

ASIEN 95 (April 2005)

Abstract

Demokratie und Menschenrechte im Europa-Asien-Dialog - Zusammenprall von Kooperationskulturen?

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This paper addresses the question of whether differences between European and Asian forms and principles of state interaction can account for interregional co-operation problems in the areas of human rights and democracy. Whereas the EU favours a formal, binding and thus supranational approach to co-operation, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is based on informal, non-binding, intergovernmental forms of co-operation. Based on empirical evidence taken from human rights and democracy dialogues between the EU and ASEAN on the one hand and the institutional context of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) on the other, the author argues that a clash of co-operation cultures basically occurs in both institutional forms of interregional co-operation between Asia and Europe, with slight variations due to the institutional context. While clashes over democracy and human rights between the EU and ASEAN have led to a complete standstill of co-operation, the flexible institutional mechanisms of ASEM seem to mitigate the negative effects of such dialogues at first sight. Yet, informality does not remove the issues from the agenda, as the recurrent disputes over Burma's participation in ASEM V clearly indicate. These issues therefore have to be tackled in a formal, institutionalised manner if ASEM wants to become what it aspires to be - a functioning link between Asia and Europe in the system of global governance.