, can be assumed as breakers or makers of ASEAN Integration. While this is the case, it should

not stop here. There must be a way for integration apart from economic, while the contention of the study is cultural.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Given the cultural determinants of communication, it can be assumed that ASEAN integration can be made possible through understanding and embracing each country’s worldviews, ideologies, values, and social structures using multimedia platforms. Making known to the different nationalities in the region the intent of being an ASEAN community, however, needs a more concrete approach. Education and participation are keys to ensure holistic integration. Such process is what is called as development communication or devcom. Professing devcom as cure-all is not the intention of this paper, but using it as an approach to educate the ASEAN community about its nature and expectations is.

Development Communication as defined by Dr. Nora Quebral (2012), the mother of devcom, is the “science of human communication linked to the transitioning of communities from poverty in all its forms to a dynamic, overall growth that fosters equality and the unfolding of individual potential.” The discipline imbibes a process that aims to capacitate and empower people through strategic messages for specific audiences. Unlike mass communication, devcom focuses on intended groups, in this case the ASEAN Community, towards social transformation that will eventually lead to behavior change. Transformation cannot happen overnight. It is a process that involves social mobilization if the community was contiguous using face-to-face or mediated communication. In the case of the ASEAN, face-to-face may not be possible physically, but can

be done electronically. This approach, also called as “communication for planned social change,” may be seen as appropriate, given the groundwork that needs to be done to ensure that citizens of the ASEAN community are well aware of what their leaders have planned for them. Access to information to educate every citizen is what is needed, both young and old. In order to ensure timely, relevant, and substantive dissemination of information, multimedia platforms like MAGS (My ASEAN Guide Supporter-mobile or electronic apps), ASEAN alerts (on mobiles); ASEAN dictionary, ASEAN newspaper, and an ASEAN website have to be developed not only to inform but to educate ASEAN nationals, if this label is to be observed. The geographical location being close to each other should be considered since environmental health needs to be taken care of as well. Understanding each other’s language, the basic information that is communicated by using the various media platforms may ease integration. Knowing how to say “thank you, welcome, greetings, or how are you, how much, or what is your name” are useful phrases to start a conversation on. Making the 10 languages available on electronic gadgets such as mobile phones, tablets, netbooks, laptops, or PCs can assist travelers to be more familiar with their community despite their origin.

In due time, if these interventions are in place, there is no doubt that ASEAN integration may come into fruition not only in pushing economic growth, but bringing their people as one. The warm Laotians, Burmese, Thais, Cambodians, Indonesians, and Filipinos can influence the serious and reserve Singaporeans, Vietnamese, Malaysians, and Bruneians if they become familiar in speaking their language. Knowing how to speak their language to some degree can indeed make

a community. While English is the assumed *lingua franca*, there is a high possibility that ASEAN nationals can learn each other’s language especially Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Brunei who speak Bahasa Melayu; Laos and Thailand perfectly understand one another; while Cambodia, Myanmar, Vietnam, and the Philippines have to learn all these languages. These can also be integrated in the curriculum as one of the foreign languages that students can take, and with the aid of multimedia access, this could be learnt faster. This integration should be seen as participatory. The ASEAN Secretariat may be tasked to act as clearinghouse or administrator of MAGS, wherein citizens of each country can beef up the database on information that they think everyone should be familiar with. The signs, symbols, hymn, or clothing may very well be featured using these applications. Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework of the study.

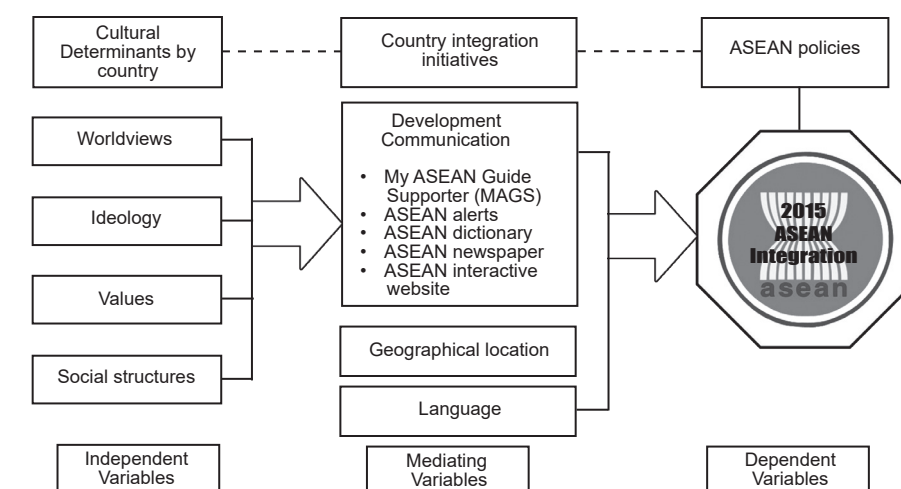


Figure 1. Ten Countries, One Nation (TCON) Integration Framework: A Socio-Cultural Perspective

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study employed a purely descriptive research design using secondary data with key informant interviews as triangulate measure. This was a class project for DEVC 215 (Communication and Culture) that the author handled during the first semester of SY 2014-2015. The six students were asked to research about how ASEAN integration can be realized, given that the assumption for such to occur in 2015 using communication and culture as lens. The Lao student specifically interviewed some students from the 10-member country who are studying in UPLB. A research of the literature was conducted to establish how cultural determinants of communication like worldviews, ideology, values, and social structures can hasten or hamper ASEAN integration. The results were analyzed and synthesized in this paper as context of TCON. The author did the implications and interpretations of the results as well as the approaches that can be considered in mainstreaming TCON.

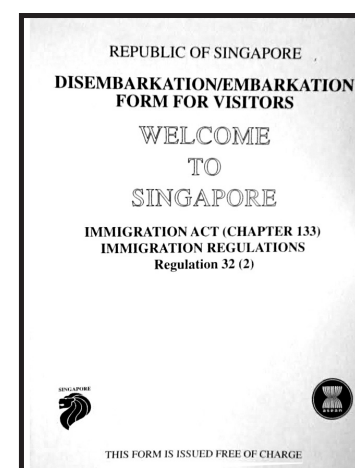
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

There is no doubt, worldviews, ideology, values, and social structures vary. Such variation, however, should be seen as strength rather than a weakness.

The belief in God is a common characteristic of the 10-member country despite the differing denominations. They all respect a supreme being that is above all men. They are also fatalistic, which should be revered because fear of something like belief on a mighty ruler can guide a moral and upright life. The worldviews of the ASEAN countries can serve like a shield to protect each

other's rights and practices. The differences in beliefs may affect social behavior, but understanding these worldviews can broaden perspectives and ultimately build a multicultural society who harmoniously lives in diversity. Having an open mind to others' cultures will not only strengthen the relationships among its constituents, but can also synergize its potentials to become a greater nation. Through constant exchange of information and intercultural communication (meaning each other's country will imbibe one another's culture), there is no doubt ASEAN integration will no longer be a lip service, but a policy that is understood by everyone.

The differing ideologies like democracy, authoritarian, monarchy, and communism definitely can affect integration but if the 10 nations can agree to have a national policy that will be observed, then, ideologies can be sorted out. This can be done if each member country can use multimedia platforms to share information to increase knowledge about each other. Close collaboration should not be limited to higher ups, but the grassroots as well. The different media platforms can be used to beef up information access and heightened awareness about ASEAN countries being one. Having an ASEAN flag alongside the national flag in schools and local government offices can perhaps educate students and citizens what ASEAN means. ASEAN signs, symbols, or logos can be used to promote the integration, like what Singapore is doing. Singapore's



disembarkation form for visitors includes the ASEAN logo indicating their membership. Other member countries can do the same. Making the logo visible in strategic locations and publications can educate a larger audience at any one time. Localizing ASEAN integration through multimedia platforms can also hasten integration.

One must also think about the speed of new media or digital media in transmitting and sharing information. For example, a tweet that goes instantly viral like memes can increase knowledge, affect attitudes, or change behavior towards a phenomenon. Therefore, the content that is being shared by the media and through digital media may have a strong impact in shaping the ASEAN identity and its cultures.

It is worth to learn more about memes since these are part of popular and everyday culture. Even if the term “meme” was coined by Richard Dawkins (1976) long before the digital era, this concept incorporates some of the most fundamental aspect of the Internet and of participatory culture and Web 2.0. Limor Shifman (2014) defines **memes** as:

Pieces of cultural information that pass along from person to person, but gradually scale into a shared social phenomenon. Although they spread on a micro basis, their impact is on the macro level: memes shape the mindsets, forms of behavior, and actions of social groups.

This attribute is highly compatible to the way culture is formed in the Web 2.0 era, which is marked by platforms for creating and exchanging user-generated content. Memes can be empowering or damaging. Given

the diverse cultural contexts of ASEAN countries, they may lead to intercultural misunderstandings and conflict if there is a violation in the use of signs, symbols, or language from one culture to another. Thus, it is very important to become media literate, use the media responsibly and critically, and understand which content is being shared in information societies. One example of an Internet meme is the video “Gangnam Style” which became the first YouTube clip to be viewed more than one billion times. Thousands of its viewers responded by creating and posting their own variations of the video. “Gangnam Style” and its parodies and imitations are one of the most famous examples of an Internet meme: a piece of digital content that spreads quickly around the web in various iterations and becomes a shared cultural experience. How can memes be used to promote ASEAN integration?

The media encompasses all the channels of communication, through which information and knowledge are disseminated and shared with one or more individuals. There are different forms of media: mainstream media, community media, and new media. **Mainstream media** consists of radio, TV, print or newspapers; **community media** are smaller and community-based, for example, community newspapers, localized radio programming, cable TV, wall newspapers, puppet shows, theater, or community communication channels. Terry Flew (2005) defines **new media** as digital media. Digital media covers media content that combines data, text, sound, and images stored in digital formats and distributed through networks such as broadband optic fiber cables, satellites, and microwave transmission systems. New media such as World Wide Web sites generate old content into digital format. Social media is another form of media that, compared to

mainstream media, is more interactive and participatory – a “two-way” communication rather than a “one-way” communication.

In ASEAN, one may argue that the booming of mobile technology and social media networks has brought the biggest change in the media landscape. Southeast Asia is enthusiastically surfing the digital wave and it is in the midst of the mobile revolution, which is increasingly enabling people to access e-services and connect with one another beyond physical constraints. For instance:

- Over 2.7 billion people, 39% of the world’s population, are using the Internet (ITU, 2013);
- There are almost as many mobile-cellular subscriptions as people in the world, with more than half in the Asia- Pacific region – 3.5 billion out of 6.8 billion total subscriptions (ITU, 2013); and
- 194 million new Internet users will come online between 2010 and 2020 in the six ASEAN nations, 91 million of them from Indonesia alone (Accenture, 2012)

Despite this digital hype, Southeast Asia is also home to a number of least developed countries where ICT development is among the lowest in the world. For example:

- In the developing world, 31% of the population is online, compared to 77% in the developed world (ITU, 2013); and
- An estimated 1.1 billion households worldwide are not yet connected to the Internet, 90 percent of which are in the developing world (ITU, 2013).

In addition, a study conducted in 2004 in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, and the Philippines showed that another important issue and obstacle to narrowing the digital divide in the region is the need for appropriate information and communication policies. Despite some of the listed countries having well-developed media systems, most countries do not have clearly defined media and communication policies. Rules and regulations have developed, sometimes as executive actions, to meet specific situations.

Can the media in ASEAN achieve regional integration? Kavi Chongkittavorn, assistant group editor of Nation Multimedia Group and Senior Media Specialist in the region, argues: “Strange but true, while ASEAN leaders often praise the region’s achievements in economic, social, and political areas in moving towards the long-awaited single community, they seldom appreciate the role of media in the process of regional integration.”

According to Kavi:

Such an attitude mirrors the deep-seated mistrust of media, as well as the existence of distinctive media cultures and institutions within individual member nations. The ambitious ASEAN Economic Community to be launched in 2015 would not be possible without the active participation of journalists and media workers within the grouping. In Europe, North America, and Latin America, media are the major driving force behind regional integration and the sense of belonging.

Media landscapes in Southeast Asia are diverse and uneven. That helps explain why it is extremely difficult to offer a general image of the regional media. That has been the main attribute hampering discussions and closer collaboration throughout these years in media-related activities, especially in setting common norms and standards of media practice. Although the charter, and the region's political-and-security and social-and-cultural blueprints, specifically mention the need to promote the free flow of and access to information - as well as the role of media in promoting ASEAN identity and awareness in community-building and integration efforts - ASEAN leaders have yet to make serious efforts to push forward this platform.

At the recent summit in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei, ASEAN leaders tasked their ministers with finalizing the ASEAN Communication Master Plan, which will focus on the common people. For the time being, it has been left to individual members to do so. Within ASEAN, as it turns out, Myanmar has reformed the most when it comes to the media. In the past 18 months, Naypyidaw has surprised ASEAN with its bold media reforms despite some imperfections. For instance, the international community has welcomed Myanmar's on-going media openness and rapid reformation and institutionalization towards public media services. This paradigm shift has caused wariness among ASEAN members of the possible impact on their countries.

During the second decade of ASEAN, Indonesia under Suharto played a dominant role in bringing

the state-owned media together to ensure media unity and commonality of views. However, without the participation of the private media sector, the Confederation of ASEAN Journalists with more than a three-decade history, has not been able to tap in and connect with the new generation of media workers or catch up with the new media revolution in the region.

In addition, he said:

Without broader media cooperation and understanding, social networks through new media platforms will set a precedent, if not conditions, for the future of ASEAN integration. With the proliferation of mobile technologies coupled with a meteoric rise in the number of citizen informants, their few words and audio clips could impact on the whole effort of regional integration. Somehow, ASEAN still lacks the media strategies for utilizing traditional, mainstream, and new media to forge regionalism.

Currently, there are well over 100 professional organizations associated with ASEAN, but none is a media-related organization. Media and its social networks must help to articulate the benefits of regional integration and cooperation. The National Press Council of Thailand and the Indonesian Press Council are currently working on a common plan to establish the ASEAN Press Council, which will be the first time in the region for such an undertaking. Thailand, Indonesia, and the Philippines have independent media self-regulatory bodies. Myanmar set up an interim press council last year.

As ASEAN community-building continues, the media in ASEAN must also be able to manage the expectations of ASEAN citizens regarding the outcome of economic integration and future implications to mitigate unfounded fears and concerns surrounding a single community.

Different communication channels provide information from which the decisions of political leaders, and those of the general public, are based. People still greatly depend on mass media for information whether this be at the local, national, or global levels (even if this is changing with the advent of new media). It is imperative, therefore, that people as receivers of information are able to read, understand, and decide for themselves on issues affecting them. The mass media also has a role in creating public opinion. This is true for both democratic and authoritarian countries. While this function is encouraged, some countries in ASEAN restrict information dissemination to limited audiences, especially if this will affect or lead to political and social instability. As a thinking public, members of a population should be able to evaluate and discern what information is being sent to them, and what actions must be taken to foster truth and transparency. The media play an important role both in creating public opinion, and reflecting and showcasing the opinions of members of the society, for instance through editorials, columns, commentaries, newspapers, magazines, new media or the Internet, among others. Media also function as watchdogs—raising awareness on issues of public interest, and the wrongdoings of institutions and people in power.

The determinant values likewise differ but one would notice that ASEAN values religion, health, respect for elders, well-being, and education. With these characteristics, a more strategic communication approach can be developed to address the gaps. ASEAN integration can happen by capitalizing on these values. The tendency to adhere to a common way of thinking can hasten the intention of having One Community, if it can be communicated using these characteristics. The social relevance of being a part of One Community can be played using these avenues. The monks can talk about ASEAN integration, as well as the priests, pastors, or *imams*. What is good for the ASEAN should be popularized to increase advocacy and hasten social transformation. There is a need to establish regional norms at the local level.

With existing social structures, the change should start with the family as the basic unit of society. Families must be educated on what ASEAN integration means. This implies that non-formal education through orientation, webinars, or face-to-face focus group discussions can be done to increase awareness about being an ASEAN national. The communication process may take awhile, but if this will not be initiated, who would? The ASEAN Secretariat should expand its network to local government units, or up to the *desa*, *ban*, or *barangay* levels to ensure that everyone knows what the ASEAN is all about. Thus, being familiar with the 10-member countries' WIVS through development communication using ICTs, can realize ASEAN integration in due time. While promotion is being done, advocacy is low because the approach used was more on the use of technocrats, rather than the masses.

CONCLUSION

Embracing one's roots is not an obstacle to imbibing another's if the intention is for the common good. Having an ASEAN Culture by understanding one's worldviews, ideologies, values, and social structures and taking those as they are cannot only create one nation, but a great nation. With the advent of ICTs, through development communication approaches, there is no doubt that integration can be realized by the current and enjoyed by the next generations. Thus, ASEANS should consider cultural determinants of communication in "weaving ASEAN integration smoothly as silk", instead of purely economic.

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THE ASEAN MEDIA LANDSCAPE¹

Benjamina Gonzalez-Flor²

ASEAN AS AN INFORMATION SOCIETY

What is the information society? The information society is defined in different ways by organizations working in different sectors. In our context, we will refer to the *information society* as a social system that capitalizes on information in order to survive. This occurs in the **Information Age**, also defined by Alvin Toffler (1980) as “Third Wave” – an age that is powerfully driven by information technology and that is based not so much on muscles and physical strength, but rather on mind and knowledge. It is important to distinguish the terms *information society* and *Information Age*:

An information society refers to a social system while the Information Age refers to an era in human civilization, a worldwide phenomenon. Hence, it is possible for a group of people to live in the Information Age but not within an information society” (Flor, A., p.13).

The Information Age is the third era of human civilization, with its predecessors being the **Agricultural Age** (first era) and the **Industrial Age** (second era). Paradoxically, the Information Age cannot exist without the previous two eras, or without the agricultural and industrial societies supplying their products and commodities.

¹ Initially prepared as an ASEAN Communication module with editorial input from Ms Sarah Gabai, Consultant, Sukhothai University, Bangkok. Some of the contents found here interface with the previous chapter.

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Porat came up with the phrase “**information society**” as one in which informational activities or information exchanges engage the majority of the workforce and account for the greater share of economic transactions. This means that even information becomes a commodity (or commercial good) to be purchased, consumed, or shared. Information gains economic value. One may argue that in Asia, people are moving towards information societies – just think about the growing demand for mobile devices and software broadband, Wi-Fi, eLearning programs, and any other information exchange platforms.

Vimal Dissanayake outlines the characteristics of the information society, and differentiates it from the agricultural and industrial societies as follows:

Table 1. Characteristics of IS

Categories of change	Agricultural	Industrial	Information
Product	Food	Goods	Information
Factors of production	Land	Capital	Expertise
Production venue	Household	Factory	Information utility
Actors	Farmers	Factory workers	Technicians
Nature of technology	Tool-oriented	Power technology	Information technology
Methodology	Trial and error	Experiment	Abstract theory and simulation
Guiding factor	Tradition	Economic growth	Codification of knowledge
Prerequisite to success	Speech	Verbal/visual and aural literacy	Computer literacy
Preferred rule	Hierarchical/authoritarian	Representative democracy	Participatory democracy
Unifying principle	Regionalism	Nationalism	Globalism

In an information society, not all members of the population are *information workers*. Alongside information, there must be agricultural and industrial workers to maintain the balance of food production and industrial needs. However, the dominant capital remains to be information. This means that there are **rich information societies** and **poor information societies** brought about by the *digital divide* locally, nationally, internationally, globally, or ASEAN-wide. Such landscape, however, is changing due to the exponential growth of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs).

The Global Information Technology Report 2014 finds little progress in bridging the gap between the world’s most networked economies and the rest of the world. However, the Asia Pacific region is very dynamic and active in developing ICTs. Click on the Network Readiness Index 2014 to see the ranking of ASEAN countries. Found below are some highlights:

- Malaysia ranks 30th and confirms its leadership as the highest ranked economy in Developing Asia. The government uses ICTs extensively, highlighting the high priority of this sector.
- Indonesia ranks 64th, the third best result among members of ASEAN after Singapore and Malaysia.
- Thailand ranks 67th and its main strength lies in relative affordability of ICTs.
- Philippines ranks 78th with improved access to ICT infrastructure and better skills.
- Vietnam ranks 84th, and the overall quality of the political and regulatory environment and ICT infrastructure limit the expansion of the ICT sector, while available skills show no signs of development.
- Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Myanmar are at the bottom of the regional rankings.

Media, Information and Power: Center and Periphery

The social structures in which we live greatly affect the *power* that media and communication have in information societies. This can be explained by the concept of media imperialism. **Media imperialism** refers to the use of media to advance the interests of a dominant country over a subordinate nation; or of a dominant organization or group of people over subordinated and marginalized groups. Critical theorists such as Habermas (German), Schiller (American), Beltran, and Bordanave (South American) have extensively theorized on media imperialism.

Transnational media like CNN, BBC, Hollywood, Bollywood, MTV, HBO, and Koreanovelas are some of the examples that display the power of information societies and the ways in which they tell the audience what to watch, what to think, what to consume, how to dress, how to look, what to eat, and so on. In most cases, our decisions in life are based on the information that is being transmitted by commercial media culture, and recently also by social media. Think about it, why so many people from different Asian countries “worship” Chinese/ Korean styles? Or, why are people obsessed with buying expensive branded clothes and accessories (promoted as coming from the “West”...but produced in most ASEAN countries)? Media culture and the world of advertising indeed play a strong role in driving consumers’ decisions on what to buy, what to choose, how to look, and so on.

The Structural Theory of Imperialism, formulated by Johann Galtung in the 1970s, takes as a point of departure the key fact that inequality between and within

nations exists at all levels of human existence and it is difficult to eradicate these inequalities and bring about change. Galtung distinguishes between *Centers (C) and Periphery (P)* nations. Each nation, in turn, has its own centers (**c**) and peripheries (**p**). Imperialism sets the relations of dominance between these nations. The Center nation has power over the Periphery nation, to bring about a condition of disharmony of interest between them. Media and communication are also seen by Galtung as a form of imperialism where the Center nation provides news and the means of communication, while the Periphery nation provides less influential information. The information and communication resources that are being produced and transmitted by the Center nations often repurpose the dominance of the Center nations on Periphery nations.

On the occasion of the 15th Asian Media Information and Communication Centre Annual Conference titled “Media in Asia: Aspirations, Choices and Realities,” H.E. Ong Keng Yong, Former Secretary-General of ASEAN addressed in his speech that “*dominant media conglomerates remain profit-driven and therefore have a stake in the region’s prosperity and stability*”.

H.E. Ong Keng Yong highlights:

- Consolidation of transnational and western media continues. The biggest of the top five is Time Warner with a total revenue of US\$ 29,795 billion in 2013 (Source: Institute of Media and Communication Policy). Time Warner has global reach with over 200 subsidiaries worldwide and owns CNN, Warner Bros Pictures, 24 magazines including Time, People and Sports Illustrated, among others.

- Time Warner is followed by Disney (owns Disney Channel, ESPN, etc.); Bertelsmann (owns 19 European TV channels and 23 radio stations, etc.); Viacom (owns MTV, etc.); and News Corporation (owns Fox TV and some 132 newspapers worldwide, including the London Times and the New York Post).

For the Asian media, this consolidation and transnationalisation of media means **tough competition**. The challenge, therefore, is to find niche and add value in providing news, information, and entertainment to targeted audiences. But beyond competition, both Asian and global media companies have a stake in the continued economic progress of countries in the region, which translates into greater and sustained purchasing power of the people. Temptations to sensationalize and exaggerate issues or even demonize some countries must be mitigated with some sense of responsibility, if not moderation, for the common good.

From this speech, we can have a better understanding of the differences between Center and Periphery in mainstream media where, as often is the case, the West (or USA) is the Center and other countries and regions in the world are the Periphery. People in the Periphery consume information delivered by the Center and strive to compete, both to raise their economic and commercial power, and to bring their stories to the world. While mainstream media are more centralized and easily controllable by the few (Center), new media or digital media (Periphery) are more accessible to the people and may be an “alternative” medium to produce and share information with the public nationally and internationally.

Despite the digital divide being increasingly narrowed down, information societies continue to exercise their dominant power over developing societies.

How is this happening? While many subscribe to Google, Facebook, Yahoo, Wikipedia, and post in an online forum, open a blog etc., few are aware of the implications of using different forms of media, for example issues of privacy and online hate speech, among others. The misuse of communication and media, and accessing sensitive information and media content may affect the ways in which people from one country interact with and understand each other. This is particularly relevant in the ASEAN context, where one of the roles of the media is to foster greater social, cultural, political, and economic understanding about ASEAN.

One must also think about the speed of new media or digital media in transmitting and sharing information. For example, a tweet that goes instantly viral like *memes* can increase knowledge, affect attitudes, or change behavior towards a phenomenon. Therefore, the content that is being shared by the media and through digital media may have a strong impact in shaping the ASEAN identity and its cultures.

It is worth to learn more about memes since these are part of our popular and everyday culture. Although the term “meme” was coined by Richard Dawkins (1976) long before the digital era, this concept incorporates some of the most fundamental aspect of the Internet and of participatory culture and Web 2.0. Limor Shifman (2014) defines **memes** as:

Pieces of cultural information that pass along from person to person, but gradually scale into a shared social phenomenon. Although they

spread on a micro basis, their impact is on the macro level: memes shape the mindsets, forms of behavior, and actions of social groups. (p.18)

This attribute is highly compatible to the way culture is formed in the Web 2.0 era, which is marked by platforms for creating and exchanging user-generated content. Memes can be empowering or damaging. Given the diverse cultural contexts of ASEAN countries, they may lead to intercultural misunderstandings and conflict if there is a violation in the use of signs, symbols, or language from one culture to another. Thus, it is very important to become media literate, use the media responsibly and critically, and understand which content is being shared in information societies.

In December 2012, the video “Gangnam Style” became the first YouTube clip to be viewed more than **one billion times**. Thousands of its viewers responded by creating and posting their own variations of the video. “Gangnam Style” and its parodies and imitations are one of the most famous examples of an Internet meme: a piece of digital content that spreads quickly around the web in various iterations and becomes a shared cultural experience.

MEDIA MAPPING IN THE ASEAN REGION

Forms of Media in ASEAN and in the Information Society

The media encompasses all the channels of communication, through which information and knowledge are disseminated and shared with one or more individuals. There are different forms of media: mainstream media, community media, and new media.

Mainstream media

consists of radio, TV, print or newspapers;

community media

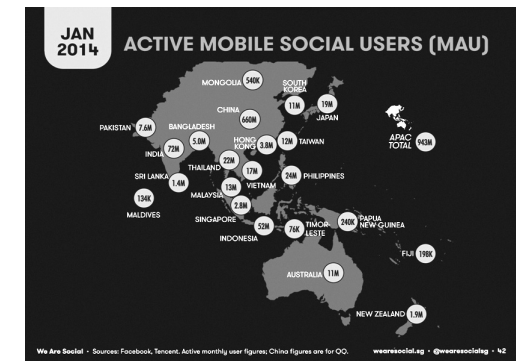
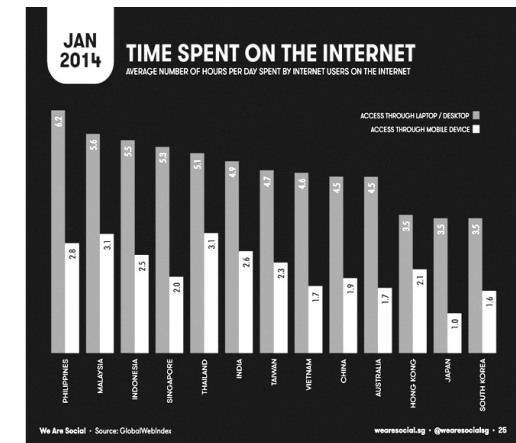
are smaller and community-based, for example, community newspapers, localized radio programming, cable TV, wall newspapers, puppet shows, theater, or community communication channels. Terry Flew (2005) defines new media as digital media.

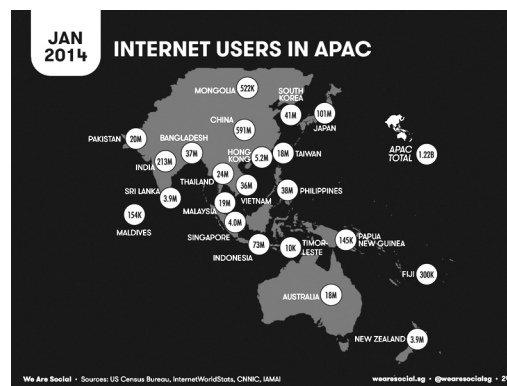
Digital media

covers media content that combines data, text, sound, and images stored in digital formats and distributed through networks such as

broadband optic fiber cables, satellites & microwave transmission systems. New media such as World Wide Web sites generate old content into digital format. **Social media** is another form of media that, compared to mainstream media, is more interactive and participatory – a “two-way” communication rather than a “one-way” communication.

In ASEAN, one may argue that the booming of mobile technology and social media networks has brought the biggest change in the media landscape. Southeast Asia is enthusiastically surfing the digital wave and it is in the midst of the mobile revolution, which is increasingly





enabling people to access e-services and connect with one another beyond physical constraints.

- Over 2.7 billion people, 39% of the world's population, are using the Internet. (ITU, 2013)

- There are almost as many mobile-cellular subscriptions as people in the world, with more than half in the Asia-Pacific region – 3.5 billion out of 6.8 billion total subscriptions. (ITU, 2013)

- 194 million new Internet users will come online between 2010 and 2020 in the six ASEAN nations. 91 million of them from Indonesia alone (Accenture, 2012).

Despite this digital hype, Southeast Asia is also home to a number of least developed countries where ICT development is among the lowest in the world.

- In the developing world, 31% of the population is online, compared to 77% in the developed world. (ITU, 2013)

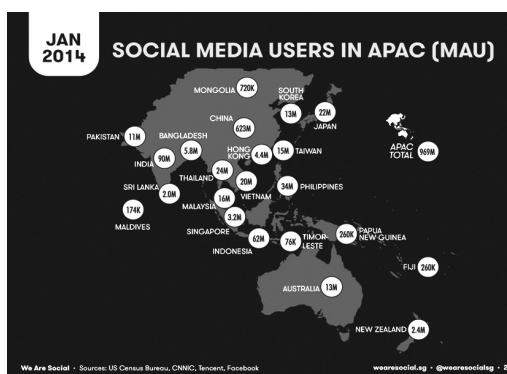
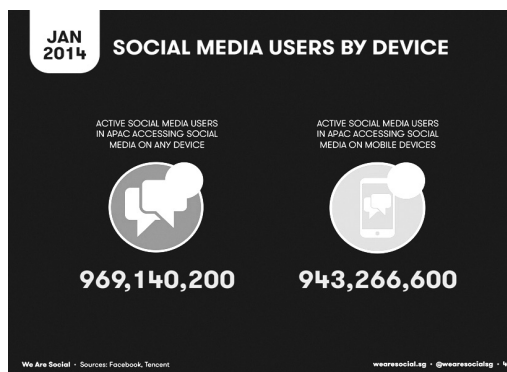
- An estimated 1.1 billion households worldwide are not yet connected to the Internet, 90 per cent of which are in the developing world. (ITU, 2013)

In addition, a study conducted in 2004 in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, and the Philippines showed that another important issue and obstacle to narrowing the digital divide in the region is the need for appropriate information and communication policies. “Despite some of the listed countries having well-developed media systems, most countries do not have clearly defined media and communication policies. Rules and regulations have developed, sometimes as executive actions, to meet specific situations.”

The Functions of Media

In *Philippine Communication in the Digital Age*, Maslog (2014) distinguishes three roles that channels of communication, and in particular mass media, play in society. These are political, economic, and social roles.

Political. Different communication channels provide information from which the decisions of political leaders, and those of the general public, are based. People still greatly depend on mass media for information whether this be at the local, national, or global levels (even if this is changing with the advent of new media). It is imperative, therefore, that people as receivers of information are able to read, understand, and decide for themselves on issues affecting them. The mass media also has a role in creating public opinion. This is true for both democratic and authoritarian countries. While this function is encouraged, some countries in ASEAN restrict information dissemination to limited audiences, especially if this will affect or lead to political and social



instability. As a thinking public, members of a population should be able to evaluate and discern what information is being sent to them, and what actions must be taken to foster truth and transparency. The media play an important role both in creating public opinion, and reflecting and showcasing the opinions of members of the society, for instance through editorials, columns, commentaries, newspapers, magazines, new media or the Internet, among others. Media also function as **watchdogs**—raising awareness on issues of public interest, and the wrongdoings of institutions and people in power.

Economic. The second role of the media is an economic one. As we have seen earlier in this study guide, mass media and mainstream media are a big part of the economy of a country or region. *Advertising* is where most of the revenue of the media is generated. Advertisers worldwide will spend \$545.40 billion on paid media in 2014, according to the new figures from [eMarketer](#). Among ASEAN member states, Indonesia is the country that leads advertising spending growth in the Asia-Pacific region; its spending is heading towards international levels.

Social. The third role of the media is social. “Mass media help strengthen the social fabric of the nation and influence its pattern” (Maslog, 2014). In other words, media are conveyers of culture, and shape the ways in which societies are being built. One of the social roles of mass media is to create a popular culture which includes customs, fads, fashions, folk songs, pop tunes, folk art, pop art, lingo, technology, norms, beliefs, personalities, and even superstitions. Other social roles are entertainment and development communication.

The Role of the Media in ASEAN

Kavi Chongkittavorn, assistant group editor of Nation Multimedia Group and Senior Media Specialist in the region, argues: “*Strange but true, while ASEAN leaders often praise the region's achievements in economic, social and political areas in moving towards the long-awaited single community, they seldom appreciate the role of media in the process of regional integration.*”

Such an attitude mirrors the deep-seated mistrust of media, as well as the existence of distinctive media cultures and institutions within individual member nations. The ambitious ASEAN Economic Community to be launched in 2015 would not be possible without the active participation of journalists and media workers within the grouping. In Europe, North America and Latin America, media are the major driving force behind regional integration and the sense of belonging.

Media landscapes in Southeast Asia are diverse and uneven. That helps explain why it is extremely difficult to offer a general image of the regional media. That has been the main attribute hampering discussions and closer collaboration throughout these years in media-related activities, especially in setting common norms and standards of media practice. Although the charter, and the region's political-and-security and social-and-cultural blueprints, specifically mention the need to promote the free flow of and access to information - as well as the role of media in promoting ASEAN identity and awareness in community-building and integration efforts - ASEAN leaders have yet to make serious efforts to push forward this platform.

At the recent summit in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei, ASEAN leaders tasked their ministers with finalizing the **ASEAN Communication Master Plan**, which will focus on the common people. For the time being, it has been left to individual members to do so.

Within ASEAN, as it turns out, Myanmar has reformed the most when it comes to the media. In the past 18 months, Naypyidaw has surprised ASEAN with its bold media reforms despite some imperfections. For instance, Myanmar's ongoing media openness and rapid reformation and institutionalization towards public media services have been welcomed by the international community. This paradigm shift has caused wariness among ASEAN members of the possible impact on their countries.

During the second decade of ASEAN, Indonesia under Suharto played a dominant role in bringing the state-owned media together to ensure media unity and commonality of views. However, without the participation of the private media sector, the Confederation of ASEAN Journalists with more than a three-decade history, has not been able to tap in and connect with the new generation of media workers or catch up with the new media revolution in the region.

Without broader media cooperation and understanding, social networks through new media platforms will set a precedent, if not conditions, for the future of ASEAN integration. With the proliferation of mobile technologies coupled with a meteoric rise in the number of citizen informants, their few words and audio clips could impact on the whole effort of regional integration.

Somehow, ASEAN still lacks the media strategies for utilizing traditional, mainstream and new media to forge regionalism.

Currently, there are well over 100 professional organizations associated with ASEAN, but none is a media-related organization. Media and its social networks must help to articulate the benefits of regional integration and cooperation. The National Press Council of Thailand and the Indonesian Press Council are currently working on a common plan to establish the ASEAN Press Council, which will be the first time in the region for such an undertaking. Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines have independent media self-regulatory bodies. Myanmar set up an interim press council last year.

As ASEAN community-building continues, the media in ASEAN must also be able to manage the expectations of ASEAN citizens regarding the outcome of economic integration and future implications to mitigate unfounded fears and concerns surrounding a single community.

Kavi Chongkittavorn,
"Time for ASEAN's media sector to come together."
The Nation.

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CARVING ICT INDUSTRY NICHES WITHIN THE ASEAN IN A GLOBALIZED HIGHER EDUCATIONAL AND KNOWLEDGE ENVIRONMENT¹

Alexander G. Flor²

INTRODUCTION

For the past decade, globalization has spawned its champions and detractors within and outside academic circles. Many of our peers consider globalization as a boon to Asian higher education since it opens up our academic programs to Western students. Consider, for instance, the increasing number of North American and European graduate students pursuing their degrees in Thai universities through English language programs. However, an even greater number among us consider globalization as a bane not only to our educational system, but also to our Asian societies in general. Localization of resources seems to be the remedy of choice for the perceived ills of globalization. One would assume that this would likewise follow in the area of education and human resource development.

This paper adopts a slightly different point of view.

From where I stand at the moment, and that would be from the vantage point of the Open Campus of the

¹ Paper presented during the International Symposium on Skills Development for Poverty Alleviation held on 25-26 January 2008 at the Colombo Plan Staff College, Pasig City, Philippines.

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University of the Philippines System, *globalization is a product of technology*. Although as an academic, it is very tempting to analyze globalization from a geopolitical point of view, I see it realistically from the standpoint of technological determinism. From this perspective, globalization is seen as the natural consequence of information and communication technologies. New ICTs have resulted in the death of distance and are thus actively undermining national as well as regional boundaries in the economic, financial, communicational, and educational spheres.

To me, it is quite clear that globalization, particularly in education, is not a product of a conspiracy perpetrated by an ideology or an economic bloc. It is merely the natural outcome of a networked world that has shrunk virtually due to advances in telecommunications and transportation.

COMPETITION, COMPETENCE, AND COMPETENCIES

How does the academe situate itself in such a global educational environment? How would universities and subsequently industries, cope to the challenges of a knowledge society?

ASEAN universities and industry clusters should position themselves according to their relative strengths and strategic advantages. Such is the fundamental ground rule in the globalized playing field, be it in the area of trade or education.

We could very well learn from the example of Indian educational institutions that are now the largest supplier of software developers in the entire world. Indian

manpower exports of programmers amount to billions of dollars annually. The Philippines ranks a poor second compared to India, based on foreign exchange earnings attributed to this sub-sector. On the other hand, India tails the Philippines as the largest global supplier of call center operators. A strategic advantage that both India and the Philippines have is that their medium of instruction in computer education as well as in communication, is English.

However, Asia in general and Southeast Asia in particular should not be engaged in cut-throat competition against one another. Each country should focus on their respective niches, be these in computer science, information science, or communication science. These niches may actually be found in the list of competencies expected from individuals to lead in a knowledge-based economy. These competencies are clustered under a growing field of study, information and communication technology.

ICT as a Body of Knowledge

Information and communication technology may be regarded as a body of knowledge, built and shaped over time by its practitioners. The building blocks of this body are generated by research, both scientific and anecdotal, involving the documentation of best practice and lessons learned.

Like all bodies positioned within time and space, this body of knowledge possesses three dimensions. In this particular case, however, the continuum constitutes these dimensions: the **hard - soft continuum**; the **front end - back end continuum**; and the **high end - low end continuum**.

The hard-soft continuum refers to the range of systems involved from hardware technologies to software technologies and on to content. Somewhere in this continuum, information and knowledge is situated, the latter being the *softest* of the lot. The front end refers to utilization or user technologies, while the back end refers to design and development technologies. High and low ends refer to the level of complexity and sophistication of the technologies.

Situate these dimensions in a matrix and we arrive at the following cells: the hard front high end; the hard front low end; the hard back high end; the hard back low end; the soft front high end; the soft front low end; the soft back high end; and the soft back low end.

Table 1. Dimensions of ICT

	FRONT		BACK	
	HIGH	LOW	HIGH	LOW
HARD	Hard front high end technologies	Hard front low end technologies	Hard back high end technologies	Hard back low end technologies
SOFT	Soft front high end technologies	Soft front low end technologies	Soft back high end technologies	Soft back low end technologies

These eight cells likewise represent ICT competency niches that are available in the global educational environment.

ICT Industry Competency Niches

Hard front high-end Competencies. These competencies encompass both the practical and theoretical skills and knowledge involving state-of-the-art industrial and enterprise ICT hardware and infrastructure. Computer engineering competencies involved in the architecture and installation of high-end enterprise, or network solutions for corporations and agencies fall under this category. Examples of such skills and knowledge are those required in the provision of systems and services by IBM, Hewlett Packard, Xerox, and Sun Microsystems.

Hard front low-end Competencies. These competencies cover both the practical and theoretical skills and knowledge involving the assembly and mass production of personal ICT gadgets, gizmos, and their components. Computer engineering, marketing, and financing competencies (including the generation of venture capital) involved in the provision of personal computers, notebooks, personal digital assistants, digital devices and their parts (processors, chips, motherboards, etc.), fall under this category. Examples of such skills and knowledge are those required in the provision of parts, products, and services by Nokia, Sony Ericsson, BlackBerry, and iPhone. The biggest providers in Asia of hard front low-end parts, products and services are currently found in China.

Hard back high-end Competencies. These competencies involve both the practical and theoretical skills and knowledge involving the design and testing of state-of-the-art industrial and enterprise ICT equipment. Computer engineering competencies involved in the

development and fabrication of high-end hardware for corporations and agencies fall under this category. Examples of such skills and knowledge are those required in the development of products by IBM, Fujitsu, Xerox, and Sun Microsystems, recently acquired by Oracle.

Hard back low-end Competencies. These competencies include practical and theoretical skills and knowledge involving the design and testing of personal ICT gadgets, gizmos and their components. Computer engineering competencies involved in the development and fabrication of personal computers, notebooks, personal digital assistants, cellular phones and their parts (chips, processors, motherboards, etc.), fall under this category. Examples of such skills and knowledge are those required in the development of products by Nokia, Sony Ericsson, Palm Pilot, and Dell.

Soft front high-end Competencies. These competencies encompass both the practical and theoretical skills and knowledge involving software enterprise solutions. Programming competencies involved in the architecture and installation of high-end enterprise, or network solutions for corporations and agencies, fall under this category. Examples of such skills and knowledge are those required in the provision of systems and services by IBM, Cisco Systems, Xerox, and Sun Microsystems.

Additionally, these competencies include the provision of knowledge management solutions (i.e., management information systems or MIS in its current form) to organizations, agencies, communities of practice, and even sectors. Content provision and

its attendant skills (i.e., database management) figure prominently under this category. In the area of ICT4D (information and communication technology for development), soft front high-end competencies include poverty mapping and GIS skills, as well as ICT program planning and development. Hence, government programs and agencies are likely clients of these services.

Soft front low-end Competencies. These competencies cover both the practical and theoretical skills and knowledge involving the development of operating systems, platforms, and software for personal computing. Programming competencies for personal computers, notebooks, personal digital assistants, cellular phones, and all-in-one models fall under this category. Examples of such skills and knowledge are those required in the provision of products and services by Microsoft, Yahoo, and Google. Web maintenance, multimedia utilization, and digital documentation all fall under this category.

Additionally, these competencies include the generation of venture capital, and the provision of knowledge management solutions to projects and work groups. Content packaging and provision, specifically for individual users figure prominently under this category. In the area of ICT4D, soft front low-end competencies include service provision for telecenters and last-mile linkages.

Soft back high-end Competencies. These competencies involve both the practical and theoretical skills and knowledge involving the designing and testing of software enterprise solutions. Programming

competencies involved in the development, beta-testing, and debugging of high-end software for corporations and agencies, fall under this category. Examples of such skills and knowledge are those required in software development for IBM, Cisco Systems, Xerox, and Sun Microsystems including Java and XML.

Additionally, these competencies include the design and development of knowledge management solutions for organizations, agencies, communities of practice, and even sectors. In the area of ICT4D, soft back high-end competencies include GIS programming, knowledge networking, and ICT policy formulation.

Soft back low-end Competencies. These competencies include practical and theoretical skills and knowledge involving software development for personal ICT gadgets or gizmos. Programming competencies involved in the development of operating systems for personal computers, notebooks, personal digital assistants, cellular phones, and all-in-one models fall under this category. Examples of such skills and knowledge are those required in the provision of products and services by Microsoft, Yahoo, and Google. Interface design and development, Web writing, multimedia authoring, and database development all fall under this category.

Additionally, these competencies include the design and development of knowledge management solutions to projects and work groups. Content provision and packaging for specialized thematic areas and sectoral concerns figure prominently under this category. In the area of ICT4D, soft back low-end competencies include the planning and design of telecenters and last-mile linkages.

TOWARDS A REGIONAL COOPERATION STRATEGY

Regionalization as a Prelude to Globalization

One common indictment for globalization is that it is just happening too fast and too sudden for developing countries to cope. To allow the globalization phenomenon to grow naturally and organically, some economists suggest regionalization as a prelude. Indeed, regional aggregations such as the EU, NAFTA, and APEC have been established to consolidate regional power. Within the ASEAN sub-region, perhaps SEAMEO can take the lead in consolidating the educational resources of the ten ASEAN nations, in order to better cope with the challenges posed by globalization. Again, these nations should focus on their individual strengths and strategic advantages, and develop their niches.

The ASEAN Educational Fitness Horizon

Nowhere else in the world is the Digital Divide considered more of an enigma than in Southeast Asia. This region boasts of countries that are in the forefront of digital technology. Singapore, Malaysia, and Thailand are producers and exporters of such technology. Also, in this region are countries which may be considered as the most deprived in ICT – Lao PDR, Cambodia, Myanmar, and Vietnam.

To begin with, the differences in the standards of living among countries within the region are quite glaring. Based on the UNDP Human Development Report, the human development index (HDI), human poverty index (HPI), as well as the HDI ranks of ten ASEAN countries is given in Table 2.

Out of 174 countries, Singapore is ranked 22nd in human development, while Lao PDR is ranked 140th. Brunei Darussalam is ranked 25th while Cambodia is ranked 137th. Malaysia is ranked 56th, while Myanmar is ranked 128th. Within the same region, we find countries classified under high, medium and low human development.³

Singapore and Brunei's poverty indices are negligible while Myanmar and Lao PDR's (38.9 and 32.3, respectively) are quite high. The poverty index of Malaysia, Thailand, and the Philippines (14.2, 18.7, and 16.3) are within the same range, while those of Indonesia and Vietnam (27.7, 28.7) are moderate.

The HDR database also offers some interesting insights on the correlation between ICT and poverty. Data on four major ICT indicators, namely, internet hosts per 1000 persons, telephone lines per 1000 persons, personal computer ownership, and television ownership were placed side by side with the aforementioned poverty indices. The correlation is unmistakable.

The higher the HDR rank, the higher the ICT indicator values. The higher the human poverty index, the lower the number of ISPs, telephone lines, PCs and TV sets per 1000 persons. The higher the value of ICT indicators (as in the case of Singapore, Brunei, and Malaysia), the lower the poverty index.

³ *Human Development Report*, United Nations Development Program and Oxford University Press: New York and Oxford, 1999.

Table 2. Poverty and ICT indicators

HDI Rank	COUNTRY	Human devt index	Human poverty index	ISPs/ 1,000	Tel Lines/ 1,000	PCs/ 1,000	TV/ 1,000
22	Singapore	0.887911	-	15.11	513	216.8	361
25	Brunei	0.877795	-	2.41	263	-	417
56	Malaysia	0.768328	14.2	2.09	183	42.8	228
67	Thailand	0.753147	18.7	0.03	70	16.7	167
77	Philippines	0.739973	16.3	0.21	25	9.3	125
105	Indonesia	0.680862	27.7	0.11	21	4.8	232
110	Viet Nam	0.663824	28.7	no data	16	3.3	180
128	Myanmar	0.579768	32.3	-	4	-	7
137	Cambodia	0.514409	no data	0.01	1	-	9
140	Lao PDR	0.491107	38.9	no data	6	1.1	10

The gap between hardware and software capabilities also exists. For instance, as earlier mentioned, the Philippines is considered to be the second largest exporter of ICT professionals and software developers next to India. Yet, it has hardly caught up with broadband and wireless technologies. The Digital Divide within sectors is likewise formidable. In Thailand and the Philippines, the business sector is fast catching up with its counterparts in Singapore ICT-wise. However, the educational sector is lagging far behind. At the tail end of the ICT utilization spectrum is the agricultural and rural development sector with the least number of ICT users, applications, and solutions. In these sectors, we find the preponderance of the information-poor.

Based on these figures, what is the fitness horizon for Southeast Asia to produce globally competitive ICT workers?

The following matrix presents a fitness horizon that situates clusters of the ten ASEAN nations within particular niches. Each cell has a focal point that takes the lead among the countries in the cluster. These focal points occupy the upper-half percentile of Table 2 based on the HDI rank. Brunei has not been included in the analysis because of its current economic status, strategies, and priorities. On the other hand, the comparative strengths and strategic advantages of Myanmar, Cambodia, and Lao PDR in ICT remain undetermined at this point.

Apart from the given indicators, the matrix is also based partially on perceived educational strengths within each country. Thus, at best, it should only be regarded as an indicative scenario for niche-carving.

Table 3. Indicative Niches

	FRONT		BACK	
	HIGH	LOW	HIGH	LOW
HARD	Thailand Malaysia Singapore	Vietnam Thailand	Malaysia Singapore	Brunei Thailand Vietnam
SOFT	Singapore Philippines Malaysia	Cambodia/ Laos Philippines Vietnam	Indonesia Malaysia Philippines	Philippines Vietnam Indonesia

Potentially, each of the remaining six countries in our analysis – Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam - has more than one niche in this scenario. Five of them can be focal points in the eight areas identified.

Thailand is perceived fittest to take the lead in the hard high front end and hard high back end technologies. As a matter of fact, it may have been taking this role on a de facto basis, because of the high-end components being manufactured in the country for the past two decades. Thailand could very well supply North American and European hardware companies with the parts and components for their hardware. Thus, its educational institutions should focus on strengthening their computer engineering curricula to provide adequate manpower backstopping for such a role.

Singapore is seen as the fittest in soft front high-end and soft back high-end technologies. Excellent technological education coupled by proficiency in English has garnered Singapore these niches for quite some time now. Moreso, among the ten ASEAN countries, Singapore is the most advanced in content management, particularly for corporate clients. Hence, it should continue to focus on their computer science and information science offerings.

Malaysia is perceived to dominate hard front low-end and hard back low-end technologies. The country may become the sub-regional hub for the development and provision of consumer ICT products ranging from personal computers to cellular phones. Thus, its colleges and universities should beef up their computer

engineering and computer science offerings, and revert back to English as the medium of instruction in these programs.

Indonesia is expected to lead in the soft front low-end technologies, i.e. the provision of software packages and content for individual users and consumers. Indonesia has the largest consumer base in Southeast Asia. It has inadvertently focused on strategies that are addressed to these consumers, ranging from marketing to utilization. Furthermore, Indonesia's concern for bridging the Digital Divide has been a tradition that dates back to the launching of the *Palapa* satellite during the late 70s. It has the potential to lead in ICT4D.

Finally, the Philippines is the potential leader in soft back low-end technologies, involving the design and development of software packages and content delivery systems for individual users and consumers. Is it any wonder that Microsoft's IT manager is a Filipino? Consider the talent that spawned the Love Bug, a computer virus that wreaked havoc around the world, being put to productive use.

The strength of the Philippines lies in the early convergence in the academe, as well as in the world of work, of the information, computer, and communication sciences in proficient English.⁴ Additionally, Philippine universities pioneered in programs such as development communication and knowledge management among ASEAN institutions. This background provides the impetus to lead in ICT4D policy and planning.

⁴ After all, the Love Bug would not spread far and wide had it not been packaged enticingly as a love letter written in English.

Knowledge Management Competencies

From the preceding list of ICT niches, the most promising set of competencies can be found in knowledge management. Knowledge management or KM, is a newly emerging discipline that treats intellectual capital as a manageable asset. Its goal is the sharing and reusing of knowledge. KM is now being offered formally as a course in two campuses of the University of the Philippines System, a third one (UPOU) soon to follow. Sets of competencies for the KM student, which can best be illustrated in the following diagram, have been identified particularly in the Los Baños campus.

Assuming that the goal of knowledge management is the sharing and reusing of knowledge, the following competencies are deemed required: **referencing skills; documentation skills; proficiency in digital capture; proficiency in document management; writing and presentation skills; multimedia packaging; Web design and Web writing; messaging and collaboration skills; proficiency in content analysis; proficiency in network analysis; proficiency in using portals and search engines; networking skills; and materials development skills.** Note that this range of skills encompasses information science, computer science, and communication science, and there is a very sound rationale for this.

Although sharing identical roots, the information and communication sciences have developed separately in the past 60 years, the former assuming a mathematical-logical paradigm and the latter adopting a socio-psychological approach. However, the marriage of information and communication technologies (ICTs),

have prompted the convergence of both information science and communication science. The synergy brought about by this convergence has in turn resulted in new applications, methods, and areas of study such as ICT4D that we in Southeast Asia may excel in, considering our unique environment and our tradition in these disciplines.

CONCLUSIONS

To supplement the repositioning of our curricula along the lines earlier described, ASEAN universities may consider redirecting its emphasis to flexible learning systems, specifically distance education and open learning programs, in achieving these competencies. The shift to learner-centered educational paradigms would likewise be attendant to these curricular and delivery system initiatives aimed at achieving localized competencies in a global educational environment.

Such changes may be considered radical by the conservative traditions of the academe. And it is in these traditions that we may find our biggest pitfall.

In December 1996, I delivered a paper in the UNESCO PACE Conference held in Manila. The paper, entitled *Theory of Decreasing Competencies in Communication Education*, described an observed trend wherein conservative academic institutions such as mine, could not cope with changes in technology and the attendant competencies required in these changes. Communication curricula at the tertiary and graduate education levels cannot keep up with the new skills and knowledge requirements of equally new information and communication technologies. Why? The answer was simple. Curricular proposals were being bogged

down by academic debate. Before a new course, let alone a new curriculum, can pass through the academic councils, the knowledge and skills incorporated in the course would already be obsolete.

Indeed, large prestigious universities may be too encumbered by their own bulk and inertia that they fail to seize the moment. Today, newer, smaller, and “lesser” academic institutions lead in the offering of innovative ICT programs. Although serious questions about the quality of their instruction are raised, they may be getting the bulk of the future crop of leaders in this knowledge society.

One wonders at times, if these academic debates are really prompted by concern for quality and rigor. Or are they really just products of parochial minds? As the 70s IT dictum states, “*Innovate, if not, then stagnate.*” We can never be truly globally competitive with a parochial outlook.

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APPENDIX A: ASEAN POLICIES ON COMMUNICATION

Agreement for the Promotion of Cooperation in Mass Media and Culture Activities

Cameron Highlands, 17 December 1969

The Governments of the Republic of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Republic of the Philippines, the Republic of Singapore and the Kingdom Of Thailand:

BEING members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (hereinafter referred to as ASEAN).

RECOGNIZING, the aims and purposes of ASEAN as embodied in the ASEAN Declaration.

AND DESIRING to give effect to the decision of the Second Ministerial Meeting held in Jakarta in August, 1968.

AND DESIRING to promote and develop their relations in the fields of mass media and cultural activities.

HAVE AGREED AS FOLLOWS

ARTICLE 1

The Contracting Parties shall promote mass media activities by:

- a) Broadcasting regular programmes to reflect the aims, purposes and activities of ASEAN by the Radio and Television Services of each member country;

- b) Organising film festivals;
- c) Encouraging the exchange of film artistes and the undertaking of joint film productions; and
- d) Organising seminars and other activities on mass media.

ARTICLE 2

The Contracting Parties shall promote cultural cooperation by:

- a) Exchanging artistes in the field of visual and performing arts;
- b) Undertaking joint research in the arts and in literature.
- c) Organizing seminars in the arts, literature, and related matters, and
- d) Organizing cultural festivals

ARTICLE 3

The Contracting Parties shall undertake to examine the possibility of exchanging experts, and of organizing seminars in Mass Media and cultural activities.

ARTICLE 4

The Contracting Parties undertake to examine the possibility of establishing ASEAN cultural institutions in member countries for the purposes specified in the Preamble.

ARTICLE 5

The Contracting Parties shall consult one another, whenever necessary, with a view to agreeing upon matters for the implementation of this Agreement.

ARTICLE 6

This Agreement shall enter into force on the date of signature by all the member countries and shall remain in force until it is terminated by the decision of all the Foreign Ministers.

ARTICLE 7

Accession to this Agreement shall take effect from the date on which the instrument of accession is deposited in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia, by any new member of ASEAN.

ARTICLE 8

A Contracting Party may at any time give formal notice of its intention to withdraw from this agreement and such withdrawal shall take effect one year from the date of the notification Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia, which shall as soon as possible notify all the member countries.

DONE at Cameron Highlands, in a single copy in the English Language this seventeenth day of December, 1969.

Declaration Of ASEAN Ministers Responsible For Information

Jakarta, 25 May 1989

THE ASEAN MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR INFORMATION, namely: the Special Adviser to His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam in the Prime Minister's Office and Minister of Home Affairs, the Minister of Information of the Republic of Indonesia, the Minister of Information of Malaysia, the Press Undersecretary of the Republic of the Philippines, the Minister for Communications and Information of the Republic of Singapore, and the Minister attached to - the Prime Minister's Office in charge of Information of the Kingdom of Thailand;

AFFIRMING their commitment to the decisions on information taken by the ASEAN Heads of Government in Manila in December 1987 embodied in the Manila Declaration of 1987;

RECOGNIZING the importance of the role of the press and television, radio, film and video in the national development of the respective ASEAN member countries and in enhancing ASEAN regional cooperation;

MOVED by an abiding faith in the capabilities of the peoples of ASEAN and the potentials for growth of their nations and with a great hope in the future of ASEAN;

DO HEREBY DECLARE THAT:

1. The ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Information shall strengthen ASEAN cooperation and their role in the promotion and development of the press, television, radio, film and video areas.

2. ASEAN cooperation in the field of information shall promote increasing greater awareness of ASEAN through wider involvement and increasing participation in ASEAN activities and cooperation among the peoples of ASEAN and the development of their human resources.
3. An effective exchange of news and information among member countries shall be promoted in order to achieve a free and balanced flow of information among ASEAN member countries.
4. Considering the importance of the role of the press and television, radio, film and video in strengthening ASEAN regional cooperation and cohesion, the ASEAN
5. Ministers Responsible for Information adopted Principles of ASEAN Media Cooperation.

AND DO HEREBY AGREE AS FOLLOWS:

1. The press and the electronic media are encouraged to promote the paramount goals of ASEAN, including the preservation of political stability, rapid economic growth, social justice, greater regional cohesion and the development of human resources to their full potential.
2. The principle of press freedom with social responsibility is the basis of the press in ASEAN countries.
3. The press and the electronic media in ASEAN have a role and responsibility to continue promoting greater awareness and understanding among the peoples of ASEAN of their history, traditions, ideals and values, and continue to enhance positive relationships among ASEAN member countries.

4. The press is important in enhancing ASEAN solidarity and urge it to continue to exercise sensitivity in handling issues that might affect ASEAN solidarity.
5. That the presence of the foreign media and agencies in ASEAN member countries has been welcomed by the Governments of ASEAN countries in accordance with their respective national policies. However, they also agreed to promote awareness among the foreign media and agencies of the unique circumstances prevailing in each ASEAN member country, to avoid future difficulties with the foreign media.
6. To share their experiences on the matter in the interest of each ASEAN country with a view to developing mutually beneficial relations with the foreign media.
7. To seek ways to ensure that press reports on ASEAN countries in the foreign media are more balanced and objective.
8. That the foreign media take into consideration the values and sensitivities of ASEAN peoples;

AND DO HEREBY ADOPT:

The programmes for the Enhancement of Press Cooperation among ASEAN Countries and The Enhancement of ASEAN Cooperation in the Television, Radio, Film and Video Areas.

DONE in Jakarta, Republic of Indonesia, on the twenty-fifth day of May One Thousand Nine Hundred and Eighty-Nine.

Programme For The Enhancement Of Press Cooperation Among ASEAN Countries

Jakarta, 25 May 1989

Pursuant to the decisions taken by the Third Meeting of the ASEAN Heads of Government in Manila, 14 - 15 December 1987, regarding the enhancement of ASEAN cooperation in the field of information, particularly in the press area, the First Conference of the ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Information held in Jakarta on 24 - 25 May 1989 adopted the following consensus:

I. Principles of ASEAN Press Cooperation

1. The Conference recognized the strategic importance of the press and its vital role in the process of national development of each of the ASEAN nations. Considering the interdependence of ASEAN nations, the Conference encouraged the ASEAN press to promote the paramount goals of ASEAN, including the preservation of political stability, rapid economic growth, social justice, greater regional cohesion, and the development of human resources to their full potential.
2. Within the above framework and the enhancement of the role of the press in national and regional development, the Conference agreed that the principle of press freedom with social responsibility is the basic of the ASEAN press.
3. The press in ASEAN has a role and responsibility to continue promoting greater awareness and understanding among the peoples of ASEAN of their history, tradition and ideals, and continue to enhance positive relationships among ASEAN member countries. The Conference noted the

importance of the press in enhancing ASEAN solidarity and in this connection urged the press to continue to exercise sensitivity in handling issues that might affect this solidarity.

4. Increased contacts among ASEAN editors and journalists to develop the spirit of ASEAN consciousness, should be further enhanced.

II. Cooperation among ASEAN News Agencies (ANEX) Network

1. The ASEAN News Exchange (ANEX) network established by Bernama, Antara, The Philippines News Agency (PNA) and the Thai News Agency (TNA) in 1980 was meant to be the major source of news on major events in the ASEAN region for the print and electronics media in the ASEAN countries. Brunei Darussalam and Singapore do not have any national news agency. However, news provided by ANEX for the print and/or electronic media have been welcomed by these ASEAN member nations.
 - a. Considering the commitment to ASEAN goals, news originated by for the print and electronic media in the ASEAN countries may differ in substance and regional perspective as compared to news originated by transnational news agencies operating in the region.
 - b. The accuracy, objectivity and regional consciousness of ANEX in providing news on important events in the ASEAN region would also help educate and broaden the horizon of the peoples of ASEAN.
 - c. It is therefore to the benefit of ASEAN nations to strengthen the in such a manner that it can equal and eventually surpass the effectiveness

and efficiency of transnational news agencies operating in the ASEAN countries.

2. The Conference agreed that ASEAN countries involved in the ASEAN News Exchange (ANEX) continue to provide the necessary support for ANEX to achieve its goals, including:
 - a. the establishment of a lower common intra-ASEAN telecommunication tariff for the ANEX network, in consultation with the respective ASEAN telecommunication authorities;
 - b. the expansion of the on-going news exchange by establishing a data bank for information exchange through the ANEX network;
 - c. the improvement of ANEX's capability to disseminate news not only within the ASEAN region, but outside the ASEAN region as well;
 - d. to request the ASEAN Committee on Culture and Information (COCI) to consider increasing its financial assistance in order that it can achieve the above goals; and
 - e. to explore other sources of funds in order to support the further development
3. Although Brunei Darussalam and Singapore are not directly involved however, their continuous support has always been welcomed.

III. Relations with Foreign Media

The presence of the foreign media and agencies contributes to the flow of a vital resource, information, from the rest of the world to ASEAN and vice-versa. Their presence has been welcomed by the Government of ASEAN countries in accordance with their respective national policies. The Conference, however, also agreed to promote awareness among the foreign media and

agencies of the unique circumstances prevailing in each ASEAN member countries, to avoid future difficulties with the foreign media. The Conference agreed:

- a. to share their experiences on the matter in the interest of each ASEAN country with a view to developing mutually beneficial relations with the foreign media;
- b. to seek ways to ensure that press reports on ASEAN countries in the foreign media are more balanced and objective; and
- c. that the foreign media take into consideration the values and sensitivities of ASEAN peoples.

IV. Enhancing Further Cooperation in the Field of Information and the Press

The Conference agreed to establish a Working Group of Senior Officials in consultation with COCI working together with the representatives of the ASEAN press and interested relevant media organizations in ASEAN to explore ways and means to further enhance ASEAN press cooperation through:

- a. holding forums, seminars and workshops, exchanging ideas and studying the history and development of the press systems in ASEAN countries;
- b. encouraging ASEAN journalists to be trained to develop ASEAN consciousness based upon the need to promote and preserve political stability, rapid economic growth, social justice, greater regional cohesion and the development of human resources to their full potential in the ASEAN region; and

- c. undertaking research on the role of the press in national and regional development.

To facilitate the undertaking of such activities, it may be necessary to consider the possibility of establishing a centre.

V. Annual ASEAN Journalism Awards

The Conference agreed to the establishment of Annual ASEAN Journalism Awards in cooperation with COCI to be given to the journalists selected in the six ASEAN member countries who best typify in their writings, for the previous year, the ASEAN ideals of regional unity and cohesion, the promotion of economic growth and social justice and the development of ASEAN's human resources to their full potential.

VI. Implementation

The Conference agreed that a Senior Officials Meeting for the Conference of ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Information meet as and when necessary to coordinate the implementation of the decisions of the Ministers.

DONE in Jakarta, Republic of Indonesia, on the twenty-fifth day of May, one thousand nine hundred and eighty-nine.

Programme For The Enhancement Of ASEAN Cooperation In The Television, Radio, Film And Video Areas

Jakarta, 25 May 1989

In carrying out the decisions taken by the Third Meeting of ASEAN Heads of Government in Manila, 14 - 15 December 1987 regarding the enhancement ASEAN cooperation in the field of information, particularly in the areas of television, radio, film and video, the First Conference of ASEAN Ministers Responsible for information held in Jakarta from 24 - 25 May 1989 adopted the following consensus:

I. Principles of ASEAN Cooperation in the Areas of Television, Radio, Film and Video

1. Considering that the Television,- Radio, Film and Video media have a strategic and vast potential in the overall development of each of the ASEAN countries, the ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Information agreed to encourage these media to play a more active and constructive role in promoting the goals of ASEAN including the preservation of political stability, economic growth, social justice, greater regional cohesion and the development of human resources to their full potential.
2. The media in ASEAN have a role and responsibility to continue promoting greater awareness and understanding among the peoples of ASEAN of their history, traditions and ideals, and continue to enhance positive relationships among ASEAN member countries.

3. In order to accomplish these objectives, the media should strengthen and enhance cooperation in the areas of broadcast technology, programme production, improving the standards and quality of personnel as well as sharing experiences to overcome negative influences from outside the ASEAN region.
4. The Conference expressed its appreciation and supported the programmes sponsored by the ASEAN Committee on Culture and Information (COCI) designed to facilitate the exchange of information including the electronics, film, print and interpersonal media in order to strengthen the socio-cultural relationships among ASEAN member countries.

II. ASEAN Cooperation in Television

ASEAN Exchange of Television Programmes.

The Conference agreed to enhance the exchange of television programmes, featuring new items, the daily life and culture of the ASEAN peoples.

III. ASEAN Cooperation in Radio

Radio Programme on ASEAN. The Conference agreed to produce specific radio programmes on ASEAN to be broadcast by national radio stations.

IV. ASEAN Cooperation in Radio and Television

ASEAN Radio - TV Symposium Orchestra. The Conference agreed to request ASEAN COCI to consider reviving the "**All ASEAN Radio and Television Orchestra**" (**ASEAN Symposium Orchestra**) focusing on ASEAN music and composers, highlighting the diversity of talent in the ASEAN region in conjunction with COCI projects on Music and Song Festivals.

ASEAN Songs for Radio and Television. Within the framework of efforts to foster unity, solidarity and harmony among the peoples of ASEAN, the Conference agreed that Indonesia's contribution of the song "**ASEAN Harmony**" which reflects this feeling of unity and solidarity be broadcast on radio and television in ASEAN countries.

The Conference expressed appreciation to Indonesia and encouraged composers from other ASEAN countries to present their composition for endorsement. (The melody and lyrics of the Indonesian composition "**ASEAN Harmony**" **Appears as Annex 1**).

V. ASEAN Cooperation in Personal and Training for Radio and Television

1. **Facilitating Production Crews.** The Conference agreed that there should be improvements in the arrangements for facilitating the work of TV production crews from ASEAN member countries on location in any ASEAN member country.
2. **Exchange Programme, Training and Workshop.** The Conference agreed that:
 - 2.1. The exchange of TV personnel, training and pooling of skills be carried out on an attachment basis on a rotational system;
 - 2.2. A study be undertaken to assess the possibility of utilizing the already existing Asian Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD) facilities in Malaysia for training purposes;
 - 2.3. TV managers, programme, planners, producers, directors and writers be encouraged to attend periodic workshops on enhancing and accelerating ASEAN TV cooperation, with private TV stations being invited for input.

VII. ASEAN Cooperation in Film/Video

The Conference took note of the following recommendations:

1. That a study be undertaken to examine and compare the existing laws, policies and taxes on film production, marketing, distribution, and exhibition, importation and exportation in the various ASEAN countries, with a view to working out common standards and incentives to stimulate the free flow of ASEAN films throughout the region;
2. That in order to encourage the promotion and the dissemination of more ASEAN films, a network of cineclubs or film societies be established in the ASEAN member countries to be assisted by ASEAN COCI 'in the respective member countries;
3. That an ASEAN Film Development Fund be created to finance the production of films that promote better understanding among ASEAN countries and project ASEAN cultures to the rest of the world, with seed money to be contributed by the ASEAN countries. The fund may be managed by the Asian Development Bank (ADB). The fund once established can solicit grants from foundations and institutions from affluent countries especially ASEAN dialogue partners;
4. That ASEAN film booths be put up in international film markets and festivals to be handled either by ASEAN Governments or the private film industries sector;
5. That workshop programmes be organized for film professionals starting with feature film script writers and directors;

6. That the continuing and effective exchange of training programmes and information in various aspects of film making to include students; trainees and experts be implemented in the earliest possible time;
7. That ASEAN COCI through its programmes facilitate the telecasting of ASEAN films over the ASEAN national TV networks.
8. That a constant exchange of compilations of special film production services, equipments and facilities available in each ASEAN country and prices thereof be conducted;
9. That a study be conducted on the feasibility of putting up a plant to manufacture raw film and magnetic stocks for ASEAN use as well as for export;
10. That a periodic exchange of film catalogues and film clips among the ASEAN countries be undertaken to serve as a basis for the distribution of films to ASEAN member countries; and
10. That the Governments of the ASEAN countries, through law and public policy, stimulate and support the production of more culturally and socially valuable films in the region, and agreed to request the COCI to examine the above recommendations for possible implementation.

VII. ASEAN Cooperation in Interpersonal Communication

The Conference recognized the importance of interpersonal communication and agreed on the continuation and enhancement of the existing programmes to foster closer relationship and better understanding among the peoples of ASEAN.

VII. Implementation

The Conference agreed that the Senior Officials Meeting for the Conference of the ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Information meet as and when necessary to coordinate the implementation of the decisions of the Ministers.

DONE in Jakarta, Republic of Indonesia, on the twenty-fifth day of May, one thousand nine hundred and eighty-nine.

APPENDIX B COURSE GUIDE

ASEAN STUDIES 231

Communication and Media in the ASEAN Context

ASEAN STUDIES 231 COURSE GUIDE

CONGRATULATIONS for enrolling in ASEAN Studies 231, *Communication and Media in the ASEAN Context*. Before anything else, ***please read this course guide carefully and completely.***

ASEAN Studies 231 was developed as a contribution of the UPOU Faculty of Information and Communication Studies to the Master of ASEAN Studies (MAS) Joint Program of the five open universities in Southeast Asia: the UP Open University; Universitas Terbuka in Jakarta; Sukhothai Open University in Bangkok; the Hanoi Open University; and the Open University of Malaysia. The MAS was meant as a major initiative for the regionalization of education in the ASEAN region. Hence, this course takes on a regional outlook on communication. By communication, we refer to information and communication technologies and media (traditional, mass and new media). This course is also crosslisted under the UPOU Master of Development Communication program as DEVC 242.

ASEAN Studies 231 is a three-unit course structured into the following: Introduction; Communication as a Social Force in the ASEAN; and Contemporary Developments in the ASEAN Communication Scene. Each unit contains three modules.

The course was so designed that the class will construct the content of these modules collectively. The main readings are contributed by the Faculty In Charge. Note that the majority of these have all been authored or edited by the FIC. In the spirit of constructivism and knowledge sharing, you are likewise expected to contribute to the class resources through a mechanism that we refer to as the learning log. This mechanism will be discussed exhaustively in a later section of your course guide.

Furthermore, this course will experiment on third generation eLearning techniques and approaches. It will be asynchronous, non-linear and non-sequential. It will employ mentoring and coaching instead of tutoring or instructing.

AS 231 is still in the process of evolving. Learners will be encouraged to contribute to the content and learning resources of this new course. Web 2.0 will not only be a concept in this course. We will make it a reality. Consider AS 231 another new adventure and this Course Guide will walk you through it.

In the meantime, study the course analysis and try to appreciate the logic adopted in the course design.

COURSE ANALYSIS

COURSE CODE: ASEAN Studies 231

COURSE TITLE: Communication and Media in the ASEAN Context

UNITS: 3 units

PREREQUISITES: None

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The role of communication programs, information and communications technologies, mass media and media systems in the development and evolution of the ASEAN.

COURSE GOAL:

The course aims to produce students who are:

- knowledgeable with ASEAN ICTs, media systems and communication policies and programs
- appreciative of the role of communication as a major social force in the ASEAN region
- able to apply critical thinking skills in the analysis of ASEAN communication policies and programs.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

At the end of the semester, the student should be able to:

- enumerate and discuss ASEAN ICTs, media systems and communication policies and programs
- describe the impact of ICTs, media systems and communication policies and programs on ASEAN society
- analyze ASEAN communication policies and programs

COURSE METHODS:

This will be an online course using the Modular Object Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment (MOODLE).

METHOD	REQUIREMENT
Assignments: Individual reflection & articulation	Three (3) TMAs in the form of blogs
Web search and collective sharing of learning resources	Learning logs
Class Project	Wiki Contributions
Testing	Final Examination

COURSE CONTENT:

The course is divided into three parts. Each part constitutes one-third of the content/ learning period.

Unit I – Introduction

- Module 1. Elements of ASEAN Media and Communication
 - Lesson 1. Communication Technology
 - Lesson 2. Communication Programs
 - Lesson 3. Communication Systems

- Module 2. History of ASEAN Media and Communication Systems
 - Lesson 1. Pre-Colonial Indigenous Media
 - Lesson 2. The Colonial Press
 - Lesson 3. Post Colonial Media

- Module 3 Communication Values, Models and Systems
 - Lesson 1. The Four Theories of the Press
 - Lesson 2. Comparative Communication Systems
 - Lesson 3. An Evolving ASEAN Model

Unit II – Communication as a Social Force in the ASEAN

- Module 4 Media's Watchdog Function
 - Lesson 1. Case Study: Singapore
 - Lesson 2. Case Study: Malaysia
 - Lesson 3. Case Study: Cambodia

- Module 5 Media's Developmental Function
 - Lesson 1. Case Study: VietNam's Media Support to Rice Production
 - Lesson 2. Case Study: Myanmar's Safe Sex Social Marketing Campaign
 - Lesson 3. Case Study: Lao PDR's Bird Flu IEC Campaign

- Module 6 Media's Mobilization Function
 - Lesson 1. Case Study: People Power and the Philippine Underground Press
 - Lesson 2. Case Study: Indonesia's Anti-Corruption Campaign
 - Lesson 3. Case Study: Thailand's Yellow and Red Shirts

Unit III – Contemporary Developments in the ASEAN Communication Scene

Module 7 Information and Communication Technology

- Lesson 1. Regional, Sub-regional and National Infrastructures
- Lesson 2. The New Media
- Lesson 3. Digital Opportunities for the ASEAN

Module 8 Comparative National Communication Policies

- Lesson 1. National Media Policies of ASEAN Countries
- Lesson 2. Telecommunications Regulatory Environments (TREs)
- Lesson 3. Transborder Communication Issues

Module 9 Communication and the Evolution of ASEAN

- Lesson 1. Communication and the Greater Mekong Subregion
- Lesson 2. Communication and BIMP-EAGA
- Lesson 3. Towards an ASEAN Regional Communication Program

REFERENCES:

Banerjee, Indrajit and Stephen Logan. 2008. *The Asian Communication Handbook*. Eastern Universities Press and AMIC, Singapore.

Flor, Alexander G. 2007. *Development Communication Praxis*. UP Open University, Diliman, Quezon City.

Tan, Gerald. 2003. *ASEAN Economic Development and Cooperation*. Eastern Universities Press.

Rao, Madanmohan. 2003. *News Media and New Media: The Asia-Pacific Internet Handbook, Episode V*. Eastern Universities Press.

FIC RESOURCES:

1. Hardcopy: Flor, Alexander G. 2009. *Developing Societies in the Information Age*. UP Open University, Diliman, Quezon City.
2. Downloadable from Course Site:
 - 2.1. Alampay, Irwin. 2009. *Telecom Regulatory and Policy Environment in the Philippines*
 - 2.2. Association of Southeast Asian Nations Secretariat. *The ASEAN Charter*
 - 2.3. Chib, Arul and Roger Harris (Eds). 2012. *Linking Research to Practice*.
3. Downloadable from Academia.edu (www.up-ou.academia.edu/AlexanderFlor)
 - 3..1. Flor, Alexander G. 2009. *Carving ICT Niches Within the ASEAN in A Globalized Educational & Knowledge Environment*.
 - 3.2. Flor, Alexander G. 2002. *Environmental Communication and Peoples' Participation: Lessons Learned in Five Natural Resource Management Projects*.
 - 3.3. Flor, Alexander G. 1991. *The Fifth Theory of the Press*

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Tutor Marked Assignments in the form of Blogs (3)
2. Participation in Online Discussion Forums and Contributions of Web-Based Resources in Learning Logs (3)
3. Contribution to a Class Wikipedia page

Activity	Percentage	Due Date
TMA: Blog 1	10%	Anytime within the semester
TMA: Blog 2	10%	Anytime within the semester
TMA: Blog 3	10%	Anytime within the semester
Learning Log 1	15%	Anytime within the semester
Learning Log 2	15%	Anytime within the semester
Learning Log 3	15%	Anytime within the semester
Class Wiki	25%	Anytime within the semester
Total	100%	

ON OPEN AND DISTANCE TEACHING AND LEARNING STYLES

THE AS 231 “CLASSROOM”

The course has a workspace in the UPOU MyPortal. To enter this workspace, you should be enrolled in the course. Upon enrollment, you will receive an enrollment key that would enable you to register your preferred username and password, which allow you to log in the course site. If you still do not have your enrollment key, please email techsupport@upou.edu.ph cc. figs@upou.edu.ph.

The course site is structured by units and contains:

1. The online discussion boards.
2. Soft copies of all the documents that are being made available to you by the course.
3. Instructions for accomplishing and uploading your assignments.
4. Instructions for participating in the online forums.
5. The names and profiles of your classmates and Faculty-In-Charge.

You are encouraged to visit the course site at least twice weekly, interact with the class, and contribute your ideas to the discussion threads uploaded by the Faculty-In-Charge and respond to the ideas contributed by your classmates.

YOUR FIC

I am Alexander G. Flor, your Faculty-in-Charge. My friends call me Sandy. I have taught at the College of Development Communication since 1976. In December 2000, I retired optionally to work with an international organization (SEAMEO SEARCA). In August 2002, I rejoined the University as the Vice Chancellor for Research and Development of UPOU. My term as Vice Chancellor ended in December 2003 and I served as Dean of the newly established Faculty of Information and Communication Studies from January 2004 until today. My current rank in the University is Professor 12 and I was awarded the designation of UP Scientist I in 2015 and UP Scientist III in 2018.

You may contact me at the following numbers: (049) 536 6001-6006 loc 400 or 355. My email addresses are alexander.flor@up.edu.ph and agflor@up.edu.ph.

As my online students, I feel that it is incumbent upon me to brief you about my predisposition towards an open learning system. As you know, we operate within policies and guidelines set out by the University of the Philippines System, some of which may not be entirely consistent with open education, particularly the latter's constructivist character. However, I would like to stretch the limits imposed by a residential system upon our open and distance learning system. Thus, as in earlier semesters, I will continue to experiment on a *non-linear, non-sequential, open ended* arrangement, specifically when it comes to our course requirements.

This means that:

1. You may upload your TMA blogs *anytime* and in *any order*, within the semester.
2. Your learning logs are asynchronous and may be visited in *any order* at *any time*. All the boards are open as of June 2 and will terminate at the end of the semester. There is no specific timeframe provided for each unit or topic.
3. You may proceed with your readings as you are comfortable with, i.e., begin at the middle, proceed at the end and end at the beginning of your reading.
4. The idea is to make the online DEVC242 experience as learner-centered as possible.

There is of course a downside to this approach:

Firstly, the responsibility for learning falls squarely upon your shoulders. If you succeed, the credit belongs to you exclusively. If you fail, you have no one to blame but yourself. However, this does not mean that learning should be an individual activity. You are fully encouraged

to form support groups or online study groups among yourselves, using Yahoo Messenger, Google Talk, Skype or Facebook. Start communicating with your classmates to form these workgroups.

Secondly, it means that you require specific qualities in order to succeed. Paramount among these qualities is discipline, focus and determination. You should likewise possess an analytical or critical mind.

You should know that you are expected to demonstrate academic integrity and intellectual honesty in your work. The University has strict rules on intellectual dishonesty. Anyone found guilty of plagiarism can be automatically suspended for at least one year or expelled outright depending on the gravity of the case. So make sure you do all the requirements on your own. ALL materials lifted from secondary sources must be CITED properly. Give a list of references and materials cited at the end of each requirement you submit.

ASSIGNMENT PACK

TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS

All students must upload their TMAs as individual blogs in the AS 231 course site. ***Please do not submit hard copies. Do not email your TMAs to me either.***

The blogs may be posted in any order anytime within the semester. Although you are given this leeway, let us be reminded of the tendency for procrastination inherent among many of us. Consider this leeway as an opportunity to exercise your sense of responsibility and manifest your sincerity of purpose. Thus, we strongly advise that you complete these requirements as soon as you can.

TMA: BLOG 1. Introduction to ASEAN Media and Communication

Go to our Moodle course site and download the book, *Developing Societies in the Information Age*. This reading is relevant to Modules 1 and 2. Visit www.academia.org. Search for the papers titled *Carving ICT Niches Within the ASEAN in a Globalized Educational and Knowledge Environment* and *The Fifth Theory of the Press*, both by Alexander G. Flor. These papers are relevant to Modules 1 and 3, respectively. Download the two papers. Read and study the book and the papers.

Post a blog on your thoughts about your readings. You will arrive at your blog site by clicking on your name listed under the participants list at the upper left hand corner of our course site. Once your profile appears, click on the Blog tab. Click on the [Add a new entry link](#). Enter the title of this TMA: Introduction to ASEAN Media and Communication.

Write your blog in the appropriate box. Give your thoughts on your readings. Remember that blogs by nature are not long expositions but short and thoughtful pieces. Be clear and concise. Limit your blog to 500 words. You can download an indicative assessment rubric for your blogs in our course site.

Before saving and posting it, scroll down to the “Publish to” menu and choose “Anyone on this site.” Make sure that you perform this last instruction. Otherwise your blog cannot be read by people other than yourself. Hence, I will not be able to mark it and you stand the risk of getting an EXT or a failing grade.

TMA: BLOG 2. Communication as a Social Force in the ASEAN

Visit www.academia.org. Search for the paper titled *Environmental Communication and People’s Participation: Lessons Learned in Five Natural Resources Management Projects* by Alexander G. Flor. This paper is relevant to Module 6. Download the paper, read and study it.

Post a blog on your thoughts about this reading. You will arrive at your blog site by clicking on your name listed under the participants list at the upper left hand corner of our course site. Once your profile appears, click on the Blog tab. Click on the [Add a new entry link](#). Enter the title of this TMA: Communication as a Social Force in the ASEAN.

Write your blog in the appropriate box. Give your thoughts on this reading. Remember that blogs by nature are not long expositions but short and thoughtful pieces. Be clear and concise. Limit your blog to 500 words. You can download an indicative assessment rubric for your blogs in our course site.

Before saving and posting it, scroll down to the “Publish to” menu and choose “Anyone on this site.” Make sure that you perform this last instruction. Otherwise your blog cannot be read by people other than yourself. Hence, I will not be able to mark it and you stand the risk of getting an EXT or a failing grade.

TMA: BLOG 3. Contemporary Developments in the ASEAN Communication Scene

Go to our Moodle course site and download the book, *Linking Research to Practice (Chib and Harris, Eds)*. Read and study Section 3, which is relevant to Module 7. Visit www.academia.org. Download the paper, *Telecom Regulatory and Policy Environment in the Philippines* by Erwin Alampay. This paper is relevant to Modules 8. Download, read and study the paper.

Post a blog on your thoughts about your readings. You will arrive at your blog site by clicking on your name listed under the participants list at the upper left hand corner of our course site. Once your profile appears, click on the Blog tab. Click on the Add a new entry link. Enter the title of this TMA: Contemporary Developments in the ASEAN Communication Scene.

Write your blog in the appropriate box. Give your thoughts on your readings. Remember that blogs by nature are not long expositions but short and thoughtful pieces. Be clear and concise. Limit your blog to 500 words. You can download an indicative assessment rubric for your blogs in our course site.

Before saving and posting it, scroll down to the “Publish to” menu and choose “Anyone on this site.” Make sure that you perform this last instruction. Otherwise your blog cannot be read by people other than yourself. Hence, I will not be able to mark it and you stand the risk of getting an EXT or a failing grade.

LEARNING LOGS

Your individual Learning Logs will be the basis for your Forum Participation and Learning Resource Contribution grades. These constitute 45 percent of your final grade.

There are three Learning Logs, each corresponding to a course unit. After reading the course materials provided for each unit, do a Google search of related materials available on the World Wide Web. These may be in the form of text documents, podcasts, video or presentation materials. Choose what you think is the best among the lot and post the universal resource locator or URL for the material to share with your classmates. Your classmates are expected to study the material and post their reactions towards it. Thirty (30) percent of your grade depends on the three materials, which you have chosen to share. Fifteen (15) percent of your grade depends on the reactions that you post on the three materials shared by your classmates.

Please take note. ***Do not upload the material. Just post the URL. Uploading the material to our course site may be a violation of intellectual property rights (IPR).***

Your contributions to the Learning Logs may be posted in any order anytime within the semester. Again, although you are given this leeway, do not procrastinate. Consider this an opportunity to exercise your sense of responsibility and demonstrate your sincerity. You are strongly advised to complete these requirements as soon as you can. The earlier you complete these, the better for you.

Learning Log 1. Introduction to ASEAN Communication and Media

After reading the course materials on Unit I, do a Google search of related materials available on the Web on the following topics: *ASEAN Media and Communication Systems, Southeast Asian communication values, Southeast Asian traditional media.*

These resources may be in the form of text documents, podcasts, video or presentation materials. Choose one material which you think is the best among the lot for each of the three topics. Include the universal resource locator or URL for each of the three materials on your learning log post to share with your classmates.

In turn, study the material of the links posted by your classmates. Post your reactions towards it with corresponding replies.

Learning Log 2. Communication as a Social Force in the ASEAN

After reading the course materials on Unit II, do a Google search of related materials available on the Web on the following topics: *media watchdogs, social mobilization, and development communication campaigns in any ASEAN country.*

These resources may be in the form of text documents, podcasts, video or presentation materials. Choose one material which you think is the best among the lot for each of the three topics. Include the universal resource locator or URL for each of the three materials on your learning log post to share with your classmates.

In turn, study the material of the links posted by your classmates. Post your reactions towards it with corresponding replies.

Learning Log 3. Contemporary Developments in the ASEAN Communication Scene

After reading the course materials on Unit III, do a Google search of related materials available on the Web on the following topics: *telecom regulatory environment in ASEAN countries other than the Philippines; new media use in ASEAN countries; and the ASEAN AMRI.*

These resources may be in the form of text documents, podcasts, video or presentation materials. Choose one material which you think is the best among the lot for each of the three topics. Include the universal resource locator or URL for each of the three materials on your learning log post to share with your classmates.

In turn, study the material of the links posted by your classmates. Post your reactions towards it with corresponding replies.

CLASS WIKI

It is the intention of ASEAN 231 that this class would contribute to the existing body of knowledge. The best and most expedient way of doing this is through Wikipedia. Thus, I am requiring each one of you to become Wikipedia contributors. Five years ago, my students put together a new page in Wikipedia on Informatization (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Informatization). This year, you are expected to create a section on the Wikipedia page on the ASEAN. The proposed title of that section is ASEAN Media Cooperation.

Note that Wikipedia encourages class projects of this nature. However, when you do become a contributor, you are expected to adhere to Wikipedia's standards of quality. To begin:

1. Go to the Wikipedia Front Page www.wikipedia.org.
2. Click "English" to get to the Main Page.
3. At the left hand side of the Main Page, click About Wikipedia. Read this article carefully and completely.
4. Go back to the top of the Main Page and click "Create Account" at the upper right hand corner. Proceed to create an account. Take note that Wikipedia advises that usernames should not reflect your real names. Protect your privacy.
5. When your usernames and passwords are validated, Log In the Wikipedia site.
6. Go back to the Main Page and input "ASEAN" to the Search box found on the left hand side. Click "Go" to arrive at the ASEAN page.
7. Edit the page and create a new section titled ASEAN Media Cooperation if it does not exist yet. Make sure that your contributions are neutral and objective but, more so, substantive and accurate. Cite your references. Wikipedia has an army of editors from all over the world. Some of them will go through your inputs with a very critical eye and may communicate with you directly. Others would offer to assist you. In the spirit of Web 2.0, your inputs are subject to editing.
8. If you want to use a sandbox to test your inputs before finalizing, feel free.
9. Email me your user names to enable me to monitor your inputs and edits.

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- Z** Zeitgeist 1, 3

ASEAN Convergence is a volume that explores the ASEAN identity from the perspective of communication and culture. It was prepared as an eBook for a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) on the same subject offered by the Faculty of Information and Communication Studies through UPOU's MODeL platform. This open educational resource may now be used as a reference for DEVC 242. Media and Communication from an ASEAN Perspective, offered under the Master of Development Communication Program cross-listed as AS 231 in the UPOU Faculty of Management and Development Studies.

-- from the Foreword