Review of International Studies (2011), 37, 557–576 *© 2010 British International Studies Association*
doi:10.1017/S0260210510000872 *First published online 2 Sep 2010*

Mimetic adoption and norm diffusion: 'Western' security cooperation in Southeast Asia?

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Abstract. The members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) have been pursuing new cooperative security agendas – namely, confidence-building measures (CBMs), preventive diplomacy (PD), conflict resolution and a set of agendas associated with security communities. The ASEAN members' pursuit of these agendas should be seen as a set of instances of their mimetic adoption of external norms for the sake of legitimacy. They have mimetically been adopting a set of norms associated with the collective management of conflicts, which have been practiced by the participant states of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). They have been doing so, with the intention of securing their identities as legitimate members of the community of modern states, and of enhancing the status of ASEAN and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) as legitimate cooperative security institutions.

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Introduction

The development of cooperative security in Southeast Asia has been noteworthy. The members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) have been pursuing new cooperative security agendas – namely, confidence-building measures (CBMs), preventive diplomacy (PD), conflict resolution and a set of agendas associated with security communities. In the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF),[1] an

* Earlier versions of this article were presented at the British International Studies Association (BISA) conference at the University of St. Andrews on 21 December 2005 and the International Studies Association (ISA) Annual Convention in Chicago on 2 March 2007. I thank the participants in these meetings and anonymous reviews for their useful comments.

[1] The ARF is an Asia-Pacific region-wide framework, involving almost all the countries in the region. ASEAN established this forum in July 1993, holding the first ARF meeting in July 1994. The ARF participants today are the ten ASEAN members – Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, the Philippines, Brunei, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar – together with China, Russia, Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Papua New Guinea, the EU, the US, India, Mongolia, North Korea, Pakistan, Timor Leste, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210510000872 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Asia-Pacific region-wide security forum, they have identified three stages of the ARF process: the developments of CBMs, PD and conflict-resolution mechanisms – or measures used in approaching conflicts. Following the first ARF meeting in July 1994, they announced these three stages in March 1995 by drawing up the ARF Concept Paper.[2] In 1997, they started exploring the possibilities of PD.[3] Furthermore, within the framework of ASEAN, they have set out a plan to establish an 'ASEAN security community' in which conflicts are managed collectively. In their summit meeting in October 2003, in Bali, Indonesia, they adopted the Declaration of ASEAN Concord II, replacing the Declaration of ASEAN Concord I, issued in 1976. In the ASEAN Concord II, they set out a plan to promote community building in three areas, namely, security, economy and society. Elements of a security community include 'conflict prevention', 'conflict resolution' and 'post-conflict peace building'.[4]

How can we capture these developments? In what terms can the ASEAN members' pursuit of new cooperative security be explained? The case of ASEAN can be captured by a perspective founded on sociological institutionalism in the field of sociology, the main focus of which is the issue of institutional isomorphism. The focus of this perspective is on what can be regarded as the 'mimetic adoption' of external norms on the part of local actors, with the intention of enhancing their legitimacy.

From this perspective, I argue in this article that the pursuit of new cooperative security agendas on the part of the ASEAN members should be seen as a set of instances of their mimetic adoption of external norms for the sake of legitimacy. They have mimetically been adopting a set of norms associated with the collective management of conflicts, which have been practiced by the participant states of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) – or the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) until 1994. They have been doing so, with the intention of securing their identities as legitimate members of the community of modern states, and of enhancing the status of ASEAN and the ARF as legitimate cooperative security institutions.

In this article, the contributions which I seek to make to the existing literature in the field of International Relations (IR) are on two dimensions. First, I contribute to the comparative study of regional security institutions. As suggested by Michael Barnett and Emanuel Adler, institutional isomorphism and emulation are important themes in this area.[5] However, few empirical studies have addressed them. Second, I contribute to the literature on norm diffusion. I bring forward evidence for the claim that the mimetic adoption of external norms for the sake of legitimacy is one of the pathways by which norms travel from one region to

[2] With regard to the third stage, the ARF Concept Paper produced by ASEAN used the expression 'development of conflict-resolution mechanisms'. However, at China's request, the Chairman's Statement of the 1995 ARF used instead the words: 'the elaboration of approaches to conflicts'. ASEAN, 'The ASEAN Regional Forum: A Concept Paper', 18 March 1995; and ARF, 'Chairman's Statement, the Second ASEAN Regional Forum', Brunei Darussalam (1 August 1995).

[3] See ARF, 'Chairman's Statement, the Fourth ASEAN Regional Forum', Subang Jaya (27 July 1997).

[4] ASEAN, 'Declaration of ASEAN Concord II', Bali (7 October 2003); and ASEAN, 'ASEAN Security Community Plan of Action', Vientiane (29 November 2004).

[5] Michael Barnett and Emanuel Adler, 'Studying Security Communities in Theory, Comparison, and History', in Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett (eds), *Security Communities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 419.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210510000872 Published online by Cambridge University Press

another. The existing literature has paid insufficient attention to this pathway for two reasons, if not more. The first reason is a range of methodological difficulties involved in the empirical demonstration of the employment of a mimetic policy by actors, intended to enhance their legitimacy. Evidence for the operation of a mimetic mechanism is hard to show. The second reason is the lack of attention to developing countries. If the mimetic adoption of external norms is indeed relevant, it must be these countries which commonly employ such a policy. This is because they usually seek the status of legitimate members of the community of modern states, which advanced-industrial countries take for granted. Nonetheless, as Amitav Acharya points out, the existing literature on norm diffusion tends to downplay the agency role of local actors.[6] Its main focus is on the activities of developed countries and international organisations led by such countries, as well as transnational activities spreading from the developed world to other places.[7] I address these two points in this article. That is to say, I empirically demonstrate the employment of a mimetic policy on the part of developing countries, thereby underlining the relevance of mimetic adoption in terms of norm diffusion.

In what follows, I first make it clear in what sense the case of ASEAN is remarkable. I then set out a perspective focusing on the mimetic adoption of norms. Next, I demonstrate empirically that the ASEAN members' pursuit of new cooperative security agendas should be seen as a set of instances of their mimetic adoption of external norms. In the concluding section, I discuss some policy implications, which are especially relevant to European policymakers.

1. Pursuit of new norms

What is so interesting about the case of ASEAN? What is so remarkable about the pursuit of new cooperative security agendas on the part of the ASEAN members? There are three points which make this case interesting: first, the ASEAN members have been adopting new norms; second, they have been adopting norms which compete with the existing ones; and third, they have been adopting such norms voluntarily and in the absence of great power politics or transnational struggles.

First, the ASEAN members have been adopting new norms – that is, standards for behaviour – namely, a set of norms associated with the collective management of conflicts.[8] These ideational elements are based on the notion that internal and

[6] Amitav Acharya, 'How Ideas Spread: Whose Norms Matter? Norm Localization and Institutional Change in Asian Regionalism', *International Organization*, 58:2 (2004), p. 242.

[7] See, for example, Martha Finnemore, 'International Organizations as Teachers of Norms: The UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization and Science Policy', *International Organization*, 47:4 (1993), pp. 565–97; Alexandra Gheciu, 'Security Institutions as Agents of Socialization? NATO and the "New Europe"', *International Organization*, 59:4 (2005), pp. 973–1012; Thomas Risse, Stephen C. Ropp, and Kathryn Sikkink (eds), *The Power of Human Rights: International Norms and Domestic Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); and Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998).

[8] Norms are broadly defined as shared – thus social – understandings of standards for behaviour. Audie Klotz, *Norms in International Relations: The Struggle against Apartheid* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), p. 14; and Martha Finnemore, *National Interests in International Society* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), p. 22.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210510000872 Published online by Cambridge University Press

international conflicts should be managed collectively within the framework of a regional cooperative security institution. They have been adopting these new norms while departing from a set of diplomatic norms associated with the ASEAN Way of diplomacy. The ASEAN Way norms emphasise the association's autonomy and its members' sovereignty, on the basis of the principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of other members and decision-making through consensus.[9]

The claim that the ASEAN members have been adopting new norms is based on the observation that they have been redefining the goals of ASEAN diplomacy by consensus. Both realists and constructivists would probably agree with the claim that, traditionally, the primary goals of ASEAN diplomacy in the past were autonomy and sovereignty – the maintenance of ASEAN's autonomy *vis-à-vis* external powers and of each other's sovereignty in Southeast Asia.[10] The ASEAN members sought to keep a certain distance from external powers in the area of security, and also avoided implementing intrusive measures to address internal and international conflicts, although these conflicts have always been rampant in Southeast Asia. In contrast, ASEAN's new cooperative security agendas prioritise security cooperation with external powers over its autonomy, and the collective management of conflicts over its members' sovereignty. It should be noted that the ASEAN members take various attitudes to the implementation of the new cooperative security agendas. At the risk of oversimplification, it can be said that the so-called ASEAN-6 countries – Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, the Philippines and Brunei – have been active while the so-called CLMV countries – Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam – have been rather cautious about any abrupt implementation. Nevertheless, all the members have agreed on what their association ought to be doing. Documents such as the 2003 ASEAN Concord II are the product of consensual decision-making.

Second, the ASEAN members have been adopting norms which compete with the existing ones. In other words, there is little compatibility between a set of ideas associated with the collective management of conflicts and the ASEAN Way norms, in that the former involves flexible interpretations of the core principles of the latter – that is, autonomy and sovereignty. Thus, ASEAN's new cooperative security agendas are inconsistent with the traditional goals of autonomy and sovereignty. To begin with, the ARF agendas – that is, CBMs, PD and conflict resolution – may lead to the involvement of external powers, such as the US, Japan, Australia and China, in Southeast Asian affairs. The setting of these agendas in the ARF may backfire on the ASEAN members, in that it will at least invite discussions of measures which are deemed intrusive. If measures to prevent

[9] Hiro Katsumata, *ASEAN's Cooperative Security Enterprise: Norms and Interests in the ASEAN Regional Forum* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009), pp. 51–3; Hiro Katsumata, 'Reconstruction of Diplomatic Norms in Southeast Asia: The Case for Strict Adherence to the ASEAN Way', *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, 25:1 (2003), pp. 104–21; David Capie and Paul Evans, *The Asia-Pacific Security Lexicon* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2002), pp. 14–27; and Amitav Acharya, *Constructing a Security Community in Southeast Asia: ASEAN and the Problem of Regional Order* (London: Routledge, 2001), chap. 2.

[10] See, Michael Leifer, 'ASEAN as a Model of a Security Community?', in Hadi Soesastro (ed.), *ASEAN in a Challenged Regional and International Political Economy* (Jakarta: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1995), p. 130; Michael Leifer, *ASEAN and the Security of South-East Asia* (London: Routledge, 1989); Amitav Acharya, 'Will Asia's Past Be Its Future?', *International Security*, 28:3 (2003), pp. 149–64; and Acharya, *Constructing a Security Community in Southeast Asia*.

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and resolve conflicts were provided for in the ARF, conflict-ridden Southeast Asia would probably be the first place in which such measures were utilised. It is worth noting that the ARF is an ASEAN-led forum, in which the association's members should be able to avoid these agendas.

With regard to the plan for an ASEAN security community, measures to manage conflicts collectively – that is, conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict peace building – may involve international measures which could be deemed intrusive. Take, for example, the case of the OSCE: the measures for the prevention and resolution of conflicts pursued by the OSCE participant states include 'missions', or 'field activities', 'mechanisms for the peaceful settlement of disputes' and 'peace-keeping activities'.[11] These measures are incompatible with the traditional practice of the ASEAN members. Under their strict interpretation of sovereignty, the dispatch of missions or troops to carry out operations in the field would constitute an act of interference.

One might argue that the aim of the security community plan is to enhance ASEAN's autonomy by developing its own measures to manage conflicts, so as to avoid the involvement of external powers in Southeast Asian affairs.[12] However, this line of argument is implausible, because an ASEAN security community and the ARF are two sides of a single coin, although the participants of the latter include external powers. In their plan for a security community, the ASEAN members have expressed their preference for '[s]trengthening the ARF process' and 'moving the ARF to the preventive diplomacy stage and beyond'.[13]

The ASEAN members' adoption of norms which lack compatibility with their former one is notable, in the context of the constructivist literature. For constructivists, norms which are external or new to a given situation may prove influential so long as they are compatible with existing ideational elements in a local society.[14] Yet new norms do not always require compatibility to be influential. This relates to the next point.

Finally, the ASEAN members have voluntarily been adopting norms which compete with the existing ones, and have been doing so in the absence of great power politics and transnational struggles. The existing literature suggests that norms without compatibility can be promoted in a local society, when they are backed by great powers or transnational struggles, although the greater the level of incompatibility, the tougher great power politics or transnational struggles must be.[15] In the case of ASEAN, the level of compatibility was by no means high;

[11] See, CSCE, 'Helsinki Document 1992: the Challenges of Change, Helsinki Decisions', Helsinki (9–10 July 1992); and OSCE, *OSCE Handbook (2000)*, third edition (Vienna: OSCE, 2000), pp. 42–85.
[12] I thank an anonymous reviewer on this point.
[13] ASEAN, 'Activities, annexed to ASEAN Security Community Plan of Action', Vientiane (29 November 2004).
[14] Jeffrey T. Checkel, 'Norms, Institutions, and National Identity in Contemporary Europe', *International Studies Quarterly*, 43:1 (1999), pp. 83–114; Steven Bernstein, 'Ideas, Social Structure and the Compromise of Liberal Environmentalism', *European Journal of International Relations*, 6:4 (2000), pp. 464–512; Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, 'International Norm Dynamics and Political Change', *International Organization*, 52:4 (1998), p. 908; Martha Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention: Changing Beliefs About the Use of Force* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), pp. 67, 71; and Keck and Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders*, pp. 204–5.
[15] Stephen D. Krasner, 'Sovereignty, Regimes, and Human Rights', in Volker Rittberger and Peter Mayer (eds), *Regime Theory and International Relations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 139–67; Stephen D. Krasner (ed.), *International Regimes* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983);

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however, both great power politics and transnational struggles were largely absent. To my knowledge, the ASEAN members were neither put under pressure nor offered incentives by great powers, such as the US or the European Union (EU), when they were drafting the ARF Concept Paper and the plan for an ASEAN security community. It is worth noting, for example, that the position of the Clinton administration toward the ARF process was passive, when ASEAN was drafting the concept paper in 1994/1995. The US was to support any ideas explored by Asian countries, as long as their ideas did not challenge its bilateral alliances and forward military presence.[16] In addition, tough transnational struggles were also absent. Activities at the unofficial level have been an integral part of Asia-Pacific cooperative security, but the nature of such activities is collaborative rather than confrontational.[17]

Notwithstanding these three points, critics may question the significance of the case of ASEAN, by arguing that what is actually taking place in Southeast Asia is a set of rhetorical changes rather than normative ones. We should certainly not overestimate the magnitude of the change. The ASEAN members' implementation of the new cooperative security agendas has been slow. In the ARF, the measures which have currently been implemented are not mature enough to be called 'CBMs' and 'PD' in the strict sense. The CBMs in the ARF are based on consultation and consensus – for example, a security dialogue on common concerns and enhanced contacts including high-level visits. They do not involve

Martha Finnemore, 'Norms, Culture, and World Politics: Insights from Sociology's Institutionalism', *International Organization*, 50:2 (1996), pp. 339–40; Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention*, pp. 18–9, 146–7; Risse, Ropp, and Sikkink (eds), *The Power of Human Rights*; Keck and Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders*; Finnemore and Sikkink, 'International Norm Dynamics and Political Change', pp. 896–9; Audie Klotz, 'Transnational Activism and Global Transformations: The Anti-Apartheid and Abolitionist Experiences', *European Journal of International Relations*, 8:1 (2002), pp. 49–76.

[16] In March 1993, Assistant Secretary of State Winston Lord stated, with regard to multilateral approaches to security, 'We are open-minded on the arenas. We will heed the ideas of others, like [. . .] ASEAN'. Winston Lord, 'A New Pacific Community: Ten Goals for American Foreign Policy', Opening Statement at [Senate Foreign Relations Committee] Confirmation Hearings (31 March 1993). Also see Department of Defense of US, 'US Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region' (27 February 1995); and Katsumata, *Asean's Cooperative Security Enterprise*, chap. 7.

[17] Unofficial settings are called 'track two', while inter-governmental channels are called 'track one'. The track-two activities are intended to support intergovernmental endeavours. The key players in the track-two activities have been participants of the ASEAN Institutes of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS). ASEAN-ISIS is a coalition of strategic studies institutions of the Southeast Asian countries, and is registered with the ASEAN Secretariat as a non-governmental organisation (NGO). It is a network of researchers in these institutions who provide policy recommendations to their own governments. ASEAN-ISIS should be distinguished from other types of transnational activities, such as 'transnational social movements' or 'transnational advocacy networks'. Such transnational activities often challenge governments. In contrast, the ASEAN-ISIS institutions have never attacked their own governments. Their role is to support the governments by exploring various innovative ideas and offering prudent policy advice. What makes ASEAN-ISIS different from other NGOs is each member institution's strong link with its government. Their links are maintained by meetings to discuss policies, the presentation of reports, and most importantly, informal personal relationships. Through such channels, input is sent to the governments from the institutions. ASEAN-ISIS plays a central role in the series of annual conferences of the Asia-Pacific Roundtable, which will be discussed later. For ASEAN-ISIS, see Katsumata, *Asean's Cooperative Security Enterprise*, chap. 4; and Hiro Katsumata, 'The Role of ASEAN Institutes of Strategic and International Studies in Developing Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific Region', *Asian Journal of Political Science*, 11:1 (2003), pp. 93–111. For transnational social movements, see, Klotz, 'Transnational Activism and Global Transformations'. For transnational advocacy networks, see, Keck and Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders*.

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specific rules and mechanisms for the exchange of military information. The PD measures considered in the ARF are limited to modest ones, such as the development of a code of conduct, the enhancement of channels of communication, and the enhanced role of the ARF chairman.[18]

This slow progress is due to several factors, which make the situation in Asia more complicated than those in other parts of the world. To begin with, the ARF is a forum in which nearly thirty countries participate, with diverse strategic interests. In this forum, even if the ASEAN members decide to implement new agendas, they will still have to negotiate with other participant countries. In addition, even in Southeast Asia, the ASEAN countries are facing at least two challenges in developing a security community. One is a mere practical issue: most of these countries lack enough experience and operational capabilities to manage regional conflicts. The minor powers in Southeast Asia are constrained by the lack of resources, and thus need more time. The other is a tough geopolitical environment, the elements of which include a rising China. In such an environment, for the minor powers of Southeast Asia, the strengthening of unity in their association has been crucial. Thus, the ASEAN-6 countries cannot afford to alienate the CLMV countries by trying to implement the new agendas abruptly. After all, the material environment in Southeast Asia is more favorable to the ASEAN Way norms, which by their emphasis on state sovereignty may promote the unity of the association.

Against the background of these challenges, in the foreseeable future, the ASEAN members' implementation of the new cooperative security agendas will not be simple and straightforward. They will probably have to do at least two things in pursuing an ASEAN security community. The first is to adopt a two-tier approach, in which the six active members start implementing new measures among themselves, and the CLMV countries join them later. This kind of approach has already proven useful in the area of economic cooperation. The second is to implement field activities with the consent of the government concerned. This is indeed the standard practice of many other regional organisations, including the OSCE/CSCE, which has been active in areas such as the former Yugoslavia and the Caucasus region.[19] In the first half of the 1990s, the international community learned that cooperation with the concerned government is essential for effective field operations.[20]

Nevertheless, we should not underestimate the significance of the case of ASEAN. A normative change has certainly been taking place, and the steady establishment of an ASEAN security community has been in progress. Thus, the practice of the ASEAN members in the field has been changing, reflecting their

[18] ARF, 'ASEAN Regional Forum Concept and Principles of Preventive Diplomacy', Bangkok (27 July 2000), adopted at the 8th ARF, Ha Noi (25 July 2001).

[19] OSCE, *OSCE Handbook (2000)*, p. 45; and OSCE, *OSCE Handbook (2008)* (Vienna: Press and Public Information Section, OSCE, 2008), pp. 39–79. It should be noted that the OSCE/CSCE participant states have the means to punish the government in question – that is, the consensus-minus-one rule, which allows them to make decisions without the consent of the state concerned. They invoked this rule in 1992 to suspend Yugoslavia from the group. ASEAN's measures will probably not involve such an exceptional rule, but instead a modified interpretation of the non-interference principle – the notion that, as long as the interested government is consulted, the dispatch of missions or troops to carry out operations in the field would not constitute an act of interference.

[20] UN, 'Supplement to an Agenda for Peace: Position Paper of the Secretary-General on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the UN', A/50/60-S/1995/1 (3 January 1995).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210510000872 Published online by Cambridge University Press

acceptance of a flexible interpretation of state sovereignty. In concrete terms, it has increasingly been 'normal' for them to send troops or task forces to the territories of other members. Most notably, in August 2005, several ASEAN members – Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, the Philippines and Brunei – sent their troops to the Indonesian province of Aceh to monitor the peace agreement between the government and the rebel force. It is true that the ASEAN participants had to collaborate with the EU on the Aceh mission, due to their lack of experience and capabilities. Still, the ASEAN members have made clear their intention to develop measures to manage conflicts further, by stating that the Aceh mission is a model for cooperation in their security community.[21] For the completion of a security community, what remains now for them to do is to gain experience and to develop capabilities. In addition, the field activity of Malaysia in the Philippine island of Mindanao deserves attention. In October 2004, Malaysia organised an international monitoring team, composed mainly of its military personnel, to monitor the ceasefire agreement between the Manila government and the anti-government force in Mindanao. The cooperation between Kuala Lumpur and Manila here was remarkable because their relations had been thorny for decades, due to the territorial dispute over the Sabah region.[22] Furthermore, in the aftermath of the cyclone disaster in May 2008, the Southeast Asian countries established an ASEAN humanitarian task force which coordinates international aid operations in Myanmar.[23] This can be regarded as another important step toward an ASEAN security community, since humanitarian assistance is an integral element of such a community.[24]

Bearing in mind these observations, I explore the way in which the ASEAN members have been adopting the conflict-management norms. My focus is on their common concern, or the factor which unites them in adopting these new norms by empowering the active members and encouraging the cautious ones to appreciate these norms. In the next section, I set out a perspective founded on sociological institutionalism.

2. Mimetic adoption of norms

The focus of the perspective set out here is on what can be regarded as the 'mimetic adoption' of external norms on the part of local actors, with the intention of enhancing their legitimacy. Mimetic adoption for the sake of legitimacy takes place in a social environment. In a community in which a particular norm is widely shared, the champion of the norm enjoys legitimacy. In such a social environment,

[21] ASEAN, 'Chairman's Statement of the Eleventh ASEAN Summit', Kuala Lumpur (12 December 2005).

[22] See, Office of the Press Secretary, Republic of the Philippines, 'Arrival of Malaysian Peace Monitors a Major Break for Mindanao Peace Agenda – Afable' (8 October 2004); and Ayesah Abubakar, 'Keeping Peace: the International Monitoring Team (IMT) Mission in Mindanao', *The SEACSN Bulletin*, Southeast Asian Conflict Studies Network, Malaysia (January–June 2005).

[23] ASEAN, 'Special ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting Chairman's Statement', Singapore (19 May 2008).

[24] ASEAN, 'ASEAN Security Community Plan of Action'; and ASEAN, 'Activities', annexed to ASEAN Security Community Plan of Action.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210510000872 Published online by Cambridge University Press

actors who seek an identity or status as a legitimate member of the community mimetically adopt the champion's norm. From this perspective, when their goals became unclear or their identity became unstable, countries involved in regional institutions look to other institutions which enjoy legitimacy, and adopt the norms practiced there.

This perspective is founded on the sociological literature on institutional isomorphism. This literature suggests that the mimicking of external models for the sake of legitimacy explains the isomorphic structures of various organisations, such as firms, schools, hospitals and nation states. For example, almost all states have national flags, airlines, and similar educational systems. They all seek similar high-tech weapons, and have tripartite military structures, with an army, air force and navy.[25] According to Paul DiMaggio and Walter Powell, when goals are ambiguous or uncertain, organisations model themselves upon other organisations which they perceive to be more legitimate or successful, so as to enhance their own legitimacy.[26]

The sociological literature either implicitly or explicitly takes into consideration the impact of the social environment. Legitimacy is important for actors in terms of an identity or status as a member of the community to which they seek to belong, and the source of legitimacy is to be found in the social environment. In other words, the norms shared by the members of a community are what define an identity as a legitimate community member.[27] The literature suggests that the international social environment – or the world culture – may define various things as elements of legitimacy as members of the community of modern states, including airlines, national education systems and tripartite military structures. It defines the practice of pioneer states in the given issue area as a legitimate model to be emulated by others.

Mimetic behaviour for the sake of legitimacy should be distinguished from policy emulation, intended to resolve particular problems. The latter type of behaviour is commonly discussed by IR scholars. Examples include the 'policy emulation' on the part of European countries of German's neo-liberal monetary policy in the 1970s,[28] and 'policy bandwagoning' pursued by various countries in

[25] John W. Meyer, John Boli, George M. Thomas, and Francisco O. Ramirez, 'World Society and Nation-State', *American Journal of Sociology*, 103:1 (1997), pp. 144–81; John W. Meyer, Francisco O. Ramirez, and Yasemin Nuhoglu Soysal, 'World Expansion of Mass Education, 1870–1980', *Sociology of Education*, 65:2 (1992), pp. 128–49; Francisco O. Ramirez, Yasemin Soysal, and Suzanne Shanahan, 'The Changing Logic of Political Citizenship: Cross-National Acquisition of Women's Suffrage Rights, 1890 to 1990', *American Sociological Review*, 62:5 (1997), pp. 735–45; John W. Meyer and Brian Rowan, 'Institutionalized Organizations: Formal Structure as Myth and Ceremony', *American Journal of Sociology*, 83:2 (1977), pp. 340–63; Mark C. Suchman and Dana P. Eyre, 'Military Procurement as Rational Myth: Notes on the Social Construction of Weapons Proliferation', *Sociological Forum*, 7:1 (1992), pp. 137–61; Dana P. Eyre and Mark C. Suchman, 'Status, Norms, and the Proliferation of Conventional Weapons: An Institutional Theory Approach', in Peter Katzenstein (ed.), *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), pp. 79–113; and Finnemore, 'Norms, Culture, and World Politics', pp. 334–7.

[26] Paul J. DiMaggio and Walter W. Powell, 'The Iron Cage Revisited: Institutional Isomorphism and Collective Rationality in Organizational Fields', *American Sociological Review*, 48:2 (1983), pp. 151–2, 4–5.

[27] David L. Deephouse, 'Does Isomorphism Legitimate?', *Academy of Management Journal*, 39:4 (1996), pp. 1024–39.

[28] Kathleen R. McNamara, *The Currency of Ideas: Monetary Politics in the EU* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998).

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the 1980s, in the form of copying the privatisation policy implemented by Margaret Thatcher.[29] This kind of view is certainly relevant; however, it is also necessary to be aware of the possibilities of emulation for a more fundamental concern: actors with unstable identity must seek legitimacy.

The sociological literature on institutional isomorphism is worth exploring, in the context of the IR literature on norm diffusion. IR constructivists believe that actors who adopted new norms through emulation for legitimacy or status concerns may eventually internalise their ideational appropriateness.[30] Nevertheless, there have been few empirical studies demonstrating the actors' employment of a mimetic policy. To put forward the claim that mimetic behaviour for the sake of legitimacy is one of the pathways by which norms spread, we need to investigate the actors' intentional behaviour. The sociological literature on institutional isomorphism tends to emphasise structure at the expense of agency, so as to identify isomorphism across units.[31] The same thing can be said of the literature on policy diffusion, which often takes into consideration the relevance of mimetic behaviour.[32] What is required is the actors' side of the story, focusing on their agency. Any claim of the relevance of this pathway would be weak, unless it demonstrated the actors' intentional employment of a mimetic policy. In this respect, it is worth noting that some IR authors have focused on the mimetic policies of particular countries or organisations. However, in their arguments, the evidence for the operation of a mimetic mechanism is correlational. It concerns the unique structure of the unit, which is puzzling from the viewpoint of functional calculations but consistent with an external model.[33] Stronger evidence for the operation of this mechanism needs to be shown. Therefore, in the next section, I

[29] G. John Ikenberry, 'The International Spread of Privatization Policies: Inducements, Learning, and "Policy Bandwagoning"', in Ezra N. Suleiman and John Waterbury (eds), *The Political Economy of Public Sector Reform and Privatization* (Boulder. Colo.: Westview Press, 1990), pp. 88–110. For other examples, see, Nina P. Halpern, 'Creating Socialist Economies: Stalinist Political Economy and the Impact of Ideas', in Judith Goldstein and Robert O. Keohane (eds), *Ideas and Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions, and Political Change* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), pp. 87–110; Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979), p. 128; and Ann Florini 'The Evolution of International Norms', *International Studies Quarterly*, 40:3 (1996), pp. 363–89.

[30] Finnemore and Sikkink, 'International Norm Dynamics and Political Change'; Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention*, p. 158; and Alastair Iain Johnston, 'Conclusions and Extensions: Toward Mid-Range Theorizing and Beyond Europe', *International Organization*, 59:4 (2005), pp. 1021–2.

[31] Finnemore, 'Norms, Culture, and World Politics'.

[32] See Katharina Holzinger, Christoph Knill, and Thomas Sommerer, 'Environmental Policy Convergence: The Impact of International Harmonization, Transnational Communication, and Regulatory Competition', *International Organization*, 62: 4 (2008), pp. 553–87; Beth A. Simmons, Frank Dobbin, and Geoffrey Garrett, 'Introduction: The International Diffusion of Liberalism', *International Organization*, 60:4 (2006), pp. 781–810; Chang Kil Lee and David Strang, 'The International Diffusion of Public-Sector Downsizing: Network Emulation and Theory-Driven Learning', *International Organization*, 60:4 (2006), pp. 883–909; and Pre-Olof Busch and Helge Jörgens, 'The International Sources of Policy Convergence: Explaining the Spread of Environmental Policy Innovations', *Journal of European Public Policy*, 12:5 (2005), pp. 860–84.

[33] See Emily O. Goldman, 'The Spread of Western Military Models to Ottoman Turkey and Meiji Japan', in Theo Farrell and Terry Terriff (eds), *The Sources of Military Change: Culture, Politics, Technology* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 2002), pp. 41–67; Theo Farrell, 'World Culture and the Irish Army, 1922–1942', in ibid., pp. 69–90; and Terry Terriff, 'US Ideas and Military Change in NATO, 1989–1994', in ibid., pp. 91–116. For important exceptions, see, AlastairIain Johnston, *Social Status: China in International Institutions, 1980–2000* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), chap. 2; and J. C. Sharman, 'Power and Discourse in Policy Diffusion: Anti-Money Laundering in Developing States', *International Studies Quarterly*, 52:3 (2008), pp. 635–56.

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seek to demonstrate the actors' employment of a mimetic policy, on the basis of evidence derived from the process of policy formation and implementation. By so doing, I bring forward evidence for the claim that mimetic behaviour is one of the pathways by which norms spread.

3. ASEAN's cooperative security agendas

The pursuit of new cooperative security agendas on the part of the ASEAN members should be seen as a set of instances of their mimetic adoption of external norms for the sake of legitimacy. They have mimetically been adopting a set of norms practiced by the OSCE/CSCE participant states – a set of norms associated with the collective management of conflicts which is based on the notion that internal and international conflicts should be managed collectively within the framework of a regional cooperative security institution. They have been doing so, with the intention of securing their identities as legitimate members of the community of modern states, and of enhancing the status of ASEAN and the ARF as legitimate cooperative security institutions. They have been employing mimetic policies, in a social environment which defines the above norms as elements of international legitimacy and the champion of these norms, the OSCE/CSCE, as a legitimate cooperative security institution.

With regard to the three agendas of the ARF – CBMs, PD and conflict resolution – the intention of the ASEAN members has been to enhance the status of the newly-established forum as a legitimate cooperative security institution, as well as their own status as legitimate players who are eligible to lead Asia-Pacific cooperative security. Having established a region-wide forum in the early 1990s, they began to consider what agendas to pursue in it. Here they looked to the OSCE/CSCE, which they perceive as a legitimate pioneer institution in the area of cooperative security, and pursued norms practiced by the OSCE/CSCE participant states.

With regard to the plan for an ASEAN security community, the intention of the ASEAN members has been to salvage the credibility of their association. In other words, their intention has been to reverse the trend of losing credibility, which began in the late 1990s, with various challenges in the background, including the Asian financial crisis, terrorism, and non-traditional issues such as pandemic diseases. It was Indonesia which initially proposed the security community plan. In 2003/2004, following alphabetical order, Jakarta, one of the key players of ASEAN, took over as chairperson. In the Bali Summit of October 2003, it put forward the security community plan, and with the consent of other members, Indonesia's plan became ASEAN's official agenda. With the intention of salvaging the credibility of ASEAN, its members, led by Indonesia, looked to the OSCE/CSCE. They pursued new norms, associated with 'conflict prevention', 'conflict resolution' and 'post-conflict peace building', thereby trying to make their cooperative security institution resemble the European one.

My aim in this section is to demonstrate empirically the plausibility of the set of claims above, centred on the proposition that the ASEAN members have mimetically been adopting the OSCE/CSCE norms for the sake of legitimacy. It is

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relatively easy to present correlational evidence to support these claims. I have already suggested in the first section that the new agendas of the ASEAN countries are inconsistent with their traditional goals of autonomy and sovereignty. Yet it can be said that what they have been doing is consistent with an external model. In other words, their new cooperative security agendas correspond with those implemented by the participant states of the OSCE/CSCE.

The OSCE/CSCE can be regarded as the pioneer institution in the area of regional security cooperation – a successful model to be emulated by other regional institutions. Cooperative security agendas such as conflict prevention and post-conflict peace building have become universal concepts, which have been considered within the framework of the United Nations. At the regional level, it is the OSCE/CSCE which has been pioneering various cooperative security activities. In the post-Cold War era, the OSCE/CSCE participant states are strengthening their CBM regime, which was originally established during the East-West confrontation, by introducing additional rules.[34] They have also begun to take on new responsibilities, including the prevention and resolution of conflicts.[35] With these developments in the background, it is said that the OSCE/CSCE has developed into a 'security community-building institution'.[36]

This being so, in what way can we approach the intentional employment of mimetic policies on the part of the ASEAN members – or more specifically, ASEAN policymakers and domestic actors in Indonesia, bearing in mind that the security community plan was initially proposed by Jakarta? My starting point is interview data. The intention of key individuals involved in the development of an ASEAN security community to enhance the association's legitimacy has been exhibited in various ways. ASEAN Secretary-General Ong Keng Yong repeatedly told the author, in the context of security cooperation, that ASEAN has been trying to 'project its responsibility' beyond Southeast Asia.[37] An Indonesian diplomat, who played a central role in the series of meetings of ASEAN senior officials in 2003, recalls that the key factor motivating them to agree on the plan for a security community was their interest in the 'wide-ranging recognition of the importance of ASEAN' by non-ASEAN countries.[38] With this in mind, in the rest of this section, to substantiate my claims, I demonstrate three things: (1) that the ASEAN members have been concerned with their international status; (2) that they have always looked to the OSCE/CSCE and, (3) that they have consistently attempted to display their adoption of the OSCE/CSCE model.

3.1 Pursuing status

The ASEAN members have been trying to be regarded as advanced and legitimate. That is to say, they have been trying to secure their status as legitimate members

[34] OSCE, *OSCE Handbook (2008)*, pp. 80–2.
[35] See CSCE, 'Helsinki Document 1992'.
[36] Emanuel Adler, 'Seeds of Peaceful Change: The OSCE's Security Community-Building Model', in Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett (eds), *Security Communities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 119–60.
[37] Interview with Ong Keng Yong, Singapore (27 November 2007).
[38] Interview with an anonymous Indonesian diplomat, Jakarta (9 January 2008).

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of the community of modern states, which advanced-industrial countries take for granted. Two points, which underline their pursuit of status, are worth mentioning. First, they are greatly concerned with categories such as First World or Third World countries. Most notably, the Philippines has recently declared its vision of attaining 'first-world status' in two decades. For President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, her country is 'on the way to winning the grand prize of First World status'.[39] Many other ASEAN members also seem to be pursuing a similar aim. For more than a decade, Malaysia has sought its Vision 2020 – its plan to become a 'fully-developed country' by 2020.[40] Thus, its latest national development plan aims to put the nation on 'track to achieve developed nation status by 2020'.[41] For the Thai Deputy Prime Minister, Somkid Jatusripitak, his country should 'step forward as part of the First World'.[42] Even Singapore takes the issue of status seriously. Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew has maintained that Singapore should move from the 'lower half' to the 'upper half' of the First World.[43]

Second, they are highly concerned with ASEAN's reputation, which is a function of the degree of compliance with the prevailing norms in the community of advanced-industrial countries. This is most apparent in the area of human rights. ASEAN's human rights practice has been criticised by the advanced-industrial democracies, and thus some of its members have been calling for changes in the association's traditional practice. When they do so, they commonly invoke ASEAN's international reputation. For example, when the Myanmar government crushed pro-democracy demonstrations in Yangon, the foreign ministers of the ASEAN members expressed their concern that the 'developments in Myanmar had a serious impact on the reputation and credibility of ASEAN'.[44] In addition, Secretary-General Ong Keng Yong is concerned about the 'perception that ASEAN has failed to deal with [the issue of Myanmar]'.[45] Moreover, the Indonesian Foreign Minister, Hassan Wirajuda, states, 'the situation in Myanmar affects our credibility'. On the basis of his observation that human rights are still a sensitive topic in Southeast Asia, he raises the question: 'what kind of message are we sending to the rest of the world?'[46]

[39] Presidential Management Staff, 'The 2007 State of the Nation Address: Technical Report', Manila (July 2007), p. 46; and Office of the President, 'PGMA: RP on Way to First World Status in 20 Years', Manila (19 January 2007).

[40] Mahathir Mohamad, 'Malaysia: The Way Forward (Vision 2020)' (28 February 1991), published by the Institute of Strategic and International Studies, Malaysia.

[41] Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, 'Speech at the Tabling of the Motion on the Ninth Malaysia Plan, 2006–2010', Dewan Rakyat (31 March 2006).

[42] *Bangkok Post*, 'Somkid: Thailand on the Verge of 'First World' Status' (27 December 2003).

[43] *ChannelNewsAsia*, 'Better Quality of Life Will Define Singapore as a Top First World Nation' (25 February 2007).

[44] ASEAN, 'Statement by ASEAN Chair Singapore's Minister for Foreign Affairs George Yeo', New York (27 September 2007).

[45] Interview with Ong Keng Yong, Singapore (27 November 2007).

[46] Interview with Hassan Wirajuda, Jakarta (9 January 2008). For the Southeast Asian policymakers' concern about ASEAN's international reputation, also see, Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, 'Forging a United, Resilient and Integrated ASEAN', address at the Opening of the 39th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, Kuala Lumpur (25 July 2006); and ASEAN, 'Chairperson's Statement of the Twelfth ASEAN Summit', Cebu, Philippines (13 January 2007).

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3.2 Looking to the OSCE/CSCE

Throughout the process of the development of cooperative security, the ASEAN members have always looked to the OSCE/CSCE. This indicates that they have perceived this European institution as a legitimate model, or a champion of global normative elements, and that this institution has been the source of the norms which they have adopted. The OSCE/CSCE may not be the only regional institution in which conflicts are addressed collectively by its participants, but the Southeast Asian countries have concentrated on the European model.

These claims run counter to the common assumption that the ASEAN members reject the European model. It is true that they usually underline the differences between Europe and Southeast Asia when referring to the practices of their European counterparts.[47] However, it should be mentioned that their discourse has never been critical of the OSCE/CSCE. The fact that they commonly make reference to the OSCE/CSCE suggests that they regard it as a successful institution.

The model institution to which the ASEAN members have looked should be identified independently of their behaviour in terms of norm adoption, so as to avoid a circular reasoning. In other words, the claim that they have looked to the OCSE/CSCE should be supported independently of the observation that they have since the mid-1990s adopted the norms practiced in this European institution. In this respect, in this subsection, I focus on two things to demonstrate the ASEAN members' concern with the European model: their appreciation of common security thinking during the establishment process of the ARF, from the late 1980s to the early 1990s; and their Deutschian security community discourse in the 2000s.

Ideational basis of establishment of ARF. During the process of the establishment of the ARF, the Southeast Asians had been inspired by 'common security' thinking, developed in the CSCE process. Such thinking is based on the view that regional security is indivisible and can be achieved only through cooperative undertakings.[48] Inspired by such an idea, in the late 1980s, some policymakers and researchers in strategic studies institutions who make policy recommendations to governments began to explore the possibilities of cooperative security agendas to be pursued in the Asia-Pacific region. At the time, much of the discussion was carried out in unofficial settings, in particular, in the series of annual conferences of the Asia-Pacific Roundtable, held in Kuala Lumpur.[49] In the 1990s, the discourse of security cooperation flourished at the official level. One of the main

[47] See, Ali Alatas, 'Statement at the Twenty-Fourth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting', Kuala Lumpur (19–20 July 1991); Datuk Abdullah Bin Ahmad Badawi, 'Welcome Remarks at the Meeting between ASEAN and the Dialogue Partners', Kuala Lumpur (22 July 1991); and Singapore, 'Notice Paper No. 236 of 2007: Questions for Oral Answers for Parliament Sitting' (17 September 2007).

[48] Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues, *Security: A Programme for Disarmament* (London: Pan Books, 1982); and OSCE, *OSCE Handbook (2000)*, p. 2.

[49] See, Muthiah Alagappa (ed.), *In Search of Peace: Confidence Building and Conflict Reduction in the Pacific, Proceedings of the First Asia-Pacific Roundtable, Kuala Lumpur, 10–11 January 1987* (Kuala Lumpur: ISIS Malaysia, 1988); Muthiah Alagappa (ed.), *Building Confidence, Resolving Conflicts, Proceedings of the Second Asia-Pacific Roundtable, Kuala Lumpur, 1–4 July 1988* (Kuala Lumpur: ISIS Malaysia, 1989); and Rohana Mahmood (ed.), *Peace in the Making, Proceedings of the Third Asia-Pacific Roundtable, Kuala Lumpur, June 16–19, 1989* (Kuala Lumpur: ISIS Malaysia, 1990).

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points at issue was the extent to which the CSCE model was applicable to the Asia-Pacific region. Australia in 1990 called for an Asian version of the CSCE, marking the beginning of intense discussion.[50] Singapore had also considered security cooperation modelled on the experience of the CSCE.[51]

The ASEAN countries' initiation of the ARF process was their attempt to practice external cooperative norms founded on common security thinking, in the context of local/regional norms, namely, a set of diplomatic norms associated with the ASEAN Way of diplomacy.[52] Although these countries had never officially endorsed the idea of creating an Asian version of the CSCE, they were supporting the spirit of security cooperation which constituted the basis of such an idea. Thus, in the early 1990s, they initiated a cooperative security dialogue, aimed at promoting a sense of mutual trust. They preferred an informal approach, characterised by a low degree of institutionalisation, as opposed to rigidly institutionalised mechanisms or a CSCE type of institution. This was due to their commitment to their traditional diplomatic norms, which had been reflected in their discourse of cooperation in the early 1990s.[53]

ASEAN security community discourse. In Southeast Asia in the 2000s, the discourse of Deutschian security communities has been salient. The Southeast Asians have set out the plan for an ASEAN security community, inspired by Karl Deutsch's security community literature.[54] This is why Deutsch's core concept, 'we-feeling', is frequently mentioned in their discourse. Indonesian President Megawati Soekarnoputri stated, in the 2004 ASEAN ministerial meeting, 'We must create a "we-feeling" [... W]e can manage to resolve our disputes peacefully and amicably.'[55] Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono emphasised in 2005 that the word 'community' entails the cultivation of a we-feeling.[56] Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi underlined in 2004 the importance of a common set of community values and a we-feeling.[57] Furthermore, ASEAN's Plan of Action for a security community states that components of such a community include the strengthening of ASEAN's solidarity in terms of a we-feeling.[58] This kind of Deutschian discourse indicates that the ASEAN members have been concerned with the European experience in general, including the activities of the

[50] Gareth Evans, 'Opening Statement at the Meeting between ASEAN and Dialogue Partners', Jakarta (27–29 July 1990).
[51] Michael Vatikiotis, 'Time for Decisions', *Far Eastern Economic Review* (16 January 1992), pp. 23–4.
[52] Katsumata, *Asean's Cooperative Security Enterprise*, chap. 4; Hiro Katsumata, 'Establishment of the ASEAN Regional Forum: Constructing a "Talking Shop" or a "Norm Brewery"?', *Pacific Review*, 19:2 (2006), pp. 181–98; and Acharya, 'How Ideas Spread'.
[53] See, ASEAN, 'Joint Communiqué, The Twenty-Fourth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting', Kuala Lumpur (19–20 July 1991); ASEAN, 'Singapore Declaration' (28 January 1992); Alatas, 'Statement at the Twenty-Fourth ASEAN Ministerial Meeting'; and Badawi, 'Welcome Remarks at the Meeting between ASEAN and the Dialogue Partners'.
[54] Karl W. Deutsch et al., *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area: International Organization in the Light of Historical Experience* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957).
[55] Megawati Soekarnoputri, 'Statement at the Opening Session of the Thirty Seventh ASEAN Ministerial Meeting', Jakarta (30 June 2004).
[56] Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, 'On Building the ASEAN Community: The Democratic Aspect', Lecture at the 38th Anniversary of ASEAN, Jakarta (8 August 2005).
[57] Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, 'Towards an ASEAN Community', address at the ASEAN National Colloquium on ASEAN, Shah Alam, Malaysia (7 August 2004).
[58] ASEAN, 'ASEAN Security Community Plan of Action'.

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OSCE/CSCE. The focus of Deutsch's literature is on the North Atlantic area, encompassing Europe. It is said today that the OSCE has developed into what can be regarded as a 'security community-building institution'.[59]

The origin of the Deutschian security community discourse in Southeast Asia is the domestic process in Indonesia. The idea of an ASEAN security community was first proposed to the Indonesian foreign ministry by the Jakarta-based Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). In this institute, such an idea was initially developed by a few mid-career researchers who hold PhDs from such European universities as London and Birmingham. They developed their policy recommendation on the basis of the Deutschian literature, with which they were familiar. For example, they thought that, although Deutsch's concern was confined to military security issues, the focus of an ASEAN security community should be expanded to cover non-military issues also. Many of their counterparts in the foreign ministry, holding post-graduate degrees from European or North American universities, were also conversant with IR concepts. Most notably, when he met the CSIS researchers, Foreign Minister Hassan Wirajuda, who holds a master's degree from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, asked them in what sense an ASEAN security community would be different from Deutschian communities.[60]

3.3 Displaying the adopted OSCE/CSCE model

With the aim of supporting the main claim – that the ASEAN members have mimetically been adopting norms for the sake of legitimacy – the third point to demonstrate is the fact that they have consistently attempted to display their adoption of the OSCE/CSCE model, even though this adoption prioritises the appearance of their cooperative security institution over its functions. Their intention to display the adoption of a legitimate model can be understood in terms of their pursuit of international legitimacy.

To capture the ASEAN members' attempts to display their adoption of the OSCE/CSCE model, it is necessary to note the 'decoupling' between their actual practices and the external model. For sociological institutionalists, decoupling is a common feature of organisations which are copying an external model for the sake of legitimacy.[61] As noted above, the ASEAN members' implementation of the new cooperative security agendas has been slow. They have only been able to implement modest measures, which are based on consultation and consensus, in comparison with the case of the OSCE/CSCE. While pursuing this kind of decoupling, they have attempted to display their adoption of the OSCE/CSCE model. Although the ARF measures which have currently been implemented are

[59] Adler, 'Seeds of Peaceful Change'.

[60] The discussion of the domestic process in Indonesia is based on the author's interviews with Rizal Sukma, Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Singapore (7 October 2005), and with Edy Prasetyono, Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Singapore (8 January 2007).

[61] Meyer, Boli, Thomas, and Ramirez, 'World Society and Nation-State', pp. 154–6; Meyer and Rowan, 'Institutionalized Organizations'; and W. Richard Scott, John W. Meyer, and Associates, *Institutional Environments and Organizations: Structural Complexity and Individualism* (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 1994).

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not mature enough to be called 'CBMs' and 'PD' in the strict sense, they have used these designations. In addition, beyond their current practices, they also emphasise new agendas as their future goals.

Along with these behaviours pertaining to decoupling, the ASEAN members' intention to display their adoption of the OSCE/CSCE model can be derived from the process since the early 1990s of developing cooperative security. In the rest of this subsection, I explore three remarkable points in this process, which demonstrate their intention: first, that the announcements of new agendas have preceded changes in the existing diplomatic norms; second, that the announcements of new agendas have been prompt; and third, that the new agendas have been announced without a common understanding about whether and in what ways they might be implemented.

Announcements preceding norm change. The ASEAN members have been announcing their adoption of new cooperative security agendas, before making a departure from the ASEAN-Way norms. They have been doing so, although the new agendas are incompatible with the ASEAN Way of diplomacy. While the former calls for the collective management of conflicts in ASEAN and in the ARF, which is a forum involving external powers, the latter emphasises autonomy and sovereignty. In the early 1990s, when the ASEAN members began considering the agendas to be pursued in the newly-established ARF, few in Southeast Asia had questioned the relevance of the ASEAN Way. Only in the late 1990s and the early 2000s did they begin to reconsider its relevance. The normative change has been slow. Thus, when they announced the plan for an ASEAN security community in 2003, they also underlined the importance of the principles of non-interference.[62] This kind of process can only be understood when considering their intention to display the adoption of a legitimate model. Without such an intention, unless a third party had put pressure on them or offered them incentives, the announcements and the normative change could only have developed in tandem.

Prompt announcements of new agendas. The ASEAN members have been setting out and announcing their new cooperative security agendas promptly, without engaging in lengthy debate. They have been doing so in the absence of pressures or incentives from third parties. What explains this kind of process is their intention to display the adoption of the OSCE/CSCE model.[63] In the ARF, it took less than a year for them to set out the three agendas – CBMs, PD and conflict resolution – although the pursuit of these agendas in the forum involving external powers was inconsistent with their traditional goals of autonomy and sovereignty. At the first ARF meeting in July 1994, the form of Asia-Pacific cooperative security was unclear.[64] Thus, after this ministerial meeting, the ASEAN members began to consider agendas to be pursued in the new forum. They held several meetings at the senior official level, explored various issues on the basis of a draft

[62] ASEAN, 'Declaration of ASEAN Concord II'.

[63] Kurt Weyland argues that, if the quest for legitimacy drives policy choice, the appearance of a novelty should immediately trigger emulation and policy diffusion should get under way in an explosive fashion. Kurt Weyland, 'Theories of Policy Diffusion: Lessons from Latin American Pension Reform', *World Politics*, 57:2 (2005), p. 276.

[64] See ARF, 'Chairman's Statement, the First ASEAN Regional Forum', Bangkok (25 July 1994).

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document prepared by Singapore, and agreed in March 1995 on the ARF Concept Paper.[65] The three agendas in this concept paper were officially adopted in the second ARF meeting in August.[66]

With regard to the plan for an ASEAN security community, at the governmental level, it took only a few months for the ASEAN members to reach an agreement. It was at an informal meeting of senior officials in July 2003 that Indonesia for the first time put on the agenda the idea of an ASEAN security community. Since then, the senior officials held several rounds of meetings. It is true that some of them were initially sceptical of the idea put forward by Jakarta. Nonetheless, they reached an agreement before the Bali Summit of October 2003, in which Indonesia's plan was officially endorsed by all the ASEAN leaders.[67] In addition, even when the domestic policymaking process in Jakarta is included, the whole process took only about a year. It was approximately a year before the Bali Summit that domestic actors in Indonesia began preparing for this meeting. The foreign ministry became attentive to the advice offered by the researchers of the CSIS, and its officials began to hold regular meetings with the researchers. Foreign Minister Hassan Wirajuda also met the researchers at least three times. Wirajuda and his ministry officials raised few objections to the ideas proposed by the researchers.[68] Through this domestic process, the plan for a security community became Indonesia's official policy.

Announcements without common understanding. The ASEAN members have been announcing their new cooperative security agendas, before reaching a common understanding about whether and in what ways they might be implemented. They began debating over implementation measures only after announcing the new agendas. This is understandable, from the standpoint of their intention to display the adoption of a legitimate model. Had they not held such an intention, they could only have announced the new agendas after reaching a broad consensus on their implementation.

With regard to the three ARF agendas, it can hardly be said that the ASEAN members had held a common understanding about their implementation when they produced the ARF Concept Paper in 1995. They had at best shared the view that CBMs might first be pursued on the basis of dialogue and consensus.[69] A few years after the launching of the ARF process, in 1997, they decided to start exploring the possibilities of PD.[70] Since then, they have been discussing this issue through official and unofficial channels. At present they have been able to agree only on modest PD measures in terms of intrusiveness. Measures stated in their document on PD in 2000 include the development of a code of conduct, the enhancement of channels of communication, and the enhanced role of the ARF chairman.[71]

[65] Interview with an anonymous Asian diplomat, Singapore (5 March 2004).
[66] ARF, 'Chairman's Statement, the Second ASEAN Regional Forum'.
[67] The discussion of the senior officials meetings is based on the author's interviews with an anonymous Indonesian diplomat, Jakarta (9 January 2008).
[68] Interview with Rizal Sukma, Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Singapore (7 October 2005); and interview with Edy Prasetyono, Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Singapore (8 January 2007).
[69] See ARF, 'Chairman's Statement, the Second ASEAN Regional Forum'.
[70] See ARF, 'Chairman's Statement, the Fourth ASEAN Regional Forum'.
[71] ARF, 'ASEAN Regional Forum Concept and Principles of Preventive Diplomacy'.

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With regard to the security community plan, a similar process to the above can be identified, in which the ASEAN members announce new agendas without a common understanding about their implementation, and then start discussing concrete measures. Thus, when they announced this plan in October 2003, in the ASEAN Concord II, they simply listed relevant notions such as 'conflict prevention', 'conflict resolution' and 'post-conflict peace building'. A CSIS researcher who took part in the Indonesian domestic process admitted that Jakarta had not been able to make it clear what these notions meant.[72] In the following year, Jakarta kick-started the discussion of possible implementation measures by proposing the creation of an ASEAN peacekeeping force.[73] This proposal was not supported by many others. The ASEAN members adopted a Plan of Action for a security community in November 2004. The measures for conflict prevention, stipulated in this plan, largely overlap with the PD measures in the ARF. Some of the conflict resolution measures are notable, such as the utilisation of peacekeeping centres in member states. In the context of post-conflict peace building, the roles of ASEAN are considered in post-conflict reconstruction, involving human resource development and institutional building, as well as in humanitarian assistance, such as the provision of safe havens in conflict areas and the repatriation of displaced persons.[74] The ASEAN members are now exploring the specific ways in which these roles might be played, on the basis of a document which should be regarded as a blueprint for an ASEAN security community. For example, they are now trying to develop common operating procedures for the provision of humanitarian assistance.[75]

Conclusion

To the extent that the ASEAN members have mimetically been adopting a set of norms practiced by the OSCE/CSCE participant states, cooperative security in Southeast Asia is increasingly becoming 'Western' in nature. With the intention of enhancing their international legitimacy, they have mimetically been adopting the conflict-management norms practiced by the OSCE/CSCE participant states. This finding gives support to the claim that mimetic adoption for the sake of legitimacy is one of the pathways by which norms travel from one region to another.

One relevant issue to be considered here is the relationship between this pathway and other ones, such as great power politics and transnational activities. Their relations can be conceptualised in two ways: either complementarity or in substitution. First, mimetic adoption may complement other pathways by facilitating the efforts to promote norms on the part of great powers, international organisations or transnational actors. It should be mentioned here that this kind of complementarity can only be achieved when the promoters of new norms do not

[72] Abdul Khalik, 'RI Must Explain ASC to ASEAN Members', *The Jakarta Post* (11 December 2003).
[73] Antara, 'RI Takes Initiative to Form ASEAN Peacekeeping Force by 2012', Jakarta (20 February 2004).
[74] ASEAN, 'ASEAN Security Community Plan of Action'; and ASEAN, 'Activities', annexed to ASEAN Security Community Plan of Action.
[75] ASEAN, 'ASEAN Political-Security Community Blueprint', Cha-am, Thailand (1 March 2009), p. 13.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210510000872 Published online by Cambridge University Press

provoke their counterparts' antipathy. Second, mimetic adoption may substitute for other pathways, by realising norm transfer when they are ineffective. IR constructivists have identified some conditions for norm transfer. As noted already, they have focused on the compatibility between new and existing norms. They have also suggested that norms without compatibility can be promoted when they are backed by great powers or tough transnational struggles. Yet the findings of this article demonstrate that norms may spread even in the absence of compatibility, great power politics and transnational struggles. Local actors may voluntarily adopt external norms for the sake of legitimacy, even if the new norms compete with existing ones.

Some policy implications are in order. The claim that mimetic adoption is one of the pathways for norm diffusion leads to policy advice. Bearing in mind the relevance of this pathway, promoters of norms may work toward the creation of a social environment which facilitates mimetic adoption. They may seek an environment which defines their norms as elements of international legitimacy and their policies and institutions as a legitimate model to be emulated by others.

This kind of advice may be useful, especially for European policymakers, in the area of cooperative security. The spread of the conflict-management norms from Europe to other parts of the world must serve the interests of the European countries. This is because the collective management of conflicts may lead to the promotion of humanitarianism, which constitutes an integral element of their interests. To facilitate the spread of their conflict-management norms, the European policymakers may work toward the strengthening of the social environment which defines the OSCE as a legitimate cooperative security institution. To do so, they may expand the activities of the OSCE, thereby enhancing the credibility of their institution at the global level. An exemplary activity in this regard is the monitoring by an OSCE delegate of the US presidential election in November 2004.[76]

So far so good: however, what is questionable is the long-term sustainability of the European policymakers' effort to facilitate the spread of their conflict-management norms. This is because 'the West' is in general losing its moral appeal today in the global society, largely due to its handling of the issues of Islam.[77] The decline in the overall moral appeal of the European countries inevitably affects the legitimacy of their status in the area of cooperative security. In other words, it will damage the social environment which facilitates the mimetic adoption of their norms by other countries. The European countries are facing a serious challenge today. Unless they manage to salvage their overall moral appeal, their effort to enhance the credibility of the OSCE will be fruitless.

[76] Dow Jones International News, 'US Invites International Nov Election Observers' (10 August 2004); and Stephen Gardner, 'US Voting Held under Europe's Eagle Eye', European Voice (4 November 2004).

[77] See, Agence France-Presse, 'Danish Newspapers Reprint Controversial Mohammed Cartoon', Copenhagen (13 February 2008); and Agence France-Presse, 'Malaysia's Ex-Pm Mahathir Wants Iraq War Leaders on War Crimes Charges', London (25 April 2008).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210510000872 Published online by Cambridge University Press