

## บทคัดย่อ

ทิศทางใหม่ของการเรียนรู้ในยุคโลกาภิวัตน์: ความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างสหภาพยุโรป  
และเอเชียทางการศึกษาในสาขาวิชา “ยุโรปศึกษา”

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ในบทความนี้ ผู้เขียนศึกษาเรื่องความสัมพันธ์ระหว่างเอเชีย – ยุโรปในประเด็นการแลกเปลี่ยนทางวิชาการ การศึกษาระดับอุดมศึกษา ทรัพยากรมนุษย์ และปฏิสัมพันธ์ทางวัฒนธรรมในเชิงกว้าง ผู้เขียนเริ่มจากการศึกษานโยบายทั่วไปด้านการศึกษา เยาวชน และวัฒนธรรมของสหภาพยุโรป และศึกษาเอกสารยุทธศาสตร์ฉบับใหม่ของคณะกรรมการยุโรปเรื่อง “ความร่วมมือกับกลุ่มประเทศโลกที่สามด้านการศึกษาระดับอุดมศึกษา” แล้วศึกษาความตกลงระหว่างเอเชียและยุโรปด้านการศึกษาเป็นประเด็นต่อไป โดยประเมินเอกสารยุทธศาสตร์ด้านภูมิภาคเอเชียของคณะกรรมการยุโรประหว่างปี ค.ศ. ๑๙๙๔ - ๒๐๐๓ รวมถึงหลักทางวัฒนธรรม ในกระบวนการใหม่ของการประชุมเอเชีย – ยุโรปหรืออาเซม

เนื้อหาส่วนหลักของบทความนี้เป็นการศึกษาสถานภาพของการแลกเปลี่ยนทางการศึกษาระหว่างเอเชียและสหภาพยุโรปซึ่งขณะนี้ดำเนินไปได้ด้วยดีและมีแนวโน้มว่าจะขยายตัวในอนาคต โดยผู้เขียนได้วิเคราะห์สมมุติฐานที่เรียกร้องให้เอเชียและยุโรปเน้นความสำคัญของการศึกษามากขึ้น และวิเคราะห์เรื่องของการปรากฏทางวัฒนธรรม ทศนคติทั่วไปในกลุ่มสังคม ความร่วมมือ และค่านิยม นอกจากนี้ยังได้วิเคราะห์การทำงานของหน่วยงานการศึกษาที่เชื่อมโยงสหภาพยุโรปและเอเชียเข้าด้วยกัน เช่น University Association for Contemporary European

Studies (UACES) ในประเทศอังกฤษ มูลนิธิเอเชีย – ยุโรป หรือ “อาเซฟ” (Asia – Europe Foundation – ASEF) และสำหรับความร่วมมือด้านการศึกษาระดับภูมิภาค ผู้เขียนศึกษาโครงการยุโรปศึกษาในเอเชีย กลไกของเครือข่ายความร่วมมือและการสนับสนุนเงินทุนของยุโรปและเอเชีย และโครงการต่าง ๆ ที่เกี่ยวข้องกับการเผยแพร่ความรู้ด้านยุโรปในประเทศที่มีวัฒนธรรมต่างกัน โดยวิเคราะห์หลักสูตรยุโรปศึกษาของจุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัยเป็นกรณีศึกษา และในตอนท้ายได้แจกแจงข้อสรุปเรื่องความสัมพันธ์ของการศึกษาในบริบทเอเชีย – ยุโรป พร้อมทั้งเสนอแนะแผนการสำหรับความร่วมมือทางการศึกษาระดับอุดมศึกษาระหว่างเอเชียและยุโรปในอนาคตด้วย

## **“Re - Orienting” the Global Learning Experience\***

### **Higher Education in the Relations between the European Union and Asia and the Subject of ‘European Studies’**

Georg Wiessala\*\*

#### **I Introduction**

*Tout homme éclairé est un homme libre* (Voltaire)

This article examines the role of education in the relationship between Europe and Asia. In it, I use the term *reorientation* in a twofold sense: *Re-orientation* - with a small ‘o’ - stands for re-thinking, or re-direction of European policies concerning educational and cultural matters; in this sense, the term denotes an adaptation to the challenges posed by economic, social and cultural globalization and mounting international interdependence. This meaning extends, in particular, to the twin dangers inherent in the new hyper-terrorism and in the escalating erosion of people’s liberties through global policies, which are becoming more hegemonic and unilateralist. Spelt with a capital ‘O’, however, the term *Re-Orientation* can reveal a second level of meaning: in this second - but not *secondary* - sense, it signifies,

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\* The Title of this paper was adapted from a short article by the author in the *European Voice* newspaper (‘EU Study Programmes’ supplement 2002)

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quite literally, a stronger prioritization of educational interaction *towards the Orient*.

Regardless of which meaning one might prefer, this paper aims to demonstrate how educational interaction between Europe and Asia, can, by its very nature, become a catalyst, or dynamic contributor, in rejecting a so-called ‘clash of civilizations’ (cf. Ioan Voicu, *Bangkok Post* 2002). What has become known as ‘people-to-people-contacts’ between continents can, arguably, lead to a more mutual appreciation of cultural differences; educational cooperation may thus go some way towards counteracting a wholesale equation of ‘terrorism’ with any race, religion or creed in East or West.

Following a critical review of the European Union’s principles and main programmes in the areas of education, vocational training, youth and culture, this article moves on to discuss, in some more detail, the position of education and training in the framework of the European Union’s ‘Asia Policy’. It will show how this policy emerged from earlier, more fragmented, programmes, which were implemented by an *élite* of the EU’s Member States, in particular the UK, France and Germany.

This article will also demonstrate in which way matters of educational and cultural cooperation between Europe and Asia became more firmly entrenched in overall political and economic, East-West dialogue, how it was ‘institutionalized’ and grew into an official ‘pillar’ of Asia-EU relations. This latter development will be investigated, firstly, through the prism of Asia-related policy-initiatives of the European Union Executive, the European Commission, and, secondly, from the point of view of the participants of the Asia-Europe Meetings (ASEM). In order to

illustrate these points, I will look at a number of educational actors in Europe and Asia, which were instrumental in the inter-continental dialogue about cultures and education, and proved to be successful in combining implementation of EU policy with a dialogue that was sensitive to a variety of cultural norms and values. The paper will close with a brief examination of the main cooperation initiatives, institutions and programmes, which provide a link between contemporary Asian and European educational actors and will look briefly at the future prospects of Euro-Asian exchange.

## II The European Dimension of Education

*The vitality and efficiency of any civilization can be measured by the appeal that its culture has for other countries. We need to ensure that the European higher education system acquires a world-wide degree of attraction equal to our extraordinary cultural and scientific traditions.*

(Source: Bologna Declaration, June 1999)

This section will discuss the outlines of education policies in the European Union (EU) in as far as they impinge on EU-Asia relations. The main principles of European Union activity in the field of education are contained in articles 3 I (q), 149 and 150 of the EC Treaty. Social Policy, or ‘Social Progress Policies’ (Moussis, 2000: 167), constitutes one of the key activities by means of which the Community fulfils its tasks. Initiatives concerning ‘education’, ‘training’ or ‘youth’ form only a small part of a larger bundle of policies. Inside this policy-amalgam, most European initiatives in the area of education are connected with the idea of a diverse and ‘social’ Europe, emphasizing

peoples' skills and entitlements. This is a concept which gained stronger currency throughout 2002/3, both internationally and on the agendas of national research bodies (e.g. ESRC, 2003: 8, 19). At the most fundamental level, EU Education Policy thus aims to make '*a contribution to education and training of quality and to the flowering of the cultures of the member states*' (articles 2 and 3 ECT). However, in view of the very significant unemployment figures within the EU, education and training must also be conceived of as instruments of an active labour market and 'employability policy', and as a pre-requisite of technological progress and advancement in the diverse regions of Europe. In this line of argument, the Council of Ministers of the EU acknowledged in 2002 that education is an indispensable part of the member states' employment strategies (Decision 2002/177/EC). It forms a wider, 'market-building', policy and can address existing socio-economic disparities in Europe. It possesses the potential to contribute to regional competitiveness, equality of wealth and social cohesion.

In the wider perspective of East-West relations upon which this paper is based, education, by means of cultural exchange, also forms part and parcel of the EU's widening arsenal of external relations and global diplomacy. As far as Asian countries are concerned, this is particularly evident in the European Union's cultural and academic contacts with the People's Republic of China. The various layers and initiatives of the burgeoning EU-China cooperation (Meissner, 2002; Wiessala, 2002: 93/4; Hodges, 2003) reveal a plethora of education-related programmes. Most of them aim at the support for legal and financial reform, democracy, human rights or local governance in China. In 2003, selected examples of these bilateral initiatives comprised: the *Euro-China Academic Network (ECAN)*, the *China-Europe*

*International Business School (CEIBS), the EU-China Vocational Training Programme, the EU-China Higher Education Cooperation Programme and the EU-China European Studies Centres Programme.* In its key policy papers on China, Hong Kong and Macau from 1995,<sup>1</sup> the Commission confirmed this agenda: it envisaged Sino-EU higher education networks, European Studies Programmes and human resource development as essential tools for nurturing incipient democratic change in the PRC and called for a ‘redoubling’ of European efforts in the area of higher education.<sup>2</sup> Educational cooperation thus evolved into a policy for the benefit of a wider EU agenda of ‘constructive engagement’. More intense educational exchange, information networks, as well as European cultural visibility and ‘profile’, all aimed to foster transition from within China towards economic and social reforms and a more open society.

The Amsterdam Treaty acknowledged the wider role of education in European politics in a more significant way than any previous Treaties had done. One of the more notable achievements of the Treaty was the addition of a new key objective to the European Community Treaty (ECT, *Preamble, recital nine*). The new insertion, or ‘recital’, tasked the European Community to ‘*promote the development of the highest possible level of knowledge for their peoples through a wide access to education and through its continuous updating*’. For some observers this confers on education something akin to a ‘constitutional’ status within the European Union (Church and Phinnemore, 2002: 334). But the

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example: COM (95) 279 (at point B 2, C 1, D 1); COM (1998) 181 (at point C 2, pp. 19/20 and E); COM (2000) 552 (at points B 2, p. 7, C 2, pp. 10/11); COM (2001) 265 (at point 3, p. 5, point 5.5., p. 19)

<sup>2</sup> COM (95) 279, at point D 1, p. 14 and D 2, p. 15

proponents of 'constitutionalization' in European education have so far failed to address a more fundamental issue: what exactly *are* the underlying 'European' values that can inform a European 'knowledge-based' economy and how can appropriate political guidelines for their implementation be formulated? Observers and policy-makers alike should be aware of the need for much more reflection on these issues. Taken at face value, a further 'upgrading' of education within the EU framework appears to be a development worth supporting in the long term. But, ironically, there is an attendant danger of an increase in 'narrow-mindedness' in the EU's striving towards an all encompassing 'Europe of Knowledge' or 'European Knowledge Society' (European Commission, DG Education and Culture, 2002: 3).

This ultimately has to do with *what kind of values* the Union seeks to embrace or disseminate, and touches on the question of whether or not the EU possesses a 'vision' an 'identity', or even an underlying 'metaphysical', even 'spiritual', dimension. This risk becomes evident on closer inspection of the relevant EU statements on education policy. Edy Korthals Altes expressed this unerringly, when observing (2003: 41): 'it seems unlikely that the EU will succeed in setting itself free from the narrow-mindedness, so typical for an economic cocoon. Indicative for this state of mind was the triumphant declaration – at the European summit meeting in Lisbon – that the EU should become the "*most competitive and knowledge intensive economy in the world*". A rather meager vision if this is compared with the broad perspective of the founding fathers. Schuman, Monnet, De Gasperi, Adenauer, Spaak, Beyen and many others never thought about integration as an objective in itself but as a means to *serve* the great cause of peace, reconciliation, prosperity and justice in our world'. These arguments are, of course, equally pertinent regarding the ultimate



guiding impulse of other EU policies, such as the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), Trade Policy or Development Assistance. However, the entrenchment of key principles of EU educational collaboration in the relevant policy areas is, arguably, much further advanced than the academic debate about their ideological justification or constitutional status.

Beyond the ideological debate, there are significant legal limits to EC involvement in the sensitive area of education. The Union itself acknowledges that (e.g.: Delegation, 2000: 5). While harmonisation and integration across the European Union remain overriding objectives in a number of policy areas, such as the Internal Market or the Single Currency, the dictum of *vive la différence* definitely rings true in the field of education. The member states retain primary responsibility for educational policy within the Community, and at the Community level, education - including higher education - do *not* form part of a ‘common’ or ‘unified’ European policy. Competencies for both content and organization of learning remain firmly within national remits. More than that, the Community is expressly banned from impinging on ‘content and organization of educational systems’, and from interfering with member states’ competence in the areas of ‘linguistic and cultural diversity’ (article 149 (1) ECT). This basic rule is a direct derivative of article 6 (3) [ex 6] of the TEU, compelling the Union to ‘respect the national identities of its Member States’.

Within this framework of what might be termed educational subsidiarity, provided by Community Law, action at EU level is thus only justified where it can provide ‘added value’, where, ‘by acting together, the members states can achieve more than if they were to act alone’ (COM (2001) 385, at 1.1.). The European

Commission, as the Community's executive, thus assumes a complementary role. It is responsible for implementing the 'European dimension' of education, which was first called for in the *Magna Charta Universitatum* (1988), the *Sorbonne Declaration* (1998) and the *Bologna Declaration* (1999). Many of these initiatives emphasized the role of Universities as sources of a 'world-class reference' standard<sup>3</sup> for the development of a European cultural dimension. The EU's own ambitions towards a *European Higher Education Area* by 2010 acted as a catalyst for the gestation of these Europe-wide approaches to education. In September 2003, a conference in Berlin further investigated the implications of these new schemes, promoting the theme of *Realizing the European Higher Education Area*.<sup>4</sup> Individual European Council meetings, such as the summits of Lisbon (March 2000), Stockholm (March 2001) or Barcelona (March 2002), helped to highlight the impact of the strong trends of globalization and internationalization in education. Last, but by no means least, the Council of Europe, in its role as observer, promoter and mediator in educational matters, contributed significantly to the growing 'European-ness' of learning (Council of Europe, 2002). Over the last decade, the *Bologna Process*, named after the original document of 1999, bound together more than 40 European countries as signatory states, reflecting an ambition to attain what was termed educational conversion 'from all directions' (Davies, 2003: 23). The *Bologna Process* was very successful in articulating and fine-tuning the main goals of overall European educational collaboration. These encompassed the promotion of a number of parallel developments:

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<sup>3</sup> See: *Rapid Database*, IP/03/194

<sup>4</sup> The conference website was at: <http://bologna-berlin2003.de/haupt1.htm>

- The ‘European’ dimension to education and of a European co-operative effort
- The widest possible access to education and quality of provision
- European benchmarking and quality assurance
- Student and staff mobility, exchange and an increase in language proficiency<sup>5</sup>
- More transparency and the Europe-wide recognition of diplomas and qualifications
- The processes of life-long learning, distance education, ‘e-learning and ICT’<sup>6</sup>
- The vocational relevance of education and training<sup>7</sup> and matters of employability
- The development of ‘democratic societies’ through educational exchange
- The communication and dissemination of the European Union’s ‘cultures’ and ‘values’<sup>8</sup>

Opening up education and training systems to the wider world, exchange and mobility and mutual recognition of qualifications became in themselves vital, legally enforceable, parts of the Single Market and of the Four Freedoms (in particular: the freedom of movement for persons and freedom of establishment). By contrast, the terms ‘development of democratic societies’ and ‘values’,

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<sup>5</sup> See: Commission Report: COM (2002) 597; Commission Action Plan COM (2003) 449 on *Promoting Language Learning and Linguistic Diversity* (Brussels, 24 July 2003). See also: *Rapid Database*, IP/03/1112; the year 2001 was designated the ‘European Year of Languages’

<sup>6</sup> COM (2001) 172, of 28 March 2001; see also: *Rapid Database*, IP/03/168, IP/03/481, IP/03/619 and: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/elearning/index.html>

<sup>7</sup> Article 149 ECT; see also: *Rapid Database*, IP/03/481 and: European Commission, DG Education and Culture, 2002:4; COM (2002) 214

<sup>8</sup> *Rapid Database*, IP/02/1066

contributed to a frequently contentious debate about the scope and contents of EU educational policy, especially in relations with the EU's partners in China and in other Asian countries (cf *infra*). By the end of 2003, a large number of new and established EU programmes existed in the three key areas of 'Education', 'Training' and 'Youth'<sup>9</sup>. In its *Guide to Programmes and Actions* (European Commission, DG Education and Culture, 2000), the Commission surveyed over 20 initiatives. Amongst those, the JEAN MONNET, LINGUA, COMETT, TEMPUS,<sup>10</sup> LEONARDO I and II,<sup>11</sup> YOUTH FOR EUROPE, ERASMUS<sup>12</sup> (SOCRATES AND COMENIUS) and ERASMUS MUNDUS (ERASMUS WORLD) programmes<sup>13</sup> formed some of the more prominent and well-known examples. The European Commission was proficient in shaping this area through its legislative initiatives and concept papers, such as the 1997 strategy, *Towards a Europe of Knowledge*,<sup>14</sup> covering the period from 2000 to 2006. In the last decade, the Commission's 'action plans', 'work programmes', 'green' and 'white' papers and 'strategies' covering educational and vocational initiatives reflected a range of ambitions and priorities. Some of the main concepts were:

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<sup>9</sup> See: *General Report 2002*, points 521-550 for details

<sup>10</sup> Rapid Database: IP/02/567, 667

<sup>11</sup> See: COM (2002) 315

<sup>12</sup> In 2003/2004, over 2000 Higher Education institutions participated in the ERASMUS Programme (*Rapid Database*, Press Release IP/03/542)

<sup>13</sup> Commission proposal at: COM (2002) 401, Brussels, 17 July 2002; *Rapid Database*, IP/02/1066

<sup>14</sup> At: COM (1997) 563

- Teaching and Learning – Towards the Learning Society (COM (95) 590)
- Education, Training and Research: Trans-National Mobility (COM (96) 462)
- Towards a European Research Area (ERA) (COM (2000) 6)<sup>15</sup>
- ‘E-Learning’ (COM (2000) 318; COM (2001) 172)<sup>16</sup>
- Making a European Area of Life-Long Learning a Reality (COM (2001) 678, 1939; General Report 2002, at point 516)
- ‘Inter-Cultural’ Dialogue and Understanding (COM (2002) 401; Rapid Database, IP/02/567)
- Investing Efficiently in Education and Training (COM (2002) 779)
- The Role of Universities in the Europe of Knowledge (COM (2003) 58)

### **III ‘People-to-People’ Contacts: EU Educational Cooperation with Third Countries and with Asia:**

- *When planning for a year, plant corn;  
When planning for a decade, plant trees;  
When planning for life, train and educate people...*  
(Chinese proverb, Guanzi (ca. 645 BC))

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<sup>15</sup> ERA provided grants since 1984, with a total value, up to the present, of more than € 43 billion

<sup>16</sup> The ‘E-Learning Action Plan’ (COM (2001) 172 promoted the three ‘priority areas’ of ‘bridging the digital divide’, ‘virtual Universities’ and ‘school-twinning via the Internet’ (cf. General Report 2002, at point 520)

European educational collaboration with third countries is not a new phenomenon: it was included in the provisions on education of the Treaty of Rome (article 149, III). In a number of cases (e.g. US, Canada) educational cooperation was made the subject of explicit bilateral agreements between the EU and the countries concerned. Moreover, a series of EU *Research Framework Programmes*<sup>17</sup> targeted the area of multinational academic cooperation and promoted the extension of the *European Research Area (ERA, cf: supra)* and the construction of international academic 'networks of excellence'. In this context, Framework Programme 6 (FP 6) was particularly relevant for EU-Asia relations since it opened up the possibilities of the European Research Area to developing countries and thus stimulated more, and easier, 'intercontinental mobility' between Asian and European researchers. The initiative also encouraged cooperation in a number of 'priority areas' pertinent to the EU-Asia dialogue, such as 'international cooperation', 'citizenship and governance' and 'the knowledge-based society'.<sup>18</sup>

The agenda for international educational collaboration was expanded and advanced by specific policy prescriptions of the European Commission, most notably the July 2001 paper on *Cooperation with Third Countries in the Field of Higher Education*.<sup>19</sup> In this communication the Commission stressed the role of world wide educational cooperation in the eradication of poverty and called for a stronger collaborative effort amongst Universities. The strategy emphasized, in particular, the need to

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<sup>17</sup> At the time of writing: FP 6 covered the period of 2002-2006 and operated on a funding base of around € 17 billion

<sup>18</sup> See: <http://www.cordis.lu/fp6/citizens.htm>

<sup>19</sup> COM (2001) 385 of 18 July 2001; Report at: COM (2002) 323; *General Report 2002*, at point 519

strengthen ‘European Studies capacities in third countries’ (cf *infra*) and paved the way for the extension of relevant Community activities (e.g. Action Jean Monnet) to non-European partner countries. The strategy was implemented by the Council of Ministers and the European Parliament through the ‘co-decision procedure’ contained in article 251 ECT. In addition to the Commission in its role as the Union’s initiator of policies, a significant number of outside bodies also contributed to the formulation of pan-European educational policies. The following agencies specialized in educational matters, to varying degrees: the Council of Europe, the *Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)*, the *Committee of the Regions*, the *European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training*, the *European Training Foundation*,<sup>20</sup> the *European Voluntary Service for Young People* and the *European University Institute*.<sup>21</sup> The European *Eurydice* education network formed an essential resource for the work of these and other bodies through its monitoring of education systems in 30 European countries, and in its coordinating function, with the help of the comprehensive *Eurybase* database.

As far as the Asian continent is concerned, a large part of the contemporary EU-Asian cultural and educational interaction is embedded in the EU’s widening academic and technical cooperation with ASEAN, the *Association of South East Asian Nations* (Wiessala, 2002a: 72). However, before there was any coordinated, supranational, European Union activity, Euro-Asian cultural exchange was a diverse field. Few common denominators

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<sup>20</sup> Turin, founded in 1990; see reports at: COM (2001) 810 and COM (2002) 440

<sup>21</sup> Florence, founded in 1976; the EUI was funded with € 5.3m in Commission contributions in 2002

existed, except, perhaps, the basic subdivision of all cooperation into *language-based*, *educational* and *cultural* spheres. Other than this, Euro-Asia contacts were typically defined by contrast. The intensity of inter-cultural contact was as diverse as its targets and duration (ECCC, 1996a, 1996b). The strong, 'privileged', presence, in Asia, of the UK, Germany and France, for example, continued to shape international education in 2003. In the case of Sino-UK educational joint ventures, few have identified the rationale for this as clearly as Hodges (2003): 'Now, China's leaders are ready for education change. Britain's leaders, for their part, are keen to establish a relationship with a country that could well turn out to be the next world superpower, and to ensure that the UK plays a part in that development'. These and other cases of educational cooperation in the service of the national interest continued to contrast with a less powerful involvement of other European nations. Strong attention to some Asian countries, such as China or India, stood out against less exhaustive cooperation with others, for example those in South East or West Asia. More often than not, these 'historical recurrences' (ECCC, 1996b: 106), were a direct reflection of the European colonial heritage. They mirrored the cultural and economic impact of the five EU member states with a colonial history on the Asian Continent (The UK, France, Spain, Portugal and The Netherlands). But historical recurrences also came to mean an increased awareness of a historical phenomenon: European expansion and colonization had depended on the growth and spread of education and the 'scientific revolution' which had been such a vivid characterization of post-Renaissance Europe. This was what Goody (1996: 224) termed the 'great burst forward' in knowledge, fuelling, for better or for worse, the reality and perception of the 'uniqueness' and 'superiority' of the West in relation to Asia. Contemporary events with a global impact, such as the successive wars in Afghanistan



or the enduring economic links between former colonizers and former colonies can be explained against this background: they contribute to the existence of a number of ‘special ties’ between selected European countries and some Asian ones, which have endured to the present day. They can also explain the continued existence of ‘traditional’ Euro-Asian patterns of trade and exchange.

Before there was such a thing as a more integrated EU involvement in international cultural affairs, a plethora of cultural relations existed on a bilateral level between the member states of the EU and Asian countries. Conceptually these cooperation projects were situated within a Euro-Asian dialogue framework for which Meissner (2002: 194/5) coined the term ‘enlarged culture’. Despite the variety of such programmes, significant disparities between them conditioned both the policies and the means of the intercontinental bilateral cultural exchange. The less institutionalized, development-oriented, short-term- and grant-based, approach taken by many Northern European countries, for instance, contrasted starkly with a more formal method by Southern European partners, which favoured a more lasting cultural presence, or ‘establishment-effect’ (ECCC, 1996b: 105), leading to more long-term economic cooperation and investment. Moreover, while some European countries preferred ‘direct intervention’ in the educational field, others relied more on the presence of their national ‘operators’, opinion leaders or *Multiplikatoren* (educators) in Asia. As a comparison between, for example, the *German Academic Exchange Service (Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst, DAAD)* and the *British Council* shows, ‘cultural diffusion’ and ‘cooperation’ - the two ‘traditional’ types of cultural and educational action - were both present, to varying degrees, in the emerging exchange between European

actors. While these bilateral exchanges between European Union member states and Asian countries led to a welcome degree of 'Europeanization', and frequently manifested itself in spontaneous collaboration between European actors in Asia (ECCC, 1996a: 108), the overall impact of Euro-Asian educational initiatives was, on the whole, insufficient, uneven and fragmented. University cooperation, for instance, which targeted mainly European and Asian *élites*, was extremely varied in relation to the Indian subcontinent, but almost unheard of in South East Asia.

In terms of direct, coordinated, EU involvement, three points should not be overlooked: firstly, the European Union acted mainly as a (financial) catalyst for increased cooperation, essentially harnessing existing synergies between member state activities. This developed in connection with earlier initiatives and through the Union's emerging, wider, framework of EU-Asia cooperation. Secondly, 'equality' had to be established as a solid base for EU-Asian cultural partnerships. Rothermund (2001: 9) summarized what needs to be remembered most: 'for cultural partnership, both hegemony and exclusiveness would be unacceptable. If hegemony is accepted, the partner who can only aim at acculturation soon ceases to be one. If exclusiveness is taken for granted, there can be no partnership at all'. Following this line of argument, the EU placed calls for a 'partnership of equals' between Europe and Asia at the centre of its Asia-related policies since 1994.<sup>22</sup> And, last, but not least, EU-Asia relations acquired what may be called a two-pronged 'learning dimension'. The first aspect of this learning dimension - perhaps the more important one - was the fact that people from the two continents began learning *about one another*, learnt to appreciate one

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<sup>22</sup> For example in: COM (94) 314, at pp. 1 and 2

another’s cultures and values. They had to begin to appreciate their commonalities and differences and to experience what I defined elsewhere as the underlying ‘software’ of each other’s societies (Wiessala, 2002b: 18). Only in this way did it seem possible, in the longer term, to shed the ‘historical baggage’ of Colonialism, to overcome what Edward Said termed *Orientalism* and to look beyond a euro-centrist, isolationist or unilateralist, view of the world. What became known as academic links, ‘people-to-people-contacts’, or as the ‘human face’ of EU-Asia contacts, could thus be interpreted and promoted as a valuable tool in ‘getting to know’ partners in Asia or Europe better and in overcoming intractable stereotypes and differences in value-systems. In the post-colonial context of Asia-Europe relations this was a significant exercise. For better or worse, the debate about ‘Asian Values’ both facilitated this new Euro-Asian discourse, and was, in turn, fed and driven by it. It also demonstrated that the practical, ‘people-to-people’ approach to educational exchanges could bear rich fruit.

Against this more philosophical background, it was equally as important to the EU that people from Europe and Asia also started to *learn with one another*, in practical, day-to-day contact, in debate and discussion and in a healthy discourse about methods, styles of negotiation or argument. This was a ‘long march to mutual understanding’ (cf: Hodges, 2003:4). It was predicated on the fulfillment of an essential condition: the considerable physical, as well as conceptual, distance between Europe and Asia had to be bridged, by means of the provision of funding and the organization of – and continuing support for – common programmes, initiatives and courses. The main benefit of this part of the ‘learning dimension’ of Asia-Europe relations was soon evident, in that participants in the new EU-Asia exchanges could use their specialized knowledge in order to enhance their career prospects

and acquire a higher profile in preparation for first post-University employment destinations (Wiessala, 2003). Initiatives such as the *EU-China Higher Education Cooperation Programme* (1997-2001) or the *China-Europe International Business School* (CEIBS) in Shanghai demonstrated the potential of this variety of cultural networking (cf also: Meissner, 2002).

This twofold ‘learning dimension’ of Asia-Europe relations was vital in constructing more productive East-West contacts and in spinning what one observer called ‘the original world-wide web’ (Chirathivat and Lassen, 1999: 43), i.e. a network of learning, which could link Europeans and Asians. The emergence of this *East-West www of learning* was accompanied by intense scholarly debate as to its purpose and merits. The discourse of the last decade emerged from a realization of the ‘double-edged sword’ (IEES, 2001: 142) of increased European-Asian interdependence and the urgent need to overcome the many stereotypes and information deficits. Representative of many similar viewpoints, Ioan Voicu (2002) summarized: ‘[...] education is crucial in overcoming and preventing pre-conceived opinions and stereotypes. Human resource development, including educational exchange, fosters mutual understanding and the concept of lifelong learning’. This recognition entailed the provision of expertise about international relations and the EU, and the upgrading of human resources to spread the message. In this context, University cooperation between European and Asian institutions of higher learning was increasingly seen as ‘not a goal in itself’, but as a component in the building of the store of knowledge and understanding that was deemed necessary for dialogue and cooperation (Chirathivat and Lassen, 1999: 32). The resulting, increased, commitment in this area created a new demand for ‘educational connectivity’ and knowledge. This development was

consolidated by the appearance of the new, ‘cultural’ pillar of the Asia-Europe Meetings (ASEM) from 1996 (Chirathivat and Lassen, 1999: 32, 69; IEES, 2001: 21).

The debate that ensued coalesced around four main issues: it comprised, firstly, a more general discussion as to the nature of area studies, or, more specifically, ‘European Studies’. Educationalists and policy-makers alike pointed to the nature of these subjects as essentially ‘multi-disciplinary’ and raised important questions about their nature, scope and methodology (e.g. Chirathivat and Lassen, 1999: 9, 15, 21; IEES, 2001: 77, 81, 160-166). The argument extended, secondly, to an analysis of how the educational dimension in EU-Asia relations could contribute to the construction of ‘world order’ and stabilize an increasingly uncertain world, characterized by financial crises, globalization and terror (IEES, 2001: 96). A third branch of the dispute focused on socio-cultural issues, asking whether Euro-Asian educational exchange was, in fact, truly beneficial for large groups of the respective populations, or for their respective ‘*élite* elements’ only. Large states, such as China or India, were often used as examples of the disproportionate dissemination of the yields of educational exchange (e.g.: IEES, 2001: 102). A last faction of observers investigated the potential for collaborative research between Asian and European scholars and among Asian academics. Analysts examined, in particular, the desirability of ‘denser Asia-Europe networks’ (Chirathivat and Lassen, 1999: 39 *et seq*, 74/5, 79, 97-104, 105-110; IEES, 2001: 145/6). In terms of contents, a large number of contributors to this group focused on different degrees of economic integration within the EU and in Asia / ASEAN, while others looked more towards the future of the EU as a global actor and the element of ‘reciprocity’ in EU-Asian exchange, thus

closely connecting with strands of similar research in Europe (Chirathivat and Lassen, 1999: 32, 59 *et seq*).

This energetic debate among scholars and educationalists was stimulated by a number of European Commission concept papers concerning academic and other relations with Asia. The core of the Commission's 'Asia Strategy' (cf: Wiessala, 1999, 2002) is comprised of three substantial policy blueprints: *Towards a New Asia Strategy* of 1994 (COM (94) 314), *Europe and Asia: A Strategic Framework for Enhanced Partnerships* (COM (2001) 469) and *A New Partnership with South East Asia* (COM (2003) 399/4). The 'learning dimension' encompassed by these and related communications was significant on account of the strong emphasis they placed on the 'human', cultural and educational dimension in Asia-EU relations. This was done deliberately, in order to complement the otherwise overwhelmingly economic and political thrust of the EU-Asia partnership. On the surface of it, the prioritising of educational links between Europe and Asia served an overtly political purpose: it was meant to carry forward the European Union's desire to increase its 'potential', 'presence' and 'profile' in Asia. A closer look at these policy frameworks also revealed their more long-term aims. And amongst those aspirations, the desirability of improved higher education and training links with Asian partners figured prominently.

Achieving these ambitions, according to the 1994 *New Asia Strategy*, would include: '*support to European and Asian Studies Centres and joint Management and Technical training programmes, implemented whenever possible with the active participation of European and Asian companies*'.<sup>23</sup> Other parts of

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<sup>23</sup> COM (94) 314, at point IV, and at point 2.1.4 (p. 19)

the Commission's 1994 *New Asia Strategy* emphasized the importance of intensified Euro-Asian collaborative research and development (R & D) (*ibid*, at point IV, 2.2.5). The Commission's 2001 follow-up paper (COM (2001) 469) further acknowledged the need to strengthen mutual awareness (at p. 3). This was to be achieved by means of: '*Educational, scientific and cultural exchanges with Asia, through support for enhanced cooperation between higher education institutions, an intensification of academic, research and student exchanges between our two regions, and the promotion of structural networks enabling mutually beneficial cooperation*'.<sup>24</sup> Recent regional programmes with a wider remit, such as the Commission's new *Asia Link Initiative*, are amongst the first tangible results of these suggestions. The subject of Higher Education in the EU's foreign relations received a major new impetus through a key Commission proposal of 2001, which covered *Cooperation with Third Countries in the Field of Higher Education* (COM (2001) 385). Referring to established Community Programmes, such as *ERASMUS* or *SOCRATES*, this document was innovative because it stressed a 'value-added' interpretation of the EC Treaty's provisions on education, vocational training and youth (cf articles 149 and 150 ECT). It concluded: '*the Community should ensure that its education activities include the international dimension in a more systematic way*'.<sup>25</sup> This was to be achieved mainly by means of 'added-value-', high-quality- human resource development, university cooperation and staff/student exchanges.

Over the last few years, Asia-Europe educational cooperation increasingly took its cue from these priorities. From 2002 onwards,

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<sup>24</sup> COM (2001) 469, at point 4.2. F (p. 19)

<sup>25</sup> COM (2001) 385, at point 10 (page 4)

the area of education was further promoted through a series of *Country Strategy Papers* (CSP), in which the Commission presented the perspectives and prospects for the improvement of its relations with individual partner countries in Asia.<sup>26</sup> Education figured prominently in the majority of these papers, although, given the heterogeneity of the Asian continent, it was not surprising that individual country strategies carried different priorities and plans. Mindful of the dangers of generalisation, it is possible to summarise the main thrust of these policies. In this context, two points are worth making: firstly, the Commission's Country Strategy Papers on Asia encompassed all branches of education, from primary to post-University level and life-long learning. And secondly, 'education' in the EU's dialogue with Asian countries was re-conceptualised in two main ways. It became either a tool of Development Policy aiming to improve an Asian country's infrastructure and the fight against poverty. Alternatively, educational exchange with Asia helped with the building of democratic institutions, thus informing the deepening East-West dialogue about human rights and political matters. The Commission's newest communication on Asia, *A New Partnership with South East Asia* (COM (2003) 399/4), of 9 July 2003 broadly reconfirmed these trends. Furthermore, it stressed the 'added-value' dimension in educational exchange between the two continents by elevating education and culture to the level of one of its six 'key priorities' (COM (2003) 399/4, at page 4). In the communication, observers also found the continuation of a significant new rationale for EU educational cooperation with Asia: next to the well-established aims of increasing awareness

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<sup>26</sup> By mid-2003, the Commission had published Country Strategy Papers on the following countries and regions in Asia: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Central Asia, China (PRC), East Timor, India, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, North Korea, Pakistan, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam.



and European presence, education becomes a tool for the alleviation of suffering and poverty in Asia, and an instrument of scientific and infrastructural development, covering, in particular, areas such as health and private sector development.<sup>27</sup> This is where the Union’s ‘Asia Policy’ and ‘Education Policy’ showed signs of overlap, and it was at this point that they could be conceptually linked to the more ‘traditional’ field of the Community Development Policy, with its emphasis on ‘progress through learning’ and the endorsement of self-help through stimulation of private enterprise.<sup>28</sup> It is worth mentioning here too that this educational and development ethic can also be derived from, and is informed by, the wider context of the United Nations’ *Millennium Development Goals (MDG)*.<sup>29</sup>

The ‘added-value’ argument also emerged from the *Asia-Europe Meetings (ASEM)*, held from 1996 onwards. In fact, ASEM - which is a biennial *process* of summit meetings, an interface, between Asian and European leaders, rather than an international *organisation* - has become one of the main channels for social, cultural and educational concerns in the Europe-Asia relationship. East-West cooperation in education already benefited from the work of relevant international bodies, such as *UNESCO*, the *European Universities Association (EUA)*, the *Association of Universities of Asia and the Pacific (AUAP)* and the *International Association of Universities (IAU)*. However, it was, arguably, only the institutional networking instigated by the ASEM which began

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<sup>27</sup> COM (2003) 399/4, at pp. 17/8, 21 and Annexe III, pp. 43-44

<sup>28</sup> See: *Communication on the Commission’s approach to Future Support for the Development of the Business Sector* (COM (2003) 267) and: *Communication on the Reform of State-Owned Enterprises in Developing Countries with Focus on Public Utilities* (COM (2003) 326)

<sup>29</sup> UN 2000, United Nations ‘Millennium Declaration’

to establish a genuinely inter-continental culture of understanding and dialogue between Asian and European participants. As a consequence, ASEM-related human resources initiatives, such as the *Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)*, the *ASEF University*,<sup>30</sup> the *ASEM DUO Fellowship Programme*, the *ASEM Education Hubs Education and Research Network (AEH-EARN, 2000)*, and the *Asia-Europe Classroom (AEC)* initiative helped to intensify the vital, ‘inter-civilizational’, contact between the Asian and European continents (Yeo Lay Hwee, 1999: 13/4). A thriving Asia-Europe educational exchange is now established as the third ‘pillar’, or ‘cluster’, of the ASEM process, with the other two clusters consisting of economic topics and political matters. The ASEM 4 summit in Copenhagen in 2002 re-emphasised the value of educational interaction and afforded high priority to the areas of academic exchanges, inter-University co-operation and the facilitation of electronic networking between schools and other education providers in Europe and Asia.

At this stage, a first, general, conclusion can be drawn: although policy research in the service of industry and finance is important, Asia-EU educational contacts *do not exist exclusively* to facilitate the promotion of European business and investment. The European-Asian relationship is overcoming the constraints of a purely economic involvement. A Commission communication for ASEM 1 in 1996 put into place much of the ideological groundwork for this: “*ASEM could express support for the two-way development of scholarship and university exchange programmes, taking into account projects already established*

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<sup>30</sup> The *Eighth ASEF University* was held from 7-21 September 2003 in Coventry, UK ([http://www.asef.org/asef-uni/2\\_asefuni/asefuni\\_2003.html](http://www.asef.org/asef-uni/2_asefuni/asefuni_2003.html))

*under our economic cooperation programme.”*<sup>31</sup> And in an additional 1997 ‘working paper’ in preparation for ASEM 2,<sup>32</sup> the Commission stressed that: *‘Particular emphasis should be put on building key networks, particularly in fields such as University cooperation, student exchanges, science and technology. The Asia-Europe Young Leaders’ Symposium is a tangible result of this ‘people-to-people-process’.*

#### **IV Educational Actors and the Subject of ‘European’ Studies**

*‘[...] the separation of Asia and Europe was the basis for the creation of Europe and its Renaissance – that is, that Europe could only be defined against the east, in opposition to it. But looking back at the Renaissance today, we can see that this approach is inaccurate. It excludes the peoples and cultures whose presence was central to creating the spirit of the Renaissance, a Renaissance more diverse and less unified than has often been assumed’ (Jerry Brotton: The Renaissance Bazaar, p. 34)*

From the point of view of the European Commission and a large number of Universities across Europe, the global promotion of the subjects of area studies, or specifically ‘European Studies’, was an obvious conduit for these policy frameworks and blueprints. The ‘opening-up’ of the Jean Monnet funding programme to institutions of higher education in non-European countries has its

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<sup>31</sup> COM (96), 4, at point 5c), page 8

<sup>32</sup> *Perspectives and Priorities for the ASEM Process*, SEC (97) 1239, at point 3.2, page 4

roots here. In this context, the Commission pledged that: *'it is important to strengthen European Studies capacities in third countries. For example, the Commission will extend the network of European Union Studies Centres and Jean Monnet Chairs around the world, so as to provide a full service to interested academics and to demonstrate the activity of the EC in this field within universities.'*<sup>33</sup> In a more general context, Shararil Talib (1999: 45) pointed out that the study of European integration in Asia was 'historically relevant' for the Asian intellectual and political *élites*, simply because 'nothing remotely comparable happened' in Asia. And, in spite of much research on the subject, political groupings such as the *Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN)* remain considerably less ambitious - and less committed - than the EU in their efforts towards regional integration.

But the emergence of 'European Studies Programmes' and 'Centres for European Studies' in at least a dozen Asian countries also shows that this exchange represents, essentially, an evolutionary and dialectical encounter. One of the most significant statements in the Commission's 2001 Asia strategy demonstrated a modest recognition of this and highlighted the amount of work still to be accomplished: *'Europe has a great deal to offer in the field of higher education and scientific research, yet the great majority of Asian students studying abroad tend to go to North America and Australasia as a first priority. Equally, the number of European academics or students with links to Asia remains very small, while European Studies remains an underdeveloped field in most Asian countries.'*<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> COM (2001) 385, at point 4. 23

<sup>34</sup> COM (2001) 469, at point 4.2. F, and at p. 19; COM (2003) 3994, at p. 25

The Commission's educational strategy represented an important test for a number of educational actors, such as the worldwide network of *European Union Studies Associations* (ECSA, EUSA), or, in the case of the UK, the *University Association for Contemporary European Studies (UACES)*.<sup>35</sup> The challenge of developing European Studies research and teaching was also the concern of a number of relevant 'think-tanks' and NGOs, such as the *Asia-Europe Vision Group* or the Singapore-based *Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)*.

The scope of activities developed by these and other associations in response to the Commission's funding guidelines was extremely broad and varied. It included significant institutional adaptation, such as the foundation in 1999 of an 'Asia Portfolio' on the part of the UK's UACES. The Asia Portfolio was tasked with establishing and maintaining contacts with partner associations, Universities and other Europe-related institutions in Asia, through promotional and conference activities, guest lectures, joint workshops and research. In many other cases, programmes similarly aimed at funding and consolidating the 'people-to-people-contact' called for by the EU's strategies. The field of European Studies in Higher Education thus developed into a naturally suitable vehicle for the promotion of the 'human dimension' in EU-Asia relations.

As a number of observers pointed out, (e.g.: Yeo Lay Hwee, 1999: 27), the continuation of this development was, however, predicated on the condition that the subjects of 'European' and 'Asian' studies were made more 'relevant' and 'contemporary'. The number of educational initiatives connected to the EU-Asia

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<sup>35</sup> <http://www.uaces.org>

relationship, which fulfil these initial requirements is relatively small. The following is a non-exhaustive selection of the most significant of them. In the context of this paper these initiatives are defined as 'significant' if and when they fulfil three main criteria: (1) the participation of significant numbers of students, stable retention-rates and satisfactory 'first-destination' results; (2) the provision of significant amounts of EU funding, and; (3) a significant potential for long-term academic exchange, self-sufficiency and research collaboration, both inside Asian academe and internationally. Bearing these provisos in mind, the following cultural and educational programmes, networks and institutions represent some of the most significant achievements, reflecting the evolving 'learning dimension' within EU-Asia relations:

- The ASEAN-EU University Network (AUN, value: € 7.767.500, AUN Newsletter, 2002)
- The Southeast Asia-Europe University Network (ASE-Univ)
- The 'Campus in Asia' and 'Campus in Europe' proposals (Rothermund, 2001: 10/11)
- The Asia-Europe Classroom (AEC) initiative <sup>36</sup>
- The 'Asia-Link' Scheme
- The MA Programme in European Studies at Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok
- The EU-China Higher Education Programme (1997-2001) and the EU-China European Studies Centres Programme (ESCP, from 2003)
- The European Union Studies Programme at Universiti Malaya (UMESP)

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<sup>36</sup> The *Third Asia-Europe Classroom International Teachers' Conference* was scheduled to take place, from 28 September to 2 October 2003, in Bogor, Republic of Indonesia

- The European Union Studies Programme in the Philippines
- The European Studies Programme in Vietnam (ESPV, 2002-2004)
- The Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) in Singapore

From within this variety of programmes and initiatives, the case of European Studies in Thailand is both instructive and exemplary; the *Interdisciplinary European Studies Programme* at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok is widely seen as one of the ‘most successful’ EU-related educational projects in the Southeast Asian region (Chirathivat and Lassen, 1999: 1-9, 15-29; IEES, 81, 160-166). It evolved against the background of a number of favourable social and historical conditions: the Kingdom of Thailand is one of the few Asian countries which has never been subjected to European Colonialism. In the view of many observers it has evaded this mainly by skilful diplomatic manoeuvring in relation to the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century European colonial powers and by what Curtin (2000: 150) called ‘defensive modernization’: the ‘acceptance and assimilation’ of European cultural and technological influence in order to escape European conquest (cf. also: Apinan Pavanarit, 2000: 127-130; M.R. Chakrarot Chitrabongs, 2000: 119-125).

Modern Thailand thus possesses a rich and diverse tradition of interest in, and lively exchange with, Europe particularly symbolized in the person of King Chulalongkorn (Rama V, reigned: 1873-1910), who visited Europe in 1897, and after whom the oldest, and most prestigious Thai University is now named. At the time of writing, the Thai Higher Education system is in flux and is undergoing a process of reform in the areas of quality

assurance, staff development, student skills acquisition and University autonomy.<sup>37</sup>

In mid-2003, the study and research components of the programme functioned within a framework determined by three overlapping 'pillars': the *Thai European Community Studies Organization (Thai ECSA)* – the Thai equivalent of UACES in the UK – the *Centre for European Studies at Chulalongkorn University* and the *Interdisciplinary Master of Arts Programme in European Studies (MAEUS)*. The MA Programme drew on the disciplines of history, economics, law and political science and successfully married a one-year intensive programme of study - including tuition by visiting European lecturers - with a study-trip to Europe for the participants of the programme.

## V Conclusions and Outlook

This article has shown that cultural, educational and academic cooperation has become an increasingly significant and, indeed, indispensable part of Asia-Europe cooperation. What is now established in political parlance as 'people-to-people-exchange' between Asian countries and the EU has moved out from the shadow of predominantly political and economic patterns of interaction, to become another constituent part of the relationship. The high priority both sides are now affording to issues of cultural exchange has a mixed parentage and can be traced to a number of main contributories.

Most notable amongst those is the value both the European Union and Asian countries have traditionally put on matters of education

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<sup>37</sup> See: *Thai Higher Education Review*, Vol. 1, No. 4, April-June 2003: 2-3, 13-17



and self-improvement. Within the last decade the Community's policies on education and culture had to become progressively more open to the outside world under the influence of globalization, a changed international security environment and the EU's democratization- and human rights- agenda. Moreover, the enhanced attention the EU has given Asia since 1994, through a large number of policy blueprints, white papers and 'country-strategies', has moved matters of educational cooperation much higher up the agenda of East-West relations, capitalizing on the valuable, parallel bilateral experience of some member states in the field of cultural exchange. As a result, Asian and European partners realized, to a much higher degree, the value of learning in the context of doing business, while recognizing at the same time the many gaping lacunae in the understanding of each other's cultures and value systems, which remained to be filled. Last, but not least, this process of prioritization was accompanied by a deliberate promotion of educational matters which were now targeted through new channels of Europe-Asia communication, such as the Asia-Europe Meetings (ASEM). The new geo-political situation after 11 September 2001 and the fight against terrorism in both Europe and Asia have been major catalysts for these developments.

Within this framework, a large number of academic and educational initiatives co-exist, bringing Asian and European participants much closer together at an ever-accelerating pace. Most of these schemes illustrate a number of significant common features, such as a high degree of institutionalization, and a concentration on the study of European politics, business, law or history. By encompassing, in particular, an element of 'European Studies', or 'EU Studies', these programmes prove that this field is the most appropriate, and, to-date, most fruitful, area of

cooperation between European and Asian nations. While the duration, funding and participation rates in these programmes and study centres exhibit a degree of variation, there are some prominent examples which successfully combine the twofold ‘learning dimension’ of EU-Asia relations – learning *from* and *with* one another – with a more practical approach to teaching and research in European Studies in general. The *Interdisciplinary Master of Arts Programme* at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, Thailand is a notable example of these.

In terms of the future of educational cooperation between Asia and Europe (the EU in particular) it is to be expected that the picture will become considerably more diversified and complex, commensurate with the growth of the EU’s stature and self-perception as an international actor and diplomatic player on the global stage. The process of compartmentalization, or ‘pillarization’, of education in EU-Asia relations shows few signs of abating in the foreseeable future. However, a burgeoning proliferation of academic exchange between European and Asian partners will increasingly be seen as a double-edged sword: on the one hand, it carries the undeniable potential to overcome misunderstandings, avoid breakdowns of communication and bring about enhanced international awareness, or simply better career prospects. But on the other hand, it will also be seen as a ‘mushrooming’ phenomenon and will lead to confusion, competition, overlap and manifestations of ‘forum-fatigue’ amongst the participants in the dialogue and the many institutions, think-tanks and other bodies involved.

The educational dimension will continue to make measured but momentous progress on its way to nurturing relations between the EU and Asia. It now represents a major challenge for Universities,

governmental and research institutions involved in this process on both continents, to try and respond to these tensions and to strive towards more ‘product’ and less ‘process’.

**N.B.:** Comments and feedback on this paper are always very welcome. Please write to: Georg Wiessala, Reader in International Relations, University of Central Lancashire, Department of Education & Social Science, Preston, PR1 2HE. E-mail: [Gwiessala@uclan.ac.uk](mailto:Gwiessala@uclan.ac.uk)

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#### Further Information and Selected Websites

ASEF University Library:

[http://www.asef.org/asef-uni3\\_infocenter/infocenter\\_library.html](http://www.asef.org/asef-uni3_infocenter/infocenter_library.html)

ASEM DUO Fellowship Programme:

<http://www.asemduo.org>

ASEM Education Hubs – Education and Research Network (AEH-EARN):

<http://www.aeh.asef.org/main.asp>



Asia-Europe Foundation, ASEF (1, Nassim Hill, Singapore 258466):

<http://www.asef.org>

Asia-Link Initiative:

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/asia-link/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/asia-link/index_en.htm)

Centre for European Studies at Chulalongkorn University (3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Vidyabhathana Building, Phya Thai Road, 10330 Bangkok, Thailand)

<http://www.ces.chula.ac.th>

Council of Europe: <http://www.coe.int>

Delegation of the European Commission in China:

<http://www.delchn.cec.eu.int>

Delegation of the European Commission in Thailand:

<http://www.deltha.cec.eu.int>

ERASMUS University Charter:

<http://www.socleoyouth.be>

European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP):

<http://www.cedefop.eu.int>

European Commission: DG Education and Culture:

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/education\\_culture/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/education_culture/index_en.htm)

European Community Studies Association (ECSA) Thailand:

<http://www.ces.chula.ac.th/ecsa.htm>

European Studies Programme Vietnam: <http://www.espv.org>

European Training Foundation (Turin): <http://www.etf.eu.int>

European University Institute (Florence): <http://www.iue.it>

FP 6 (6<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme): <http://www.cordis.lu>

Institute of European Studies, Macau: <http://www.ieem.org.mo>

Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 30 Heng Mui Keng Terrace, Singapore 119614:

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