

ASEAN-EU UNIVERSITY NETWORK PROGRAMME
**FIRST ASEAN-EUROPEAN UNION
RECTORS' CONFERENCE**
HIGHER EDUCATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
4-6 OCTOBER 2004

By ASOKKUMAR, AEI Senior Research Assistant and GARETH A. RICHARDS, AEI Senior Research Fellow



Participants at the conference

Closer links between the countries of Southeast Asia and Europe have been one of the major aspirations in international relations over the last decade. During that period both the respective regional organisations – the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the European Union (EU) have undergone profound changes. These have mainly been to do with the widening of their membership to include countries that were previously outside the formal regional arrangements, and a deepening of policy coordination across a whole variety of issue areas. These changes within the regions have inevitably had a spillover effect on how the two regions frame the terms of their engagement.

The field of higher education has become one of the most important areas of cooperation between the two regions. For a number of years now, discussion and debate has taken place on how best to advance new forms of collaboration and partnership, and there have been some successful efforts to institutionalise this dialogue.

It is in this context that the first ASEAN-European Union Rectors' Conference was held on 4-6 October 2004 at the Asia-Europe Institute, University of Malaya. The conference was jointly organised and funded by the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, the University of Malaya, the EC Delegation in Malaysia, and the ASEAN-EU University Network Programme (AUNP).

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The AUNP is one of the more interesting developments in ASEAN-EU cooperation – a joint initiative by the European Commission and the Bangkok-based ASEAN University Network (AUN) launched in January 2000, and which aims to improve cooperation between higher education institutions in ASEAN and the EU.

Under the AUNP's Network Initiative strand, this historic first conference was held under the generic theme

Audience at the auditorium



YBhg. Dato' Professor Dr. Hashim Yaacob, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Malaya, making his welcome address



Guests exchanging gifts at the opening ceremony of the conference

of Higher Education and Sustainable Development, reflecting the extent to which education is now linked to long-term goals of sustainability. Over two-and-a-half days the conference gathered some 120 University rectors, representatives of Education Ministries and higher education specialists from Asia and Europe, and focused discussion on the potential of ASEAN and EU higher education institutions in establishing and enforcing sustainable development. In addition, the conference also provided a useful forum for information about ongoing ASEAN-EU higher education cooperation initiatives related to sustainable development and concrete collaborative and funding prospects for universities in the two regions.

The tone of the conference was set by the keynote address delivered by the Deputy Education Minister of Higher Education, Malaysia, YB Datuk Fu Ah Kiow. In his far-ranging speech the Minister noted the "pathbreaking" nature of the conference and expressed the hope that today we can genuinely talk of a "partnership of equals" between Southeast Asia and Europe. He stressed the increasingly interregional character of these interactions. Datuk Fu then went on to outline the vision of the Malaysian government for advancing cooperation between ASEAN and the EU. Here he endorsed a vision of sustainability – as the means of securing a world "that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" – as a framework for tackling pressing issues in higher education. In order to do so, he pinpointed five areas that will drive cooperation for the foreseeable future:

- Internationalisation of higher education to include Asian countries operating on a level playing field;
- The realisation that global qualifications will be-



Associate Professor Dr.
Pavich Tongroach



Dato' Fu Ah Kiow



H.E. Thierry Rommel



Lunch-break



Musicians entertaining the guests during lunch-break

come increasingly important;

- The role of research in all the disciplines as the bedrock of effective teaching and the major means of advancing knowledge creation to meet global problems head-on;
- The issue of life-long learning as a process in which people have the opportunity to constantly upgrade their knowledge, skills and experience;
- The impact on Higher Education of the General Agreement on Trade in Services administered by the World Trade Organisation.

Some of these themes were also picked up in the lead contributions made by the conference's opening plenary session. Both HE Dr Thierry Rommel, Ambassador-Head of the Delegation of the European Commission in Malaysia and Prof Dr Pavich Tongroach, the Chairman of the ASEAN University Network, spoke eloquently of the practical ways in which Southeast Asian and European universities could foster sustainability as a key objective of joint policymaking.

Finally, on behalf of the host of the event, Dato' Prof Dr Hashim Yaacob, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Malaya, returned to the theme of internationalisation: "The real opportunity of internationalisation lies in the possibilities of harnessing the world's knowledge resources to add value to our human capital". He also spoke honestly about the real challenges that lie ahead. Of these he highlighted the problem of the "digital divide" and the "cultural divide" that often creates difficulties for

establishing genuine Asia-Europe partnership. At the same time, he pointed to the role of the public service ethos in overcoming these difficulties: "The way forward must be based on an embedded notion of public service. This will undoubtedly require a sharing of our ideas and plans, our hopes and concerns, so that we can set in motion the development of a knowledge infrastructure today to meet the needs of tomorrow".

The real work of the conference, as always, took place in the detailed panels and opportunities for education movers and shakers to meet informally to discuss ideas. They explored the state-of-the-art thinking in higher education on the modalities of sustainable development in order to encourage ASEAN and EU universities to shape new interagency cooperation initiatives. Among the most important concrete initiatives discussed were joint applied research, curricula and human resources development in the significance of regional studies, mobility of faculty and students, quality assurance schemes, mechanisms for credit transfer, and higher education policy development. In addition the conference assessed the need for regular meetings of ASEAN-EU university leaders. To meet this objective, a Second ASEAN-EU Rectors' Conference was planned for 2005.

The most important objective of this conference was the fact that it managed to raise awareness among the participants of specific education and research needs and constraints that the partners face in the area of higher education for sustainable development. This was no mean achievement. The conference marked a coming-of-age for the two regions in this policy field. At the same time it pointed to concrete ways in which the ideals of cooperation could be realised in practice. The hope is that these initiatives could eventually make a significant contribution to the success of existing and future sustainable development strategies adopted by the two regions. The hard work of implementing the exciting proposals now begins. ■

Second Annual INREF-AGITS Working Conference

Environmental Governance in Asia: Regional Perspectives on Institutional and Industrial Transformations

By ASOKKUMAR, AEI Senior Research Assistant

The second annual INREF-AGITS working conference was held at the Asia-Europe Institute, University of Malaya on 26-27 November 2004. This followed the successful inaugural conference held in Chiang Mai University, Thailand in 2003. This year's conference was a joint initiative of Wageningen University, the Netherlands, and the Asia-Europe Institute, and the theme was "Environmental Governance



Prof. Dato' Dr. Shaharil Talib delivering his opening speech

in Asia: Regional Perspectives on Institutional and Industrial Transformations". AGITS (Agro-Industrial Transformations towards Sustainability) is a project initiated by Wageningen's North-South Interdisciplinary Research and Education Fund (INREF) in Southeast and East Asia for cleaner agro-industries in a global perspective.

Rapidly industrialising and developing Asian countries are facing new challenges in coping with increasing environmental deterioration. The background of these new challenges can be brought together loosely under themes such as globalisation and the coming of the network society, which are having a major impact on both the causes of environmental decay and the outlooks for successful environmental governance, management and reform in Asian economies.

Although the social, political, economic, cultural, and geographic conditions and resources of each country are unique and contribute to particular challenges, regional collaboration on environmental policy receives increasing attention. Growing awareness about the regional as well as global character of environmental problems and about the requirement to avoid regional competition around the level of environmental protection enforces the need for regional harmonisation.

Such regional harmonisation on environmental regulation has to take place within the context of considerable variation in dynamics and conditions between Asian nations found at the national local levels. Furthermore different sectors, such as agriculture and food production, livestock, fisheries, textiles, and wood products, are impacted by globalisation and the coming of the network society in different ways. These are the challenges faced in attempting to achieve regional harmonisation.

The major issues addressed at this year's conference included: policy arrangements to identify the new challenges, efforts to create regional economic and political institutions, the role played by the non-

state actors included in environmental governance, exchange of knowledge between countries on best practices or innovative environmental arrangements, and institutional innovation best fitted for environmental reform dynamics at the regional level in Asia.

In one of the most important papers, entitled "Urban and Industrial Environmental Reform in Southeast Asia, A Comparative Analysis", Arthur P.J. Mol from Wageningen University and David A. Sonnenfeld from Washington State University cited Southeast Asian countries as having high economic growth tendencies with increasing absolute environmental deterioration. They argued that these similarities are a basis for increased environmental co-operation in the region if appropriate governance arrangements could be put in place.

Up till now, however, ASEAN – the logical institution to start such cooperation – is preoccupied with trade liberalisation and other related economic agendas, leaving environmental issues almost untouched. The differences in absolute and relative environmental performances and improvements over time between countries raise important questions for further scholarly research and policy analysis. While automatic transfer of environmental reform practices between countries is often unwise due to the differences in national institutional arrangements and capacities, countries nevertheless can learn from each other. Thailand's success in encouraging adoption of ISO 14000 environmental management system (EMS) standards, Singapore's accomplishments in restraining growth of private car ownership and generation of solid waste, Vietnam's increase in energy efficiency, Malaysia's achievements in the relative decline in NO_x emissions in the 1990s, are some examples.

So far, a great deal of collaborative research in the field of environmental studies has tended to concentrate on the scale and character of ecological problems as well as successful responses. This is essential in establishing the nature of the issues. But what this year's INREF-AGITS working conference made clear is that much remains to be learned about the actors, institutions, and contingent factors responsible for these apparent successes in urban and industrial environmental policymaking in Southeast Asia. This agenda thus focuses more explicitly on the importance of governance issues which will become the centerpiece of important collaborative research in the future. ■

THE ASIA-EUROPE FORUM: REFLECTIONS ON THE ASIA-EUROPE MEETING

By GARETH A. RICHARDS, *AEI Senior Research Fellow*



There is little doubt that the fifth Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) summit, held in Hanoi, Vietnam (7-9 October 2004) marked something of a turning point for the two regions. In the lead-up to the summit there was a major row when the European Union threatened to pull out of the dialogue due to the controversy over Myanmar's accession to the ASEM process. In addition, the enlargement of the EU earlier in the year – incorporating ten new member states from Central and Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean – also raised questions about the organisational viability of such a large interregional association. In the end, the summit marked a diplomatic triumph for Vietnam acting as a host to its first ever major international conference. More importantly, there appeared to be a renewed rigour in identifying and acting on issues of mutual concern for the two regions.

One of the major criticisms of ASEM in the past has been that it is a rather remote and top-down form of governance. While the existence of regular dialogue and interaction between Asia and Europe is welcome the resulting policy initiatives have not been seen to capture the imaginations of the wider public. In recognition of this shortcoming a series of public meetings and forums has been organised to reflect more critically on the recent

developments in the ASEM process.

On 7 December 2004, Asian Strategy and Leadership (ASLI) – a leading Malaysian think tank concerned with international affairs – hosted a one-day forum at The Westin, Kuala Lumpur, to look back at the major outcomes of the Hanoi summit and consider ways of “strengthening the Asia-Europe partnership”. The forum brought together a number of prominent and informed commentators on the unfolding Asia-Europe relationship. These included a large number of ambassadors from Asian and European missions to Malaysia; representatives from national ministries; leading businessmen; academics; and postgraduate students from the Asia-Europe Institute.

The forum was opened by statements from HE John C.F. Von Muhlen, Ambassador of the Netherlands representing the Presidency of the European Union, and HE Nguyen Trung Thanh, Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs of Vietnam, and a major official at the Hanoi summit. Both contributions noted how the ASEM process was now facing new challenges that would shape the next two years of cooperation.

Organised in four substantive sessions, the forum then covered a range of pertinent issues and policy domains. These ranged from general reflections and assessments of

the current state of relations between the two continents to specific policy proposals in areas such as environmental governance and human rights.

Among the speakers at the forum were Shaharil Talib (Executive Director) and Gareth A. Richards (Senior Research Fellow) of the Asia-Europe Institute, University

of Malaya. Their presentation focused specifically on “Globalisation, Interregionalism and Higher Education: Policy Lessons for Asia and Europe” and drew on some of the lessons from AEI’s experience to illustrate the tasks that lay ahead. An edited version of their joint paper is produced here.

Shaharil Talib and Gareth A. Richards:
Globalisation, Interregionalism and Higher Education: Policy Lessons for Asia and Europe

Introduction

This paper offers a synoptic discussion of developments in higher education collaboration between Asia and Europe within the framework of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) process. The purpose is to take stock of the current state of cooperation through a number of specific initiatives. The paper considers some of the common contexts and problems facing educational policymakers in the two continents which are shaped, to a large extent, by processes of globalisation. This discussion then forms the background to a consideration of both convergent and divergent trends across the two regions with regard to educational policy and their significance for enhanced policy transfer and sharing. The example of the work of the Asia-Europe Institute, University of Malaya, is used to illustrate possible future directions for higher education policymaking and concrete policy implementation. The concluding section suggests that while much has been achieved so far under the ASEM framework, greater attention needs to be placed on the precise mechanics of successful policy transfer and sharing if the goal of sustainable and equitable collaboration is to be realised.

Higher Education in the ASEM Process

The idea of establishing closer higher education linkages between Asia and Europe has been tabled on the ASEM agenda since the first summit held in Bangkok in 1996. The Chairman’s Statement at ASEM I noted that the process “supported the strengthening of cooperation on all levels of education and vocational and management training”. Since then a number of initiatives have been taken to ensure that this commitment has been translated into reality. Five such major initiatives are worth highlighting, not because they exhaust the range of possibilities, but because they provide an indication of what has been achieved so far and what remains to be done.

ASEM Education Hubs: In October 1998, Singapore proposed the establishment of a network of ASEM education hubs, whereby individual universities would volunteer as centres of excellence in a particular field relevant to Asia-Europe relations, and be ready to receive exchange students from other hub institutes for one or two semesters. By the end of 2003, universities in 22 countries from the two regions had joined the network and 540 scholarships in arts, business and science were awarded amounting to €2.4 million. ASEF plays the role of a clearing house in its implementation and continues to actively promote the network in all ASEM countries.

ASEM DUO: The ASEM-DUO Fellowship Programme,

funded by ASEM partners, is a fellowship-granting programme for university students and teachers in pairs (DUO) of ASEM countries who wish to go to Europe or Asia (i.e. Asians to Europe, Europeans to Asia) for further study, research or joint lectures. This Fellowship Programme, established in 2001, aims to contribute to enhancing reciprocal academic exchanges between students and teachers of the European Union and those of Asian countries of ASEM. The original target of funds for the ASEM-DUO was €26 million for the period of 2001 through 2005. DUO-Korea, DUO-Singapore, DUO-France and DUO-Denmark have been launched already. The Secretariat was set up in Seoul in October 2001, and serves as a focal contact point and depository for relevant information of the programme.

Trans-Eurasian Information Network (TEIN): The TEIN project was endorsed as one of the new ASEM initiatives at the ASEM III Summit in Seoul in 2000. The European Commission has approved a grant of €10 million in support of TEIN. The purpose of the project is to increase direct cooperation between Europe and Asia in the field of research and education. Its overall objective is to foster economic growth and understanding between Europe and Asia through better awareness, access to, and use of interconnectivity between Europe and Asia as well as within Asia. Beneficiaries will not only be the scientific community to develop research and development activities, but also the population at large who will benefit from the development of virtual institutes and laboratories.

The *Erasmus Mundus* programme is a cooperation and mobility programme in the field of higher education which aims to enhance quality in European higher education and to promote intercultural understanding through co-operation with third countries. The programme is intended to strengthen European cooperation and international links in higher education by supporting high-quality European Masters Courses, by enabling students and visiting scholars from around the world to engage in postgraduate study at European universities, as well as by encouraging the outgoing mobility of European students and scholars towards third countries. The European Commission has recently proposed an extension of Erasmus Mundus to Asia and has earmarked some €100 to support the programme.

Asia-Europe Institute, University of Malaya: So far the only major institutional development has been the Asia-Europe Institute sponsored by the Government of Malaysia. Having initially established an Asia-Europe Centre at the University of Malaya in 1997, the Asia-Europe Institute was formally gazetted on 11 July 2002. The current mandate of the AEI was outlined in a Malaysian government paper which was endorsed at the ASEM senior officials meeting (SOM) held in Lisbon, Portugal (2-3 May 2000). This reflected Malaysia’s commitment to internationalising higher education and advancing the idea of the AEI as an

“educational infrastructure and knowledge network for Asia and Europe in the twenty-first century”. Support for the vision and work of the AEI has recently come from the highest levels. The Official ASEM Declaration on Dialogue Among Cultures and Civilisations signed in Hanoi, Vietnam (9 October 2004) reaffirmed its commitment to “stepping up educational exchanges, in particular by means of programmes developed by ASEM” and cited the AEI as such an example.

Globalisation and Higher Education in Asia-Europe Relations: Common Contexts and Problems

The impressive range of Asia-Europe initiatives in higher education collaboration needs to be understood against the background of rapid changes that are likely to have major implications for the future of education and training systems. In order to understand where the future of higher education collaboration may lead it is worth taking stock of the significance of globalisation – understood here as the intensification of economic, political, and ideational networks across the world – for its potential effects of education.

A key question for those concerned with designing and managing higher education policy and systems is whether globalisation is leading to a convergence between national and regional education and training systems or whether, by contrast, there remain important divergent trends that allow for national adaptation of global processes. If there seems to be a process of convergence – at least at the level of policy rhetoric and general policy objectives – then a further question raises itself: convergence on whose model of higher education and to whose benefit? A starting-point for answering these questions lies in an understanding of long-term common contexts and problems that face both continents.

Changes in education and training policies over the last decade have been driven by a number of trends – in demography, economics and culture – that are common or similar to Asia and Europe.

Demographic trends have involved an ageing of populations and workforces. It is becoming manifest virtually everywhere. The effects on education systems have been sudden and often dramatic. Ageing has resulted in increasing demands on social services at the same time as aged-dependency ratios have risen, thus placing greater pressure on public resources in general and education in particular. Most importantly, the ageing of populations and workforces has posed new demands on education and training systems – for the retraining of employees whose skills have become out-of-date and for meeting the needs of growing populations of retired people. The call for lifelong learning is a direct response to this widespread demographic phenomenon.

Economic restructuring has had an equally direct effect on education and training. Globalisation has undoubtedly intensified global economic competition, both in the race to create the conditions which attract foreign direct investment and in the struggle to improve productivity and market competitiveness in home-based industries and services. This shift implies an ever greater emphasis on information-rich,

high quality production and services where the premium is on rapid change and innovation. These changes have faced education and training systems with new challenges. First, the need to reduce social costs to encourage competitiveness and to attract FDI has led to tight expenditure controls. These, in turn, have forced expanding education systems to be more cost-efficient. Second, there has been a generalised demand for higher levels of qualification and skill throughout the workforce – including the range of skills seen as vital to modern working environments: the ability to communicate well, handle information, work in teams, solve new problems, apply knowledge and skills in different contexts, to think conceptually and creatively.

No less important than demographic and economic changes have been the effects arising from widespread changes in cultures, values and lifestyles. They are discernible everywhere. One key issue is the pluralisation of lifestyles, cultures and values and the consequent effects of increasing individualisation on social cohesion in society. At the same time, these processes have meant increasing levels of uncertainty and risk. Life courses are, put simply, much less predictable and more variable than in the past. They pose special challenges for education and training. They necessitate a diversity and flexibility of provision to suit those in different situations. At the same time, they require a systematic provision which retains its coherence and transparency. They suggest a need for multiple pathways which are all valued and recognised. The increasing complexity and flexibility of these pathways, and proliferation of personal choices they engender, put a premium on the availability of counselling and guidance.

Globalisation and Higher Education in Asia-Europe Relations: Convergence and Divergence in Policies and Practices

Common or similar demographic, economic and cultural changes in the contexts of education and training across Asia and Europe have led to some clear convergences at the level of policy discourse and general policy objectives. Most countries have sought to extend education through increasing participation in post-compulsory education and training. Most countries have also sought to increase access to short and long cycle higher education and rates of participation have also risen here. Taken together, this has led to a new international discourse around lifelong learning and the ‘learning society’. The ‘learning society’ notion, which envisages learning as a permanent process throughout the life cycle and occurring in multiple sites, has been made possible through advances in communications and technologies. These allow for more flexible modes of learning within different kinds of institutions.

In terms of educational contents or objectives there have also been some common policy shifts. Higher education is becoming increasingly internationalised both in its reach and curricula. In the EU, as we have seen, this has been greatly supported by European Commission initiatives, whereas in Asian states such as Japan, Korea and Malaysia it has been promoted through heavy government backing. There has also been widespread policy interest in enhancing foreign language skills, IT and so-called transversal skills, like

problem solving and communications. Budgetary restraints in most countries have placed increasing emphasis on improving cost-efficiency in education provision. This has led to a widespread interest in new forms of quality control and performance evaluation at all levels of education. It has also led to measures in many countries to decentralise educational governance and control.

In these and other areas there has been a clear tendency towards convergence across a range of countries in the general discourse and broad objectives of educational policy. However, there is less evidence of convergence in the details of policy and in the actual structures and processes in different countries. At one level, this is because national education systems, whilst broadly pointing in the same directions, are starting from different points and/or changing at different rates – so that there is little convergence between two points in time. At another level, the lack of convergence in national educational systems – despite common contexts and problems – is due to the fact that countries are responding in their own particular ways. This reflects the structures and value systems which underpin them and which are the product of different patterns of historical evolution.

The structures of national systems are fundamentally determined by national differences in industrial structures and labour markets, in political traditions and institutions, and in cultures of citizenship and knowledge traditions. This point was acknowledged explicitly in the Chairman's Statement at the ASEM V Summit in Hanoi which noted: "cultural diversity is the common heritage of humanity" and called "on the need to promote unity in diversity and respect for the equal dignity of all cultures and civilizations". Leaders emphasized in particular "the need to preserve the national cultural identity, in face of the ongoing rapid advances of information and communication technology and globalization". So long as there are continuing national differences in these areas of cultural and institutional diversity then it is likely that there will also continue to be major differences in national systems. This has major implications for the future of Asia-Europe educational collaboration.

Managing Asia-Europe Educational Collaboration: Policy Transfer and Sharing

From what we have said, there is clear evidence of policy convergence within Asia and Europe around some broad policy themes and this bodes well for the future of collaboration between the two regions. The key areas include: lifelong learning, internationalisation of higher education, some decentralisation in regulation and governance, increasing use of evaluation and quality control measures, and the need to bring education and the needs of employability together.

However, this does not yet appear to have led to any marked convergence in structures and processes. Indeed, even in an age of globalisation, differences in national structures and processes of higher education policy would appear as distinctive as they were eight years ago when ASEM was launched. What is apparent is that different countries – or groups of countries – have responded in practice to common problems in different ways in line

with their particular traditions and models. This fact raises a major challenge for managing the future of Asia-Europe educational collaboration. How exactly will such collaboration be managed? What are the models available to us for policy transfer?

These questions are important because they pinpoint some of the shortcomings of higher education provision within the ASEM process to date and should also suggest ways forward in the future. Two important shortcomings need highlighting. The first is that the operationalisation of most initiatives has generally been on a bilateral basis – this is obvious from the terms of reference of the Duo Fellowship programme but still underpins much of the policy thinking in other areas too. But in the next context of globalisation it seems fair to suggest that more multilateral and region-to-region initiatives are likely to frame future of engagement. This will require greater coherence and consistency within regions – within the burgeoning ASEAN plus Three partnership, for example – if genuine multilateral collaboration is to become a reality.

The second observation is that if ASEM is to be truly a "partnership of equals" then there has to be greater sensitivity to the needs and contribution of the Asian side. It is not often said – at least not by diplomats or university leaders – but there is a palpable sense in which the EU is seen to lead and Asia follows in the field of higher education policy. Perhaps this should not surprise us. Many European universities have outstanding credentials and have a longer history of internationalisation; and the European Commission has been at the forefront of identifying new funding streams to realise its policy priorities.

These developments should be welcomed. But they should also be seen for what they are. Take the Erasmus Mundus programme. As its mission statement notes, the purpose is "to enhance the attractiveness of European higher education world-wide" and that means making Europe a magnet for students and researchers from around the globe, including from Asia. Where then does this leave Asia? How do we begin to tackle the fact that last year nearly a quarter of a million Asian students were studying in Europe while just 10,000 of their European counterparts were studying in Asia? Do Asian policymakers simply import policies that have evolved over many years in Europe or do they attempt to copy "foreign" models? Which actors get involved in the process of policy transfer and policy collaboration? In other words, how do we build a genuine partnership of equals in higher education – one that draws on the expertise, knowledge, enterprise and insights from both regions?

One way of understanding these processes – and the difficulties they impose – is to use a framework for understanding different modalities of policy transfer and sharing. Such as framework can be organised around seven questions:

- Why do actors engage in policy transfer and sharing?
- Who are the key actors involved in the policy transfer/sharing process?
- What is transferred?
- From where are lessons drawn?
- What are the different degrees of transfer?

- What restricts or facilitates the policy transfer/sharing process?
- How is the process of policy transfer related to policy “success” or policy “failure”?

Offering answers to these questions – over the next two years in the run up to the next ASEM Summit in Helsinki – will enable us to map clearly the realities beyond the rhetorical and real policy commitments that have so far been reached.

New Directions in Asia-Europe Higher Education Collaboration

Here we want to suggest some practical ways in which the processes of policy transfer and sharing in higher education may be both widened and deepened in the post-Hanoi environment. We draw upon some of the experiences of the AEI to illustrate what can be done and what still needs to be done.

It is our strong belief that the goals, content and instruments of all policies and programmes should possess a carefully-crafted balance between two complementary domains. The first is the need for a highly developed research culture, advanced through internationally-recognised research pillars, seminars/conferences, publications and affiliations. And second, the development of sustainable international postgraduate programmes, working in partnership with lead Asian and European universities to assure the highest levels of quality and flexibility.

Drawing from our own experiences, the organisation of research should encompass six objectives that may act as a flexible template for other similar initiatives.

- To advance multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research that has special significance globally and for the countries of Asia and Europe specifically, and for intra- and inter-regional relations.
- To balance the demands of basic theoretical and conceptual research with strategic and applied research that is relevant to policy formulation and problem-solving.

- To organise research in key thematic areas or research pillars. This will be achieved through concentrated, multinational groupings of researchers who will explore interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary insights across the range of fields of inquiry.
- To provide high quality research on issues of importance to business, the public sector and government, and the wider community.
- To establish research hubs as the foundation stones upon which our researchers can undertake work of the highest quality and relevance. These foundation stones will include unique collections of data and expertise in research methods to utilise these data. Researchers will have electronic access, as well, to other world class information resources.
- To support interregional and inter-institutional research collaboration in a number of ways:
 1. by forming research teams with high-level collaboration between Asian and European scholars, research institutions, policymakers, and relevant stakeholders
 2. by coordinating and supporting individual research projects centrally through research pillar convenors and advisory committees;
 3. by funding individual research grants;
 4. by supporting research students;
 5. by establishing durable research infrastructure resources and facilities;
 6. by bringing together a large number academic researchers and policy users through linkages with other complementary centres, groups and networks of advanced research;
 7. by organising research seminar series to strengthen scholarly dialogue between key stakeholders.

In order to meet these aims, research at AEI is currently organised in four complementary research pillars:

1	2	3	4
Globalisation, Regional Integration and Development	Interculturalism and Community Development	Sustainability, Governance and Social Change	Business Networks, Knowledge Management and Competitiveness
To understand the significance and impact of the different facets of globalisation and regionalism in order to create multidisciplinary knowledge of the emerging world order, with special emphasis on developmental outcomes.	To understand, in context of a globalised world, the imperatives of dealing with the particularities of cultural and religious identity, and the ensuing problems and possibilities that difference elicits. To enable policy, programmes and projects for training as well as the creation of a resource base.	To understand complex interactions between the natural environment and the dynamics of economic development, in order to design social transformations and governance arrangements for managing sustainability.	To understand the policy relevant dynamics of the forces that influence entrepreneurship, innovation and economic performance in Asia and Europe.

Table 1: AEI Research Pillars

In order to illustrate the kinds of synergies between first order research and direct policy application, the AEI has already convened a research group under a lead provided by UNCTAD to examine the possibilities for developing Asian monetary regionalism – as an answer to the problems that confronted the region during the 1997-98 financial crisis. Of course, initial proposals along these lines are already being debated at the highest intergovernmental levels. What is needed is the expertise and analysis that only dedicated research hubs can provide. And here joint collaboration with scholars of European monetary and financial union will be invaluable.

Following from this, it is clear that postgraduate teaching and learning in the Asia-Europe process must be driven by its advanced research culture. Thus the organisation of any portfolio of postgraduate courses is intended to create synergies between research and teaching/learning. The existing programmes offered by the AEI, for example, reflect a number of unique characteristics that further the aims and objectives of enhancing higher education cooperation and exchange.

Partnership: Each of the International Master programmes has been established in joint partnership with leading institutions in Europe.

International Teaching: Each of the International Masters programmes is taught jointly by AEI’s academic staff and Visiting Professors, all of whom have global reputations. This ensures that AEI’s students have the benefit of learning from leading scholars who bring with them outstanding pedagogical practice and research insights. In addition to their teaching duties, Visiting Professors add considerable value through frequent dialogue with the University’s local faculty, the promotion of collaborative research, and other public outreach activities.

International Students: Since their inception in September 2002, the International Masters programmes have enrolled a total of 88 students, nearly on-third of whom

have been from Europe.

Financial Support: As part of its commitment to developing a truly global learning experience, the AEI offers both full and partial financial support to deserving applicants on the basis of both outstanding academic achievement and appropriate personal and leadership qualities.

In order to build on and extend AEI’s existing portfolio of three postgraduate courses it is proposed to offer five new International Masters programmes, the first of which will be delivered in 2005-6. This will mean a total of eight International Masters programmes as follows:

- Globalisation and Regional Integration
- Information Management
- Small- and Medium-Scale Enterprises
- ASEAN Studies
- Technology and Innovation Policy
- Development Economics
- Environmental Policy
- Interculturalism and Community Development

Special mention should be made of one of the new courses. The ASEAN Studies programme will be the first dedicated postgraduate course of its kind anywhere in the world – quite a thought given the general acknowledgement of the success of ASEAN as a regional association and the proliferation of equivalent EU Studies courses over the last decade. In November 2004, the Board of Trustees of the ASEAN University Network announced the launching of six full-time scholarships, sponsored by the Government of Thailand and the University of Malaya, to support this initiative. We also hope that EU countries will see the advantages in sponsoring European students to study the processes of regional integration and policy formulation in this dynamic and important region.

All the areas of teaching/learning have been chosen to meet student-led demand and to complement the AEI’s research pillars—with direct linkages between the two as follows:

Research Pillar 1	Research Pillar 2	Research Pillar 3	Research Pillar 4
Globalisation, Regional Integration and Development	Interculturalism and Community Development	Sustainability, Governance and Social Change	Business Networks, Knowledge Management and Competitiveness
↓	↓	↓	↓
MA Courses	MA Courses	MA Courses	MA Courses
Regional Integration (IMRI) ASEAN Studies (IMAS) Development Economics (IMDE)	Interculturalism and Community Development (IMICD)	Environmental Policy (IMEP)	Information Management (IMIM) Small- and Medium-Scale Enterprises (IMSME) Technology and Innovation Policy (IMTIP)

Table 2: Linkages Between Research Pillars and International Masters Programmes

Finally, plans are also well advanced to develop a comprehensive PhD programme for students drawn from both Asia and Europe, and to be supervised by leading scholars from both regions.

Conclusions

It is clear that the core policies of the ASEM have reached a critical turning-point. To date, much has been done and it is good to concentrate upon success. But there is also a need to acknowledge that not all policy transfer and policy sharing is successful or at least that it could be better done.

In our view, at least three factors have a significant effect on policy failure or less than optimal success. First, the “borrowing” countries may have insufficient information about the policy and its institutional form and how it operates in the countries in which it is transferred. This is a process of uninformed transfer. Second, although a policy may be transferred, crucial elements of what made the policy a success in the originating countries may not be transferred leading to failure. This is what we call incomplete transfer. Third, insufficient attention may be paid to differences in the economic, political, institutional and cultural contexts in the transferring and borrowing countries: we can call this inappropriate transfer.

In searching for solutions to complex problems and in responding to opportunities afforded by new circumstances,

it is increasingly likely that governments – acting alone or acting regionally – will look “abroad” for solutions. This is much easier than in the past because of the growth in all forms of communication. At the same time it is also much easier because there is a multilateral, interregional framework in place that precisely encourages such transfer of policy initiatives.

The potential beneficial results of high quality policy collaboration and transfer in the field of higher education are very considerable. The ASEM process could be at the centre of a real knowledge infrastructure, linking higher education in Asia and Europe through precise programmes with identifiable student markets, and problem-solving applications. Moreover, the overall knowledge synergies will benefit all the ASEM member states and more than 2 billion people.

Both Asia and Europe have a great deal to learn from each other. Both continents have the institutional, intellectual and scholarly bases to enhance existing policy initiatives and craft new specialised policy developments. In doing so, a genuine “partnership of equals” needs to be created – and this will require some rethinking of the processes of policy transfer on the part of the EU and greater cohesion and coherence on the part of Asia. If this can be achieved then the enhancement of Asia-Europe educational cooperation and linkages will create an innovative knowledge emporium appropriate to the information age. ■

ASEAN Studies at Asia-Europe Institute

By GARETH A. RICHARDS, AEI Senior Research Fellow

A major breakthrough has been achieved in the realisation of a proposal to launch a new International Masters programme in ASEAN Studies at the Asia-Europe Institute, University of Malaya, in September 2005. For the last three months, two senior members of the AEI’s staff – Gareth A. Richards (Senior Research Fellow) and Tan Sri Ajit Singh (Distinguished Research Fellow and former Secretary General of ASEAN) have been working on the details of the ASEAN Studies proposal. This has entailed the writing of a clear and specific the rationale for the programme; an assessment of the student market through a survey; the development of key areas of the teaching/learning syllabus, together the identification of potential Visiting Professors to teach these modules; an assessment of the academic and non-academic support mechanisms; and, an exploration of new collaborative research opportunities in the rapidly-evolving field of ASEAN Studies.

Now comes news that the programme is to receive its first funding support. The recent meeting of the Board of Trustees of the ASEAN University Network, held in Siem Riep, Cambodia, expressed appreciation to the Asia-Europe Institute for establishing the M.A. programme in ASEAN Studies. In recognition of this, University of Malaya – represented by its Vice-Chancellor, Dato’ Professor Dr. Hashim Yaacob – offered three full scholarships to students from AUN Member Universities. The Chairman of AUN Board of Trustees and the Secretary General of Commission on Higher Education, Ministry of Education, Thailand also offered three full scholarships for students from Thai Member Universities enrolling in this programme.

This financial and logistical support from within ASEAN represents a vital step on the road to placing ASEAN Studies at the centre of international teaching, learning and research.

The International Masters programme in ASEAN Studies will provide an advanced level of understanding of the political, economic, social and cultural forces which shape ASEAN as well as the attendant policy process in a range of issue areas. It will do so through a consideration of four aspects of ASEAN.

1. The historical, social and cultural forces that have shaped Southeast Asia as a macro-region in the world order.
2. The contested nature of theoretical concepts—how the same basic categories are understood in partially different ways in competing theoretical approaches to regionalism and regionalisation, and how some concepts belong more to some theories than to others.
3. The institutional arrangements, changing policy agenda and governance issues of ASEAN in the contemporary period.
4. The key characteristics of ASEAN with analogous developments in regional associations elsewhere in the world.

The programme is designed for students for whom a taught MA will be a prelude to careers in fields related to business, international, regional, government and non-governmental organisations, or any career where advanced knowledge of ASEAN, regional integration and globalisation coupled with an advanced capacity to communicate effectively will be an advantage. It will appeal particularly to those with an interest in historical, cultural, political and economic aspects of regional integration.

Further details on the International Masters in ASEAN Studies will be available in February 2005. ■

Cultural Programmes

By CARMEN NGE, *Independent Film Critic*

Between War and Peace: Four Films

December 15, 2004 marked the first night of film discussion at AEI, after a packed house for Samira Makhmalbaf's latest cinematic endeavour, *At Five in the Afternoon*. The group that gathered in a circle was of a modest size and the dialogue that ensued was at times halting, at times steadfast and only occasionally heated; war and peace are clearly subjects that do not invite easy digestion.

From the grainy black and white palette of Gillo Pontecorvo's landmark film, *Battle of Algiers*, and the spartan icy white landscape of *Marooned in Iraq* to the tongue-in-cheek black humour of Danis Tanovic's *No Man's Land* and the sombre, haunting quiet of *At Five in the Afternoon*, this month's screenings at AEI gave us more than enough occasion for reflection.

From: *The Battle of Algiers*



The Battle of Algiers, which kicked off December's Between War and Peace series of films, reminded us—with a great deal of cinematic restraint—that the torture of Iraqi prisoners at Abu Ghraib is a silent salute to European colonialism's brutalising military power. The fact that Pontecorvo's 1965 film easily calls to mind our war-inscribed present is both eerie and disheartening.

Charting the rise and fall (and rise again) of the Algerian resistance movement in colonial Algeria under French rule, the film is a highly affective portrayal of anti-imperial struggles waged by ordinary native Algerians against the white settlers. The resistance, led by the FLN (Front de la Libération Nationale or the National Liberation Front), is revolutionary for it includes men and women, adults and children and, in so doing, results in the kind of grassroots anti-colonial struggle that penetrates all sectors of society.

Frantz Fanon, perhaps the most famous non-Algerian writing about the resistance movement in his adopted homeland, wrote in *The Wretched of the Earth* that "decolonization is always a violent phenomenon". Pontecorvo's grippingly honest film is testimony to the truth of Fanon's assertions. We do not only see the fist of colonial might pounding into the stone facades of the Arab quarters, killing countless innocent civilians, we also witness the tactical

moves of a disenfranchised people with nothing to lose.

With disarming precision, *The Battle of Algiers* re-enacts the bombing of French civilian targets in public places, such as coffee shops and banks. Such guerrilla strategies are reminiscent of the Palestinian resistance in the occupied territories, as well as more recent attacks in Iraq by civilian Iraqis against American soldiers.

It would seem that colonialism and its military apparatus is still alive and well in numerous corners of the world. At the same time, however, organised resistance struggles have not dwindled. Despite his harsh and gritty portrayal of Algeria under French colonialism, Pontecorvo gives us a rare glimpse of hope *en masse* towards the end. The death of key players in the FLN does not equal the death of the struggle against repression and foreign occupation. The desire for self-determination needs no leader.

From: *No Man's Land*



No Man's Land is a lesson in contrast. If Pontecorvo tries to show us the truth of colonialism then Tanovic tries to show us the farce of war. The civil war in Bosnia-Herzegovina at its height in 1993 is theatre of the absurd at its best. Two soldiers—one Bosnian, the other Serb—are awaiting their proverbial Godot: the United Nations.

Caught in the crossfire of Bosnian and Serbian frontlines, the two men are accompanied by a third: a Bosnian soldier, wounded and lying on a special kind of dirty bomb—one that bounces up when detonated, killing everyone within a few hundred feet. As the two soldiers bicker, point fingers and even shoot at each other, they await a UN bomb specialist from Germany to save them from their fate.

The UN becomes the object of Tanovic's derisive black humour. Ordered not to intervene, UN peacekeeping forces come and go without any sense of purpose, bowing down to the whims of ineffectual UN high command, who are more interested in appeasing the media than they are in handling the curious dilemma before them.

The film exposes the not-so-secret affair between the media and the United Nations, and mocks at how both routinely dupe the other, unaware of their own internal failings and hypocrisy. Caught in the middle are the soldiers who fight a battle that knows no solution. Locked in a paradigm of accusation and hate, the Bosnian soldier eventually kills the Serb and, ironically enough, is himself killed by a member of the UN peacekeeping force.

The final image of *No Man's Land* is a stroke of cinematic genius. The remaining Bosnian soldier, lying on a bomb that will explode as soon as he moves, is left alone in the trenches—the

media thinks he has been saved, the UN abandons him without remorse, and his partners in war are dead.

The absurdity of war knows no solution. Its victims are the thousands who are caught in the crossfire between peace and politics, between hope and senselessness. The future is a time bomb waiting to go off because war promises nothing but more death in store.

Both Pontecorvo and Tanovic take us into the heart of war, into the thick of insurgency, counter-insurgency, brutality and senseless violence. Alternatively, Samira Makhmalbaf and Bahman Ghobadi take us to the hinterlands of war's bleak after-effects.

From: *Marooned in Iraq*



In *Marooned in Iraq*, Ghobadi leads us on a road trip that delivers Kurdish music and mayhem with a generous dose of comedy. A famous musician, Mirza, manages to convince his two sons, Barat and Audeh, to follow him on a mission to find his lady love, Hanareh—who is blessed with a beautiful voice and an even more elusive presence.

In an interview, Ghobadi confesses that Hanareh is not the focal point because the goal of the film is to take us on a tour of Iraqi Kurdistan and to expose the consequences of Saddam-inflicted cruelty onto the Kurdish community. We witness the effects of bombings, thievery, smuggling and chemical warfare by Iraqis against the Kurds. Orphaned children with impish toothy smiles share screen time with round-bellied and thickly-mustachioed Kurdish musicians. And the Kurdish women—old and young—are simultaneously vocal and opinionated, cantankerous and difficult.

The face of Ghobadi's Kurdish community demands our laughter as

well as our empathy because they are irrepressibly human and undeniably humane. In the face of suppression, state-sponsored purges and great poverty, these homeless people continue to laugh in the face of their perpetrators and to joke about their own plight.

The music in the film is reminiscent of Emir Kusturica's carnivalesque *Underground* (1995), to which Ghobadi acknowledges cinematic debt. Kurdish music, according to the director, is one of the liveliest in the world and in his film he uses it to give his characters soul—it awakens and energises them, even in the face of death.

But like all good road movies, *Marooned in Iraq* never leads us to a clear destination. Hanareh is never found, father and sons take divergent paths away from one another, and the future of Kurdistan is unknown.

The enigmatic future of war-torn nations seems to be a central preoccupation of the last three movies in the *Between War and Peace* series. Apart from *The Battle of Algiers*, the rest of AEI's December offerings ask us to not only ponder a possible future for these countries—the former Yugoslavia, Kurdistan and Afghanistan—but also to question the notion of possibility itself. What does it even mean to imagine a future? Is another world possible?

Samira Makhmalbaf attempts to answer this question through the vehicle of a *burqa*-clad and white high-heeled Afghan woman, Noregh, who dreams of becoming her country's next President.

From: *At Five in the Afternoon*



Her third film, *At Five in the Afternoon* is Makhmalbaf's decidedly feminist take on contemporary post-Taliban Afghanistan. In her film, women attend school, they are free to move about beyond the confines of their homes and they can show their faces if they please. Talib men, like Noregh's father, must look away and beg forgiveness for their sins if

they were to accidentally cast their eyes on an unveiled woman. Women are no longer responsible to cover themselves in the company of men; instead men are the ones who have to take responsibility for their gaze.

With a cast of non-professional actors, Makhmalbaf manages to give us penetrating insight into the psyche of a young woman and the community within which she lives. Noregh is a woman who desires the impossible—to be the first woman President of Afghanistan—and who dares to articulate her desires in a schoolroom of peers as well as to a male poet, who is enamoured by her ambition and steadfastness.

But she spares her father the pain of knowing the truth about herself; she continues to maintain a charade of Muslim female piety and decorum because she does not want to anger him and she also realises that he is too old and has suffered too much to be able to deal with this additional trauma.

With memorable images of graceful *burqas* billowing in the wind, against a desolate, arid landscape, Makhmalbaf paints us a picture of Afghanistan that is both feminine and masculine. A recurring motif in the film is the image of Noregh, a solitary female figure emerging from dark, interior confines into lighted exteriors—symbolically representing Afghan women's transition from the orthodox Dark Ages into post-Taliban enlightenment.

Full of symbolic significance, Makhmalbaf's film invites us to imagine a new future that does not promise men at its helm. The final sequence of *At Five in the Afternoon* is a revealing one: the Taliban regime, represented by the two old men, is tired and despondent—one of them has even declared "God is dead"; the future of patriarchy, represented by Noregh's nephew, is dead.

What remains are the two women—one aspiring to be President and the other, her sister, mourning her dead child and husband—who walk together in search of water, with which to sustain them for the onward journey. They head towards the promise of water but the film ends without showing us if they indeed found it. Nonetheless, their courage keeps them going, keeps them from giving up like their elders. Armed with each other and a once-unimaginable aspiration, these two women literally walk into the final frame with nothing but hope and resilience.

Perhaps, these will be enough. ■

INTERNATIONAL FILM SCREENINGS EAST MEETS EAST

January 2005

Wednesday 5 January
8:30 pm

HERO

China 2002

96 mins.

Dir. Zhang Yimou

Using the assassination attempt of the historical figure, Chin Shi Huang Di (the first emperor of China) as a backdrop, this extraordinary film explores the concept of a hero. Set during the height of China's Warring States period, this is a tale told by an unnamed, invincible warrior who claims to have defeated his embattled and paranoid king's three most dangerous adversaries in one-on-one combat. *Hero* is a visually stunning, audacious film. Zhang Yimou, who gave us such classics as *Red Sorghum* and *Ju Dou*, has created a breathtaking epic about almost supernatural martial artists who walk on water, hang in the air, and slice and dice their opponent into a thousand slivers with nonchalant elegance.

Wednesday 12 January
8:30 pm

BLIND SHAFT

China/Germany 2003

92 mins.

Dir. Li Yang

The award-winning *Blind Shaft* tells the story of two itinerant miners who risk their lives under dangerous working conditions and develop questionable morals in order to survive. In the dark caves of one of the many illegal Chinese coal mines, they murder a co-worker, making his death seem accidental, in order to extort money from the mine's management. Harsh and compelling, with an intense focus, the film is a shockingly direct account of greed and murder and turns a cold eye on the Chinese economic miracle. *Blind Shaft* means to leave the viewer dazed, and it does.

Silver Bear, Berlin

International Film Festival
2003

Wednesday 19 January
8:30 pm

KOLYA

Czech Republic 1996

105 mins.

Dir. Jan Sverák

Kolya is a warm and funny film. It tells the story of Louka, a middle-aged Czech cellist who is a skirt-chasing bachelor and who enjoys a lifestyle free of responsibilities. When he finds himself strapped for cash, he agrees to a marriage of convenience. But after his new bride skips town, Louka is left to father her five-year-old Russian son, Kolya. Neither could be more unhappy with their predicament, especially since they don't even speak the same language. It takes time and patience for the cultural barrier between this unlikely father-son duo to fall, but when it does, an unbreakable bond forms in its place.

Best Foreign Language Film,
Academy Award 1997

Wednesday 26 January
8:30 pm

GOOD BYE, LENIN!

Germany 2003

121 mins.

Dir. Wolfgang Becker

October 1989 was a bad time to fall into a coma if you lived in East Germany – and this is precisely what happens to Alex's proudly socialist mother. Alex has a big problem on his hands when she suddenly awakens eight months later. And what could be more shocking than the fall of the Berlin Wall and the triumph of capitalism in her beloved East Germany? Wolfgang Becker has given us a film that is fast and funny, intriguing and touching.

Sponsored by



Best Picture, European Film
Awards 2003



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Intellectual Exchange

Interview

by ASOKKUMAR, AEI Senior Research Assistant



Rohan Felix Vigneswarer (IMSME)

Could you tell me briefly about yourself?

I am a local Kuala Lumpur boy. I grew up in Petaling Jaya and studied in La Salle secondary school PJ and completed my law degree in South Wales. In 1996, I started chambering after passing the Certificate in Legal Practice (CLP) exam and started my professional carrier as a lawyer with a legal firm, Lee and Hishamuddin. My area of speciality is insurance and loss adjusting. In my line of duty, very briefly I was involved in a commercial research project entitled "Social Impact Assessment" for PEMM Consulting Sdn. Bhd. This work was done as part of legal compliance for the relocation of a racecourse currently located at Sungei Besi in Kuala Lumpur to the suburbs of Rawang. This assignment exposed me to the world of research and instilled a desire in me to learn more about business operations.

What was the basis for choosing AEI and this IMSME programme?

The location of AEI is very convenient for me. This is the only master's programme in Malaysia with an "in company project". More importantly, we have students from many Asian and European countries and the cultural diversity is very enriching. Besides that this is the only reputable master's programme in the field of small and medium industries. The visiting professors come from many leading institutions in Europe and the dissemination of knowledge is excellent. SMEs are becoming the engine for future economic growth and the onslaught of globalization and free market should be exploited to our advantage. How do we do that? The way to go about it is by the K-economy. SMEs in this region are somewhat skeptical about the changes in the economic environment. They could end up paying a high price if they are not careful about the implementation of the ASEAN Free Trade Agreement.

How can you play a part in strengthening SMEs in your own environment?

That's the whole idea about my master's programme. I am learning a great deal of managerial skills from human resources, government regulations, financial management, business law, e-commerce and subjects on technology management. These subjects are of real value to anybody who wishes to be an entrepreneur. Upon completion of this course, I would be in a better position to advise the SME entrepreneurs not only in the legal area but also in management and finance.

What is your view on AEI as an academic institution?

Well, AEI is unique in the sense that the degrees offered are in very specialized areas. For example the International Masters in Small and Medium-Scale Enterprises is catering for people who wish to link themselves with the industry directly. The courses offered are very practical and conducted by people with industrial experience.

What is your message to current AEI students and friends?

Please keep the AEI alumni alive and try to get everybody for a reunion at least once a year. As part of the AEI family, please be active and participate in the events organised by the institute. Take the opportunity while at AEI and optimise your stay in Malaysia. Try to learn more about the country and the people. Building a group network is an essential part of any masters programme and please don't forget that we need each other for whatever business that we want to venture in as the whole world is moving towards a single free market.



Om Karona (IMSME)

Could you tell me briefly about yourself?

My name is Om Karona and I am from Cambodia. My entire schooling was in Cambodia and I completed my first degree in accountancy. I completed it as a part-time student at the Institute of Management Sciences, Siem Reap. My father is a public servant and my mother runs a small business in Siem Reap.

How did you know about AEI?

After deciding to further my education in the field of business, I searched for an institution outside Cambodia as this will give me international exposure. I searched the internet for reputable institutions in this region and was very impressed with AEI and the IMSME programme that is being offered. The tuition fee is reasonable and it's value for money.

Why did you choose the IMSME programme?

One of my professors at the Institute of Management Sciences in Siem Reap was instrumental in encouraging me to take up this programme. As I have always wanted to be an entrepreneur myself, this was the most logical decision I could make. Besides that the cosmopolitan crowd in this university is unique with students coming from many parts of the world. The cultural diversity is so enriching. The "in company project" that comes with this master's programme is really good. This will give me an opportunity to link with real-life experience. We will be attached to a local SME company for a duration of two months and thereafter submit a report of our work. This experience will definitely help me when I go back to my country. Currently SMEs in Cambodia are facing a lot of problems. Cheaply produced goods from China and other ASEAN countries are forcing the local companies to phase out. Many local SMEs went under receivership or closed down as they were simply not ready to face the competition. Although cheap goods are welcomed as Cambodians will have access to those goods, it also has made thousands of people lose jobs. For a total revamp of the entire SMEs, systems operation is needed and there aren't many experts in my country. Unlike Malaysia, the government's support is still at a low level. Firm-level technological capabilities are weak with very little Research and Development activities. All this must change immediately and the most crucial element of competent manpower must be in place. I want to play an important role in doing that upon returning to Cambodia.

What are the things that fascinate you in Malaysia?

The infrastructure in this country is far better than that of Cambodia. This explains why we are unable to compete with other ASEAN countries. For example the electricity tariff in Malaysia is much lower compared to Cambodia. Frequent power cuts are normal. Foreign Direct Investment is rare as we are still seen as politically unstable. The cost of education there is far higher than in Malaysia, and not many have access to basic education and the institutions of higher learning are ill equipped. The environment is not conducive for learning to take place.

What is your view of AEI as an academic institution?

This is a good place with high quality education. AEI is well placed to attract students from all over the world. As the institution grows, I believe there will be more international students coming to AEI and personally I feel that I have gained a great deal of knowledge.

Your message to the current AEI students.

We must utilise this opportunity to learn more about people from other countries. Solid links must be established between us and a group network is very important. Students from this country must travel to countries like Cambodia to explore future possible joint ventures. ASEAN co-operation in trade and industry must begin from the relationship that we establish. ■

AEI'S FIRST UNDERGRADUATE ELECTIVE COURSE FOR SEMESTER TWO

CURRENT EUROPEAN ISSUES**(ZXEX 1301)**

By MAIMUNA MERICAN, AEI Course Co-ordinator & Lecturer

'Central and Eastern European Countries (CEECs) enlargement of the European Union (EU) in May 2004 with an additional ten new member states bringing it to a total of 25, the start of negotiations on EU membership with Turkey, EU constitution, etc...'

These are amongst the current debates within the EU paradigm. In the wake of the EU being one of the global players, AEI has for the first time offered University of Malaya's undergraduates an elective course entitled '*Current European Issues*' in semester two which began last November and ends in March 2005. The course is designed to provide a comprehensive introduction to contemporary issues in the EU. In particular it focuses on the role of the Europe in the globalising world order and how this affects the character of European integration. The course is organised in four parts. Part One provides an understanding of the historical evolution of European regional integration, role of Member States and examines the institutional architecture of the EU. Part Two focuses on the recent enlargements and challenges of EU enlargement. Part Three examines EU as an international actor in a global world with a clear focus on contemporary developments in its external relations. Part Four then shifts attention to key policy areas within EU and its involvement and effects on the international arena.

Ruhana Padzil and I are very thrilled and excited to embark on this learning and teaching endeavour as the number of registered students for this course is very encouraging. The extra incentive which makes this journey more fulfilling is the fact that the 25 students who have undertaken to follow this course through come from a '*bag of mix marbles*'! I had thought that this course would only capture the attention of international relations or law students. However, to my utter surprise we have students from as far a field as Sport Science, Architecture, Engineering, and Medicine. By following the course in English we hope that the students are not only learning European issues but improving their English language skills through their interactive class discussions, oral presentations and also tutorials which contribute to their overall assessment. There is also an element of innovation in this course. Ambassadors from Asian and European countries will be invited to participate and give guest lectures together with key people from civil society. Thus, we sincerely hope that the course not only offers the opportunity for academic qualifications, but also unique engagement and interaction with key personalities within our society. We pledge our commitment in making AEI's elective course as a course that portrays our social responsibility as teachers in enhancing knowledge for our people and our nation!

We wanted to know our students' experiences...Nazli made it real by patiently taking their pictures and exploring their views regarding this course.



Maimuna MERICAN



Ruhana PADZIL

**The course syllabus covers these major topics**

EU and Its Internal Mechanisms and Institutions
Historical Background of the EU

Institutional Architecture of the EU

The Process of Enlargement

EU and Its External Relations
External Relations

The EU and the US

The EU and the Mediterranean
The EU and the Middle East

The EU and Asia

The EU and Africa, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP)

EU and Its Policies
Democracy and Good Governance

Social Policy

Development Issues
Human Rights

AEI Undergraduate Elective Course



Interview

by NAZLI AZIZ, AEI Senior Research Assistant

Popping into a class twice to interview students of the **Current European Issues** without prior notice to them was a rather pleasant task. “It’s so unfair, you should tell us earlier...then we can dress up!”, said one of them followed by a blast of laughter from the class when I was there the first time. On the second occasion, I teased to make them famous. Both times, however, I managed to get their cooperation in a very casual ambience of interviewing them. Many thanks! Here are some excerpts:

Q: This elective course is meant to cater students from different backgrounds. “One size does fit all”, so to speak! Do you agree?

A: Nurul Adni (Medicine): Most definitely. Although we have different backgrounds we all seem to fit in this class. Current European issues are a global affair and ought to be universally studied. For that matter, it’s not restricted to any background, be it medical, engineering or arts!

A: Fung Wen Yin (Engineering): It is supposed to be “fit all from the same interest: fond of studying European issues”. I think this is not bound to the fact that what background I’m coming from but is what direction I’m going to. This is a very magnificent discovery in my life that I have a choice to choose this course and seeing an entirely different style of presentation compared to that which I encounter in my faculty. It does broaden my knowledge horizon. I believe I’ll have many things when I leave. This course provides me a space of thinking and exploring a new vista to see the world.

A: Gan Yee Ching (Sciences): I agree with it because it comprises mostly general knowledge and something that is related to our daily lives. By taking this course, it helps me to understand how the Union functions. It is not anything too technical or formulated like science. So, I guess it can be grasped by students from different backgrounds.

Q: The course aims to provide a comprehensive introducing to contemporary issues in the EU. Wonderful! Is it useful to you, anyway?

A: Mohd Yusuf Daud (Accountancy): I think so. It makes me aware of the currents affairs in Europe, not only what happens in Asia and America.

A: Yong Chihui (Sciences): I guess so. It helps me enlarge my understanding of what’s happening beyond the borders.

A: Mohd Amzari Mat Rani (Education): Since EU has a great impact on the world today, it’s important for me to know what’s happening there. Whatever action is taken by the EU would reflect on how the Union sees the world.

Q: This course is about the EU. Why should we study the EU?

A: Melanie Kang Yee Sun (Arts): The EU is a phenomenon that is affecting the world structure in the field of International

Relations. If we are to understand the current issues of the world, then the study of the EU is essential and fundamental.

A: Kala Chandra Varthini (Arts): The EU has been a phenomenal success. It’s a challenge to the existing lot of international relations theories. The EU makes an impact on the current international system. It caught my attention as a lot of issues can be discussed in this class.

Q: Generally speaking, students with social sciences background have more advantages than sciences students for this course. What do you say to that?

A: Christopher Choong Weng Wai (Economics): I think that’s possible. However, it shouldn’t be a hindrance as education ought to be holistic.

A: Sharifah Shahira Syed Sofi (Sciences): I think so. Anyhow, it helps sciences students like me to know more about the current issues in Europe.

A: Suhana Irda Mohd Nasir (Sciences): I tend to agree with them. However, it also depends on our willingness to dig and nourish our knowledge, regardless of our background.

A: Chong Jeunn Fuh (Architecture): I don’t agree! Basically this course explains about things which are happening in Europe in particular and the world in general. The course is about general knowledge that we should know. Any student would have more advantages so long as they have the exposure towards the subject.

A: Ivan Choo Weng Wah (Sport Science): Definitely! It depends more on the students themselves rather than on what they’re studying. I personally feel that it’s the way they’re brought up rather than the background of what they’re studying.

A: Chia Choon Seng (Sciences): That’s right! Individuals are driven towards their goal in learning something. I’m interested in this course because there are opportunities to be explored to fulfill my curiosity with the advantage of the existing course as such.

Q: Each of you attended an elective course that was offered by AEI last semester. Why AEI again?

A: Rowena Chin Ai Lin (Arts) The reason why I enrolled again for the course this semester is because I really had fun in class last semester and didn’t want to miss out on it again this semester. I didn’t realize how much I’ve learnt from the course till now, when I’m taking a paper on European Politics as a core paper!

A: Chye Lillian (Law): The reason I’m coming back for second semester here is simply that I feel content and happy learning at AEI and of course, lecturers played an important role in attracting me to come back. I like to learn new topics in a new environment and challenges. AEI helps me to achieve these goals.

A: Teo Bee Guan (Sciences): I’m impressed by the sincerity, willingness, passion, and dedication of the lecturers to teach students. And of course, I’m also interested with the EU. I want to know more about the Union, not just wasting the credit hours only. ■

Seminar Series

By GARETH A. RICHARDS, AEI Senior Research Fellow

The new academic year has brought a number of distinguished Visiting Professors to the Asia-Europe Institute. Their presence has stimulated the launching of the new AEI Seminar Series. The idea is to offer a venue for scholars from around the world to share their latest research with the academic community in Malaysia. The papers that are presented in the Seminar Series will be edited for publication in the AEI's Working Papers collection that will come online in 2005. Here we highlight some of the major themes from recent seminar presentations and offer a thumbnail profile of the Visiting Professors.



J. Gabriel Palma

Faculty of Economics and Politics
University of Cambridge, United Kingdom

“Economic Development: East Asia and Latin America Compared”

23 September 2004

Gabriel Palma is one of the world's foremost development economists. Originally from Chile his academic career took him to the United Kingdom and he has been based at the Faculty of Economics and Politics, Cambridge University since 1981. Dr Palma's research has focused both on theoretical issues of development – he has been a leading contributor to debates about radical development theories – and on the practical policy issues of industrialisation and finance. He has published very widely indeed and has three books in press: *Growth and Structure of the Chilean Manufacturing Industry from 1830 to 1935: Origins and Development of a Process of industrialisation in an Export Economy*, Oxford University Press; *Radical*

Theories of Development: A Critical Reappraisal, Academic Press; and, as editor with G. Harcourt, *Richard Kahn's Contribution to Political Economy*, Palgrave. Gabriel Palma was Visiting Professor at the Asia-Europe Institute, teaching on the International Masters programme in Regional Integration.

Over the last decade Dr Palma has developed an interest in the comparative development strategies of Latin America and East Asia and this was the theme of his paper to the AEI Seminar Series. In it he traced the contrasting fortunes of the two regions through an analysis of their economic history, macroeconomics, international trade and international finance. One of the key explanations for the differentiated development outcomes has been the ability of East Asian developmental states and their domestic institutions to mediate global economic processes to their advantage. In this feature of the development process Dr Palma sees major lessons for the Latin American economies that have been beset by so many difficulties.



Vincenzo Maragliano

Controller Akademie and University of Ancona, Italy

“Shareholders' Value Creation and Capital Structure”

27 October 2004

Vincenzo Maragliano is a well-known trainer and consultant with Akademie Controller Italia, a leading training institution in management control and finance. He is also a professor with Istituto Adriano Olivetti (ISTAO), University of Ancona, one of the most prestigious management schools in Italy which has

become a focal point for the study of small- and medium-scale enterprises and enhancing entrepreneurship. Vincenzo Maragliano was Visiting Professor at the Asia-Europe Institute, teaching on the International Masters programme in Small- and Medium-Scale Enterprises.

Dr Maragliano's seminar presentation examined how to move from the “return on equity” accounting perspective to the “economic value added” perspective, with specific reference to SMEs. In particular, the paper considered innovative methods in how to create shareholders' value; how to measure company performance; and, the managerial impacts of capital structure.



Johannes Dragsbaek Schmidt

Research Center on Development and International Relations (DIR)
Aalborg University, Denmark

“Social Capitalism in Thailand: A Response to the Crisis of Neoliberal Globalisation”

4 November 2004

Johannes Dragsbaek Schmidt is Associate Professor and the Director of Research Center on Development and International Relations (DIR), Aalborg University, Denmark, where he has overall responsibility for the management of one of Scandinavia's leading centres for development studies. His teaching and research interests fall into the fields of international political economy, and political and economic development with special reference to Southeast Asia. He has published extensively

on social change, the impact of neoliberal globalisation, and welfare policies in the region. He is joint editor of *Globalization and Social Welfare in East and Southeast Asia* (forthcoming) and *Globalization and Social Change*, Routledge, 2000. Professor Schmidt was Visiting Professor at the Asia-Europe Institute, teaching on the International Masters programme in Regional Integration. Professor Schmidt's seminar presentation offered an up-to-date analysis of the political economy of Thailand under the leadership of Thaksin Shinawatra. It began with a consideration of the political events that propelled

Thaksin to power in 2001 under a populist campaign that promised an alternative to the IMF-imposed model of neoliberal orthodoxy. The paper analysed in some detail these populist policies, aimed at helping small businesses and farmers, and which involved the postponement of farmers' debts and allocation millions of dollars in credit for thousands of villages. He also promised to build a million homes for the poor. The tentative conclusion of the paper suggested that Thaksin's claims to offer an alternative to neoliberalism are ambiguous at best.



Gilles Van Wijk
Essec Business School, France
“**The Role of Time Instruments in Management**”
10 November 2004

Gilles van Wijk is Associate Professor in Strategy and Management at the ESSEC Business School, France, one of Europe's top business schools. He obtained his PhD in Management of Organizations from Columbia University in 1984. His teaching and research expertise falls into the fields of business policy, strategic management and new ventures. He is the author of a classic text entitled *Organization Theory*, New York, 1984, and his recent publications examine inter-firm alliances, the management of trust, and time as a means of domination and control – the topic of this seminar presentation.

Gilles van Wijk was Visiting Professor at the Asia-Europe Institute, teaching on the International Masters programme in Small- and Medium-Scale Enterprises.

Professor van Wijk's paper to the AEI Seminar Series examined the fascinating topic of time instruments in management. He emphasised that efforts to optimise planning and organisational processes have led to the development of more and more sophisticated tools. However, this development has to be understood as part of a social world characterised by deep-seated internal contradictions that require coercion and domination of some interest groups to avoid disintegration. In particular, managerial action unfolds in a context of structure and procedures and uses various forms of power to contain and integrate the different stakeholders that have conflicting objectives. As the paper demonstrated, time-based management tools are an important example of such devices.



Om Prakash
Delhi School of Economics, India
“**Asia and the Rise of the World Economy in the Early Modern Period**”
25 November 2004

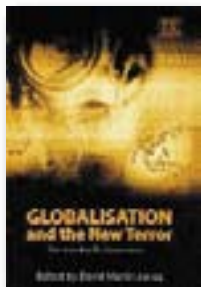
Om Prakash is one of the most celebrated historians of Asia from the perspective of world history. He is Professor of Economic History at the Delhi School of Economics, having obtained his PhD in Economic History from the University of Delhi in 1967. His distinguished career includes visiting professorships and fellowships at Harvard University's Department of Economics, Leiden University, the Netherlands Institute of Advanced Study in the Humanities and Social Sciences, Heidelberg University in Germany, Maison Des Sciences De L'Homme in France, and Curtin University in Australia. Among other honours, he is a permanent Foreign Member of the Royal Dutch Academy of Sciences and is on the Executive Committee of the International Economic

History Association. He has authored numerous books and hundreds of articles. His best-known books include *Asia and the Pre-modern World Economy*, 1995; *European Commercial Enterprise in Pre-colonial India*, Vol. II.5 in *The New Cambridge History of India* series, 1998; and, *Bullion for Goods: European and Indian Merchants in the Indian Ocean Trade, 1500–1800*, forthcoming.

Professor Prakash's seminar paper revisited one of the most important themes of world history – the rise of an early modern world economy that followed the “discovery” of the Americas in 1492 and that of the all-water route between Europe and Asia in 1498. The critical connection between these two great discoveries was provided by the large quantities of American silver which the European corporate enterprises exported to Asia in order to buy Asian goods. The seminar presentation dealt mainly with the implications of the import of American silver into Asia and argued that there was no basic difference in terms of its impact between Europe and Asia – in other words, in terms of the rise of the world economy in the early modern period. ■

GLOBALISATION AND ASIA

There is, of course, no shortage of books on globalisation. For more than a decade the study of globalisation has been one of the dominant themes across the social sciences. As one well-known analyst maintains 'the idea of globalisation has acquired the mantle of a new paradigm'. And yet there is very little consensus on what globalisation actually means still less where the processes associated with it may be heading. Recent publications on globalisation are now offering a more nuanced view of changes in the global political economy. Here we highlight three titles that examine various facets of globalising processes and their implications for Asia.



Jones, D.M. (ed) (2004) *Globalization and the New Terror: The Asia Pacific Dimension*, London, Edward Elgar.

This work examines trends in 'new terror'—understood here to be the capacity of sub-state actors to secure religious or politically motivated objectives by violent means. The contributors argue that whilst the use of violence to achieve political ends is scarcely original, what distinguishes new terror is its potential for lethality. This, combined with its evolving capacity to draw upon the resources of

globalisation, particularly the revolution in communications, which has both advanced global markets, has also rendered them, and the more developed core states in the international trading order, increasingly vulnerable to asymmetric threats. The book's objectives are to: examine the character of new terror and its ambivalent relationship to the evolving cybernetic order made possible by technology and globalization, identify emerging and threats in terrorism including cyber-terrorism, eco-terrorism, bombings and CBR material; and consider the implications of these characteristics for the Asia-Pacific region.

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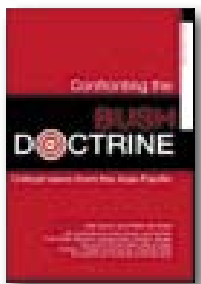
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Bibliography

Contributors: R. Butler, G. Cameron, P. Chalk, J. Cotton, R. Gunaratna, F. Haut, D.M. Jones, J. MacFarlane, A. Muir, K.A. O'Brien, D. Richardson, P. Schulte, M. Smith, A. Tan, G. Wardlaw, M. Weeding, C. Williams, M. Zanini

David Martin Jones is Senior Lecturer in Political Science, School of Political Science and International Studies, University of Queensland, Australia.



Van Ness, P. and Gurtov, M. (eds) (2004) *Confronting the Bush Doctrine: Critical Views from the Asia-Pacific*, London, RoutledgeCurzon.

There is no doubt that President George W. Bush and his administration have transformed US foreign policy and reshaped global international relations in a very profound way. Many American commentators continue to talk about 9-11 as the day the world changed, but increasingly analysts around the world are concluding that more important than 9-11 have been the ideas that the Bush leadership brought into office in January 2001. *Confronting the Bush Doctrine* is the first book to take on the vitally important task of analysing how the Asia Pacific region sees and evaluates what the United States is doing.

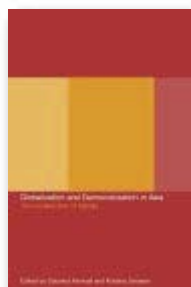
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Peter Van Ness is a Visiting Fellow in the Contemporary China Centre and lectures in the Department of International Relations at the Australian National University. Melvin Gurtov is Professor of Political Science and International Studies at Portland State University, USA.



Kinnvall, C. and Jönsson, K. (eds) (2002) *Globalization and Democratization in Asia: The Construction of Identity*, London, Routledge.

Globalisation is a defining feature of our times, covering everything from economic and political issues to the spread of American culture. Its status is controversial, however with some viewing it as leading to greater development for all, while others see it as a threat to national cultures and democratic political life. This book shows how simplified such binary views are, and examines how various globalising forces have affected Asian societies. It discusses the relationship between globalisation, identity and democratic developments in Asia both theoretically and empirically, and aims to understand how economic, political and social forces interact and are mutually reinforced in Asian societies.

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