

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Southeast Asia refers to the southeastern part of Asia and consists largely of the Indochina Peninsula and the Malay Islands. The area includes East Timor, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Vietnam, Brunei, Singapore, Indonesia, Cambodia, Thailand and the Philippines, with a total area of about 4.48 million square kilometers and a total population of about 650.5 million as of 2018.¹ Indonesia has the largest population of about 270 million, and Brunei has the lowest population of 430,000 in the Southeast Asia region.² The total volume of trade in Southeast Asia is \$2.825 trillion as of 2018.³

In response to changes in the international environment, such as the establishment of the European Economic Community in the late 1950s, three countries, Thailand, the Philippines and Malaysia, formed the Association of Southeast Asia in July 1961 to promote regional cooperation and stop communist expansion.⁴ ASEAN was established on 8 August 1967 with 5 nations Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Singapore at the Bangkok declaration. Then

¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs. "South Asia Pacific: Ministry of Foreign Affairs." Accessed January 4, 2020. http://www.mofa.go.kr/www/wpge/m_3483/contents.do.

² Ibid

³ Ibid

⁴ Division, ASEAN Cooperation. "ASEAN." *Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, December 27, 2019. http://www.mofa.go.kr/www/brd/m_3924/view.do?seq=363566&srchFr=&srchTo=&srchWord=&srchTp=&multi_itm_seq=0&itm_seq_1=0&itm_seq_2=0&company_cd=&company_nm=&page=1.

in later years the ASEAN became a ten nation system after Brunei joined in 1984, Vietnam in 1995, Laos and Myanmar in 1997, and Cambodia in 1999.⁵

South Korea has diplomatic relations with all ten countries, becoming with the Philippines, in 1949, to East Timor in 2002. Since the establishment of dialogue in 1989, South Korea and ASEAN countries have continuously developed relations in various fields, including politics, security, economy and society and culture, over the past 29 years.⁶ As a result, ASEAN countries have established themselves as South Korea's No. 1 visiting region and second for trade and investment destination. As of 2019, ASEAN is South Korea's second largest trading target (\$1,597.4 billion), a large-scale overseas investment zone (\$61.3 billion), and an overseas construction order area (\$119 billion).⁷ For South Korea, ASEAN is a strategic location as external enlargement and expanding the diplomatic horizon of the middle power. Moreover, the ASEAN+3 system was launched with ASEAN member states and China, South Korea, and Japan to resolve the transnational issues such as the Asian financial crisis on December 1997 at the 30th Anniversary ASEAN Summit. Therefore, ASEAN+3 cooperate in a various ways such as politics & security, finance & economy and social & culture.

South Korea had undergone extreme political change during President Park Geun-hye administration. President Park was the first female President in South

⁵ "About ASEAN - ASEAN: ONE VISION ONE IDENTITY ONE COMMUNITY." ASEAN. Accessed January 4, 2020. <https://asean.org/asean/about-as>

⁶ ASEAN Cooperation Division of the Foreign Ministry. "Republic of Korea and ASEAN." *A General Situation of ASEAN 2019*, October 2019. http://www.mofa.go.kr/www/brd/m_3924/view.do?seq=363566&srchFr=&srchTo=&srchWord=&srchTp=&multi_itm_seq=0&itm_seq_1=0&itm_seq_2=0&company_cd=&company_nm=&page=1.

⁷ Ibid

Korea, and she was the daughter of Park Jung-hee who was a military dictator and 5th to 9th President in South Korea. During her administration, Choi Sun-sil, one of the President Park's staunchest allies, controlled all of presidential duties instead of the president and committed a lot of an irregularity. However, finally the Choi Sun-sil's shadow ruling for President Park came out in the world⁸. All of Korean were upset with this shadow ruling case, and they also longed for honest and proper government different from President Park. Therefore, President Park was impeached in March 2017 and the same year, the government of Moon Jae-in was launched with assert peace as a key point of their policies. President Moon administration built a five year government administration plan to based on the slogan 'A Nation of People, Righteous Republic of Korea'⁹.

In the year 2017, South Korea declared a "New Southern Policy" under its vision to make Korea-ASEAN countries' relations goes beyond a "strategic partnership" and into a "people-centered community of peace and prosperity (3P: People, Prosperity and Peace)".¹⁰ In order to implement the plan, South Korea's government has visited to the ASEAN countries and there had a diplomatic exchanges with them to expand South Korea's diplomatic and economic possibility through strengthen the cooperation between ASEAN countries.

⁸ Justin Fendos. "The History of a Scandal: How South Korea's President Was Impeached." – The Diplomat. for The Diplomat, January 24, 2017. <https://thediplomat.com/2017/01/the-history-of-a-scandal-how-south-koreas-president-was-impeached/>.

⁹ State Planning Advisory Committee. "The Significance of The Five-Year Plan to Government Operation." *Moon Jae-in a Five-Year Plan for Government Operation*, n.d. Accessed July 2017.

¹⁰ "Progress Direction." Presidential Committee on New Southern Policy. Accessed January 15, 2020. <http://www.nsp.go.kr/policy/policy03Page.do>.

Government of South Korea started NSP policies with five of ASEAN countries which are Indonesia, Singapore, Brunei, and Vietnam. Especially five of ASEAN countries already had deep economic and trade relations with South Korea since before the declaration of NSP. For instance, Vietnam is a country subject to South Korea's intensive cooperation and they have a large scale of infrastructure business with South Korea.¹¹ Moreover, Indonesia also have been settled economic and trade relationship with South Korea through the CEPA(Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement).¹²

Thus, South Korea's government is currently focusing on the implementation of NSP policies towards four countries first. Domestically, a 'presidential committee on the New Southern Policy' was set up under the direct control of the president in August 2018 to lay the groundwork for carrying out pan-governmental policies by drawing up a blueprint that comprehensively contained strategies and tasks.

1.2 Research Question

Based on background information above, I have the following research questions for this thesis:

1. Why South Korea introduces "New Southern Policy"?
2. What is "New Southern Policy"?

¹¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Korea. "A General Vietnam Condition." *Relations with South Korea*, November 2019.

¹² Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Korea. "A General Indonesia Condition." *Relations with South Korea*, November 2019.

3. What are the influences of New Southern Policy for both South Korea and ASEAN countries?

1.3 Research Objectives

The objective of the research is to analyze the South Korea's "New Southern Policy"(NSP) under the Moon administration. The thesis will focused on the NSP factors which came from the importance of ASEAN and Southeast Asia region's role in the world. Moreover, this research has an objective to analyze the final purpose of this topic in which to strengthen human exchange and economic cooperation with ASEAN countries and to expand the diplomatic horizon of South Korea. Furthermore, NSP also to lead cooperation and mutual assistance in response to Democratic People's Republic of Korea(DPRK)'s nuclear ambition especially with ASEAN countries who have a good diplomatic relations with DPRK, and to improve the defense industry cooperation both South Korea and ASEAN countries.

1.4 Significance of the Research

The result from this research will provide an insight on how NSP is selected as the focus for South Korea's foreign policy under Moon administration. The research also aim to see how NSP have influences for the relations between South Korea and ASEAN countries. This research topic is not only addressed domestic concern but also on the international concern of elaborate bilateral relations

between South Korea with ASEAN countries. This research helps the study of diplomatic relation between South Korea and ASEAN countries in the future. Moreover, this topic is also useful to the public in general which are interested in the South Korea's foreign policy and to the students of social sciences especially in the field of International Relations studies.

1.5 Structure of Thesis

The first chapter, is the introduction of this thesis will explain the outline of the thesis by giving the background of the topic, research questions, objectives, and the structure of the thesis.

The second chapter, is the literature review and for the topic, theoretical framework, and concepts. I will collect the literature review from book, journals, report, government official website, and news related with the research questions above. Moreover, theoretical framework and concepts related with the thesis will be elaborated in this chapter which is neoliberalism theory, regionalism, globalization, and foreign policy theory.

The third chapter, is about explaining the research methodology and approach in which I will elaborate my research approach, method, data collection and data analysis technique in an effort to answer the research questions on the gathered data collection.

The fourth chapter, is the discussion and the main part of the thesis. In this chapter I will analyze and provide all collected data to answer the three research questions that were already given in chapter I. Therefore, I will provide the research

data and information that can be used to solve the research questions in a most efficient way.

The fifth chapter will conclude and summarize all previous chapters especially chapter IV and draw conclusion about research questions which are the significance of NSP to both South Korea and ASEAN countries and the future outlook of the NSP based on the chapter I to IV.

After giving the introduction and the background of this research in the chapter I, next chapter will be elaborating on the theoretical framework and provides the following literature reviews which will be used in the research. Moreover, theories and concepts will be used in answering research questions.

