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Culture and Integration:

The European Union and ASEAN in Comparative Perspectives

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Since World War II, changes in international politics have promoted state interdependence and, in particular, regional integration. The characteristics and intensity of regional integration varies with setting, the European Union (EU) being generally considered as the most advanced case. Beginning with the establishment of the European Community of Coal and Steel in 1951, an ever growing number of European states adopted common policies and supranational institutions, entered into a customs union, created the Single European Market, and eventually established a political union and a single currency through the 1992 Treaty of Maastricht. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) provides another prominent example of regional integration. Choi and Caporaso suggest that 'the growing diversity of regional integration efforts provides fertile ground on which to examine integration theories, which [have so far] heavily relied on the European experience.' In spite of this opportunity for comparative analysis, 'research today has become more heavily concentrated in Western Europe, North America and Asia, with little communication across the three areas, producing studies on multiple regions that are in a fundamental way not comparative' (2005:481). This paper lays out the initial groundwork for a research project that takes up the challenge raised by Choi and Caporaso and compares the processes of regional integration in Europe and Southeast Asia from the perspective of cultural co-operation.

There is no consensus on the meaning of the term 'culture' among scholars from various disciplines. But the debates on the concept lie beyond the scope of this paper. For the

limited purposes of this paper, the concept of culture is accepted as implied or construed by the EU's and ASEAN's institutions.

At different times and in different settings, the EU's and ASEAN's institutions began consciously to employ the concept of culture as a tool to further the respective integration processes. On the one hand, they sought to extend integration to the area of cultural policies; on the other, they used culture to promote common regional identities.

The present paper examines the uses of culture in the two integration processes adopting constructivist approach, which highlights the significance of culture, identity and norms as keys to understanding regional integration. More specifically, the paper asks how culture is instrumentalized to advance integration and to construct identities in the politics of integration. The following pages will focus on five themes:

1. EU and ASEAN as examples of regional integration;
2. constructivism, EU and ASEAN;
3. culture as a field of integration politics;
4. cultural policies;
5. culture in the politics of identity.

EU and ASEAN: Regional Integration

To date, European integration has served as the prime and paradigmatic example of regional integration. The eminence of European integration has inspired a large body of literature conceptualizing the European Communities and, later, the European Union either as an 'archetypal [case] of regional integration' (Wallace 1994) or as a phenomenon 'sui generis' (Sabragia 1992). The first view makes the European case the yardstick against which others are to be measured. It is reflected, for example, by comments of a Thai diplomat who – employing the EU as a point of reference – claims that ASEAN could not be considered a regional integration process before the establishment of AFTA in 1992 (Vejjajiva 2001). The

implications of the alternative position, which insists on the singularity of the European experience, are aptly summarized by Rosamond:

"That is to say, there is only one EU and, therefore, European integration cannot be a theoretical testing site for the elaboration of broader generalization. The inclination rather would be to treat the EU as an historically-rooted phenomenon, arising in utterly specific conditions and therefore without meaningful historical precedent or contemporary parallel'. (Rosamond, 2000: 16)

However different, both the 'archetype' and the 'sui generis' conceptions of European integration have tended to hamper systematic comparison with other integration processes. This state of scholarship raises two fundamental questions: first, what is regional integration?; and second, can uneven cases of regional integration be compared?

Regional integration, explains Walter Mattli, is not a new phenomenon. 'Examples of Staatenbünde, Bundesstaaten, Eidgenossenschaften, leagues, commonwealths, unions, associations, pacts, confederacies, councils and their like are spread throughout history' (1999:1). Moreover, much as today, regional integration processes in the past had different objectives and characteristics.

From a different theoretical vantage points, scholars of regional and of European integration offer general concepts of regional integration. Ernst Haas suggests that integration is 'the voluntary creation of larger political units involving the self-conscious eschewal of force in relation between participating institutions' (Haas 1974: 4). Taking a slightly different approach, Donald J. Puchala regards regional integration as 'a concordance system' comprising 'clusters of cooperatively interacting states' (1972:278).

Haas's and Puchala's broad definitions encompass both the European and Southeast Asian cases of regional integration. The EU and ASEAN alike may be considered to represent 'larger political units,' and 'clusters of cooperative states'. Both EU and ASEAN are upshots of the ensuing cold war in the post WWII period which drew sovereign states to

come closer. In Europe, the outbreak of the Cold War¹ brought about American offers of financial aid under the Marshall plan, which envisioned Europe as a free trade area and a bulwark against Communism. Before the American initiative, western European countries had not been interested in any co-operation which might create supranational entity. But although they wanted to protect their national sovereignty, they had to accept the American scheme with its prospect of economic integration for two reasons. First, they were in need of funding for rebuilding their war-torn economies. Second, public sentiment at the time favored the creation of a federal Europe. By accepting the American offer and later establishing the Coal and Steel and the Atomic Communities, the governments of the six original members of the EC/EU therefore could gain public support. In 1957, European integration reached another milestone with the creation of the European Economic Community.

In the following decade, the five founding members of ASEAN² followed a similar path as Western Europe. In the American fight against communism, Southeast Asia had become a region of strategic importance. Following American initiatives, the five countries concluded a series of inter-state alliances, and eventually established ASEAN with their Bangkok Declaration of 1967. The main objectives of the new organization included economic, social and cultural co-operation.

On this broad conceptual level, the comparison between the EU and ASEAN does not pose any particular problems. But systematic and detailed comparative studies have to come to terms with the marked differences between developments of regional integration in Europe, on the one hand, and in Southeast Asia, on the other. The following part will discuss these problems and demonstrate how constructivism can help to understand EU and ASEAN.

1 For examples: the invasion of communists in Greece, Yugoslavia, the growing number of communist regimes in eastern European countries and even on the very border of the sphere of American power, the Democratic Republic of Germany.

2 Founding members of ASEAN are: Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand.

Constructivism, EU and ASEAN

Emanuel Adler explains that ‘constructivism is in fact three layered understanding’ (2005:96). First, it includes a metaphysical layer which deals with ‘the reality that scholars seek to know and [...] the knowledge they seek to interpret [...]’ Second, as social theory, constructivism regards ‘the role of knowledge and knowledgeable agents in the constitution of social reality.’ Third, as international relation theory, constructivism ‘open[s] new important questions for example, about the roles of identities, norms and causal understandings in the constitution of national interests [...], and about the social construction of new territorial and non-territorial transnational regions’ (Adler 2005:96).

Following the lead of international relation studies, scholars have applied the constructivist paradigm to the studies of European integration and ASEAN. Their studies have opened up new perspectives on the roles of norms and identities in formulating state interests and in the social construction of transnational polities. In this paper, I draw on a constructivist approach at two levels: (1) to understand ASEAN as a regional integration process comparable to the EU, and (2) to analyze the EU’ and ASEAN’s cultural co-operation.

Constructivism and Regional Integration

Neo-functionalism, a major theory of European integration, suggests two significant components sustain the integration process: supranational institutions and societal actors (Haas 1968, Caporaso and Keeler, 1995). The neo-functionalist approach emphasizes the leading role played by the supranational level in policy making and in advancing the integration process. In this respect, the EU contrasts sharply with ASEAN, whose member states have so far taken only modest first steps towards the establishment of supranational mechanisms. The member states of the EU have been willing to transfer some of their sovereign rights to supranational institutions such as the Commission and the Court of Justice

whereas the member states of ASEAN have insisted on their national prerogatives and set up only minimal institutions with limited power such as the ASEAN Secretariat.

From this neo-functionalist perspective, ASEAN exemplifies a case of weak regional integration. Moreover, integration in Southeast Asia may be considered as 'negative' in that it focuses on eliminating obstacles while the EU member states have adopted a 'positive' integration strategy that provides for the creation of common rules and norms as well as for common policy-making.

Thus it seems that EU and ASEAN are uneven comparative cases. However, from a constructivist theoretical perspective, Amitav Acharya (2001) suggests that, based on a community of security interests, ASEAN has developed collective norms that sustain its development through interaction and socialization among the members. These norms are: (1) 'the non-use of force and the pacific settlement of disputes'; (2) 'regional autonomy and collective self-reliance'; (3) 'non-interference in the internal affairs of states'; and (4) 'the rejection of an ASEAN military pact and the preference for bilateral defense co-operation' (Acharya 2001:478).

The significance of these norms is that they lead to a collective identity of ASEAN. Thus the constructivist approach helps to broaden the analysis of regional integration from only institutional arrangements and the degree of economic interdependence to the emergence of norms and identities. Moreover, contrary to the prediction of neo-functionalism, the EU's institutions have so far been unable to inspire loyalties among the Member States' citizens to the European Union as a new polity beyond the nation states.

This latter finding draws attention to the second component of regional integration highlighted by neo-functionalist scholarship: societal actors in transnational society such as professional associations, interest groups, and scientific and cultural organizations.

Notwithstanding neo-functionalism claims that these actors would voice demands for integration, they have not always shown support for the European project. The ratification crisis of the Treaty of Maastricht in the early 1990s and the recent rejection of the European constitution in France and the Netherlands provide the most obvious examples. Thus regional integration processes of both the 'positive' and the 'negative' types face the challenge to create societal actors of transnational society and to transfer their loyalty to the new polity beyond the states.

Constructivism and Culture as a New Field of Integration Politics

This paper takes the conventional constructivism of Alexander Wendt as a starting point to understand the two regional integration processes in Europe and Southeast Asia from the perspective of cultural co-operation. In 'Social Theory of International Politics' (1999), Wendt argues that international relations are constructed through social interaction processes. Actors such as states acquire identity – and thus an understanding of the self, others, and state or group interests– through participating in collective meaning, that is by being a part of 'the daily life of international politics.' Wendt asserts that the identities states have acquired can change through new social interactions.

Wendt's theory is relevant to this paper in two ways. First, it helps to understand why culture has become a new field of integration politics. The approach suggests that social interactions between the member states of the EU and ASEAN have developed so far that an integration limited to the economy and to security becomes inadequate. Talking about culture and making culture a field of their policies enable the EU and ASEAN to open up a new context for social interaction: an arena of cultural co-operation transcending state boundaries. Under these conditions, the EU's and ASEAN's institutions become agencies of their own new social structures. At the same time, they use cultural co-operation as a way of shaping a 'European' or 'ASEAN identity' among the citizens of their member states.

Second, Wendt's approach reveals that the EU's and ASEAN's uses of culture – in tandem with the promotion of invented discourses – are indeed the matter of identity politics. Wendt places identity at the very center of his approach. Identity of both individuals and territorial entities can be changed and transformed through social interaction. For territorial entities like states and supranational polities, social interaction means a process in which the institutional actors acquire knowledge on the self and interests of the entity through organized co-operation, the problem-solving experience resulting from such co-operation, etc. Thus concrete action resulting from policy is an important aspect. Wendt further suggests that rhetorical practice, i.e., ways of speaking about one's own identity, also plays a key role in identity transformation. However, he fails to elaborate how discursive practices could create identity. In this paper, I try to overcome this gap, analyzing the EU's and ASEAN's policies on culture as the condition of social interaction – as well as their uses of discourses in their cultural politics.

Culture as a Field of Integration Politics

While the EU is founded on the assumption that its member states share a common culture, ASEAN has much weaker cultural foundations. In the case of the EU, the idea that European countries belong to a common civilization has underpinned the development of the integration process from its beginnings in the 1950s through the establishment of the European Union (EU) in 1992. Christianity, democracy, individualism, human rights, and European art, architecture, and literature are most often cited as distinctive elements of European culture. Moreover, the idea of 'Europe' as a space of civilization that has evolved overtime has become a constitutive part of the cultural identity of western European countries (Delanty 1995).

By contrast, the concept of 'Southeast Asia' as a geographical and cultural unit has emerged only recently, to say nothing about a self-conscious identification of the population with the region. Geography separates the founding members of ASEAN² from one another. Neither the classical kingdoms on the mainland nor those on the islands of Southeast Asia have ever conquered or united the whole region under their rule. The development of the classical kingdoms did not lead to a 'we feeling.' Moreover, people in Southeast Asia speak numerous languages, which belong to different language groups. Nowadays, ASEAN plans to promote the use of English as a means of communication in order to encourage closer contacts and interaction between the citizen of the various member states. After the end of World War II that 'Southeast Asia' emerged as an area of strategic interest to the United States in its fight against communism – a geopolitical position the region continued to occupy through the end of the Cold War. It is only in this period that the concept of Southeast Asia as a distinct region emerged. As compared with European integration, history and cultural traditions played but limited roles in laying the foundations of ASEAN. However, independent of the question in how far cultural commonalities constitute a prerequisite for an integration process, the cultural complexity of any integration project proves to be problematic.

The Treaty of Rome (1957) established the European Communities with the aim of creating 'an ever closer union among peoples'. This aspiration was actually related to the cultural construction of the Communities as an aspect of a political union. Culture was, at that time, thought to pertain to the sphere of 'high politics.' Jean Monnet, however, believed that European unification had to start from 'low politics', i. e., in the economic sphere and more especially with the integration of European heavy industry (Monnet 1978). Integration of some key functional sectors would create the conditions for a spill-over which would then

extend the scope of integration to other areas. The EC/EU member states took for granted that they shared cultural commonality and thus put the issue of culture aside.

In Southeast Asian integration, the issue of culture was initially more straightforward than in the EU because the ASEAN's member states entertained much more modest ambitions for their association than their European counterparts. Thus ASEAN was initially established by the Bangkok Declaration of 1967, not by an international treaty. Moreover, ASEAN's goals were limited to 'promot[ing] regional co-operation in South-East Asia in the spirit of equality and partnership[...]' (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Thailand 1983:1). 'Co-operation' is the key concept in this clause. It implies that ASEAN's member states do not intend to give up any of their rights as sovereign nations. Besides, the Bangkok Declaration states that

[the member states] are determined to ensure their stability and security from external interference in any form or manifestation *in order to preserve their national identities* in accordance with the ideals and aspirations of their peoples' (www.aseansec.org; emphasis mine).

When national sovereignty and identity are not at stake, it is evidently easier to address the issue of culture. Thus the original members of ASEAN agreed even in the founding charter of their new organization that culture belonged to those 'matters of common interest' in which ASEAN should 'promote active collaboration and mutual assistance' (www.aseansec.org).

In the early years of the European Communities, culture – in so far as it was explicitly relevant to European policies – was mainly thought of in terms of cultural assets and commodities. The Treaty of Rome only refers to culture for three purposes: prohibiting discrimination, allowing exceptional restrictions upon the free movement of goods, and safeguarding national art. However, beginning in 1960s, demands for achieving a political union resulted in adding culture to the fields of co-operation among the member states.

While European integration has always had a two-fold goal – a political and an economic union –,the Treaty of Rome gives the first priority to economic integration. But only three years after the Treaty had entered into force, the issue of achieving a political union came to the fore again. At the Bonn Summit of 1961, the governments of the member states discussed the future of European integration and sought ways to develop a political union. On this occasion, they concluded that 'the co-operation of the six must go beyond the political field as such, and will particularly be extended to the sphere of education, of culture, and of research [...]' (European Parliament, 1982:107).

At this point, the case of ASEAN helps to understand the why culture has become a field of integration politics. Adopting a constructivist approach, Nikolas Busse (1999) reinterprets inter-state politics and conflicts in Southeast Asia in the 1970s and in the early 1980s. Busse argues that ASEAN has moved beyond 'balance of power politics' such as 'fighting wars against each other or building alliances against outsiders.'

Busse's argument may be taken further. From the end of the 1980s, international and domestic politics in Southeast Asia have changed. Since the end of the Cold War, the region has enjoyed a more stable peace and economic growth. Therefore, state-interaction and socialization among the ASEAN's members play out in a new context, in which economic and security co-operation prove to be inadequate.

Moreover, ASEAN celebrated its thirtieth anniversary in 1997 in the midst of uncertainty. The financial and economic crisis which swept across Asia in that year caused a severe immediate and sustained economic recession. In order to cope with the situation, ASEAN leaders called for international assistance and greater solidarity among the member states. 'ASEAN: One Region, One Vision' – a book commemorating the anniversary of the association that was distributed by Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad at the ASEAN Summit on 15 December 1997 – highlights the change of direction in ASEAN's

development, which resulted from the financial crisis. In their 'ASEAN Vision 2020,' a document adopted at the same summit, the heads of state and government³

'envision the entire Southeast Asia to be, by 2020, an ASEAN community conscious of its ties of history, aware of its cultural heritage and bound by a common regional identity.' (<http://www.aseansec.org/1814.htm>)

The promotion of regional identity and cultural interaction between the member states became a pressing issue as is demonstrated by the establishment of the ASEAN Foundation in the same year. In the following years, the Hanoi Action Plan and the Bali Concord II articulated new visions and took measures to increase public awareness of ASEAN through cultural activities.

ASEAN, therefore, extended its integration efforts, which were initially narrowly limited, to the political domain as is symbolized by the new interest in creating identity through cultural activities. Much as Karl Deutsch has suggested, security as the basis of regional integration goes the mere preservation of peace. It 'can also mean the security of wealth and property [...] or security can mean the security of symbols and institutions, of positions of class and role, of images and habits, of ideology and culture...' (Deutsch 1968: 211).

Following the same logic, culture gained new prominence as a field of politics of European integration again economic and security integration were challenged. From the late 1960s through much of the 1970s, political and economic problems taught the member states and the institutions of the EEC to realize the shortcomings of an integration limited to security and the economy. In the 1960s the process of European integration was nearly halted several times due to the confederation approach pursued by President de Gaulle of France.

³ See Joint Statement of the Heads of State/Government of the Member States of ASEAN on the Financial Situation Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 15 December 1997, <http://www.aseansec.org/5221.htm>.

Moreover, in this period the soaring oil price and the collapse of the Brettonwood System put European integration to a severe test.

As a result, the EC/EU's institutions began consciously to view culture and identity as intrinsic aspects of integration and as key tools for deepening the integration process. The concept of a 'European identity' adopted in 1973 has become as popular as controversial since its first articulation.⁴

This consciousness became stronger when the EC/EU institutions learned from day-to-day politics. In 1979 and 1984, the low turn-out for the first direct elections to the European Parliament revealed that the integration process did not command the broad popular support that had long been taken for granted. The ensuing legitimacy crisis of the European institutions has since proved a recurrent problem of the integration process. Together with demands for a political union from 1979 to 1991, efforts to overcome the legitimacy deficit have helped to make culture an aspect of integration that is as prominent as it is controversial. Besides, 'culture' has become a major area of commercial activities, and hence, falls increasingly within the Community's legal competence in matters of economic and industrial policies (Shore 2000: 25).

In actual fact, however, the governments were slow to follow up on cultural aspirations in the integration process. The European Parliament and the Commission, however, proved far more ambitious than the heads of state and government. Both Parliament and Commission considered culture and a genuine European cultural policy as seminal for

⁴ See the European Communities (1973) 'Declaration on European Identity' Bulletin of the European Communities 12.

the political union⁵. Cultural co-operation in the European case was, therefore, shaped by a mediation between competing ideas concerning culture and the integration.

From the end of the 1980s, the EC/EU's involvement in international politics lent additional weight to the conscious effort of its institutions to use policies on culture to create a new condition of social learning.

The identity of the EC/EU was partly constructed in the image of its enemy, the Soviet block in eastern Europe. The end of the Cold War in the late 1980s turned this enemy into partners and thus created a new context in which the EC/EU had to negotiate its identity. Moreover, both *realpolitik* and a sense of responsibility towards the east of the continent led the member states to adopt a policy of eastern enlargement. This new challenge provoked concerns over the differences between the older member states and the candidates for membership. Along with political and economic conditions, culture played an important role in the discussions of the enlargement policy, which has proven unpopular with considerable parts of the European electorate. On 1 January 2007, eastern enlargement of the EU will reach its conclusion with the accession of Romania and Bulgaria. But the membership bid of Turkey has made the cultural identity of Europe a crucial issue in the debates on the future of the Union.⁶

It may be concluded that culture plays an ambiguous role in processes of regional integration. On the one hand, cultural commonalities form part of the prerequisites for integration processes. On the other hand, culture proves a sensitive area where political integration is pursued. Thus both for the EU (as an example of 'positive' integration) and for ASEAN (as example of 'negative' integration) cultural co-operation appears to be the best

⁵ See The European Communities (June 1964) Seventh General Report on the Activities of the Communities 1 April 1963-31 March 1964, p. 359, and the European Communities (1962) 'Action Programmes for the Second Stage' Bulletin of the European Communities 2, p. 8.

⁶ Membership negotiations with Croatia are also under way, and may reach a speedy conclusion.

way for the first phase of the integration process. Later, culture has become a new field of integration politics when economic and security integration proved inadequate for the further advancement of integration.

Culture as a Policy Field

The European experience suggests that intergovernmentalism dominates the decision making process of cultural policy, no matter how advanced an integration process. The more the EU's supranational institutions have been involved with the field of culture, the stronger its orientation towards intergovernmentalism in cultural policy has become. The European Parliament and especially its Socialist Group have long encouraged the EC/EU to pursue policies on culture following a supranational approach. Moreover, in the early 1980s, the Parliament spearheaded demands for institutional reforms and for the establishment of a political union. In 1984, it drew up the draft Treaty on the Establishment of the European Union, the first document of its kind to include a special article on culture. When common European cultural activities became more visible in the 1980s, supporters of the cultural construction of 'Europe' encouraged the EC to integrate the issue of culture into a revised Treaty of Rome and into a treaty establishing the political union. These efforts led to a debate on the direction in which the EC/EU should pursue its policies on culture. Finally, the establishment of the Single Market proposed by the Delors Commission increased the importance of culture in the integration process.

Together, these developments resulted in the inclusion of Article 128 on culture in the Treaty of Maastricht (1992). On the one hand, the Treaty provides the legal basis for the EU's cultural activities and endorses culture as an important aspect of the Union. On the other hand, it subjects the EU's cultural policy to the principle of subsidiarity, which gives

precedence to national and lower levels of government unless a policy goal can only be achieved through an action of the Union.

In spite of differences between the Southeast Asian and the European processes of regional integration process, ASEAN and the EU share certain similarities in their approach to cultural policy-making. In ASEAN much as in the EU, decisions regarding cultural matters remain reserved to the heads of state and government. From December 1978 to September 1991, the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia and the ensuing peace process caused sustained disagreements among the member state of ASEAN, which regarded the influx of Cambodian refugees and the question whether or not an intervention of the superpowers should be welcomed. The peace agreement signed in Paris in September 1991 not only ended the Cambodian conflict, but also gave an ASEAN emboldened by the region's economic miracle new aspirations for its future. In 1995, ASEAN leaders began to dream once more of enlarging ASEAN to the whole of Southeast Asia. Unfortunately, such optimism did not survive the 1997 financial crisis. What remained was the plan to intensify economic integration based on a sense of community that was to be enhanced by cultural activities. Moreover, ASEAN also probed the possibilities of developing institutions of a more supranational character. Nevertheless, the association has retained its intergovernmental approach to cultural policy.

As to the funding of cultural activities, ASEAN appears to be more progressive than the EU. In 1978, the association set up the ASEAN Cultural Fund to finance its cultural activities. It was only in 1980, by contrast, that the EU – then already in the third decade of its existence – began to make budgetary provisions for cultural activities reluctantly appropriating minimal sums. From 1980 to 1983, European cultural action remained limited to one-time initiatives. In response to the legitimacy problem following the 1984 elections (see above), the EC changed approach to its cultural activities. From 1984 to 1995, the

Commission ran small annual programmes including cultural heritage and media initiatives. The annual budget of cultural heritage programme in 1984 totaled only 400,000 ECU peaking at 5,637,000 ECU in 1995. As a result of the Treaties of Maastricht, Nice, and Amsterdam, the Commission could launch larger cultural programmes with more substantial budgets from 1997 to 1999. These included Kaleidoscope (mass media activities), Arian (a book and reading programme), and Raphael (a cultural heritage programme). Since 2000, the Commission has integrated these three schemes into a single framework called 'Culture 2000.'

Whereas the EU has developed its cultural activities from one-time initiative to long-term programmes, ASEAN still limits its action to only one-time initiatives. These initiatives include ASEAN film festival weeks, conferences, cultural exhibitions, youth camps, exchanges of cultural professionals, etc. Both the EU's long-term cultural programmes and ASEAN's one-time cultural initiatives creates more transnational contacts of cultural professionals. Rules set up by these long-term and short-term programmes generate structures that shape not only organizations of members of states practice, but also enhance the 'we feeling' through the creation of networks among cultural professionals and others who participate in the programs. However, this may be more obvious in the EU case.

The European Commission has introduced the system of partnership for applicants of its cultural programmes in 1997. The Raphael Programme required at least three applicants from different member states. Later Culture 2000 has increased this requirement to five and three partners from different countries for multi-annual and annual projects respectively.

There is some evidence that the networks created for 'Raphael' or 'Culture 2000' projects have fostered long-term co-operations. Examples include the European Museums' Information Institute (EMII), which received a Raphael award in 1999. The project was led by the Museum Documentation Association in the United Kingdom (MDA), who had played a key role in introducing a national museum computer network in the country. MDA has the

mission to provide information about museums and to make their collections and activities accessible on the internet. As 'Raphael' required applications to be based on European Partnerships, MDA co-ordinate with other two institutions from France and Denmark to search for further partnership and to set up the European Museums' Information Institute (EMII). The Raphael fund allows EMII to create network, which continued to function after the end of the grant.

In actual fact, European cultural activities received much greater financial support than the meager direct appropriations suggest. Funding was secured through the EU's Structural Funds, instruments for regional development. Efforts at completing the Single Market led to a doubling of these Funds in 1987, in 1994, and in 1999 each. Moreover, the Treaty of Maastricht (1992) encouraged the EU's institutions to take culture into account in all policy areas. Almost 80% of regional projects include cultural elements (URBAN, RECHAR, etc.), which serve as key tools of development and often concern the daily life of the citizens. By contrast, activities financed through direct budgetary appropriations to cultural policy tend to focus on 'high' culture and to target cultural and academic professionals.

Following the European lead, ASEAN, after the financial crisis in 1997, has planned to integrate the cultural dimension into its development activities. But ASEAN lacks the structural policy with its dedicated funds, which have played a major for cultural action and policies in the EC/EU. Therefore, the process of Europeanization, which has been promoted through an interplay between culture and regional policy, might be difficult to replicate in Southeast Asia under present conditions.

Culture as Politics of Identity

As compared to nation states, both the EU and ASEAN are new territorial entities. On the one hand, they are still in the process of identity formation and articulation. On the other, they lack cultures recognized as their own, which would serve to represent their identities. The cultural policies taken up by both EU and ASEAN are ways of searching for a European and Southeast Asian culture respectively. Cultural policy making creates a new arena of social interaction and thus helps to shape regional identities. Both the EU and ASEAN, moreover, develop invented discourses that help to formulate their identities and facilitate identity politics.

‘People’ s Europe’ and ‘People’s ASEAN’

In June 1999, the ASEAN Eminent Persons Groups (EPG) was established, which criticized the official VISION 2020 for the association and articulated the alternative view of 'The People's ASEAN'. Interestingly, this phrase suggests a parallel to the 'People's Europe' as postulated in a document dating back to the Fontainebleau Summit of 1984. At Fontainebleau, the European Council set up an ad hoc committee on the 'People's Europe' chaired by Adonnino to prepare suggestions on how to make 'Europe' a reality in people's lives.

Despite their similar names, the two documents differ from one another in many ways. 'The People's ASEAN' makes its clear that the ASEAN VISION 2020 is a utopian dream. It points out that this vision is not even generally accepted among the leaders of the member countries. Moreover, it calls on ASEAN's leaders and institutions to accept the economic reality of the member states and to overcome economic disparity. It also suggests that 'People's ASEAN' should pay more attention to the young generation creating more opportunities for their interaction through university exchanges and youth corps. It also proposes exchanges between academics and cultural centers in member countries financed by

their hosts. Although the EPG realized the importance of promoting ASEAN awareness among the citizens, it did not suggest concrete plans to address this issue. The target groups of ASEAN remains limited to small numbers of middle-class citizens in the capital cities who enjoy greater opportunities than people in rural areas.

'A People's Europe,' the earlier European document, presents a much clearer vision. It calls for a polity without internal borders in which people enjoy not only basic human right, but also economic and civil rights introduced by the integration process. The Adonnino committee asked the community's institutions to use what Micheal Billig calls 'banal nationalism' to enhance public consciousness, that is inserting 'Europe' into daily life through the introduction of European passports, European car plates, a European anthem, the European flag, sports activities, etc. Unlike ASEAN, which wants to promote English as a means of communication, 'A People's Europe' suggests to encourage people to learn at least two European languages other than their native tongue.

In spite of these differences, both 'The People's Europe' and 'The People's ASEAN' are political discourses which help to create what Benedict Anderson (1991) calls 'imagined communities.' Anderson problematizes the roles of imagery in the process of identity construction, especially in political entities. A nation, which is originally an abstract concept, gains its body through imagination. This kind of imagination is created by systems of cultural representations and practices. As with nation states, the imaginary also plays a key role in the cultural construction of the EU and of ASEAN.

Identity is constructed in part through the narratives of a given political entity or community. Such narratives might be invented and are told by landscapes, symbols, architectures, monuments, rituals, history, etc. Both the EU and ASEAN lack foundation myths. The EU's and ASEAN's cultural activities allow them to construct the narratives of their 'selves' as communities of economic integration with cultural souls and foundations.

This is made evident by the ways in which the European Commission has articulated its policies on culture. Similarly, in the last decade, ASEAN leaders continually stressed the cultural commonality uniting the peoples of the region.

In the EU's case, the 'People's Europe' has been further articulated through the interplay between culture and regional policy. Through this practice, the EU can narrate its history through the urban landscapes of the member states. ASEAN, by contrast, is still far from achieving this capability. Further studies, to be sure, are needed on how local people interpret and engage the representations of the EU in their neighborhoods. But the presence of the EU and its symbols is unmistakable and likely to increase. Thus the 'European City of Culture' programme, which was set up by the Ministers of Cultural Affairs in 1984, does not only guarantee prestige to the designated cities, but also secures further development funding from the Structural Funds. Moreover, the interplay between culture and regional policy gives a visible presence of the EU in the territorial space of its member states through the construction of buildings, squares, cultural centers etc. This is exemplified by the regional development project in the Dutch city of Maastricht, where the Treaty Establishing the European Union was signed in 1991. The industrial area along the river Maas opposite the old city center had been derelict. 'European' regional development projects have transformed the whole area into a modern architectural landscape comprising a ceramic industry center, residential buildings, business and cultural centers and a meeting square. All over the surface of the square appear Euro symbols on floor tiles claiming their place next to Dutch national symbols in the urban landscape.

In the last five years, ASEAN's leaders have expressed their interest in using culture as a medium for development. It is still too early to predict whether or not this interest will be followed up with projects that can contribute to a narrative of ASEAN told through the urban spaces of its member states. So far, ASEAN has been the business of political leaders, its

cultural activities have mainly targeted small numbers of people in the capital cities. Making ASEAN popular in the member states does not seem to be an easy task considering the uneven development and economic problems in the region. Nevertheless the concept of a 'caring community,' which ASEAN VISION 2020 originated in 1997, remains one of the principal goals of the association (see the Bali Concord II of 2003).

As envisioned by its leaders, ASEAN would look both outward – to play a key role in international politics, and inward – to work together as a 'caring community.' ASEAN VISION 2020 describes this latter aspiration in some detail. ASEAN is to be a community (1) which is conscious of its regional identity; (2) which prides itself of the 'vibrant and open ASEAN societies'; (3) which overcomes the basic problems of living; (4) which has strong families as its foundation; (5) a community in which 'civil society is empowered', (6) which is free from drugs; (7) 'technologically competitive'; (8) 'green and clean' ; (9) a community in which problems are solved on the regional level; (10) a community of democratic societies; (11) committed to developing institutions that will help to realize the ambition of a 'caring community' (ASEAN Vision 2020, 1997).

If the 'caring community' is materialized as ASEAN has planned, it is likely that 'People's ASEAN' will become an imagined community. The EU experience demonstrates that practical interests in daily life of citizens can lead to the creation of a new point of identification.

European identity vs. ASEAN identity

'European identity' – a concept introduced by the 'Declaration on European identity' issued in 1973 – embraces both internal and external aspects. On the one hand, it refers to the common civilization of Europe; on the other, it aims at expressing a common European voice in the international relations. The term originally provoked the criticism that the EC/EU tried

to superimpose an invented bureaucratic identity on national ones. In the 1980s, therefore, the EC/EU's institutions later (in the 1980s) gave a new meaning to the phrase. Through its cultural activities, the Commission explained that 'European identity' comprised regional and national identities and that it was a task of the EC/EU to promote the former in order to preserve the latter. Although the term 'European identity' remained controversial, it has created a space for speaking about 'Europe' and in the same time slowly juxtaposed the 'European dimension' to national and regional domains. The concept of 'European identity' is based on a presumed particularity of European culture, which effectively lies to a great extent in a Euro-centric worldview.

ASEAN has often used the terms 'ASEAN identity' and 'Southeast Asian identity' interchangeably. The reference to a common regional identity has drawn less criticism than in the European case. Without strong supranational bureaucrats, ASEAN's identity only represents an identity of state cooperation. In other words, ASEAN's identity so far has only an external aspect which does not challenge contents of national identities. Southeast Asian identity has been created in the image of the west. But ASEAN also uses an identity discourse to highlight its own uniqueness and to stress its special ways of dealing with integration methods and certain problems.

From late 1990s, the European Commission has felt free explicitly to advertise on EUROPA, the EU's official web site, that one of the main purposes of the EU's cultural policy is to create a 'European identity.' Thus it may be concluded that the interplay between cultural policy and the political discourse employed by the EU is bringing about the creation of an supranational identity.

Conclusion

For both the EU and ASEAN, culture plays an important, but also a highly problematic role in regional integration. Cultural commonalities, which are often considered indispensable for integration, are not always relevant. The European case demonstrates that the cultural commonality, which is claimed to underpin the integration project, is itself a cultural construction and easily overrated. Cultural complexities of the integration process come to the fore when economic and political problems exacerbate the legitimacy deficit of integration in its negative stage.

Culture and cultural policy have marked a turning point of integration process. The EU's and ASEAN's experiences demonstrate that economic and security co-operation do not provide adequate social interaction for sustaining regional integration processes whether or not they aim at establishing political unions.

Cultural policy becomes a space of identity politics, in which discourse also plays a role. Policies related to 'high' culture may serve to promote exaggerated claims of cultural commonality, but will not contribute to raise awareness of and identification with the integration process among the citizens. Constructing a regional integration polity as an imagined community likely requires narratives drawing on an interplay of space and culture. Moreover, cultural policy may help to create interaction among people and contribute to the emergence of a common identity. Further inquiries into the paradoxical relationship between culture and regional integration requires more empirical research, which will contribute to our understanding of general characteristics of regional integration. Grand theories of international relation are likely to prove less useful in capturing this paradox than more adaptable medium range theories.

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