

## The State and Military Sources of Comprehensive Security in Southeast Asia

Delphine Allès  
University Paris-Est Créteil, LIPHA  
61 avenue du Général de Gaulle  
94010 Créteil Cedex – France  
Email: [delphine.alles@gmail.com](mailto:delphine.alles@gmail.com)

Pascal Vennesson  
S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies  
Nanyang Technological University  
Block S4, Level B4 Nanyang Avenue  
Singapore 639798  
Email: [ispvennesson@ntu.edu.sg](mailto:ispvennesson@ntu.edu.sg)

Prepared for delivery at the 58th International Studies Association Annual Convention,  
Baltimore, Maryland, February 22th-25th, 2017

### **Abstract:**

Broader security advocates commonly assume that widening the concept of security to include other sectors than the military, giving equal emphasis to domestic and trans-border threats, and allowing for a transformation of the conflictual logic of international and domestic security go together. In this paper, we argue that this conventional account is mistaken. By examining the sources and manifestations of the broader security agenda in Indonesia, Malaysia and, at the regional level, ASEAN we show that the broader security agenda has old and deeply influential military and strategic roots with unsettling policy and normative implications. Our argument is important for three reasons. First, this dimension is left out of most accounts of non-traditional security in South East Asia (SEA) which tend to apply common human/non-traditional security narratives to regional concerns in order to evaluate the relevance of government initiatives, leaving an important theoretical gap given the increasing calls for non-Western approaches to IR. Second, our argument helps to explain why SEA governments have been among the early promoters of non-traditional security narratives. Finally, we challenge widely held views in security studies as in SEA the military's involvement in "non-traditional security" *is* the tradition.

**Keywords:** ASEAN, Critical Security Studies, Indonesia, Malaysia, Security, State-Building, War.

**Draft – Do not quote or cite without permission – Comments welcome**

## **Introduction: Comprehensive Security Through the Lens of Southeast Asia**

Southeast Asia presents a central puzzle for the “wideners” and “deepeners” of security.<sup>1</sup> In the evolution of international security studies over the past two decades the twin moves to widen and deepen security have been central. A sharp dichotomy has come to distinguish on the one hand “traditional” security, state- and military-centric and the “new” security, broadened to incorporate economic, societal and environmental issues and deepened in its actors and referents.<sup>2</sup> Widening-deepening perspectives are not confined to academic debates. Instead, they have expanded into a large and diverse body of thought increasingly integrated into influential policy-making circles. In a globalizing world, international organizations expanded their agendas which favored adding to state security, notions like collective security, comprehensive security, non-traditional security or human security.<sup>3</sup> By reifying the distinction between “traditional” security and “new approaches” these academic and policy perspectives assume the anteriority and primacy of conceptions based on state sovereignty, the separation between internal and external security and they understand the main role of the military as externally-focused. The conjunction of the widening and deepening of security and the evolving agenda of international organizations also favored a generally positive normative view of the broadening of security.

---

<sup>1</sup> We borrow the labels “wideners” and “deepeners” from Barry Buzan and Lene Hansen and provide a full definition below: Barry Buzan, Lene Hansen, *The Evolution of International Security Studies*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009, p. 187.

<sup>2</sup> Thierry Balzacq, *Theories de la sécurité : les approches critiques*, Paris, Presses de Sciences Po, 2016.

<sup>3</sup> Victor D. Cha, « Globalization and the study of international security », *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 37, n°3, 2000, p. 393-403; Forence Basty, « La sécurité humaine : Un renversement conceptuel pour les relations internationales », *Raisons politiques* 4/2008 (n° 32), p. 35-57.

However, the critical security perspective has the security trajectory of South East Asia backward.<sup>4</sup> The goal of this article is to examine the state and military sources of the comprehensive conception of security in Indonesia, Malaysia and ASEAN.<sup>5</sup> The notion that security is (and should be) wide was present at the creation of these post-colonial states, it was encouraged and supported by the military in the context of counterinsurgencies and is very much the “traditional” conception of security. Instead of the evolutionary moves from sovereignty to “traditional” security and then to a broadening and deepening of security, South-East Asia is characterized by the reverse path. In Indonesia as in Malaysia, political, societal and economic issues have been constituted as security issues before the consolidation of frontiers and sovereignties. These issues have been securitized by nascent state building institutions, notably the military, which formulated broad conceptions of security and monopolized the conception and implementation of policies to tackle them.<sup>6</sup> Since its creation in 1967 ASEAN is also based on a broad conception of security which kept the state as its core referent object.

We select Indonesia and Malaysia because they are deviant cases for the critical security analysis of the widening of security. In these two countries the broader conception of security long pre-dated the end of the Cold War and were embedded in the state-building project. Moreover, the broader security conceptions were not related to the conception and the implementation of cooperative and liberal policies. For the elites who formulated their initial security doctrines, the nature of security concerns was intimately related to the necessity to

---

<sup>4</sup>. By South-East Asia, we mean the 10 member states of ASEAN.

<sup>5</sup>. While we focus on these cases in the limits of this article, the same dynamics are at play in the other countries of the region, notably in Singapore, Thailand, the Philippines and Myanmar.

<sup>6</sup> Ole Wæver, « Securitization and Desecuritization », dans Ronnie D. Lipschutz (dir.), *On Security*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1995, p. 46-86.

legitimize the building of political regimes that were weakened by both domestic and transnational instability.<sup>7</sup> The critical juncture of the decolonization process, rooted in the longer history of security in the region, propelled the conceptualization and implementation of comprehensive security doctrine which became a central instrument of the legitimation of the control of states on their citizens.

The remainder of the article is organized as follows. First, we present the “widening-deepening” problematique and the ways in which it has been applied to Southeast Asia. We also lay out our argument. Second, we analyze the comprehensive security conceptions which were an important part of the state-building process in Indonesia and Malaysia as well as in the creation and the institutionalization of ASEAN.

## ***I. Widening-Deepening Security and the Puzzle of Southeast Asia***

### *§ 1. Widening and Deepening Security*

Our focus here is on critical security studies (lower case) which, following Keith Krause and Michael C. Williams, is now commonly used to designate the diverse range of approaches which favor the broadening and deepening of security.<sup>8</sup> This is distinct from, and significantly broader than, Critical Security Studies (upper case) which generally refers, following Ken Booth and Richard Wyn Jones, to one distinctive strand of emancipation-oriented critical approach, inspired by Antonio Gramsci and the Frankfurt School.<sup>9</sup> This diverse range of

---

<sup>7</sup> Thierry Balzacq, « The Three faces of securitization: political agency, audience and context », *European journal of international relations*, vol. 11 n°2, 2005, p. 171-201.

<sup>8</sup> Keith Krause, Michael C. Williams, eds. *Critical security studies: concepts and cases*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997); Keith Krause, ‘Critical Theory and Security Studies: The Research Programme of ‘Critical Security Studies’’, *Cooperation and Conflict* 33/3 (1998), 298-333.

<sup>9</sup> Richard Wyn Jones, *Security, Strategy and Critical Theory* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1999); Ken Booth, *Theory of World Security* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

critical security perspectives generally argue “in favor of deepening the referent object beyond the state, widening the concept of security to include other sectors than the military, giving equal emphasis to domestic and trans-border threats, and allowing for a transformation of the Realist, conflictual logic of international security.”<sup>10</sup> Critical security studies is a set of perspectives, not a school of thought, or a paradigm. Critical security specialists, many have observed, identify themselves with a variety of approaches and theories notably conventional constructivism, critical constructivism, human security, peace studies, post-colonialism, critical international relations theory, the Aberystwyth, Copenhagen and Paris schools, post structuralism and feminism.<sup>11</sup> It is important to note that the most comprehensive survey of international security studies acknowledges its Western-centric character. As Barry Buzan and Lene Hansen put it: “(...) ISS is by birth an Anglo-American discipline which has been based on a Western conception of the state. This conception has arguably limited empirical and political relevance for major parts of the non-Western world, where the drawing of colonial

---

<sup>10</sup>. Barry Buzan, Lene Hansen, *The Evolution of International Security Studies*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009, p. 188, pp. 187-225. See also: Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear* (Brighton: Wheatsheaf, 1983), pp. 255-7; Barry Buzan, Ole Waever, Jaap de Wilde, *Security* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1998); Buzan and Hansen, *The Evolution of International Security Studies*, op. cit., 16; Peter Burgess, ed., *The Routledge Handbook of New Security Studies* (London: Routledge, 2010); Shannon Brincat, Laura Lima, João Nunes, eds., *Critical Theory in International Relations and Security Studies. Interviews and Reflections* (London: Routledge, 2012); Philippe Bourbeau, Thierry Balzacq et Myriam Dunn-Cavelty, « International relations. Celebrating eclectic dynamism in security studies », dans Philippe Bourbeau (dir.), *Security. Dialogue across disciplines*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2015, p. 111. We follow what has become the common usage and use critical security studies (lower case) to designate the diverse range of perspectives which favor the broadening and deepening of security. Critical Security Studies (upper case) refers to one distinctive strand of emancipation-oriented critical approach, inspired by Antonio Gramsci and the Frankfurt School. See: Keith Krause, Michael C. Williams, eds. *Critical security studies: concepts and cases*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997); Keith Krause, “Critical Theory and Security Studies: The Research Programme of ‘Critical Security Studies,’” *Cooperation and Conflict*, Vol. 33, N°. 3 (1998), pp. 298-333; Richard Wyn Jones, *Security, Strategy and Critical Theory* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1999); Ken Booth, *Theory of World Security* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

<sup>11</sup>. Steve Smith, “The Contested Concept of Security,” in: Ken Booth (ed.), *Critical Security Studies and World Politics* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2005), pp. 27-62; Barry Buzan, Lene Hansen, *The Evolution of International Security Studies* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009); David Mutimer, “Critical Security Studies: A Schismatic History,” in: Alan Collins, ed., *Contemporary Security Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 67-86.

boundaries irrespective of local communities and allegiances has produced a radically different set of political, economic and cultural structures.”<sup>12</sup>

The widening and deepening of security is not only an academic project. The United Nations Development Programme 1994 Human Development Report, for example, presented the notion of “human security” as an innovative and useful concept, well adapted to the post-Cold War world and put individual emancipation at the heart of security concerns extended to political, economic, societal and environmental fields.<sup>13</sup> The United Nations International Commission for Intervention and State Sovereignty, the 2004 Barcelona report “A human security doctrine for Europe”, the 2016 Berlin Report of the Human Security Study Group presented to the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy as well as British, Canadian and other governments have all been affected by critical security perspectives.<sup>14</sup> These theoretical and policy perspectives share a common frame even as they seek to put it into question: they commonly present the Westphalian system as the starting point of the state-centric conceptions of security focused on the military protection of frontiers.<sup>15</sup> It is often taken for granted that these broader conceptions of security imply cooperative and liberal policies.

---

<sup>12</sup>. Bary Buzan, Lene Hansen, *The Evolution of International Security Studies*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009, p. 19.

<sup>13</sup>. The UNDP report identifies seven components of human security: economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community and political security. United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report 1994*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994, pp. 24-33.

<sup>14</sup>. The critical security perspective also shapes the security research agenda of the European Science Foundation, for example: J. Peter Burgess, *The Future of Security Research in the Social Sciences and Humanities-Discussion Paper* (Brussels: European Science Foundation-Standing Committee for the Humanities (SCH), July 2014).

<sup>15</sup> Barry Buzan, *People, states, and fear : an agenda for international security studies in the post-Cold War era*, Colchester, ECPR Press, 2008 (2<sup>ème</sup> éd.), 311 p.; Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver et Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, Boulder, Lynne Rienner, 1997, 239 p.

## § 2. *Widening Security in South-East Asia*

Since the 2000s, many publications devoted to security in South-East Asia sought to assess the implementation of broader security conceptions in the region, often presented as a conceptual innovation and potentially as a source of political change.<sup>16</sup> The broadening of security is generally analyzed as a new trend, both for research and for the political elites of the region who “traditional” outlook is presented as a starting point which is on the cusp of a significant change. For example, Mely Caballero-Anthony and Alistair D.B. Cook identify a shift in the understanding of what constitute a security threat which transforms the ways in which states interact since they now face common threats and long-term consequences for their societies.<sup>17</sup> While Amitav Acharya notes without further elaboration the “Asian roots” of human security, he nevertheless argues that the governments of the region share a “traditional conception of security as protection of national integrity and sovereignty against military threats.”<sup>18</sup> By and large, these scholars agrees that the broad understandings of security is new to South-East Asia and they generally neglect the striking similarities with a number of core elements of political and strategic thought in Asia. They do not explore the links between these broad conceptions and the security doctrines formulated during the colonial struggle and institutionalized in the early post-colonial era.<sup>19</sup> They commonly take for granted the notion

---

<sup>16</sup> Amitav Acharya, *Constructing a Security Community in Southeast Asia : ASEAN and the Problem of Regional Order*, Londres, Routledge, 2009, 352 p.; Mely Caballero-Anthony, Ralf Emmers, Amitav Acharya (eds.), *Non-traditional security in Asia : dilemmas in securitization*, Londres, Ashgate, 2006. See also: Alan Chong, « Southeast Asia : theory between modernization and tradition », in: Amitav Acharya et Bary Buzan (dir.), *op. cit.*, p. 117-147.

<sup>17</sup> Mely Caballero-Anthony, Alistair D.B. Cook, *Non-traditional security in Asia : issues, challenges and framework for action*, Singapore, ISEAS, 2013, p.1.

<sup>18</sup> Amitav Acharya, « Human security : East versus West », *International Journal*, vol. 56, n°3, 2001, p. 443.

<sup>19</sup> Hans Günter Brauch *et. al.*, *Globalization and environmental challenges : reconceptualizing security in the 21st century*, Berlin, Springer, 2008, part. 3 « Philosophical, ethican and religious conceptualizations of security », p. 173-320.

that in Southeast Asia the broadening of security took place in the post-Cold War context and was co-terminous with the evolution of the agenda and prescriptions of international organizations, notably the United Nations Development Programme. This vision of the sequence of the rise of broader security views not only implies that they are innovative but also that they are normatively desirable. For example, Jürgen Rüländ argues that the broadening of security in Asia is the source of a “gradual shift from a realist vision to a conception of security that is cooperative, liberal and comprehensive.”<sup>20</sup>

### § 3. *The State and Military Sources of Security Widening*

We seek to challenge this interpretation and offer an alternative. The wider (but not the “deeper”) conception of security is at the heart of the security doctrines put into place in the states of the region after the independence. Far from casting aside strategy and the military, they helped to legitimize a considerable enlargement of the missions of the armed forces shaped by their counter-insurgency struggles.<sup>21</sup> The distinction between “traditional” (which critical security proponents usually understand as restrictive) and “non-traditional” (broader) approaches assumes that the broader understanding of security is necessarily post-State. It starts with the military protection of borders and expands to other themes and, presumably, other referent objects. This sequence neglects the rich non-Western and pre-state history of the notion of security.<sup>22</sup> In Southeast Asia, where one finds peoples who for a longer period of time were without states, the late territorial anchoring of politics created a situation where

---

<sup>20</sup> Jürgen Rüländ, *op. cit.*, p. 363.

<sup>21</sup> Patricia Owens, *Economy of Force. Counterinsurgency and the Historical Rise of the Social* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

<sup>22</sup> Jonathan Herington, « Philosophy : the concepts of security, fear, liberty, and the state », dans Philippe Bourbeau *et. al*, *op. cit.*. p. 22-44.

security was envisioned before the creation of sovereign entities.<sup>23</sup> In that region, it is the “restrictive”, state-centric, conception of security which is comparatively recent.<sup>24</sup> Our argument resonates with two bodies of work. First, we agree with those who note that there is nothing new in the notion that security in South-East Asia is generally envisioned by both academic and practitioners in a broad way. In the 1970s, Michael Leifer pointed out that security discourses in the region often mixed internal and external dimension. He also emphasized ideological conflicts as one of the first security concerns of the region’s heads of state.<sup>25</sup> As Mutiah Alagappa puts, in South-East Asia: « (...) comprehensive security generally implies that security goes beyond (but does not exclude) the military to embrace the political, economic, and sociocultural dimensions. »<sup>26</sup> Others agree that most of South-East Asian leaders, like their counterparts in the Third World, are primarily concerned by internal threats to the security of their state structure and their regimes.<sup>27</sup> We also acknowledge the important, but often neglected, critical security insight that when non-military issues are

---

<sup>23</sup> James C. Scott, *The art of not being governed: an anarchist history of upland Southeast Asia*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2010, 464 p.; Nicholas Tarling, *Southeast Asia: A Modern History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 3-164.

<sup>24</sup> Kurt W. Radtke « Security in Chinese, Korean, and Japanese philosophy and ethics », Hans Günter Brauch *et. al.*, *op. cit.*, p. 208.

<sup>25</sup> Michael Leifer, *ASEAN and the security of Southeast Asia*, Londres, Routledge, 2013 [1989], 2010 p.; Ralf Emmers, Joseph Liow (eds.), *Order and security in Southeast Asia. Essays in memory of Michael Leifer*, London, Routledge, 2006. 272 p.

<sup>26</sup> Muthiah Alagappa, *Asian security practice : material and ideational influences*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1998, p. 624; Mutiah Alagappa, « Comprehensive security : interpretations in ASEAN countries », Dans Robert A. Scalapino *et. al.* (ed.) *Asian security issues : regional and global*, Berkeley, University of California Press, Institute for East Asian Studies, 1988, p. 57-58.

<sup>27</sup> Mohammed Ayoob, Chai-Anan Samudavanija, « Leadership and Security in South-east Asia: Exploring General Propositions » in: Mohammed Ayoob, Chai-Anan Samudavanija (eds.), *Leadership Perceptions and National Security: The Southeast Asian Experience*, Singapore, ISEAS, 1989, p. 256.

« securitized », without a parallel « deepening » of the security actors and referents, then the broader security conception can contribute to the authoritarian reinforcement of states.<sup>28</sup>

We do not claim that a set of « Asian values », arising from the pre-state history of the concept of security in the region, is at play in the security doctrine of states which are now independent and territorialized. However, the existence of traditions that are different from the ones which dominate security studies provides an incentive to explore the hybridizing which occurred with the state model during the decolonization process. In Southeast Asia, we observe from the start the combination between state-building and the broad conception of security, incorporating both military and non-military dimensions.

We select Indonesia and Malaysia because despite their different political trajectories, they both put comprehensive conceptions of security at the heart of their security doctrines. Indonesia conquered its independence through an armed struggle against the Dutch colonial power while Malaysia negotiated its independence with the United Kingdom. During the Cold War, Malaysia was close to the Western bloc, whereas Indonesia opted for non-alignment oriented toward the East and then the West. In Indonesia the authoritarian regimes of Sukarno and Suharto led to a process of democratization from 1998, while in Malaysia within a constitutional monarchy the power is monopolized since independence by the same coalition led by the Malay Nationalist Party. As Nicholas Tarling put it: “Across Southeast Asia, on the mainland and in the archipelago, the structures of states adopted were often strikingly similar, and so, too, was the repertoire of tactics and strategies employed by rulers. (...) That was to be true also of the post-colonial regimes.”<sup>29</sup>

---

<sup>28</sup> Pinar Bilgin, *Regional Security in the Middle East - A Critical Perspective*, Routledge, London, 2005, p. 35.

<sup>29</sup> Nicholas Tarling, *Southeast Asia: A Modern History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 271.

While we focus on the crystallization and adoption of comprehensive security doctrines in the post-colonial state building conjuncture, both pre-colonial and colonial security conceptions and practices paved the way. In the pre-colonial era, even the most powerful states in Southeast Asia were weak and possessed weak military capability. Their forces were small, not recruited from the majority peoples and had increasingly a “law-and-order” role.<sup>30</sup> Colonial control brought to an end the inter-state competition among Burma, Siam, and Vietnam and interstate wars ceased in the region until World War II. As Nicholas Tarling notes: “In a perhaps unprecedented way, Southeast Asian societies had been demilitarised. Their relations with one another were not determined by their relative strength, nor did competition among them prompt military modernization as it did in Europe.”<sup>31</sup> This absence of inter-state conflict combined with the absence of threats external to the region until 1941, helped to restrict the size and role of colonial armies whose role remained that of an armed constabulary rather than an army. Colonial powers, protected by their naval predominance, used force only in limited ways. Local naval forces were mostly involved in policing and anti-smuggling activities.<sup>32</sup> Importantly, the one type of war which was fought both during the establishment of colonial control, during the Japanese occupation and afterward both in Indonesia and in Malaysia was guerrilla warfare. It is precisely the type of warfare in which both the insurgents and the counter-insurgents have to embed their use of force in the broader framework of political and socio-economic policies. In the post-colonial era, the military which arose from the guerrilla struggle could claim the role of nation-builder and came to be

---

<sup>30</sup>. Nicholas Tarling, *Southeast Asia: A Modern History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 286-287.

<sup>31</sup>. Nicholas Tarling, *Southeast Asia: A Modern History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 288.

<sup>32</sup>. Nicholas Tarling, *Southeast Asia: A Modern History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 288-289.

associated with development. Their role “was still more focused on the internal than the external, on preservation rather than defence or attack.”<sup>33</sup>

## **II. Comprehensive Security and Post-Colonial State-Building: Indonesia, Malaysia, ASEAN**

### **1. « National resilience » and the security and political role of the military in Indonesia**

As Michael Leifer pointed out, in Southeast Asia security is based on the capacity of state to put their political house in order.<sup>34</sup> We argue that, beyond limited differences in emphasis, there is a remarkable continuity in the underlying conception of security and the essentials of the country’s security doctrine from the early days of the independence struggle, the Sukarno regime (1949-67) and the New Order government under President Suharto.

When Indonesian leaders proclaimed independence on August 17, 1945, the territory was far from being stabilized and they immediately faced the challenges of internal fragmentation. On the declaration of independence, the main concern of Republican leaders, who hoped to secure independence by diplomacy rather than struggle was to maintain law and order. They initially set up the People’s Security Agency (Badan Keamanan Rakyat) which became a few months later the People’s Security Army (Tentera Keamanan Rakyat) which was finally renamed and reorganised as the Army of the Republic of Indonesia (Tentera Republik Indonesia) which counted among its officers Suharto and Nasution.<sup>35</sup> The main source of the initial institutionalization of the army was domestic and linked to domestic law and order

---

<sup>33</sup>. Nicholas Tarling, *Southeast Asia: A Modern History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 291.

<sup>34</sup> Michael Leifer, « The security of Southeast Asia », *Pacific community: an Asian quarterly review*, vol. 7, n°1, 1975, p. 26-27.

<sup>35</sup>. Nicholas Tarling, *Southeast Asia: A Modern History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 292-293.

security, not external threats. At the beginning of the struggle with Dutch forces, the deputy of its commander-in-chief, A. H. Nasution called for a “total people’s war” and the creation of territorial defence forces and armed mobile striking force.<sup>36</sup>

Faced with violent contestation, notably separatist guerrillas supported by the United States and then communist movement, political and military elites immediately highlighted the risk of destabilization generated by non-military and transnational threats. This situation justify the need to put into place a tight state and military control over the political and socio-economic spheres, as well as the citizens’ private space. Dewi Fortuna Anwar notes that in Indonesia security policy has never been confined solely to military security, understood as the defense of the national territory against external threats.<sup>37</sup> From the early days of Sukarno era (in power from 1945 until 1966), a broad understanding of security was adopted. General Nasution redefined the role of the army in terms of a “Middle-Way”. It would neither be merely a “civilian tool” like in Western countries, nor a “military regime.” The “dual function” (*dwi fungsi*) doctrine legitimized the role of the military in economic and political domains.<sup>38</sup> In his view, the political role of the military during the initial years of Indonesia’s independence was justified by its major role in a long struggle (*perjuangan*) against the colonizer.<sup>39</sup> Moreover, powerful military elites became suspicious of political leaders. As an institution, the military predated political institutions, notably political parties. It was in an of

---

<sup>36</sup>. Nicholas Tarling, *Southeast Asia: A Modern History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 293.

<sup>37</sup> Dewi Fortuna Anwar, « Indonesia's Strategic Culture: Ketahanan Nasional, Wawasan Nusantara, and Hankamrata », in: Ken Booth, Russell Trood, eds., *Strategic cultures in the Asia-Pacific region*, New York, St Martin’s Press, 1999, p. 199.

<sup>38</sup> Christian Lambert Maria Penders et Ulf Sundhaussen, *Abdul Haris Nasution: a political biography* Olympic Marketing Corp, Hopkins, MN, p. 231-232. See also: Ulf Sundhaussen, *The Road to Power: Indonesian Military Politics, 1945-1967* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982).

<sup>39</sup> Herbert Feith et Lance Castles, *Indonesian political thinking 1945-1965*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1970, p. 411.

itself a factor of national unity whereas those in charge of “irregular military units” which were competing with the national power were “generally the politicians.”<sup>40</sup> Nasution rejected the “politization of military issues.”<sup>41</sup> While critical security approaches usually examine (and criticize) the securitization of political or social issues, for Nasution the sequence was reversed, reflecting a legitimacy which started with the military.

This approach was the foundation of the action of the military since 1957. Under Sukarno’s regime of Guided Democracy (1957-1966) in a context of renewed separatist rebellions, its main goal was to “securitize” Indonesian domestic politics. This “double-function” political and military of the armed forces was later institutionalized under the New Order, after the rise to power of General Suharto (1966-1998). He sought to bring Indonesia closer to Western countries and favored an ideology largely opposed to his predecessor. Yet, he too relied on the ideas of General Nasution. The political role of the armed forces was institutionalized and integrated to the Parliament because they were supposed to safeguard the national interest much better than political parties.<sup>42</sup>

Under the Suharto regime, and still under the influence of Nasution, the comprehensive security dimension was further institutionalized. The military elite saw the greatest threat to Indonesia as arising from the country itself, notably secessionist movements, religious radicalism and challenges to Pancasila, the Five Principle of the Indonesian Republic (belief

---

<sup>40</sup> Abdul Haris Nasution, « Unity of command », dans Herbert Feith et Lance Castles, *op. cit.*, p. 417.

<sup>41</sup> Abdul Haris Nasution, *op. cit.* p. 418. In 1952, Nasution mounted a coup to put pressure on Sukarno but his attempt failed and he was constrained to a temporary exile.

<sup>42</sup> Jongseok Woo, *Security challenges and military politics in East Asia: From State Building to post-democratization*, New York, Bloomsbury Academic, 2011, p. 52.

in one God, humanitarianism, unity, democracy and social justice).<sup>43</sup> Hence the need to address a broad range of issues such as fragmentation of national unity and the eruption of social disorders that could imperil economic activities and ultimately the development of the nation. Economic development is understood as a crucial component of Indonesia's security strategy. Its aim is not merely to remove potential causes of unrest by increasing prosperity but to unify the country and improve government control by building modern communication infrastructures.<sup>44</sup> The external threats themselves were perceived as intertwined with these profoundly domestic issues since they essentially took the form of infiltration and subversion which would exploit and exacerbate societal cleavages.

The notion of *ketahanan nasional* or national resilience, progressively defined in the late 1960s, refers to the "the dynamic condition of a nation which includes tenacity, sturdiness, and toughness, which enables her to develop national strength to cope with all threats and challenges coming from within as well as from without, which would directly or indirectly endanger national life and the struggle for national objectives."<sup>45</sup> This approach combines a global vision of the envisioned threats and state-centric referent object and solutions to respond to these threats. This conception is the basis for the associated notions of *hankamrata* (total defense of the people) and *sishanrata* (total defense) which are still current in

---

<sup>43</sup>. Dewi Fortuna Anwar, "Indonesia: Domestic Priorities Define National Security," in: Muthiah Alagappa, ed., *Asian Security Practice. Material and Ideational Influences* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), p. 478.

<sup>44</sup>. Dewi Fortuna Anwar, "Indonesia: Domestic Priorities Define National Security," in: Muthiah Alagappa, ed., *Asian Security Practice. Material and Ideational Influences* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), p. 478.

<sup>45</sup>. Quoted in: Dewi Fortuna Anwar, "Indonesia: Domestic Priorities Define National Security," in: Muthiah Alagappa, ed., *Asian Security Practice. Material and Ideational Influences* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), p. 478. See also: Institute for National Resilience of the Republic of Indonesia (Lemhannas RI) : <http://www.lemhannas.go.id/index.php/tentang-lemhannas/sejarah> [Accessed 29 decembre 2016].

contemporary Indonesia.<sup>46</sup> After the 1998 democratic transition, Indonesia preserved this basis of its defense and security policy as well as the role of the Lemhannas (Lembaga Ketahanan Nasional, Institute for national resilience). Created under Suharto, its main mission is to spread a culture of « national resilience » in addition to contribution to the education of military elites. The latest 2016 Indonesian Defense White Paper reiterates the significance of non-traditional challenges of state and non-state origins at the domestic and international levels. It envisions a reinforcement of a “universal system of defense” (*Sistem Pertahanan Semesta*) combining military and non-military elements and involving all the components of the nation, be they military or civilians.<sup>47</sup> This continuity helps explain the early adoption in the 1990s by political and military elites of the notion of “non-traditional security” which introduced a change of vocabulary without implying any paradigmatic revolution.

In sum, the comprehensive conception of security in Indonesia was present at the creation of the post-colonial state. It was not a late attempt at expanding security beyond an existing core understood as the military defense of national borders against external threats. The conception of security was genuinely comprehensive, including national identity, economy, society as well as military capability, and was perceived as responding to multifaceted domestic challenges. When external threats were perceived as significant they did not take the form of a military invasion, but of territorial disagreements with the former colonial power (such as West Irian) and foreign help to rebellious movements. Finally, far from being

---

<sup>46</sup> Kusnanto Anggoro, « Unravelling total defense: territorial structure, democracy, and non-military defense », Document de travail, Séminaire DCAF-Lesperssi sur *Democratic Total Defence Systems*, Jakarta, 28 août 2007.

<sup>47</sup> Kementerian Pertahanan Republik Indonesia, « Buku Putih Pertahanan Indonesia 2015 », publié en ligne : <https://www.kemhan.go.id/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/BPPI-INDO-2015.pdf> [dernier accès le 29 décembre 2016].

emancipatory, the broader security conception under Sukarno implied severe restriction of political activities.<sup>48</sup>

## **2. « Total defense », ethnicity and the securitization of social cohesion in Malaysia**

A comprehensive conception of security emerged in Malaysia during the independence process which culminated in 1957. The critical juncture in the formation of the comprehensive security conception was the struggle against the communist guerrilla supported by Beijing. The notion of comprehensive security is rooted in the counterinsurgency strategies during the “state of emergency” (*Darurat Tanah Melayu* 1948-1960 and 1968-1989).<sup>49</sup> The insurgency merged a political and an ethnic fear: Beijing-led communist subversion and, due to the ethnic Chinese character of the Malaysian communists, the danger of the sizable ethnic Chinese population in Malaysia as a source of division and conflict. Like any counterinsurgency campaign, military action, conducted mostly by British forces including Gurkha troops, was only one aspect of a wide range of political, administrative, economic, social and cultural measures. The counterinsurgent state was further institutionalized during the “second emergency” from 1968 until 1989.<sup>50</sup>

The preservation and promotion of national security is regarded as intertwined with political stability, regime security, economic growth and development and multiracial peace

---

<sup>48</sup>. Dewi Fortuna Anwar, “Indonesia: Domestic Priorities Define National Security,” in: Muthiah Alagappa, ed., *Asian Security Practice. Material and Ideational Influences* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), p. 483.

<sup>49</sup> Cheah Boon Kheng, “The Communist Insurgency in Malaysia, 1948-90: Contesting the Nation-State and Social Change,” *New Zealand Journal of Asian Studies* 11 (1) (June 2009), pp. 132-52; Timothy Norman Harper, *The End of Empire and the Making of Malaya*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2011; Anthony Short, *In Pursuit of Mountain Rats. The Communist Insurrection in Malaya* (1<sup>st</sup> ed. 1975) (Singapore: Cultured Lotus, 2000).

<sup>50</sup>. Ong Weichong, *Malaysia’s Defeat of Armed Communism: the Second Emergency, 1968-1989* (London: Routledge, 2015).

and harmony. The domestic focus and the multi-dimensional conception of security are exacerbated by its strong ethnic component. As K. S. Nathan puts it: “Malay security is invariably equated with Malaysian security. Malay feeling of insecurity are invariably translated into policies and strategies of coercion and accommodation designed to promote Malay ethnic interest.”<sup>51</sup> The conception of security is ethnic more than national and any perceived challenge to Malay supremacy implies a weakening of Malay security.<sup>52</sup>

Like in Indonesia, the military became a central actor in the preservation of domestic stability. The Malaysian conception of security puts the emphasis on the security implications of economic development and social cohesion. The security and development policy (*keselamatan dan pembangunan* - *KESBAN*) implemented by Prime Minister Tun Abdul Razak Hussein in power from 1970 until 1976 forged a direct link between these two domains and closely associated domestic and foreign policies. By assimilating explicitly economic development and security the 1971 program which arose from this doctrine, legitimized the use of extraordinary means in the name of security, here the social control exercised on the various ethnic groups of the Malaysian society.<sup>53</sup> The KESBAN program was launched when the counterinsurgency intensified which increased fears of an identity-based clash between the Malay, Chinese and Indian communities. The aim of the program was to create the foundation of an integrated security policy which would guarantee the close proximity of civilians and the military, economic development and national stability. In addition, paramilitary patrols with the involvement of army officers would establish a tight social control, down to the

---

<sup>51</sup>. K. S. Nathan, “Malaysia. Reinventing the Nation,” in: Muthiah Alagappa, ed., *Asian Security Practice. Material and Ideational Influences* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), p. 518.

<sup>52</sup>. K. S. Nathan, “Malaysia. Reinventing the Nation,” in: Muthiah Alagappa, ed., *Asian Security Practice. Material and Ideational Influences* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), p. 519, 521.

<sup>53</sup> Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver et Jaap de Wilde, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

village level (*rukuk tetangga*).<sup>54</sup> In 1984, the objective of neighborhood patrols was explicitly the pacification of inter-communal relations.

The concept of *Hanruh* (total defense) was another important step in the institutionalization of a comprehensive security doctrine. Presented in May 1986 by the Committee for National Security under Prime Minister Mahatir Mohamed, its main goal was to affirm the close link between national security and political stability, itself arising from economic success and “social harmony” understood as the preservation of an inter-ethnic consensus which constituted the economic and political system. As the then prime minister Mahatir Mohamad put it: “National security is inseparable from political stability, economic success and social harmony. Without these all the guns in the world cannot prevent a country from being overcome by its enemies, whose ambition can be fulfilled without even firing a single shot. All they need really is to subvert the people and set up a puppet regime.”<sup>55</sup>

Total defense (*Hanruh*) requires the participation of all governmental agencies and the contribution of the society as a whole, way beyond the military or police dimensions. By combining security vigilance through village patrols, social cohesion, and economic resilience, Malaysian elites formalized a global doctrine that would be able to counter “any type of threat internal or external” while preservation the objective to preserve the “integrity of the force and sovereignty of the nation.”<sup>56</sup> Put into place after the “second emergency”, the goal of this approach was, in part, to reinforce the social control on minorities, considered as a

---

<sup>54</sup> Nazar bin Talib, *Malaysia's Experience In War Against Communist Insurgency And Its Relevance To The Present Situation In Iraq*, Mémoire de master en études militaires, Marine Corps University, 2005, p. 19-20.

<sup>55</sup> Quoted in: K. S. Nathan, “Malaysia. Reinventing the Nation,” in: Muthiah Alagappa, ed., *Asian Security Practice. Material and Ideational Influences* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), p. 514.

<sup>56</sup> Mohamad Faisol Keling *et. al.*, « The Malaysian Government’s efforts in managing military and defence development », *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, vol. 2, n°12, juillet 2011, p. 190; Mohd Zackry Mokhtar, « Total Defense: Usaha kolektif memperkasakan pertahanan negara » [Défense totale : effort collectif pour renforcer la défense nationale], *Perajurit* [Militaires], Juin 2006, p. 38-43.

threat for national cohesion and who became subject of education campaigns to reinforce their patriotic allegiance. All the political leaders of the country, members of the United Malays National Organization (UMNO) which heads the ruling coalition since independence, endorsed the comprehensive security agenda. They understand it as compatible with the underlying conception of security in Malaysia and not as an opportunity to liberalized the political system.

In sum, four main conclusions arise from our analysis of security conceptions in Indonesia and Malaysia. First, the security conceptions of these two post-colonial states were born comprehensive. These broad conceptions of security were formulated and implemented long before the emergence of the post-Cold War “non-traditional” security scholarly and policy agenda. The trajectories of these two states also show that there is nothing pre-determined in the political implications and uses of comprehensive conceptions of security. In some cases, the broadening of security may lead to more liberal and inclusive outcomes but in others, such as in Indonesia and Malaysia at different points in time, it can equally serve authoritarian objectives, especially when “broadening” happens without any “deepening.” The incorporation of political, economic and societal issues in security helped legitimize in these two countries a strong state-led social control and, under some circumstances, gave a prominent and even hegemonic role to the military. Finally, while the critical security received wisdom about “broader security” claims that it pushes aside and somewhat marginalizes the military and the use of force, in Indonesia and in Malaysia it led to the opposite outcome. To different degrees, counterinsurgency warfare and the armed forces were an important source of the comprehensive security agenda and became the guarantors of domestic political and societal stability. This explains the particular significance of the Army as an institution in countries where the maritime frontiers are more important than land

frontiers. In short, in Southeast Asia the post-Cold War broadening of security was not an innovation and its political implications were mixed at best, reinforcing states more than empowering societies.

### **III. The Security Foundation of ASEAN's Sovereign Regionalism**

At first sight, policy discussions and declarations about non-traditional security in Southeast Asia are not limited to states but involve ASEAN as well. This seems to indicate that, even in a limited way, the formulation of common principles in the security realm favors cooperation and represents progress of regional integration.<sup>57</sup> As the member states recognize the significance of non-traditional threats, ASEAN would become increasingly consolidated. However, such an interpretation neglects the fact that ASEAN itself, following the objectives and concerns of its member states, was created on the basis of a comprehensive conception of security. This conception was coherent with the fact that founding members (Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines) shared an authoritarian governance and a proximity with the Western bloc. They considered that they faced “non traditional” security threats: the progress of armed communist or separatist movements, often supported by external allies.

These concerns led ASEAN members to highlight in the 1967 Bangkok declaration the interdependence between security threats and the objectives of the organization: peace, liberty, social justice, and economic well-being. It also affirmed the importance of inter-state cooperation to implement these objectives.<sup>58</sup> ASEAN regionalism was designed to help

---

<sup>57</sup> ASEAN, « ASEAN 2025 : Forging Ahead Together », Jakarta, 2015, p. 14. <http://www.asean.org/storage/2015/12/ASEAN-2025-Forging-Ahead-Together-final.pdf> [Accessed 29 Decembre 2016].

<sup>58</sup> ASEAN, The ASEAN Declaration (Bangkok declaration), Bangkok, 8 August 1967.

consolidate the sovereignty of its member states and insure their stability.<sup>59</sup> The comprehensive conception of security did not imply any regional integration. If regional cooperation was based on a comprehensive conception of security, it served ultimately a sovereignist approach and the state was the condition and the finality of this security. On this basis, ASEAN developed in the 1970s, notably under the leadership of Indonesia, the notions of “comprehensive security” and “regional and national resilience.”<sup>60</sup> Elevated to the rank of priority of regional cooperation, these ideas echoed the national security doctrines and notably the Indonesian “national resilience.”

ASEAN’s underlying security conception was comprehensive. It integrated dimensions non-military, non-state centric and transnational, including ideological, social or cultural. It connected security, economic development and political stability. It also justified regional cooperation on the basis of an increasing realization that threats had become more interdependent and transnational.<sup>61</sup>

National and regional resilience are linked since the stability of each state is the starting point and a necessary condition for the security of the whole. ASEAN’s security conception is multidimensional, yet resolutely state-centric.<sup>62</sup> The founding objectives of ASEAN reflect the broadening but not the « deepening » of security. Intergovernmental cooperation does not imply the creation of a security governance at the level of the regional organization. In this

---

<sup>59</sup> Nicholas Tarling, *Regionalism in Southeast Asia: to Foster the Political Will*, Londres, Routledge, 2006, 288 p.

<sup>60</sup> The notion of national and regional resilience was formulated during the first ASEAN summit in Bali (February 1976).

<sup>61</sup> NISHIKAWA Yukiko, *Human Security in Southeast Asia*, Abingdon, Routledge, 2010, p. 128.

<sup>62</sup> Jusuf Wanandi, “Security Issues in the ASEAN Region,” dans Karl D. Jackson et M. Hadi Soesastro (dir.), *ASEAN Security and Economic Development, Research Papers and Policy Studies*, no. 11, Berkeley, Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, 1984, p. 297-308.

approach, national and regional resilience, while taking into account the non-military dimensions of security, can only derive from the preservation of strong and sovereign states. This idea was present at the creation of regionalism in Southeast Asia and was later reinforced as ASEAN expanded to states with different political regimes. They shared an interest in cooperating without abandoning sovereign prerogatives. A comprehensive approach to security is not only compatible with the preservation of authoritarian and semi-authoritarian regimes but it was one of the foundation of a regional, intergovernmental, organization designed to ensure their persistence. This runs counter the idea that taking into account “non-traditional” threat should somewhat reinforce regional integration. It also helps to understand the relatively weak impact of ASEAN and particularly its « Political and Security Community », adopted as an objective in 2003 and formalized in 2015, regarding « non-traditional » security threats.

In sum, the regional level also indicates that in Southeast Asia, the comprehensive approach to security is not particularly innovative, it is rather the « traditional » way to envision security. Moreover, it does not guarantee as such more cooperative or liberal practices. The legitimation of “non-traditional” security in multilateral, regional and global frameworks help the ASEAN member states to preserve the foundation of their security doctrine while putting into place some cooperation. “Non-traditional” security, understood in the ASEAN framework, is one axis of cooperation with China whose leaders adopted this vocabularies in 1996.<sup>63</sup>

---

<sup>63</sup> David Arase, « Non-Traditional Security in China-ASEAN Cooperation : the Institutionalization of Regional Security Cooperation and the Evolution of East Asian Regionalism », *Asian Survey*, vol. 50, no. 4, 2010, p. 808-833; Katherine Morton, « China and non-traditional security : towards what end ? », *East Asia Forum*, 31 mars 2011. En ligne : <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2011/03/31/china-and-non-traditional-security-toward-what-end/> [accessed 31 July 2016].

## **Conclusion**

Critical security advocates generally assume that the broadening and deepening of security takes as its starting point a previous understanding of security based on the military protection of state borders which is then either completely left behind or complemented by other, “non-military”, policies. They see the broadening of security beyond the military dimension as a conceptual and policy innovation which tends to downplay and ultimately marginalize the military. Ultimately, they maintain, broadening security lead to more liberal cooperation. However, the cases of Indonesia and Malaysia show that in these countries and in Southeast Asia more generally, the comprehensive understanding of security is the norm since the creation of independent states. This broad conceptualization of security predated the stabilization of external borders and hence the creation of “traditional” security doctrines. In Indonesia and in Malaysia as well as in the framework of ASEAN, security doctrines based on comprehensive conceptions of security had very different trajectories and consequences. They were intertwined with the making of the post-colonial states, they enshrined the fundamental role of the military often in the context of counterinsurgency warfare and facilitate the expansion of its role in politics, economics and society. Comprehensive conceptions also helped legitimize a strong social control by the state. This early institutionalization helps explain that the notion of “non-traditional” security was easily appropriated by the political elites in the region. It helped legitimize existing security doctrines without any paradigmatic change.