Abstract

The paper explores the implications of major social transformation in Asia for Europe. It is specifically addressed to expressions of cosmopolitan engagement between transnational organizations representing Asia and Europe. Within Asia there is some evidence to indicate that cosmopolitanism is becoming a significant factor in culture and in politics, as is illustrated by increasing transnational cooperation within Asia and the dilution of national interests. A major question is whether such forms of cooperation will play a significant role in Asia’s relation to Europe and whether as a consequence European Asian relations will develop in a direction congruent with cosmopolitan principles. The thesis of the paper is that if its momentum continues to develop, cosmopolitan relations and normative regionalism in Asia and Europe are significant factors in reshaping the world and trans-regional order, and that critical cosmopolitanism can be an alternative to nationalism and to narrowly defined globalization.
Introduction

Cosmopolitanism has emerged as an important theoretical approach in the social sciences in recent years. Originally a development within moral and political philosophy concerning an universalistic orientation towards world principles it has become increasingly pertinent to social science especially in the context of issues relating to globalization and transnational movements of all kinds. It would not be inaccurate to speak of a cosmopolitan turn in social science. Cosmopolitanism suggests a critical attitude as opposed to an exclusively interpretative or descriptive approach to the social world. In this sense it retains the normative stance of traditional notions of cosmopolitanism. One of the principal expressions of cosmopolitanism as a political condition concerns the search for alternatives to purely instrumental economic and security relations between societies. While cosmopolitanism has become influential within normative political theory, as is illustrated in the work of theorists such as Held (1995) and Archibugi (1995), it has been taken up in a different guise in disciplines such as history, sociology, anthropology, cultural studies where the tendency has been towards a more situated or rooted understanding of cosmopolitanism. Rather than a preoccupation with exclusively universalistic principles, the cosmopolitan turn in the social sciences has tended towards a post-universalistic stance. This has led to a view of globality as seen through the lens of the local. The resulting relativization of universalism opens cosmopolitanism to more empirically relevant applications.
Of particular relevance, which is the concern of the present paper, is the recognition of a multiplicity of cosmopolitan projects in the world. It is not an exclusively western project, but can exist anywhere and at anytime. Hence the theme of varieties of cosmopolitanism that is developed in this paper. Cosmopolitan cultural and political orientations can be expressed in individuals, in collective actors such as organizations and social movements, in populations such as diasporas, and even in whole societies or civilizational currents. However, cosmopolitanism is not simply reducible to transnationalism, although transnationalism is an important precondition of cosmopolitan orientations. To speak of cosmopolitanism is to refer to a transformation in self-understanding as a result of the engagement with others over issues of global significance. It is concerned with identifying processes of self-transformation arising out of the encounter with others in the context of global concerns.

A major challenge today is the development of dialogue across cultural and civilizational worlds. When different national interests come into play difficulties in developing cooperation and dialogue are increased. Overcoming major political and cultural divisions is one of the most challenging tasks of the present day. This paper is addressed to this problem. The focus of the paper is to look at emerging forms of normative transnationalism in both Europe and in Asia. The argument advanced here is that such developments constitute varieties of cosmopolitanism and mark the emergence of new kinds of relations between the societies of Europe and Asia. Foregrounded in this is the possibility of cosmopolitan dialogue. Unlike many approaches to inter-cultural dialogue, the idea of a cosmopolitan dialogue suggests a transformation in self-understanding and not merely a better awareness of the
perspective of the other. Moreover, it also requires a change in policy making, as opposed to merely a change in consciousness (Nederveen Pieterse, 2006).

Cosmopolitanism is not a European or universal western condition but occurs in a variety of societal forms. There are European and Asian expressions of cosmopolitanism, a term that can be taken to be a concern with global principles of justice and the need to take into account the perspective of the other. Until now the dominant conceptions of cosmopolitan have focused on universal justice, identifying cosmopolitanism with a universal normative order. One of the principal correctives of this has been a concern with European versions of cosmopolitanism (Habermas, 2003; Beck and Grande, 2007). In such approaches European integration as a postnational process is seen as entailing cosmopolitan cultural and political possibilities. This paper brings the Asian experience to bear on the debate on the multiple expressions of cosmopolitanism. Such a perspective offers a richer and more culturally nuanced analysis of the huge variety of normative frameworks that exist in the world and, moreover, offers a basis for a new conception of transcontinental dialogue.

Cosmopolitanism is particularly relevant to Europe and Asia. Although generally related to developments pertaining to global civil society and transnational governance beyond the nation-state, it is relevant both to the kinds of normative regionalism that are emerging in Europe and Asia as well as the deeper cultural orientations that are constitutive of their civilizations. Cosmopolitan theory offers a robust approach to current patterns of cooperation between Europe and Asia as well as a normative framework for comparative analysis.
Asia is important for Europe, both for individual nation-states and the EU. The EU itself has been developing an interest in the external and global context in which Europe is increasingly becoming an actor in the world (Lavenex, 2004). Europe, too, is important for Asia, where there is increased interest in developing relations that are not exclusively based on national interests. The paper aims to assess the mutual interest in this relationship and to take stock of the implications of the rise of new centres of economic and political power in Asia for Europeanization. Although the obstacles to cosmopolitanism cannot be underestimated, there is much to suggest that in fact Europe and Asia have the necessary social and political resources to draw from in moving beyond national interests and at the same to resist the normless world of globalization.

It has been increasingly accepted that within Europe national interests alone cannot be self-determining. The project of European integration, which led to a dilution of national sovereignty, arose out of this recognition, but in the wider international context national interests on the whole are predominant and often such interests are rooted in cultural and even in civilizational worlds. The EU is an exception in so far as it is a polity based on overlapping layers of governance in which the national level is only one tier and indeed one that has been considerably modified by a transnationalization of the nation-state. Recent studies have demonstrated the relevance of cosmopolitanism for Europeanization (Delanty and Rumford, 2005; Rumford, 2006; Beck and Grande, 2007). There are not many other comparable models of governance in the world. Nowhere is this more evident than in the case of the United States, despite its democratic political culture. However, there is some evidence to suggest that in the case of Euro-Asian relationships there is a shift
towards what might be called a cosmopolitan perspective whereby national interests are modified by transnational cooperation. Transnational citizenship and global civil society has become increasingly operative in the Asian context (He, 2004a). On the level of culture, contrary to popular slogans such as the ‘clash of civilizations’, there is also some evidence of cosmopolitan possibilities for dialogue.

The paper proceeds as follows. In the next section the relevance of cosmopolitan theory for social and political analysis is outlined in further detail around the notion of critical cosmopolitanism. The subsequent section applies the critical cosmopolitan perspective to Europe. In the next section Asian driving forces of and various expressions of cosmopolitanism are examined. The paper concludes with an assessment of cosmopolitan relations between Europe and Asia.

**Critical Cosmopolitanism**

The current state of scholarship on Europe and Asia relations falls into four categories: (1) research on EU policy with respect to Asia; (2) Asian area studies; (3) philosophical studies on cultural dialogue, including postcolonial approaches; and (4) normative international relations, including global security studies. These fields are generally separated. EU policy making is mostly concerned with issues specific to the EU and is generally not addressed to broad questions in social and political theory (Lawson, 2003; Preston and Gilson, 2001). This is also the case with Asian area studies, although this is a larger field and is not confined to policy studies. Studies on cultural dialogue while being more theoretical are predominantly philosophical and limited in scope as far as empirical research is concerned (Deutsch, 1991; Ravi et al 2004). A good deal of the more theoretical and culturally oriented literature on Europe
and Asia is dominated by politicized assumptions, such as those associated with postcolonial theory or the ‘clash of civilization’ thesis. Normative international relations has remained on a very abstract level (Beitz 1979, Frost 1996). The approach adopted in this paper is to apply cosmopolitan theory to both European and Asia experiences with transnationalism. We argue that this has particular relevance to what we call normative transnationalism, which can be discerned in Asia as well as in the European context. A cosmopolitan approach is also particularly suitable to comparative analysis, especially in relation to issues of transnationalism.

Cosmopolitanism has been for long associated with western moral and political philosophy (Tan, 2004). The major philosophical proponents of cosmopolitanism, which in modern times derives from Kant, have tended to associate cosmopolitanism with a universalistic orientation towards world community (Bohman and Lutz-Bachmann, 1997). In Greek philosophy, for the Stoics and Cynics cosmopolitanism signified an allegiance to the world community as opposed to the community into which one was born. Cosmopolitanism was ignited with consciousness of the wider world that had been opened up with the expansion of Hellenism into Asia. For Kant it was primarily a demand for the recognition of universal rights. It has had a considerable impact in social sciences and history as a way to respond to globalization. The attraction of cosmopolitanism for social scientists consists in part of its normative orientation, which is especially relevant to transnationalism and the growing consciousness of globality. Rather than being a utopian projection or, as in Nussbaum’s (1996) well known essay, a moral postulate, it has a resonance in a wide range of cultural, social and political currents throughout the world. Cosmopolitanism, too, has been reflected in developments in global history, cross-
cultural encounters in history and in studies of alternative modernities (Gaonkar, 2001). This is not the place to engage in a full review of these developments. Our aim here is rather to outline the basic assumptions of our cosmopolitan approach, which we term critical cosmopolitan, in order to provide a working theoretical framework to address European Asian relations in the present day.\(^5\)

The distinctive feature of the critical cosmopolitan approach that our analysis draws on is that it aims to be empirically relevant but also evaluative. In normative terms it is significant with respect to the current situation in which globalization has brought about new challenges; it is also crucial in terms of cosmopolitanism itself, that is in interrogating and testing the hypotheses of cosmopolitanism in an empirical world.

Much of cosmopolitan theory in social science tends to be either exclusively normative, as is the case with cosmopolitan political theory, or - as is the case in most social and historical work - concerned with an all too diffuse notion of transnational movements or cultural hybridity. In the former case there is little engagement with actual empirical examples and, in the latter case, the link with the normative is often lost in a preoccupation with issues of diversity, mobility, hybridity etc and there is often an unclear connection with globalization. Our position is that any serious application of cosmopolitanism to social analysis requires moving beyond purely normative considerations to assessing concrete developments. But how do we do this without losing the normative dimension of cosmopolitan analysis?
Identifying cosmopolitanism with self-transformation in light of the encounter with others in responses to the challenges of globality, it is possible further to specify it as a condition that occurs through deliberation. It is through deliberation that hitherto assumptions are revised in light of the perspective of the other. There is now a substantial literature on deliberation in relation to democracy and public discourse, as is evidenced by the work of Habermas, Dryzek, and Fishkin. Dryzek (2006) advocates discursive democratization or deliberative engagement across boundaries in transnational public spheres. Fishkin and Luskin (2005) have developed and applied deliberative polling techniques to achieve a more genuine and equal deliberation in US, UK, China, EU and many other places. The connection with cosmopolitanism has only rarely been made, but it is a highly relevant example of cosmopolitanism. Deliberative discourse, we argue, exemplifies the critical thrust of cosmopolitanism as a post-universalistic condition that is open to a diversity of interpretations and applications. It is dialogic but also critical. In another sense, critical cosmopolitanism offers a normative standpoint to assess the current situation, for instance to assess the preconditions of cosmopolitanism in a particular context or to assess the extent to which a given situation is one in which cosmopolitanism is a significant factor.

The critical cosmopolitanism advocated here avoids the pitfalls of universalism (purely normative advocacy) and relativism (whereby cosmopolitanism is equated by hybidity and pluralism). Some of the characteristics that are generally associated with cosmopolitanism such as the negotiation and crossing of borders, a concern with overlapping allegiances, a concern with global equality and the suffering of others, are thus given a more concrete form in a specific methodological approach the aim of which is to discern and assess empirical expressions of cosmopolitanism. As post-
universalistic self-understanding, cosmopolitanism can be seen more of a self-
problematisation and as a learning from the other. In that sense it is a universalism
modified by relativism; it is not European universalism, but exists in a variety of
contexts and to varying degrees. For instance, it is possible to see cosmopolitanism
expressed in the mixing and re-packaging of cultures and identities. This might be a
weak expression of cosmopolitanism but, depending on the degree of self-
transformation that results, it may also take a stronger form. Recognition of the
perspective of the other is the key to cosmopolitanism and it makes little sense
speaking of cosmopolitanism if this is absent. In situations of a largely transnational
nature where self-problematization and pluralization result from the encounter with
others we can speak of cosmopolitanism. Cosmopolitanism in this sense, then, is
related to the capacity for self-transformation in the cultural and political resources of
a society or a given social form.

For the purposes of the present paper, a critical cosmopolitan approach offers an
alternative to internationalism as well as to globalization oriented approaches. Where
the former is largely a matter of inter-state relations and the latter a process in which
time and space become compressed, cosmopolitanism is rather a response to the
normative implications of the international order and to globalization and comes into
play where ever alternatives to exclusively economic and security concerns are
explored. So, for example, cosmopolitanism as opposed to globalization can be
expressed in movements aimed to bring global forces under the control of
cosmopolitan publics and cosmopolitan states. One of the characteristic features of
cosmopolitanism as opposed to internationalism or globalization is the link with the
local. Cosmopolitan politics take place in the nexus of the local and the global in
much the same way as it is a condition that goes beyond the universal versus relativist poles. We see cosmopolitanism as constituting a field of tensions that arises whenever the local and the global come into contact. In this sense, then, it is not a question of which came first, cosmopolitanism or globalization. Both have been mutually linked.

A key indicator of cosmopolitanism is the value of global justice and equality. Conventional cosmopolitan theory does not adequately consider the value of equality, in particular the value of cultural equality, presupposing very often a western or European conception of equality. The result is a fairly limited conception of cosmopolitan dialogue as one that is premised on western assumptions (He, 2005). In addition, critical cosmopolitanism is distinguished from superficial or pseudo ‘cosmopolitanism’ which focuses only on the use of the life style of other cultures to enrich one's material life without normative engagement.

On the basis of the foregoing theoretical and methodological observations, we can now consider our two cases and explore the relations between them from the perspective of critical cosmopolitanism.

**Cosmopolitanism and Europeanization**

The case for cosmopolitanism in the European context can be most readily established by taking some examples related to the overall process of Europeanization. By this term is not meant simply ‘European integration’ or the Europeanization of the nation state as a result of the EU, but a wider process of the Europeanization of European societies (See Delanty and Runford, 2005). The role of the EU in this cannot be underestimated and is without doubt the single most important factor in enhancing the
capacities of European societies to become cosmopolitan. However, as a transnational project it is not to be equated with cosmopolitanism. It is helpful to begin by identifying some of the preconditions of cosmopolitanism in Europe before specifying some of its more overt expressions.

The basic preconditions of cosmopolitanism within Europe have been established by the Europeanization of the nation state as a result of the consolidation of the EU over the past two decades during which time the project of European integration came to be increasingly addressed to wider societal issues. The EU can be seen as a catalyst of cosmopolitanism without itself being necessarily cosmopolitan. The sharing of sovereignty and the undermining of national autonomy has opened up opportunities for cosmopolitanism to become more rooted in European societies than in previous times when national societies were relatively autonomous. With the transformation of the European project into one of normative transnationalism as opposed to a purely inter-governmental organization, the external preconditions for European cosmopolitanism were established. It is important not to conflate such preconditions with a fully developed cosmopolitan condition, since the EU itself is not cosmopolitan by virtue of being a transnational actor. Although a case could be made to see the EU as itself an instance of cosmopolitanism, the position taken here is to see it as a catalyst of cosmopolitan change. It must be borne in mind that the EU can also lead to counter-cosmopolitanism, as in Milward’s (1993) well known thesis of the ‘European rescue of the nation-state’ or the argument, which has some plausibility, that the EU provokes nationalism (Hutchinson, 2005).
Despite all claims that Europeanization has not led to a European Society or that a European political community has failed to rival the obvious popularity of national identity, there can be little doubt that the tremendous transformation of the nation state as a result of Europeanization has opened the ground for cosmopolitan orientations. There is now ample empirical evidence of the interpenetration of European societies to a degree that has never before been the case. This is particularly evident in the dilution of borders within the EU and the more or less total disappearance of war within the EU. It is for instance inconceivable that Germany and France will once again go to war. Europe too has been the context in which countries such as Ireland have been able to overcome the legacy of history and in the case of Ireland have found a more balanced relationship with their neighbour. A pertinent example of cosmopolitan politics in this context is the creation of power-sharing whereby the UK and Irish governments have joint sovereignty over Northern Ireland. At this point we can speak of an overt expression of cosmopolitanism, that is a transformation in the cultural and political orientation of society as a result of the encounter with others. The transnational space that has been opened by Europeanization has provided such possibilities the results of which are, as already argued, best exemplified in the national or local space rather than in the transnational space as such. This, again, is an example of how cosmopolitanism should be seen as a transformative condition in which the local responds to the challenges of the global. So our thesis is that the Europeanization of national societies has established preconditions for cosmopolitanism to emerge and whether or not this happens is an empirical question. For example, the enlargement of the EU to include much of central and eastern Europe can be seem as setting a precondition of cosmopolitanism in that it has led to the emergence of a multi-centred Europe, which can no longer be
defined in terms of a narrow western conception of Europe and the European heritage. But whether or not this tendential ‘post-western Europe’ in the making will actually develop in a cosmopolitan direction is an open question (Delanty, 2003). The current debate about the future of the draft Constitutional Treaty and the question of Turkish membership is an example of a discourse in which cosmopolitan and counter-cosmopolitan currents can be found.

Cosmopolitan tendencies are evident in changing identity patterns. There is now adequate empirical evidence of European identity as an identity that is not necessarily in competition with national or regional or ethnic identities, but an identity than can co-exist with other kinds of identity and with which it may have a reflexive relation (Herrmann et al 2004). This dimension of reflexivity is an important indicator of cosmopolitanism in so far as it suggests a problematization of self-understandings. An interesting example of this is the Europeanization of Turkish Islam, that is the tendency by which Islam in Turkey has become an agent of democratization as a result of its willingness to undergo change. Further examples of at least partial cosmopolitanism are the growing Europeanization of public discourse. Although a European public sphere does not exist as such, the interpenetration of European public spheres has resulted in a more and more forms of interaction between European societies and emerging out this are instances of cosmopolitan consciousness. A pertinent example was European wide civil opposition to the Anglo-American led war in Iraqi.

This is clearly a limited outline of the case for the relevance of cosmopolitanism to developments related to Europeanization. It does seem incontrovertible that if
cosmopolitan theory is to have any empirical application the emergence of European normative transnationalism is one of the most obvious candidates in the world. There are few transnational fields where the dilution of national sovereignty has been so extensive and where normative orientation beyond economic and security issues play a significant role. While this transnational normative order can be identified with the EU, it should be related to the much wider scenario of a post-national Europe that has been transformed by cross-national interactions and the move towards a post-sovereign polity.

There is one weakness in the case that has been set out here: what has been discussed so far concerns only ‘internal’ cosmopolitanism, an inner European cosmopolitanism. We have not addressed the external context of cosmopolitanism, that is the relation between Europe and the rest of the world. It is clearly the case that this is crucial to cosmopolitanism and that a purely internal European cosmopolitanism is a limited one. With the EU becoming increasingly a global actor in what is now generally recognized to be a multi-polar world the external context must be addressed. Before looking at this with respect to the relation to Asia, the case for an Asian variant of cosmopolitanism can be assessed.

**Asian Cosmopolitanism**

The European case offers a relatively coherent example of a transnational order in which, to varying degrees, normative orientations towards postnational politics is evident. The Asian case is more complicated and the obstacles to cosmopolitanism should not be underestimated. While on surface appearances there is little comparable to Europeanization in Asia, it would be a mistake to conclude that cosmopolitanism
is not a relevant consideration. Limiting cosmopolitanism to European specificity results not only in the neglect of Asian variants of cosmopolitanism, but also limits the true significance of a cosmopolitan approach, which we argue resides in learning from the other in the context of global concerns. There is also an important American debate on cosmopolitanism, which we cannot consider here for reason of space, but which is also relevant. It will suffice to note that much of the American debate has been confined to the politics of identity and multiculturalism and has been less a feature of social and political science. Yet, there is a general recognition of a post-universalistic cosmopolitanism.7

To begin, a brief consideration of some of the possible objections against the idea of an Asian cosmopolitanism is in place. The first and most obvious one is that the geographical and cultural diversity of Asia exceeds anything comparable to the European case where a unity in diversity has some reality. The size of Asia and the existence within it of several civilizations – of which the major ones are the Chinese, Japanese, Indian, and Islamic world – make it difficult to speak of Asia in a sense comparable to Europe, which despite its open-endness is more defined than Asia. Another obstacle – and clearly the critical one – is the existence within Asia of major national rifts, such as Japanese-China fault line or the Pakistan-India conflict which very recently came close to nuclear war. It may also be objected that the tradition of national sovereignty is unassailable in Asia where there is also weaker traditions of civil society and incomplete democratization. Other objections will be that only the elites are cosmopolitanism and that Asian cosmopolitanism may be at the cost of the peasantry and the environment. Moreover, there is not an Asian identity in the sense that there is a tangible if somewhat limited European identity.
These are serious challenges for critical cosmopolitanism and cannot be easily dismissed. Yet we argue that notwithstanding these considerations cosmopolitanism is a significant reality in Asia. In particular the rise of an Asian normative transnationalism, although different from the European case, is one of the major examples of Asian cosmopolitanism. Relevant too in this context is the work of Onuma (2007) who has developed a trascivilisational perspective to deal with a number of transnational boundary questions; and the notion of cosmopolitan democracy has been extended and modified to Asia to address the national identity question (He, 2002). Before looking at this we can note a number of more general indicators and preconditions of cosmopolitanism in the Asian context and briefly provide a few rejoinders to the above mentioned obstacles.

It is certainly the case that the size of Asia and the huge diversity of its civilizations presents a problem for a common Asian identity. While diversity may be a source of Europe’s cosmopolitanism, it is arguably the case that in Asia cosmopolitanism has been impeded by diversity. But it is possible to see cosmopolitanism being expressed in different ways through civilizational cross-fertilization. The civilizations of Asia have been products of cross-cultural fertilization as opposed to separate and autonomous civilizations; they have borrowed from each other as well as having borrowed from European civilization. European liberalism, nationalism and Marxism have all been absorbed by Asian civilizations to the extent that these European ideologies have become internalized as an essential component of Asian cultures. Asian hybrid cultural forms are favourable milieus for the development of cosmopolitanism. Many political, economic and cultural reforms
or the transformation of Asian societies have been taken in the light of the perspectives from Europe and America. In contrast, such borrowing and hybridity does not move so easily in the opposite direction. In Europe borrowings have been more selective and so far no European country has internalized aspects of Asian culture like Confucianism and Buddhism on a large scale or at a deepened level. It is certainly difficult to claim that European society has transformed itself in the light of the perspective of Asia. These facts suggest that there is a stronger ‘external’ dimension to Asia than is the case in Europe.

It has often been noted that the civilizational heritage of Asia and its ancient religions has been a basis for Asian cosmopolitanism. Sanskrit, for instance, can be seen as an Asian cosmopolitan equivalent of Latin (Pollock, 2001). Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, and Confucianism established the basic preconditions for Asian cultures to create dynamic and hybrid societies in which cosmopolitanism has been more of a popular phenomenon than an elite project. It is arguably the case that in Europe until recent times cosmopolitanism was more of an elite phenomenon. In Asia the mixed and ethnically plural nature of many of its civilizations and overlapping ethnic cultures and identities suggests a more pronounced popular cosmopolitanism and which might be seen as a precondition of a new kind of civic cosmopolitanism.

Fred Dallmayr (1996) has commented on Asian critical cosmopolitan traditions. In this regard, the rich and persistent ‘Tianxia’ tradition in East Asia can be seen as one of Asian forms of cosmopolitanism in an ancient time. Mo Tzu (480-390B.C) promoted a cosmopolitan or universal love, an outwardly oriented disposition of mind which is completely devoted to achieving the benefit of others. His notion of ‘love is
defined almost in terms of Kant's principle of treating all men as ends in themselves’ (Schwartz, 1985: 146-7). The Chinese Confucian scholar Kang Youwei (K'ang Yu-wei 1858-1927) advocated the elimination of national boundaries, class structure and racial discrimination in order to achieve his vision of universal peace and greater unity of mankind; and Tan Shitou (T'an Ssu-tung, 1865-98) imagined the formation of global government in which only the world exists but nations dissolve (Fung Yu-lan, 1973: 689, 698).

Migration, too, is a significant fact in present day Asian cosmopolitanism. Migrants returning from western countries are having a major impact on Asian countries. It is possible to see migrants as one of the leading driving forces of cosmopolitanism, just as Jewish migration was a carrier of cosmopolitanism in nineteenth century Europe. In this context Asian experiences with multiculturalism and citizenship can be noted as expressions of cosmopolitanism. Aihwa Ong has commented on how intensified travel, consumption, communication has led to a transnational Chinese public (Ong, 1999). Throughout south and east Asia, countries are now debating, and sometimes adopting, new policies to accommodate minorities, from the recognition of indigenous rights in the Philippines to regional autonomy in Indonesia and China, to multinational federalism in Sri Lanka and India. (Kymlicka and He, 2005:1). There is now the beginnings of empirical evidence of Asian transnational forms of collective identity. The newly established Asian barometer documents some evidence of transnational identities (Inoguchi 2005). 3,573 respondents constituting thirty-nine per cent of the sample population reported that they feel part of an Asian supernatinal group. Increasingly the life style of Asians is becoming more and more cosmopolitan albeit with some limits. For example, 24.1 per cent of the 9,160 respondents said that they have friends from other countries, 52.8 per cent often watch
foreign entertainment programs, 44.9 per cent often watch foreign news programs, 10.5 per cent use email to communicate with other countries, and 33.5 per cent receive international satellite or cable TV.  

The stronger adherence to national sovereignty in Asia should not be led to the conclusion that Asian nationalisms blocked the development of cosmopolitanism and that cosmopolitanism is merely an ideal without any substance. Historically, the idea of cosmopolitanism emerged in the context of liberal nationalism in the nineteenth century. Theoretically speaking, nationalism and cosmopolitanism are complementary and mutually implicated (Delanty, 2006c). Indeed the result of the Asia barometer demonstrates a moderately strong positive correlation between Asian regional identity and national identity with high levels of Asian regional identity being associated with high levels of national identity. Chinese fighting for national prestige and natural resources largely out of considerations of self-interest nevertheless has cosmopolitan consequences. Hu Jintao, the president of PRC, for example, announced that China would double aid to Africa by 2009 and create an investment fund of $5 billion in the 2006 Sino-African Summit in Beijing. In his trip to eight African countries in February 2007 President Hu cancelled Cameroon's debt, Sudan's $19 million debt, the $15 million of debt Liberia owed to China, and $15 million in debt Mozambique owes China. Tony Blair’s call for the cancellation of African debt has been realized by the Chinese government and the unintentional consequence of this has contributed to the development of a cosmopolitan outlook and to the partial realization of global redistributive justice. Recently, in order to increase its global reach and to compete with China for global influence, Japan decided to develop ‘value-oriented diplomacy’, a foreign policy based on support for universal values of democracy, freedom, human rights, rule of law, and market economies. This departs from Japan’s early post-war
policy which was solely devoted to economics and is likely to promote the course of cosmopolitanism in Asia and beyond. Increasingly cosmopolitanism will be seen as an instrument or expression of greater national identity in Asia.

The driving forces for cosmopolitanism come not only from migrants and nation-states, but also from NGOs and intellectuals. There is growing democratization in Asia where the world-wide pursuit of democracy has been much in evidence. One of the most important developments in Asia has been the spread of civil society, a development that is closely linked to wealth creation and urbanization. Various NGOs and intellectuals in Asia seek international linkage and form transnational cooperation in all areas, even in the most thorny area of redefining national identity, challenging the WTO's rule, and creating a new type of global social contract (He, 2004b; He and Murphy, 2007). Despite a weak institutional framework for environmental regionalism and national governments' resistance to ceding sovereignty over environmental issues in Asia (Campbell, 2005), transnational environmental movements have developed in Asia. In 2004 a number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam and Myanmar with the help of international Rivers Network protested the local Chinese government's decision to build dams in the upstream of the Nu River which flows into Southeast Asian countries. Chinese NGOs also organized lobbying activities and campaigns against the damming of the Nu River within China. In the end, Beijing ordered the local government to suspend the decision. In addition, transnational public spheres have been developing in Asia. Numerous criticisms of the American war in Iraq testify to the formation of a critical and even deliberative public sphere. Also, a series of substantive dialogue held overseas between Han and Tibetans led to the transformation of Han Chinese perceptions towards Tibetans (Zhang Weiguo 1999).
Most Asian countries are now fully linked to the global economy and several are major players. As Asian countries confront globalization, new models of modernity come into play. This cannot be seen as simply reactive to western powers or to globalization. Asian expressions of modernity are products of a unique constellation of forces that are shaping the world in ways that cannot be understood in terms of ‘westernization’ (see Beck et al. 2000). This situation, which is one of an invigorated Asianism, has brought about an entirely new approach to culture and to politics in Asia. Postmodern culture is now an integral part of many major Asia cities where a new kind of aesthetic cosmopolitanism has come into being.\(^\text{10}\) It is arguably the case that developments in culture and aesthetics are one of the major expressions of Asian cosmopolitanism.

The political landscape is also changing and is the chief focus of this paper. The major Asian powers have now recognised the need to have positive relations with Europe in order to challenge the US. There is a pronounced shift from bilateral relationships with individual European countries to relations with the EU and which is increasingly being mediated through Asian transnational organizations. This is the context in which we can introduce what we regard as one of the most important expressions of Asian cosmopolitanism, namely normative transnationalism. This takes two forms, normative regionalism within Asia – that is Asia transnationalism – and a wider Asia European transnationalism. Underlying both is a new questioning of the East West divide.

Examples of Asian normative regionalism are ASEAN (Association of S. E. Asian Nations) which was established in 1967 and has been influenced by the EU. NGOs
such as ASEAN People's Assembly have taken a lead in taking seriously the values of democracy, human rights, participation and good governance in building an ASEAN Community of Caring Societies in recent years. 2005 was a watershed year in the history of Asian normative regionalism. The Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the Establishment of the ASEAN Charter embodies the first written requirement for the promotion of democracy and human rights, for transparency and good governance and for strengthening democratic institutions. In addition, under the pressure of threats to boycott any regional meeting chaired by Myanmar, the military regime in Myanmar decided to relinquish its turn at the ASEAN's chairmanship in 2006. In December 2005, a group of South East Asian lawmakers also called for Myanmar to be expelled from ASEAN if the military regime does not improve its human rights record. In the long term, the argument that Asian identity excludes concerns for human rights and democracy is weak and by no means self-evident. The question of how to treat minorities within a nation-state requires a regional and global approach. A regional and global principle of basic human rights including minority rights should be included in the normative practice of regionalism.

Normative Euro-Asian transnationalism is reflected in ASEM (Asia-Europe Meeting), which was founded in 1996 and the Europe Asia Foundation. These are the main examples but others are, the Asian Foundation, Europe-Asia Civil Society Dialogue, and Asia Europe World Summit 2002. ASEM has endorsed equality, mutual respect and mutual benefit as a basis of dialogue; it addresses global issues of common concern such as arms control, disarmament, combating illicit trafficking, managing migratory flows, and combating racism and xenophobia. The Asia-Europe Foundation, which was established in February 1997 under the framework of ASEM,
is a good example. With a membership of 38 countries it has developed a Cultures & Civilisations Dialogue programme, and organized a series of conferences, lecture tours, workshops and seminars in order to promote deeper engagement and wide collaboration between societies of Asia and Europe.11

**Normative Transnationalism and Cosmopolitan Engagement**

Until now, we have argued, Europeanization was shaped by internal factors relating to the transnationalization of the nation state, but today the external is coming increasingly to the fore. We have argued that certain developments within Europe can be linked to cosmopolitanism, but whether the external dimension, that is Europe’s relation to the non-European world, will bear the imprint of that cosmopolitanism remains to be seen. The thesis of this paper is that the critical factor in this is the rise of a different kind of normative transnationalism between Asia and Europe and cosmopolitan engagement. Not all transnational connections between Europe and Asia are cosmopolitanism. Cosmopolitan engagements are characterized by an overriding concern with normative and moral issues, acceptance of the criticism of other cultures, taking others as equal partners in a cultural dialogue, positive cultural encounter and the formation of overlapping identities and trannational citizenship. An ideal of cosmopolitan relations is that both sides take the perspective of the other seriously, and both sides engage in substantive dialogue with a critical eye to cultural equality and mutual respect. Cosmopolitan engagement denies a place for cultural imperialism and cultural superiority, but encourages mutual respect and mutual learning.
The relation with Asia is becoming more important as is illustrated with the EU’s New Asia Strategy, launched in 1994. It can hardly be denied that that strategy was initially inspired by purely economic considerations and a certain sense of threat posed by the volatile economies in Asia. In the past decade or so the relation of Europe to Asia has taken more complex forms. In 2006 the European Commission agreed on a new agenda for EU-China relations and to deepen its political ties. Already bilateral trade is expected to exceed €180 billion, making the EU China's largest trading partner, far ahead of the US and Japan. The Chinese government has a major interest in forging a different and more cooperative kind of a relation with Europe as a counterbalance against the domination of the US. In the eyes of many Asian governments and non-governmental organizations, the EU represents a model of normative regionalism that is highly relevant to Asia, especially in regard to sustainable development, energy, and climate change.

It is increasingly recognised that Asia is important for Europe. Unprecedented social change in Asia – economic, demographic, political, and cultural – has compelled a new approach. The centre of global power is slowly shifting from West to East and already global markets are making a huge impact on Europe (Frank, 1998; Therborn, 2006). Europe can either embrace global markets – and face nationalist reaction in Europe – or it can resist globalization by retreating into a Fortress Europe. If Europe resists globalization by economic protectionism and increased security anti-western sentiments will be provoked in Asia. Neither of these options can be a basis for the future. Due to economic interdependency and with its growing consciousness as a global actor, Europe will have to find more positive ways of relating to Asia. Together Europe and Asia need to solve together the problems of the world risk
society (Beck and Delanty, 2006). From the Asian perspective there is growing interest in Asia to have a different kind of relation with the EU than the one it has with the US (and which could be understood as a more cosmopolitan one than one based exclusively on national interests). The perception is that the EU sets an example for China and Asia in terms of a new type of political order which the US lacks.

This alternative model is one of cosmopolitan relations between Europe and Asia beyond economic and security considerations, and it lays down a foundation for lasting friendship. International relations based on purely economic trade are often unstable and are subject to the contingencies of economic conditions. In the early and mid-eighteenth century, European thinkers such as Leibniz discovered the value of cosmopolitan relations between Europe and China. For example, that Chinese moral science was not unencumbered by ‘the superstitious fetters of religion that had imposed a cake of custom on European institutions’ served as a model for Europeans to reform their moral practice (Jones 2001:20). Today, the EU has helped Asian countries to reform Asian political and moral lives. For example, the EU-China village governance project (2001-2006) helped Chinese villagers to build and improve village democracy in China. The EU's new corporate social responsibility project aims to help the Chinese business community to develop a moral concern with the social consequences of their policies. European countries such as Sweden have successfully brokered the peace deal that ended conflict in Aceh in 2005. ASEM summits have discussed a number of global and regional common issues on an equal basis. Transnational linkage and cosmopolitan engagement between Asia and Europe is contributing to the development of a transnational public sphere on an equal basis.
Of course, economic and security considerations still dominate the relationship between Asia and Europe; and there is a long way to go in furthering cosmopolitan relations between Europe and Asia. It is imperative for both regions to improve the quality of cosmopolitan engagement. An Europe-Asia trans-regional public sphere will make a significant contribution to global democracy in terms of deliberative and cosmopolitan engagement, and constitutes an obstacle to any monopolization of political discourse by a single super power.

The argument advanced here is not that any transnational engagement between Europe and Asia could be termed cosmopolitanism. The critical point in making an exchange cosmopolitan is the normative principle of accepting the perspective of the other. A specific example of this can be found in those cases where the national interest is not the primary one. It is of course, too, the case that Europe and Asia are internally pluralized and the organizations that represent them have to accommodate this condition and as a result such transnational organizations may be more oriented towards cosmopolitanism.

**Conclusion**

Critical cosmopolitanism can be an alternative to nationalism and to narrowly defined globalization. A major question is whether positive political forms of regional cooperation will develop along cosmopolitan lines, that is will go beyond narrow economic and security concerns to address problems of global justice. This question is also a cultural question and concerns the capacities of a given society to transform itself in light of the perspective of the other. Although Asian cultural diversity will prevent a common Asian identity emerging, it does play a role in building a
transnational regional identity. Indeed the ASEAN People's Declaration states: ‘Aware that our diversity has not undermined the reality of our shared destiny.’

Despite the relative absence of cosmopolitanism at the level of the state, there is evidence of cosmopolitanism on cultural, civil society, regional (subnational) and transregional levels. It can be argued that the external dimension of cosmopolitanism with western societies is more developed in Asia where the internal dimension is less developed. It makes sense to speak of an Asian cosmopolitanism, which although different and less developed than the European model is nonetheless significant.

Rather than, as Samuel Huntington predicted, the emergence of the alliance between radical Islam and conservative Confucianism against Western civilization, cosmopolitan relations between Europe and Asia have been emerging and will continue to develop. Islamic fundamentalism is not an Asian phenomenon but was nurtured in European countries and was a product of transnationalism. Cosmopolitanism versus fundamentalism is a more accurate characterization of the current situation than the West/Europe v Asia. For this reason the ‘clash of civilizations’ thesis needs to be revised.

Europe has developed a higher level of ‘internal’ dimension of cosmopolitanism. It is time to develop the external dimension of cosmopolitanism. A truly cosmopolitan Europe must engage with Asia in a self-critical manner; and a cosmopolitan engagement with Asia will feed back into the development of a critical cosmopolitanism in Europe. Europe can no longer be defined by the exclusion of Asia. We need to rethink European identity in ways that have a more positive approach to Asia.
References


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Endnotes

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4 For the purpose of this paper the terms ‘Europe’ and ‘Asia’ have political meanings – as in transnational organizations, such as the EU and ASEAN –cultural meanings
which derive from the wider civilizational forms, and geographical meaning. On the whole we are primarily concerned with the former and geographically we focus on East Asia and Southeast Asia.

5 For an elaboration of the notion of a critical cosmopolitanism see Delanty (2006a).

6 For a comparison between India and the EU, see Oommen (2004).

7 See for example Appiah (2005). Ong (1999) is an exception in this respect.

8 Source: Nippon Research Center, Asia-Europe Survey (18 countires), Oct-Nov 2000. We thank Takashi Inoguchi for sharing this result with us.

9 Pearson correlation coefficient r = .41, p = <.01).

10 See for example Dirlik and Zudong (2000) and Miyoshi and Harootunian (1989).
