

*ASEAN and the EU: Arts and Culture Festivals as Tools to Promote Regional
Identity*

Enrique Banús Irusta, David Ocón Fernández

International University of Catalunya (UIC), Spain

0224

The Asian Conference on Cultural Studies 2013

Official Conference Proceedings 2013



iafor

iafor
The International Academic Forum
www.iafor.org

Identity: A Typically European Affair?

Immediately after the Italian unification, the story goes that in the first session of the Parliament, one of Garibaldi's companions said: "Abbiamo fatto l'Italia, si tratta adesso di fare gli italiani"¹. In 2004 the Chinese artist Zhao Xudong wrote: "Many scholars begin to reflect on the shortcomings of typical Western conceptions such as nationality, ethnicity and identity"².

'Identity' could thus be considered a characteristically Western issue³, and specifically a European concern⁴. Nevertheless, in European Communities the insistence on a 'European identity' appears only relatively late, in the 1970s. The influential *Tindemans Report* was the first to establish a direct connection between European identity and progress in political integration, stating that "Europe cannot proceed to a greater degree of political integration without the underlying structure of a unifying European identity"⁵. Also from the 1970s is the official declaration on 'European Identity' adopted at the Conference of Heads of Government at Copenhagen in December 1973. Here, identity is linked to democratic values, and in fact, the document establishes that "The principles of representative democracy, of the rule of law, of social justice (...) and of respect for human rights" are characterised as "fundamental elements of the European Identity"⁶.

When culture is mentioned in official European Union (EU) documents, the aspirations are much more modest. In what constitutes now article 167 of *The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union*, identity is not mentioned and only a secondary goal, a "common cultural heritage" that has to be brought "to the fore"⁷. The main goal, however, is to contribute "to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States". In the treaties, identity is only used when considering the European presence in International affairs, and as such it appears in the *Preamble of the European Union Treaty*: "RESOLVED to implement a common foreign and security policy including the progressive framing of a common defence policy, which might lead to a common defence in accordance with the provisions of Article 42, thereby reinforcing the European identity and its independence in order to promote peace, security and progress in Europe and in the world." Identity is therefore an element

¹ "We have made Italy. Now we must make Italians", Massimo D'Azeglio (Massimo Tapparelli marchese D'Azeglio – 1798-1866), fist session of the Italian Parliament, 18.2.1861.

² Catalogue of the exhibition *All under Heaven* (2004).

³ See also: "the nation-state is an invention of the modern West, and certainly the word *nation* (*minzu*, designating 'a people' rather than a country or state) was imported into the Chinese language only at the end of the nineteenth century.", Holcombe, Charles. *A History of East Asia: From the Origins of Civilization to the Twenty-First Century*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2011, p.6.

⁴ "Outside of Europe, only those societies that possessed a singular identity and managed early to acquire rudiments of stateness, e.g., Japan, Thailand and China, were able to escape being subordinated to or colonized by European sovereign national states.", Schmitter, Philippe C. and Kim, Sunhyuk, 'Comparing Processes of Regional Integration: European Lessons and Northeast Asian Reflections, in Verdun, Amy (ed.). *Current Politics and Economics of Asia. Special Issue on the European Union and Asia*, Vol. 17, Issue 1, 2008.

⁵ The Report is from 29.12.1975, published in the Bull. CE, suppl. 1/76.

⁶ See "Annex to the Summit Conference Final Communiqué", in *Bulletin of the European Communities*, No 12, December 1973, pp. 11-12. The document was prepared by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the then nine European member states.

⁷ CONCLUSIONS OF THE COUNCIL of 10 November 1994 on the Commission communication concerning European Community action in support of culture (94/C 348/01).

that gains a visibility in the European Community life only after the first decades, and more clearly when entering into dialogue with other parts of the world rather than within the European Union itself.

Also, culture is an area that appears relatively late in the official documents. It took a long time for the European Community to act in the field of culture – at least directly and on a clear legal fundament: it was only in 1993 when a Title related to culture was included in the quoted *Treaty on the European Union* (TEU), better known as “Maastricht Treaty”⁸. This is a relatively late birth, probably due to “divergences quant à l’opportunité d’une véritable action culturel européenne”⁹, as it was said in the Commission’s “Rapport général” after the first informal meeting of the Ministries of Culture in September 1982¹⁰.

Culture and ASEAN: From *per se* to why not?

On the other side, it is not very common to link the Southeast Asia region with sophisticated and advanced models for cultural cooperation. However by 1969, barely two years after its creation, the *Association of South East Asian Nations* (ASEAN), had already developed an *Agreement for the promotion of mass media and cultural activities* in the region. The agreement was signed in the Cameron Highlands, Malaysia, by representatives from the governments of the five ASEAN member countries at the time: Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines. The agreement urged the ASEAN members to promote cultural cooperation; it soon took form in a concrete body, the *Permanent Committee on Socio-Cultural Activities*, created in 1971 “to promote cooperation in the social, educational and humanitarian fields as well as in the visual and performing arts, literature and related cultural activities in order to achieve the fullest development of the ASEAN people”¹¹.

That means that 22 years before the European Community introduced a Title related to culture for the first time, culture was part of the official governmental agenda in Southeast Asia’s regional main institution. And with concrete operational results: the first *Summer Field School of Archaeology*, in May 1973; the meetings of museum experts in 1975 and 1976, that resulted in the creation of the *ASEAN Association of Museums* in December 1976; a training in traditional dance and music in 1975, followed by a meeting of experts in design and handicrafts; an *ASEAN Literary Award Programme*, established as a way acknowledge and stimulate literary production in the region and for the understanding among the ASEAN cultures; art and photography exhibitions since 1974. The activity was reinforced in October 1978,

⁸ The Treaty was signed in February 1992 by the then twelve member states of the European Communities, and is in force since November 1993. The article related to culture has been maintained with only an amendment (underlying the role of diversity) by the Treaty of Amsterdam and is also included in the Lisbon Treaty as article 167 (it was first called article 128, later 151, and now 167) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

⁹ “differences regarding the advisability of a genuine European Cultural Action”.

¹⁰ P. 41.

¹¹ *ASEAN Plan of Action on Culture and Information*, ASEAN Secretariat, Jakarta, Indonesia, October 1994, p. 43.

when - as a result of support from a substantial cultural grant by Japan¹² - ASEAN created the *Committee on Culture and Information* (COCI).

Those first few years of promotion of cultural and artistic activities in the region did not look to respond to any other intention or strategy than the promotion of culture as an item that deserved support and encouragement in itself.

However, what could be considered a culture *per se* policy that reigned in the first few years of ASEAN, with time, included the reflection on regional identity. There was, however, one main difference in relation to the European Communities: culture in ASEAN was then *expressis verbis*¹³ brought into direct relation with identity. In fact, it drastically evolved towards being utilised for the creation of a regional identity. As such, in 1976's *Declaration of ASEAN Concord* signed in Bali, Indonesia, it is mentioned that "Support of ASEAN scholars, writers, artistes and mass media representatives" should be promoted "to enable them to play an active role in fostering a sense of regional identity and fellowship."¹⁴ The projected *ASEAN Community*, due to enter into force in 2015, will be built upon three pillars or communities: defence, economic and socio-cultural, three communities "closely intertwined and mutually reinforcing for the purpose of ensuring durable peace, stability, and shared prosperity in the region"¹⁵. For the socio-cultural community, the role of contributor towards achieving identity and awareness of ASEAN is again reinforced, since it "shall nurture talent and promote interaction among ASEAN scholars, writers, artists and media practitioners to help preserve and promote ASEAN's diverse cultural heritage while fostering regional identity as well as cultivating people's awareness of ASEAN"¹⁶.

Here, unity and diversity are combined, but in a more audacious way than in the EU: to foster regional identity is much more than to bring to the fore a common cultural heritage¹⁷. This, in fact, is ironically clearer than the European Union's official documents go!

¹² The *ASEAN Cultural Fund* was set up in December 1978 to finance cultural cooperation within ASEAN. Japan was the initial contributor to the fund with five billion yen disbursed between 1978 and 1979.

¹³ "explicit"

¹⁴ *Declaration of ASEAN Concord*, Bali, Indonesia, 24 February 1976, <<http://www.mfa.go.th/asean/contents/files/other-20121203-171104-892621.pdf>>. This message, progressively reinforced, was also gathered in the *Singapore Declaration of 1992*, <<http://www.asean.org/news/item/singapore-declaration-of-1992-singapore-28-january-1992>>. Later on, the *Declaration of ASEAN Concord II* or *Bali Concord II*, signed in Bali, Indonesia, in October de 2003, aimed to impulse regional cooperation and integration focusing on achieving a developed shared community: "the Bali document presents an impressive and comprehensive attempt at reforming regional cooperation that could bring ASEAN on to the path of regional integration and towards a stronger standing in East Asian regionalisation", Freistein, Katja. *ASEAN after the Bali Summit 2003: From Paralysis to New Life?*, European Journal of East Asian Studies 4(2), 2005, p. 202.

¹⁵ Declaration of ASEAN Concord II (Bali Concord II), Bali, Indonesia, 7 October 2003, <<http://www.aseansec.org/15159.htm>>

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ "ASEAN countries have firmly supported the exchange of ASEAN scholars, writers, artists and teachers to enable them to play an active role in fostering a sense of regional identity and fellowship". Sucharitkul, Sompong. *ASEAN Partnership and Cooperation with Non-ASEAN Partners*, Singapore Journal of Legal Studies, 1991, p. 579

Top-down approach: festivals as tools to “promote” regional identity in ASEAN

As early as in ASEAN’s 1969 *Agreement for the promotion of mass media and cultural activities*, the organisation of “cultural festivals” was foreseen; in fact, they were mentioned as one of its four key areas¹⁸. In the background of the different approaches to the link between culture and identity, the question is posed: what has been the role of festivals, on one hand, in ASEAN and, on the other in the European Union’s cultural policy.

Starting with ASEAN, it should be underlined that as early as 1971, festivals were organised. From 1971 until 1985, fifteen editions of the *ASEAN Film Festival* were held. Other types of festivals also followed. For instance, *Theatre Festivals* (1988-1995, three editions), *Dance Festivals* (1990-1996, four editions), *Festivals of Songs* (1981-1997, thirteen editions) and *Performing Arts Festivals* (1981-1987, six editions), were prominent components of the regular ASEAN agenda of events during its first 30 years of existence (1967-1997). In total, ASEAN organised more than 40 festivals of performing arts, film and music during those three first decades. That constituted almost 30% of the totality of over 130 cultural activities organised in this period¹⁹.

By mid-1990s, when the first *ASEAN Plan of Action on Culture and Information* (1994-1997) came into force, festivals seemed to still be a priority in the agenda. “Festivals shall revert to the most pervasive form of presentations in the region which is a combination of dance and drama. Such a form allows more room for creativity [...] Performances, however, shall not be confined only to limited audiences but should also be covered by television for wider exposure”,²⁰ is expressly said in the *Plan of Action*. But despite this official declaration of support, only two festivals were organised in this period²¹.

In fact, as ASEAN grew in complexity with the years, the number of COCI meetings and the myriad of sub-committees, working groups, preparatory meetings and declarations multiplied. Instrumental in the first few decades of existence of the association, in parallel with the growth and density of the strategic processes, the number of festivals however decreased. The key seems to be: the same or even less budget, more meetings, less activities. 10 festivals were organised in the 1970’s, 19 in

¹⁸ “The Contracting Parties shall promote cultural cooperation by: (a) Exchanging artistes in the field of -visual and performing arts; (b) Undertaking Joint research n the arts and in literature; (c) Organizing seminars in the arts, literature, and related matters, and (d) Organizing cultural festivals”, *Agreement for the promotion of mass media and cultural activities*, Article 2, Cameron Highlands, Malaysia, 17 December 1969.

¹⁹ It is difficult to have a definitive count of the number of cultural events organised in the first three decades of existence of ASEAN. COCI supplies in its website a list of all the projects organised since its creation in 1978 until August 2011. This list, however, contains events of all sorts, from technical and preparatory meetings to actual cultural and artistic events as festivals. The list mixes as well both cultural and information events and sometimes events overlap areas. Film, for instance has been since the creation of COCI associated to the information section, not to culture. *Bridging a century. An information brochure on the ASEAN Committee on Culture and Information (ASEAN-COCI)*, affirms that exclusively in the artistic and cultural area “close to 80 projects from 1978 until 2000 have been or are being implemented”, of which 25 of them would be festivals, about 30% of the total.

²⁰ *ASEAN Plan of Action on Culture and Information*, ASEAN Secretariat, Jakarta, Indonesia, October 1994, p. 14.

²¹ An *ASEAN Theatre Festival* in 1995 and an *ASEAN Dance Festival* in 1996.

the 1980's and 11 in the 1990's. None was organised in the first decade of the 21st century, substituted instead by events such as *Best of ASEAN Performing Arts* (2008-2013, ten editions), a personal project of the ASEAN Secretary General, Surin Pitsuwan. Unlike the format of regular festivals taking place in different ASEAN member countries, this event was organised in a non-rotational format, and only for Jakarta audiences.

At present, the only "festival" type events organised by ASEAN (the "ASEAN Festival of Arts") are the showcase of performances forming part of the cultural programme of ASEAN's summits and major meetings. This pattern certainly limits the reach of these artistic outputs to wider audiences other than government officials, and puts into question its capacity to comply with the ambitious aims being set by several declarations²².

As ASEAN's agenda for regional integration, promotion of common identity and awareness developed, the role of government-led festivals, once instrumental to achieve those aims, diminished, its presence reduced to its minimum expression. Banished from the "identity" agenda, festivals were also exiled from the straightforward support of culture *per se* of the first years of ASEAN.

Bottom-Up Grant Programme: Festivals As Tools To "Suggest" Regional Identity In The EU

The European Communities or the European Union, on the contrary, have never organised a festival. In spite of this, festivals certainly play a relevant role in the Union's cultural action and retain an outstanding place in the Communities' life.

The Communities' cultural policy has seen three distinctive periods: A first phase that started in the 1980s, before culture was even mentioned in the Treaties, included diverse actions supporting heritage protection, translation, the formation of artistic disciplines and many others. In the second period (1996-2000), the interventions were organised in the three programs ARIANE, RAPHAEL, and KALEIDOSCOPE. Since 2000, the cultural action is concentrated on the "Culture" programmes (2000-2006, 2007-2013 and probably 2014-2020). Its budget is not substantial: in the Commission's budget for 2010, only 1.37% is devoted to Education and Culture – the disaggregated data for the different areas cannot be found; but it is clear that Education, with such programs like ERASMUS, takes the lion's share²³.

The European Culture programme is a "classical" grant programme as exists in many countries: applications are submitted and evaluated, and the available money is distributed according to a list established by the evaluators. It includes different types of activities to be funded: Multiannual cooperation projects receive more substantial

²² Other festivals that are promoted under the name "ASEAN" are either private or nationally-initiated festivals that just borrow the name for marketing or promotional reasons.

²³ The Commission's website indicates that "for 2007-13, the EU has allocated almost €13 billion to lifelong learning and worldwide exchanges" (<http://europa.eu/pol/educ/index_en.htm>). For the Culture programme is said: "The current programme runs from 2007 to 2013 with a total budget for the period of around €400 million" (<http://europa.eu/pol/cult/index_en.htm>), this would mean around 57 million per annum and 0.04% of the budget. This is very close to the figures released for previous years, for example, in 1992, it was 0.019%; in 1996, 0.03% per cent, in 2000, 0.04%.

amounts and can – therefore and for the longer duration of the project – have a greater visibility and impact. But also smaller Cooperation Measures and annual operating grants for so-called European Cultural Bodies are foreseen. Here, two types of entities can be included: the “European Ambassadors” and the networks. In 2012, four Ambassadors received an amount between 100.000 and 200.000 € and twelve networks were granted amounts between 14.000 and 120.000 €. They were selected from 55 applicants, and a total amount of 1.353.075 € was disclosed.

Knowing the organizations awarded with the title “European Ambassadors” can give accurate more accurate idea of what is considered “European”. They are:

ENSEMBLE INTERCONTEMPORAIN
Union des Théâtres de l'Europe
Concerto Köln GbR
SPIRA MIRABILIS

“Spira mirabilis” is a group devoted to the study of symphonic and chamber repertoires; its description does not include any reference to Europe.

“Ensemble InterContemporaine” was established in 1976 by the initiative of the French composer and conductor Pierre Boulez, among others; it received a grant of 200.000 €. It underlines several times both the European and the international dimension of its work²⁴ speaking about “la professionnalisation du secteur musical européen”²⁵ translation as one of its three main aims. Its merits in diffusing the European music from the 20th century are recognized. However, how relevant can the quoted amount be for an ambitious musical formation that in May 2012 gave five concerts in Paris, in June had a tour to Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo and Bogota, in August intervened at the Festival of Lucerne, etc.

Similarly, “Concerto Köln”, with concerts in Germany, France, Poland and The Netherlands from May to August 2012, and then a tour in Latin America (Colombia, Brazil, and Chile), receives 100.000 € by the European Union. This does not seem much for a music ensemble that – like InterContemporaine – works “mit einer europäischen und internationalen Ausrichtung”²⁶, with two added values: the members are Europeans, and this means diversity of temperaments, musical formation and cultural background; and also the repertoire is European, which means border crossing²⁷.

The “Union des Théâtres de l'Europe” is more specific when saying that “this ‘multinational house’ intensively discusses European identity, the dissolution and determination of borders”. Here at least there is a concrete reference to European

²⁴ “L'Ensemble interContemporaine (EIC) est une formation à vocation européenne et internationale, composée de 31 musiciens européens qui se consacre à l'interprétation et à la diffusion de la musique du 20^{ème} siècle à aujourd'hui, en Europe et dans le monde entier.”

²⁵ “the professionalisation of the European music industry”

²⁶ “with a European and International orientation”

²⁷ “Dabei ergibt die europäische Zusammensetzung der Mitglieder eine gute Mischung an verschiedenen

Temperamenten, Ausbildungen und kulturellen Hintergründen. Concerto Koln versteht sich als Ensemble, das explizit den Blick über den deutschen Tellerrand wagt. Das manifestiert sich in der Programmwahl und der Neugier für ein unbekanntes grenzüberschreitendes europäisches Repertoire.”

topics: identity and borders are key elements for a reflection about the common European denominator.

In all these cases, the Commission's support is more relevant due to its symbolism than to its amount: these formations are considered as "Ambassadors of Europe" and therefore supported by the European institutions. Here, in a way, the link between financial support and identity is established.

But the Culture programme also includes a budget for European Festivals and here, the situation is different. In 2012, out of the 275 European festivals that submitted an application, only 14 were selected for a grant of between 65.000 and 100.000 €, amounts that do not seem entirely relevant to so complex a project as a festival²⁸. The selected projects are:

Festival junger Künstler Bayreuth	Germany
Vilenica International Literary Festival	Slovenia
Festival Maribor	Slovenia
Festival Europavox	France
Festival Lent 2012	Slovenia
Punkt	Norway
ImPulsTanz - Vienna International Dance Festival	Austria
Street Musicians Festival	Serbia ²⁹
Festival Mysteries of Europe. XXI Storytelling Marathon	Spain
transmediale - festival for art and digital culture	Germany
12. internationales literaturfestival berlin 2012/Sparte Internationale Kinder- und Jugendliteratur	Germany
London Jazz Festival	United Kingdom
iDANS International Contemporary Dance and Performance Festival	Turkey
Gaudeamus Muziekweek	The Netherlands

It is not easy to find out what the specific European elements of these festivals are. Only in two of them do the titles mention a European element: the "Mysteries of Europe" as "Storytelling Marathon" and Festival "Europavox". In the Marathon, "professionals of oral narrative from the 30 countries in the European Union and the European Economic Area"³⁰ came together to narrate "the mysteries from Europe"³¹. It is the addition and the exchange of different perspectives that guarantee the European perspective. No other approaches are visible in the announcement of this activity. "Europavox" insists on the bias unity and diversity³² with the declared

²⁸ See <http://eacea.eu/culture/funding/2011/selection/selection_strand_136_2011_en.php>

²⁹ Serbian and Turkish entities are also eligible to the Culture programme.

³⁰ <<http://maratondeloscuentos.org/spip/spip.php?article402>>

³¹ <<http://maratondeloscuentos.org/spip/IMG/pdf/Programa-Maraton-Ingles.pdf>>

³² "L'ambition du projet est de parler de l'Europe en dépassant son image bureaucratique et impersonnelle. Le slogan 'l'unité dans la diversité' peut s'incarner pour les jeunes européens à travers

objective: “promouvoir la diversité musicale européenne”³³ With this mention it is positioning itself inside the paradigm that seems to define “Europeaness”.

In the other cases, questions may be raised, such as whether the *London Jazz Festival* includes more European elements than the many other Jazz festivals held in Europe. The festival programme does not provide support for this. It is true that three of the four highlights of the Festival are Europeans (Sarah Jane Morris, Shabaka Hutchings, Paco de Lucía)³⁴. But does this provide enough dosage of “Europeaness” in a festival that characterises itself by “the mix of international and British artists”?³⁵

This is only one example for the issues related to this programme, a “classical” granting programme with an added element (the “European dimension”) that has to be combined with the reinforcement of the cultures of the Member states.

Conclusion: A Paradox Exists

The European Union is a project that pursues deep integration. In the past, integration was done by European states at the time of their creation. They were concerned with the affirmation of their nationhood and connected to it, with the creation or development of their identities. It was not enough to put countries in a map; citizens needed to be made. Nevertheless, as we have seen, the European Institutions have placed rather weak emphasis on to “European” identity in the advancement of regionalism.

European states have often used culture as a tool to affirm their national identities. In the European Union’s treaties however, the role of culture has been much less ambitious: the presentation of a “common cultural heritage” has been sufficient. The lack of a real European cultural policy, replaced instead by a grant system with open application, makes its potential impact limited. The degree of European dimension in the projects is essentially left to the applicants, and the European Commission only influences the process through its evaluation, with a rather loose criterion: any kind of cross-border reference satisfies the requirements. The addition of elements from different parts of Europe, the exchange or the mobility – all these are acceptable. The main objective of article 167 (the promotion of the cultures of the member states) provides such a broad framework that almost every project can be accepted as long as it works beyond the borders of a country. This kind of cultural intervention, politely “suggested” as it is, cannot be considered a priority instrument to ambitiously advance European integration.

The development of nationhood and with it, of national identity, has been a common capital concern for most of Southeast Asian countries since they gained independence in the 1940’s and 1950’s. With such pressing issues at home, regional integration became secondary and the countries opted for looser regionalism patterns and institutions.

une pratique culturelle fédératrice comme la musique.” See: <<http://www.europavox.com/fr/pages/le-festival/le-projet-europavox.php?rubrique=16&page=34>>

³³ “to promote European musical diversity”

³⁴ <<http://www.londonjazzfestival.org.uk/>>

³⁵ <<http://www.londonjazzfestival.org.uk/about/our-history>>

However ASEAN, while having weak integration in mind, discovered culture as early as the 1970's as a significant field from where to stimulate regional identity. It was ASEAN itself who organised cultural events, traditionally following a top-down and not people-centred approach in its interaction with civil societies. Only in the last few years some initiatives have challenged that perspective: the *ASEAN Foundation*, created in 1997 with the goal of helping to bring about shared prosperity and a sustainable future to all ASEAN countries; included some cultural projects like an *Asian Children Cultural Festival* (2003), a Training and Workshop for *Managing the Integration of Culture into Development Programmes* (2002-2005) and some financial contribution towards the *Best of ASEAN Performing Arts* project. These projects however remain still isolated initiatives without much sustainability and get little relevance in the myriad of economic, security and more social-oriented initiatives.

ASEAN's COCI, today with shrinking and limited budgets, does not organise as many festivals and high-visibility cultural activities as it did in the past. Over the decades, it has equally failed in establishing consolidated funding and stimulating the creation of civil society-oriented mechanisms and structures, such as networks and associations. Without these platforms, the independent discussion and reflection on cultural issues has been limited and the growth and impact of cultural events such as festivals slow. In a more globalised world where regional alliances are becoming more important, and with the ambitious projected *ASEAN Communities* due to enter into force in 2015, culture and festivals seem to be more necessary than ever in order to affirm and "promote" the now much desired regional identity.

As this paper has outlined, both the EU and ASEAN have for decades incorporated policies related to culture and the arts, sometimes as well -more in the case of ASEAN than the EU- aiming to stimulate regional identity. Festivals, as essential components of culture, have in both been at different stages important tools for the two entities to invigorate regionalism. However, over the years, while the strategic importance of festivals has progressively decreased in ASEAN, in the European Union it has gradually augmented. It is very difficult to measure the effective outcomes of the EU's bottom-up approach to culture, based on a *laissez faire* policy and the conviction that weak intervention will provoke positive results. ASEAN's top-down approach – paradoxically, a more direct intervention by the less formalised organisation - seems to have caused fatigue to the regional institutions and scepticism towards the effectiveness of organised culture.

