



# Journal of Shinawatra University

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The Journal of Shinawatra University's main objective is to publish high quality, peer-reviewed previously unpublished papers on topics related to the fields of Liberal Arts, Business and Management, Information Technology, Management Technology, Public Administration, Health Science and Nursing, Mass Communications and Education.

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## Editor's Introduction

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Welcome to the second issue of the Journal of Shinawatra University. This is a quarterly academic journal accepting papers in a wide range of disciplines. Papers are double-blind peer-reviewed and may be submitted in either English or Thai languages. The purpose of the Journal is to provide an additional space where the results of research and discourse based on facts may be published for scrutiny by society at large. At a period of history in which obfuscation and unsupported assertions have become common currency, it is adjudged all the more important to shine a humble torch upon a path leading to real understanding and the promulgation of truth.

In this issue, I am pleased to be able to include a diverse range of papers from Nepal, Bhutan and India, as well as Thailand. The invited paper is provided by Dr. Cornelis Reiman and is a version of the keynote address he graciously delivered at the conference held at SIU's BBD Building in June, 2014.

Dhruba Gautam reports on the assignment of human resources responsibility to line management in the context of organizational performance in Nepal. Sonam Dolkar Penjore and Robert Kirkpatrick (the founding editor of the Journal of Shinawatra University) then consider the development of the education system in Bhutan. The third paper is from Puangtip Chaiphalsarisdi, Steven McKee and Palphol Rodlaytuk, who describe quantitative research into the English language needs of nurses at Pathum Thani hospital. Sittichai Anantarangsi then provides a paper about the economic interactions between Malay Thais and Buddhist Thais in the southern border region of Thailand. Amit Sinha writes about the issues involved in understanding investor perceptions concerning the prevailing corporate reporting practices in India. Nancy Huyen Nguyen and Suzana Bandeira are concerned with comparative forms of business and cultural etiquette and the impacts that these will have on Latin American entrepreneurs seeking to establish businesses in the Greater Mekong Subregion. C.T. Sunil Kumar provides a detailed investigation of the delivery of food grains in Kerala and compares transportation by rail and waterway. Mukund Deshpande and Neeta Baporikar describe the attempts to achieve excellence by the owners and operators of SMEs in the automotive sector of Pune. Finally, in a research note, Vutthi and Duchduen Bhanthumnavin describe the creation of the first Nuclear Energy Management Programme to be offered at the university level in Thailand. Three book reviews complete the issue.

It is pleasing to note not only the geographic diversity of papers and authors in this issue but also the diversity of disciplinary approaches involved. The *Journal of Shinawatra University* is intended to be a home for papers in the many

disciplines that the university accommodates and to welcome a wide range of forms of inquiry. It is hoped that providing a new venue for multidisciplinary studies will stimulate new forms of thought and encourage people to work together who might otherwise consider their work to belong in a silo without connection to the rest of the academic world.

I look forward to receiving papers in many disciplines and from many parts of the world for subsequent issues.

**John Walsh**

# Journal of Shinawatra University

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## Invited Paper: A Tale of Two Cities

*Cornelis Reiman*

**Dr. Cornelis Reiman** was the inaugural Dean of Postgraduate Studies and an Executive Vice President at Shinawatra International University. There, he led a small team that shaped a new MBA school. He was also Vice President, Chief Operating Officer and Chief Technology Officer at Universitas 21 Global, a premium online graduate school. This was established in Singapore by sixteen of the world's best universities. More recently, he was President of a commercial examinations-based entity spanning eleven countries that had comprised the former Soviet Union. Based in Thailand, he is active in consulting and academia, continuing as Deputy Chairman of the Australian Institute of Management Graduate School and he is also on the Advisory Board of the *Shinawatra International University Journal of Management*. As well, he was an Independent Director of the largest professional accounting body in Kazakhstan, which gained membership of the International Federation of Accountants because of his guidance.

This invited paper is based on the keynote address he gave at the International Conference on Economics and Social Sciences, held at Shinawatra University on June 22<sup>nd</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup>, 2014.

### A Tale of Two Cities

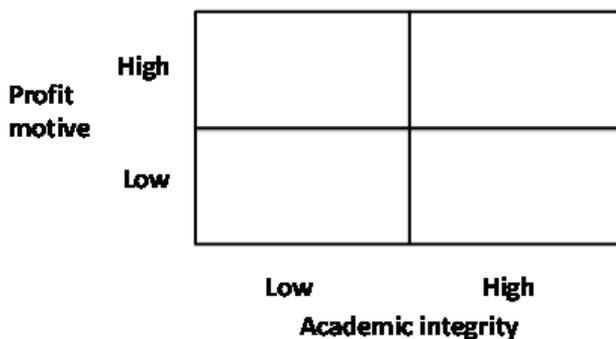
Academia and commerce are two cities. Most of us live in one of these and have visited the other. My life's journey began in commerce. My father was an accountant and I had jobs after school since the age of ten that continued until I was twenty years old. This taught me about the value of effort and of money. Then, when at university, I studied economics and accounting. Later, I worked with Arthur Andresen & Co as a corporate auditor of a variety of clients, in terms of size and industry type, in all components of their business. Next, I was with IBM, where I held technical, sales, marketing, management and executive positions.

I also worked as a high-level management consultant. In doing so, I provided a wide range of private clients with strategic and operational advice in accounting, finance, board reporting, organizational and business development, as well as marketing and computing. The common factor was the need for chief executives, and boards, to find a quick and practical answer to a pressing business issue. Clients included the chartered accounting firm of Touche Ross & Co., Greenpeace, The Wilderness Society, as well as Federal Government agencies in Australia and commercial businesses. During this time, by chance, I became State President of the Economic Society of Australia and that was when I

entered the city of academia. I was asked to teach at the University Adelaide and, as I travelled the streets of this new city, I also lectured at Monash University. There, I focussed on postgraduate international economics, business and management subjects. After that, I was fortunate to work in pivotal, executive roles at two universities. One was Shinawatra International University in Thailand, which offers traditional face-to-face teaching and the other was Universitas 21 Global in Singapore, a premium business school that was entirely online.

So, I knew the two cities well, having lived in both. I might suggest that my commercial experience had helped me in academia. In addition, I could see the need for improved avenues between the two cities. As you might appreciate, I continued to apply my knowledge of commercial living to what I saw in the academic city.

With all of that as necessary background, I considered the two cities in more detail. One city, understandably, was focussed upon academic integrity. The other city, as expected, paid attention to profit. In this regard, consider Figure 1 below.



*Figure 1 Two Cities – Four Sectors. Source: Author*

As can be seen, the two cities are segmented to show four sectors. For the sake of simplicity and to serve the purpose of this discussion, commerce has a high or low profit motive, whereas academia is defined by way of having high or low academic integrity. With these aspects intersecting, we can add examples of entities in each case, as in Figure 2 below.

Beginning with the bottom–right quadrant, and proceed in an anti-crosswise direction.

- **High academic integrity and low profit motive** typifies the traditional, public universities. These, as you will know, are state-funded and, generally, uphold high standards of research.
- **High academic integrity and high profit motive** applies to private universities, with those in the United States providing fine examples, for instance Harvard and Yale, although the fact that they are invested endowments obviously help to secure financial stability.
- **Low academic integrity and high profit motive** applies to private enterprises that focus on educational offerings. Apollo would be a good example for this sector. I have added new entrants here because these entities would only consider the education industry if there was money to be made.
- **Low academic integrity and low profit motive** would apply to public and private institutions that tend to be long-standing and, for instance, serve technical and para-professional needs.

<b>Profit motive</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Private Sector (new entrants)</b>	<b>Private Sector</b>
	<b>Low</b>	<b>Public and Private sectors</b>	<b>Public Sector</b>
		<b>Low</b>	<b>High</b>
		<b>Academic integrity</b>	

Figure 2 Four Sectors with Examples. Source: Author

This approach has simplified the urban landscape and the examples are not extensive. Even so, it can be seen how the purposes of educational institutions vary in accordance with the four parameters that characterise sectors presented in the preceding diagrams. This analysis is taken a step further in figure 3 below. In each case, a dot represents the primary purpose or vision of representative organizations. Again, for simplicity, these dots are placed centrally in each sector. In reality, we might find that these are more to the upper-right corner, which would apply, for example, to Harvard and Yale as these maximise both characteristics. In the four sectors of this exhibit, it can be seen that the vision is moderate and with room for improvement. Of course, these points will vary for different institutions but the conceptual approach should be clear.

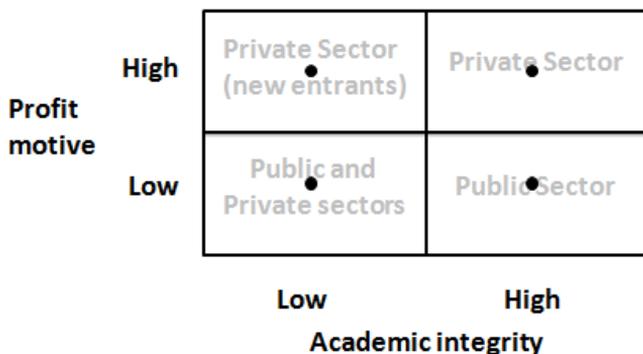


Figure 3 Organizational Essence. Source: Author

As is evident, there are differences between the essences when they are compared. That is in line with the characteristics of each sector, as previously explained. Now, with this focal point in mind, consider what is needed to fulfil the aforementioned vision. Specially, consider the mission statement that often supports it. This allows the addition of policies, principles, plans and objectives to support the ideals of the vision shown earlier. The outcome of that planning process is the highlight of what appears in Figure 4 below.

Each small segment on a circle would, for instance, be a proposal that supports attainment of the central element, being the aforementioned vision. After the strategic planning process is concluded, operational plans follow, as does the execution of these in day-to-day activities, as illustrated in Figure 5.

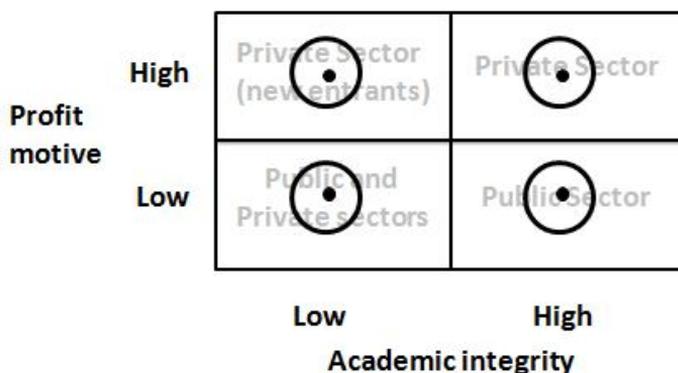


Figure 4 Organizational Focus. Source: Author



Figure 5 Fulfilling the Vision. Source: Author

The progression can be seen in which organizational vision leads to a statement about the mission, which is followed by supportive policies and principles that provide parameters for a strategic plan, embedded objectives and all of the operational elements. These, as indicated, are procedures, processes, practices and promotions that connect an enterprise to the market in which it sits. Essentially, there is linear progression in terms of the outer elements having direct connections with the core, formative elements.

The overall way of thinking, and the related doing of things to attain strategic objectives, if not the mission and vision as well, can be considered to be organizational consciousness. This is presented in the next diagram, in which points on the outer circle are operational elements, emanating from and supporting the strategic and structural elements upon the smaller circle within.

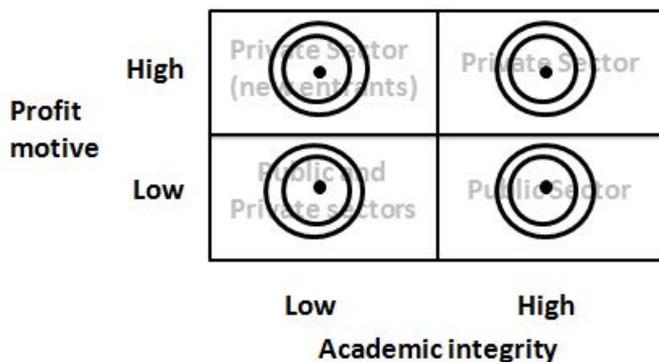


Figure 6 Organizational Consciousness. Source: Author

Simply, if every employee worked in accordance with the vision, mission, plan and goals, they would be effective in the workplace. Consequently, the organization would be effective, for example, objectives would be met or exceeded ahead of time and within budget constraints. So, the outer circle in

each case represents the strategic intention for an enterprise to the fullest extent in terms of what is done on a day-to-day basis. In other words, this represents the way that people, think, act and behave in an entity. Consequently, this can be considered to be organizational consciousness. That is to say that all employees are aware of their obligations and work toward the attainment of the central elements in everything that they do.

Each part of these external circles, then, extends the organizational ideals. For clarity, organizational consciousness is shown to be within the space or realm of commercial and academic aspiration. It might, therefore, be concluded that the integrity of the deep-seated organizational essence, represented by the central dot, remains intact. Further, it might be considered that the central, essential elements need to be attained and maintained. So, it is known that an organization requires procedures, processes, practices and promotional effort. All of that, then, interacts every day with the marketplace, with students, prospective students and other so-called stakeholders.

Of course, reality strikes when that is not done. Weaknesses in academia arise due to misaligned effort and mismatched consciousness, whereby the focus of a person does not align with that of the organization in which she is employed. The reasons for such an unfortunate outcome of reduced performance are shown in Figure 7.

- 
- **Poor organisational focus**
  - **Weak leadership**
  - **Inadequate direction**
  - **Bad management**
  - **Low employee commitment**

*Figure 7* Reasons for Reduced Performance. *Source:* Author

The picture become less clear, especially for employees, when there is inconsistency in the organizational structure and how it functions. Often, faculties and departments pursue their own ends. That means there is a lack of cohesion in terms of actions supporting the same, central objectives laid out in the strategic plan. When that happens, fragmentation of the collective effort arises and divergent paths are followed. Consequently, employee actions and management decisions support differing plans and policies. Consequently, there cannot be one organizational consciousness. The structure, then, becomes non-linear. In fact, the organization turns out to be messy and ineffective.

## Misalignment

Now that the thinking behind the two cities concept has been made clear, it may be further illustrated with a number of tales. In each case, consider the underlying thought process, the associated goal and, then, the impact upon the respective entity.

- |  |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Underlying thought processes</b></li> <li>• <b>Goal, plan, principle, mission, vision</b></li> <li>• <b>Impact upon the respective entity</b></li> </ul> |
|--|

*Figure 8 Misalignment. Source: Author*

In addition, consider what strategic objective that action had satisfied and, if at all possible, take that back to any potential plan and, of course, the underpinning vision. Naturally, the answers might not be anything to do with the organization but only relate to the vision and intentions of one or more people who had prompted these outcomes.

## Examples of Misalignment

- Poor interpersonal relations are tolerated because someone is a good researcher. So, principles related to mutual respect are non-existent.
- Discrimination is apparent in relation to treatment of staff and students.
- High marks are given to students because of close relations with lecturers.
- Indiscretion by executives, such as an intimately-engaged president discovered in the car park at night by a university guard.
- Teaching awards are given with the decision process lacking student input, such as teaching evaluations.
- Politicised teaching in line with personal preferences of the lecturer.
- Belittling colleagues and students with academic superiority, such as constantly raising intellectual topics and displaying a strong vocabulary.
- Academics do not bother to submit expense claims as the process was so arduous that they pay out of their own pocket for what is needed.
- A president falsely accused the wife of key faculty member of sharing university secrets.

- A computer application system was released for submitting and marking assignments but was so difficult to use that tutors and students reverted to the previous way of interaction.
- The IT manager at a university became upset when challenged as to why there were delays in rolling out an important departmental application, especially when his technical staff members agreed with what was suggested by the IT-aware academic.
- An accomplished researcher was appointed president and led that university to financial disaster within a year.
- Business-related professional qualifications of academics were removed from the website of a business-related faculty due to the jealousy of some who had none of those.
- A major university closed the business school of a lesser institution after a takeover, only to find later that the school had greater market reach, brand strength and profit potential than the university's own MBA program and Department of Management.
- A professor went to Asia and signed a binding contract with a university there, although he did not have the authority to do so.
- The ambitious dean of a very large faculty shunned contact with anyone unless they were positioned higher than her or were a recruiter.
- The provost demanded that two people had to be accepted by the MBA program because they were well-connected in politics, even though both were caught cheating in the entrance test.
- A president employed computer sales people to recruit students. They knew nothing of academia. That fact, then, placed great pressure on others to monitor and manage all marketing and sales activity.
- The Development Manager at an Australian university came up with a great idea to ensure that offshore degree programs were kept at the right level of academic integrity. Local lecturers in Asia would do all of the teaching. Then, all assignments and exams would be marked by academics in Australia. As you can imagine, the Australians did not agree. Marking is not the fun part of the job.
- A university cashier had embezzled millions of dollars and no one noticed.
- A president ordered strict control of all costs, yet bought a new computer to replace one that was only a few months old and travelled extensively to meet famous people.

- For an online graduate school, supported by 16 top universities, advertising showed 16 university logos surrounding that of the graduate school. This made it appear as if the school was an entry point for all of the universities. Consequently, many enquiries were received about all sorts of irrelevant things, such as “Where can I park my bike when I study at Nottingham?”
- At a major research institution, a person went on holiday. A colleague accessed her files and published her paper under his own name.
- A curriculum was developed without any needs assessment of what employers wanted.
- A university president's integrity was lost when several instances of plagiarism were found in books written by him. He resigned and, not long afterwards, took up a leading role in a tertiary education industry body. It seemed that gross misconduct was acceptable amongst his peers and that his fall from grace, as well as lack of academic integrity, was of no consequence.
- A president changed an MBA program curriculum because of what his wife had to say about it as she was doing one at another university. In this case, no consideration was given to the need for mandatory Education Department approval.
- A doctoral candidate who studied female career progression in a specific industry presented her conclusions. People were shocked when an academic had asked “For comparison, did you look at career progression for males?”
- A doctoral candidate said “Please don’t ask hard questions”
- A president employed a former colleague for a Vice President role and that person added negative value to the business. In other words, the business was worse than if the job had been left vacant.
- A university president promoted openness, consensus and team decision making - as long as the outcomes were what he wanted in the first place.

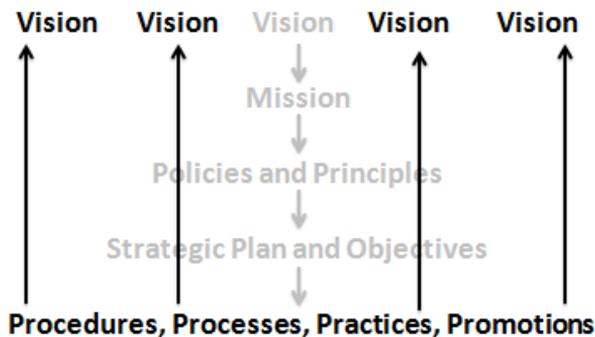
I can state that, when working with people like this, it is not hard to look good.

What feeds misaligned course of action? Consider:

- Vested interests
- Human nature
- Wish, want, need, hope and desire

- Fear, uncertainty and doubt
- Ego, greed, insecurity
- A lack of common sense

Instead of looking from the inside out, as we did when starting with the essence of an academic entity, consider the reverse. As presented in Figure 9, the examples of misalignment support alternate objectives, plans, principles, policies, missions and visions. Fundamentally, we see outcomes that are contrary to what would come from the organization's vision, plans and so forth. Ineffectiveness and sub-optimal results arise with regard to profit or academic integrity or both. All of this adds to the confusion and disillusionment of employees.



*Figure 9 Not Fulfilling the Same Vision. Source: Author*

In the case of a poorly-organized entity or one that is managed badly, there is a tendency for employees and their actions to be less focussed on the strategic plan and the organizational essence. The chances are high, therefore, that procedures and so on will enter other realms. This, in turn, can lead to issues, such as a lowering of academic integrity.

Specifically, this instance focuses upon the entrepreneurial, profit-driven private sector. Note that the vision is as it was before, which is represented by the dot (see Figure 10 below). However, the emanating policies, plans and actions take the entity into broader areas. Thus, the reach of a related organization extends or bleeds into adjoining terrain. That might be acceptable but lowering profit is not likely to a cherished result.

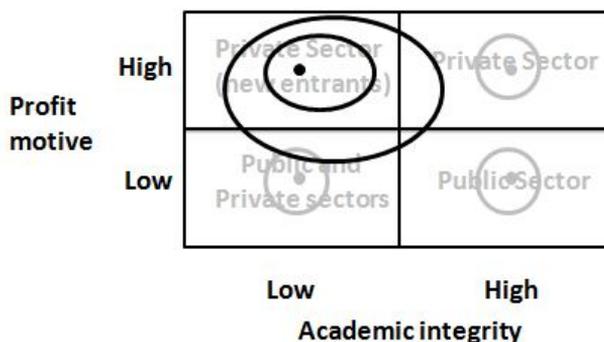


Figure 10. Reality Strikes. Source: Author

When it is considered that some of these practices are to do with promotion and marketing, it becomes evident that overlap can occur with what other institutions offer. This can be seen as a reason why prospective students become confused as to the actual, underlying essence of each educational offering, such as the level of academic integrity. Then again, they might not. It could be entirely to do with cost, accessibility, reputation, family ties and, of course, job prospects after graduation.

In the case of entities with a strong reputation, operational drift by poorly-aligned employees can be an issue, which is why there are standards to follow and accreditation to maintain. Perhaps that is how educational entities are controlled. For instance:

- Academic integrity is maintained by way of external accreditation reviews.
- The profit motive is maintained by way of public financial results.

## Takeovers

Even so, it is worth considering that poorly-run organizations become a target for other entities, especially when any predator has strong leadership and management skills. We can imagine, therefore, that well-run, profitable enterprises will target weak entities in takeovers. This situation is presented in the following diagram where the solid arrows represent takeovers and the dashed arrow represents an alignment.

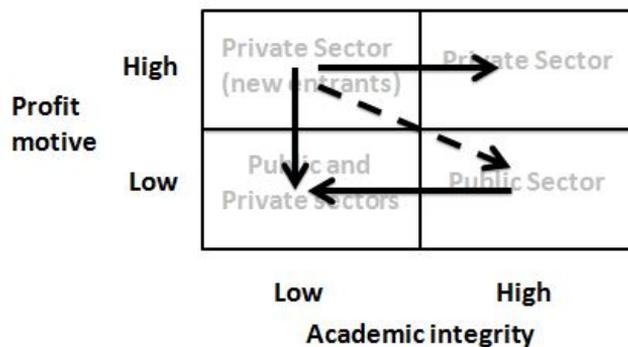


Figure 11 Takeovers. Source: Author

Simply:

- Private sector entities seek greater market share and improved revenue streams.
- Private sector entities seek increased academic integrity and, thus, a better reputation. Consequently, such businesses align with public universities.
- Private sector entities and public sector entities, such as state-run institutions, seek entry-level access points, which secondary schools and colleges provide.

Other arrows could be included, which would be based upon personal experience and expectations.

After any takeover, there will be differences between the focal points of organizations and the resultant organizational consciousness. Also, there will be tension, not only between differing profit motives and views as to academic integrity but, also, between cultures. It is a personal choice as to how far someone is prepared to bend acceptance of things after a takeover. This, as might be appreciated, is always the case. Usually, it is the weaker partner or the target that suffers. This is seen, too, when departments and faculties are merged. A key consideration is the absorption rate. For instance, the target should be less than ten percent of the final organizational size in terms of employees or students. Otherwise, significant issues arise, such as a loss of organizational consciousness of the dominant entity.

Remember the benefits. It is all about such things as:

- Reduced costs.
- Increased profit.

- Greater market share.
- Improved market access.
- Better image.

Possibly, and hopefully, someone thought about what was best for the students, too. Then again, anyone pursuing a profit motive alone is unlikely to consider teaching outcomes.

### **What's in It for Me?**

The impact of any major change, such as a takeover, depends upon who you are:

- Job level, role, stage of employment, time to retirement.
- Stage of completion if a student.

The answer is for the individual to do as well as possible in any set of circumstances. Essentially, do not let the so-called healthy tension between profit motive and academic integrity become a problem unless in the position to make a related decision. The underlying issue, then, is to maintain simplicity and calmness while the overarching problems create unnecessary complexity. In effect, such a person lives in two cities with all of the added inconvenience continuing to test levels of patience.

### **Move to the Other City**

Of course, if all of this becomes too difficult, then it is possible to move to the other city or, as academic colleagues might say, “go to the dark side.” Certainly, there are opportunities in commerce and industry for academics and, particularly, for researchers who have specialist skills and abilities. Even so, it is generally held that there is a substantial failure rate, as high as 75%, when academics are placed in top research and senior management roles within the private sector. This noteworthy result is due to numerous factors, such as academics lacking what is necessary to do well or, even, just to survive. These are summarised in Figure 12.

- |  |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Managerial skills</b></li> <li>• <b>Collaboration abilities</b></li> <li>• <b>Influencing abilities</b></li> <li>• <b>Team leadership skills</b></li> <li>• <b>Commercial focus</b></li> <li>• <b>Strategic orientation</b></li> </ul> |
|--|

*Figure 12 Academics – Deficiencies. Source: Author*

This highlights the plight of academics who stray away from their natural habitat, one in which their time is often spent pursuing mutual goals with individualised fervour and doing so regardless of the commercial outcome. Clearly, this approach is at odds with how entities in the private sector operate, whereby a collective endeavour is driven by the profit motive. So it is that two significant sectors of the economy, being education and business (more so universities and corporations) are, at the heart of each, poles apart. In effect, an analogy of two cities is appropriate, with neither likely to uproot and move closer to the other. In this regard, consider the organizational consciousness that was expressed earlier.

Yet, we cannot forget the fact that corporations live and die by their profitability. They are not the pretty little trinkets of governments, as universities can be, other than in providing taxable income and employment. Also, we know that consecutive governments look for ways to praise universities but persist with the view that academic successes, such as graduates and discoveries, had best come with successively less support in the way of government funding. With reduced availability of public handouts, universities strive for greater access to other sources of funds, such as endowments. Clearly, to rely upon grants and bequests indicates uneconomic operations.

Academic institutions do not, as is the case with their commercial cousins, live and die by way of profitability. That should not be a surprise. It follows that this fundamental characteristic often permeates through universities in how each is organized and managed. This is all the more true for any of these learned entities wherein the majority of employees and most of those in senior roles do not understand any organizational model other than those proposed and promoted by universities.

Longstanding and increasing demands are placed upon universities to improve operational effectiveness and so become somewhat corporatised. Consequently, it would be beneficial for these entities to introduce business-minded ideas or bring people in from the private sector for the same purpose. Evidently, this is unlikely. The prevailing culture of universities is self-propagating and self-fulfilling. Academics beget academics. They are the people on selection committees who restrict the hiring of business-minded people who would be good for a university and its future. That is the way of things. Organizationally, therefore, academics create colleagues in their own image, doing so in line with the prevailing and domineering philosophy, if not psychology, of the organization. I could include the term ‘organizational consciousness’ again for added effect.

The end result of this persistence is a cult of continuance without major change. Could a corporation survive if reliant upon communal decision making? Could

it disregard the harder edge that is necessary to break through antiquated ways of doing things? What of unclear or unwieldy governance issues? The relationships between Chancellors and Vice Chancellors come to mind, as well as that of Chairpersons and Presidents, as do the roles of University Councils. Then there are the various internal structures and reporting mechanisms that seem to be self-serving instead of being aligned with mission-critical issues, as is usual in businesses.

Of course, the paucity of access to broader organizational and operational input in academia can also be applied to the corporate sector, yet businesses are less affected by the bounded rationality of a walled village. Consider the analogy of serfs, noble knights and lords jousting in a number of principalities that comprise a comely kingdom funded by a reluctant provider of necessary government aid. Needless to say, university personnel might not always be the people who are likely to seek work in the corporate sector, especially when such people are frequently detached from the commercial parts of the world.

Yet, many academics have had enough of corporatisation and managerialism in universities. However, besides another university, perhaps one without a corporate culture and far from the light of necessary public scrutiny, it is hard to imagine where dispirited academics will go if seeking to avoid organizational effectiveness.

The ‘ivory tower’ analogy, which is to do with elitist detachment, is still applicable to many (but not all) academics, as is their prevailing disdain for crass commercialism. This is a most appropriate description since, it seems, it dramatically reduces the academic talent pool upon which some sectors in private enterprise depend. However, as already indicated, academics who do seek employment outside of universities should heed the fact that they might lack a few necessary skills to do well.

In response to obvious deficiencies among academics, companies should make good use of introductory training to assist academics when taking up positions in the commercial sphere. Mentoring and effective talent management would also be useful. Still, any academic who does go to ‘the dark side’ had best make a personal effort to improve themselves, too. Such an initiative would help to reduce any resistance that, often, is the ingrained product of immersion in a juxtaposed organizational culture that, mostly, is the antithesis of what is commonly known in business entities. Thus, academics who do want to move to a corporate position or any other job outside their academic domain must appreciate that they need to alter their general level of awareness. This sort of change is very necessary if they are to operate successfully in a new environment.

Naturally, egos are healthy in any workplace. Usually, most people show qualities of their particular upbringing. Arrogance, poor treatment of administrative support staff, petty rivalry, the stealing of good ideas and people ingratiating themselves with the departmental head are characteristics not only found in universities. Yet, deep down, the innermost aspects of people working in corporations and other commercial enterprises differ irreconcilably from academics in terms of the firm fundamentals, as well as the resultant principles, processes and practices. We saw this earlier when organizational consciousness was discussed. It is worth remembering that academic integrity and rigour, which rule universities (even if occasional outbreaks of plagiarism cloud that view), can be at odds with demands of the private sector. Ask anyone who has worked in a privately-funded, commercially-focussed university. In such an entity there can be more than the aforementioned healthy tension between steadfast academics and other employees who are seasoned by private sector expectations.

This might well be a clear clarion call that falls upon all ears but only penetrates those heads that are open to change. That is the kernel of the issue. Clearly, there exists in the broader economy a rather competitive environment, which is one created by corporations in which profit is king. This objective has fostered the vital need for appropriate focus, as well as facilitating organizational effectiveness, which is something that academics and universities could seize and promulgate for their own purposes, even if profit is not one of them.

It is because of the entrenched consciousness of people in the different sectors that prejudices and associated obstacles arise. As already suggested, while universities desperately need better management, they are extremely reluctant to bring in someone from outside of academia. Perhaps that is done to appease the employees in such institutions. Yet, it means that these entities show slow to no progress in terms of betterment and are similarly poor at trying to contain costs.

On the other hand, industry is keen to recruit suitable people from universities, although that has its problems, too. It is not to say that academics and universities are doing a bad job since, clearly, they are not. It is to acknowledge that differences exist within the sector, especially when profit-driven competitors have entered the market. It is also necessary to acknowledge that problems exist, as might be said of any enterprise.

## **Ending This Tale of Two Cities**

As may be seen, we do not have two cities, as was the initial suggestion but, in fact, many. It is a question of in which city do you live? Is it one in which its inhabitants are driven by:

- Profit motive?
- Academic integrity?
- Productivity?
- Publish or perish?

Know where you live and what you must do to succeed. Ideally, you must follow the vision, mission and plans of your organization. Ideally, these elements are aligned with your own. If they are, your success and career are assured. Having said that, there is a risk about which you should be aware if you do align entirely with the purpose of the organization. You will stand out. You will stand apart. You will be the one who can help to improve the workplace. You will excel. However, by default, that will reflect poorly upon others who, in comparison, are neither as focussed nor as effective.

That, perhaps, is the best place to end this tale.

## **Peer Reviewed Papers**

## **Assignment of HR Responsibility to Line Management for Organizational Performance: Nepalese Reality**

Dhruba Kumar Gautam

### **Abstract**

*The purpose of this paper is to examine the situation of the assignment of human resource management (HRM) roles and responsibility to line management in business organizations of Nepal and to analyze the contribution of highly devolved and less devolved organizations in terms of overall organizational performance. This survey-based exploratory research assumes individual organizations as the unit of analysis. Data obtained from structured questionnaires completed at 105 organizations are inserted into SPSS and statistical tools (including t-test and f-test) were used. The perceptual measurement of financial performance and market share is also explored through the use of published data. The results of this study highlight the assignment of HRM responsibility to line management in listed companies of Nepal and show the differences between more assigned and less assigned organizations. It reaches the conclusion that highly-devolved organizations are significantly different from less devolved organizations in their performance in terms of quality of product, level of labour productivity, financial performance and employee satisfaction, rate of innovation, employee commitment and market share. The differences in perceptual measurement of organizational performance are also supported by the secondary data concerning the financial performance of responding organizations. The result of this study motivates Nepalese academics and business executives to understand the importance of 'partnership practices' by line management and human resource departments while managing human resource practices. The main limitations are: data being collected by only one respondent from each firm and that a number of variables to measure organizational performance are not included in this research.*

*Keywords: assignment of human resource roles and responsibility, human resource management, line management, organizational performance, Nepal.*

**Dr. Dhruba Kumar Gautam** is Associate Professor in the Faculty of Management at Tribhuvan University, Nepal and Founding Secretary/Executive Director of the Nepalese Academy of Management.

## **English Language Needs of Nurses at Pathum Thani Hospital: Results of a Quantitative Survey**

Puangtip Chaiphivalsarisdi, Steven McKee and Palphol Rodloytuk

### **Abstract**

*In the context of the increasing importance of English in nursing in Thailand, this paper considers a questionnaire survey of 163 nurses of Pathum Thani Hospital in Thailand with a view to benchmarking existing English language ability in the sample and a needs assessment of what will be required in the future. This survey research, "Nursing Survey, Language Development" had 4 objectives; (1) explore and prioritize the needs assessment for the development of English courses, 2) explore what is preferable in learning English, 3) determined the relationship between demographic details and contents required to be learnt and 4) discover the relationship between demographic details and method of teaching. The results of the survey are presented and a brief discussion is provided concerning how the results will be incorporated into a forthcoming English language teaching programme.*

*Key words: English language, language development, medical tourism, nursing, Thailand*

**Dr. Puangtip Chaiphivalsarisdi** is Dean of the Faculty of Nursing Sciences, Shinawatra University, Thailand.

**Dr. Steven McKee** is Associate Dean of the School of Liberal Arts, Shinawatra University, Thailand.

**Dr. Palphol Rodloytuk** is Director, Student Services Quality Development Centre, Shinawatra University, Thailand.

### **1. Introduction**

Learning English is increasingly important in the Southeast Asian region (as represented by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations or ASEAN) since the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) is due to be instituted within a few years. The AEC provides for greater cross-border movement for appropriately qualified individuals in seven different employment categories, one of which is nursing. The ASEAN Joint Coordinating Committee on Nursing (AJCCN) is the body charged with ensuring that this takes place and, in 2006, arranged for the signing of the Mutual Recognition Arrangements on Nursing. This agreement specifies five domains of nursing practice which should be required of all those

# **Economic Interactions between Malay Thais and Buddhist Thais in the Southern Border Provinces**

Sittichai Anantarangsi

## **Abstract**

*The southern border provinces of Thailand have been wracked for more than a decade by insurgency and violence that have drawn a rift between the majority Muslim Malay Thais and the Buddhist Thais. With a view to finding ways that might promote better inter-community relations, this paper reports on qualitative research conducted in the region concerning commercial and economic exchanges between the communities. It is found that although there are some socially and culturally determined factors leading to variations in production and consumption activities, much more united the communities than divided them in this respect. Since people have been living in close proximity to each other for a long period of time, a stock of goodwill has been generated among them which has not yet been depleted and it is concluded that this could be replenished through instituting more forms of exchange and interactions through market institutions.*

*Keywords: cross-border movements, economic exchange, inter-community relations, Malaysia, Thailand*

**Dr. Sittichai Anantarangsi** is a Research Fellow at the SIU Research Centre, Shinawatra University, Thailand.

## **1. Introduction**

Siam annexed the previously independent state of Patani in 1909, at a time when external pressure enforced by European colonial powers (i.e. Britain and France) had caused the state to become a quasi-colonialist version of itself (Loos, 2011). As a result, a state which had been overwhelmingly populated by people professing Theravadin Buddhism as their personal belief suddenly acquired a substantially-sized territory which contained people who were largely Muslim in belief and Malay in ethnicity. Previously, the Siamese state had dominated many of the independent Malay states to its south and exacted suzerainty and tribute from them. However, it was the Anglo-Thai Treaty of 1909 that formalized the annexation of the states and formalized their incorporation into Siam and Malaya (Kersten, 2004). Since that time, Pattani – the two Ts indicate the region consisting of the Thai provinces of Yala, Narathiwat and Pattani – has been subjected to the long-standing campaign by the Thai state to unify the country through promoting the three institutions of

## **Understanding Investor Perceptions Concerning Prevailing Corporate Reporting Practices in India**

Amit Kumar Sinha

### **Abstract**

*The purpose of this paper is to study the availability, adequacy and usefulness of information disclosed by companies listed on the stock exchange and investors' perceptions of disclosure practices. For this study, investors have been classified into two categories – active and ordinary investors. The corporate disclosure practices adopted by the company and the satisfaction of investors in both categories is tested by using chi-square tests on the following parameters: disclosure of information in directors' reports; disclosure of risk exposure of the company; disclosure of information required for quoting a price tag in the book-building process and disclosure of information in the annual report and corporate governance report. A survey-based research methodology was deployed, taking a selective sample of both types of investors, i.e. active and ordinary investors. Primary data has been gathered in the Lucknow District of Uttar Pradesh State, India, using a structured questionnaire. As the awareness level of investors is increasing, their expectations from the companies are also rising, thereby demanding that more information needs to be disclosed. The disclosures by companies do not adequately cover the informational needs of stakeholders. However, the increasing disclosure trends can be considered as a first step towards improved corporate disclosure. The study therefore supports the need for a suitable and comprehensive regulatory framework for corporate disclosure, so that it is of relevance to all stakeholders. In addition, the study also suggests that there is a need for voluntary disclosure on the part of companies to win the confidence of stakeholder and for more informed decision-making. This study contributes to the literature by evaluating prevailing corporate disclosures as made by Indian companies in their annual reports. Further, it throws light on investors' expectations and their perceptions on corporate disclosure practices, which may motivate companies towards improved corporate disclosure practices.*

*Keywords: adequacy of information; corporate disclosure practices; investor's perception; relevance of disclosures; risk exposure*

**Dr. Amit Kumar Sinha** is Assistant Professor at Amity Business School, Amity University, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.

## **Ways to Win in the Greater Mekong Sub-Region: A Practical Guide for Latin American Entrepreneurs and Investors**

Nancy Huyen Nguyen and Suzana Bandeira

### **Abstract**

*Besides North-South trade relations, there is an unprecedented rise in South-South goods and services flows. There is no better example of this than the trade and investment between Latin America and Southeast Asia (including the Greater Mekong Sub-Region or GMS). However, it is not always easy to compete and win in other markets. Mainly drawing from personal observations, the paper aims to offer insights on cultural and social etiquettes that require special attention from Latin American investors while doing business in the countries of the GMS. The ultimate objective is to promote business cooperation between the two regions. Suggestions on how to minimize cultural gaps and bolster business communication between GMS and Latin American business practitioners are also offered.*

*Keyword: cultural and social etiquettes; doing business; Greater Mekong Sub-Region; Latin America,*

**Nancy Huyen Nguyen** is a researcher at the University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce, Bangkok, Thailand.

**Suzana Bandeira** is a consultant and a teacher at the Sao Paulo Pontifical Catholic University, Sao Paulo, Brazil.

## **Food Grain Logistics in India: The Multimodal Supply Chain with National Waterways 3**

C.T. Sunil Kumar

### **Abstract**

*In a country as enormous as India, the movement of food grains is a significantly important and complex undertaking. It primarily uses the railroad system, on which some 25 million metric tonnes of wheat and 30 million metric tonnes of rice are transported annually. The grains are principally obtained from agriculturally successful states such as Punjab, Haryana, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Chattisgarh. The food is then transported by rail to around 2,000 warehouses from which supplies are sent to the state governments, who then distribute it to the public with the goals of poverty alleviation, employment generation, economic and social development. Some food is also transferred to the central government departments such as the army and the paramilitary organizations. However, there is an alternative to the railroad and that is to use the national waterways. This paper explores the issues involved in using a waterway in a multimodal supply chain by drawing on evidence from Kerala state. The issues and practicalities of using this form of transportation are examined and conclusions and policy implications drawn as a result.*

*Key Words: India, inland water terminal, multimodal supply chain, national waterways, supply chain management*

**C.T Sunil Kumar** is AGM, Food Corporation of India, Zonal Office, Guwahati, India. Email: [ctsunil@gmail.com](mailto:ctsunil@gmail.com)<sup>1</sup>.

### **1. Introduction**

The mechanization of loading and unloading of food grain bags to and from wagons is in an infant stage and is still dependent on manual workers. Since the Indian Railways (IR) is a monopoly, there is little downward pressure on prices and the charges for demurrage for retention of wagons beyond the free time for loading and unloading wagons are a source of controversy. Penal demurrage is often charged at up to six times the normal demurrage charge.

The state of Kerala in southern India has paddy production of 800,000 metric

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<sup>1</sup> This is a revised version of a paper presented and published at ICMC2013, organized by Birla Institute of Management Technology, Greater Noida, on December 5-6, 2013 at BIMTECH Campus.

## **Excellence in a Borderless World: Evidence from Pune Auto-Components SMEs**

Mukund Deshpande and Neeta Baporikar

### **Abstract**

*Business at SMEs is taking new directions and more and more are using total quality management as an effective modus operandi to gain market share and repeat business. Various manufacturing industries have used six sigma practices to survive and increase in size in a competitive environment. Such recognized programmes have thus spread through many industries. Despite this, incidences of small firms remaining unproductive are on the rise. Reasons for business failure are persistently attributed to capital deficiency and incompetent usage; however skill, talent and persuasion are required to transform the business to excellence. The majority of small business owners are often inexperienced in business and studies reveal that the lack of strategy can be one of the main reasons for lack of competitiveness. The strongest of the firms now are not only those most able to survive but also the ones most responsive to change. It is now realized that a single strategy is insufficient for survival in a competitive and borderless world. This study revealed diverse dimensions as being vital for integrating firm operations, extending to the employees, suppliers and customers and other stakeholders to expand responsiveness and the flexibility of manufacturing organizations. This study, conducted on Pune SMEs, revealed significant strategies that formed the means to achieve excellence. The study reports behavioural insights which have enabled some Pune SMEs achieve superiority in business. It is field research.*

*Key Words: auto-components, excellence, Pune, strategies, SMEs.*

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Neeta Baporikar is Professor in Strategic Management and Entrepreneurship, and doctoral guide in Management in the University of Pune. Email: neetajb@rediffmail.com.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> This is a revised version of a paper presented and published at ICMC2013, organized by Birla Institute of Management Technology, Greater Noida, on December 5-6, 2013 at BIMTECH Campus.

## RESEARCH NOTE

บูรณาการของเทคโนโลยีนิวเคลียร์และพฤติกรรมศาสตร์  
เพื่อการพัฒนาหลักสูตรใหม่ด้านการจัดการพลังงานนิวเคลียร์ในประเทศไทย

วุฑฒิ พันธุมนาวิน\*, ดร. และ ดุจเดือน พันธุนานวน\*\*, ดร.

\* ศาสตราจารย์, คณะเทคโนโลยีการจัดการ มหาวิทยาลัยชินวัตร

\*\* รองศาสตราจารย์, คณะพัฒนาสังคมและสิ่งแวดล้อม สถาบันบัณฑิตพัฒนบริหารศาสตร์

### บทคัดย่อ

ในสถานการณ์ปัจจุบันประเทศต่างๆ กำลังประสบปัญหาวิกฤตทางด้านพลังงาน โดยมีสาเหตุสืบเนื่องมาจากราคาของเชื้อเพลิงฟอสซิลสูงขึ้น การปลดปล่อยก๊าซเรือนกระจก และอัตราการเพิ่มของการใช้พลังงานสูงขึ้นอย่างต่อเนื่องประกอบกับแหล่งเชื้อเพลิงฟอสซิลกำลังจะหมดไป และนอกจากนี้แนวโน้มของความต้องการใช้พลังงานที่ราคาถูกและสะอาดเพื่อการพัฒนา แล้วนำไปสู่สังคมคาร์บอนต่ำ พลังงานนิวเคลียร์ถูกจัดเป็นพลังงานทางเลือกประเภทหนึ่งที่จะตอบสนองความต้องการดังกล่าว แต่อย่างไรก็ตามเรายังไม่สามารถนำมาใช้ได้อย่างสะดวก ทั้งนี้เนื่องจากการยอมรับทางสังคมยังเป็นปัญหาต่อพลังงานนี้ อย่างไรก็ตาม จากผลการวิจัยปรากฏว่า องค์ความรู้ที่ประกอบด้วย มิติ คือ ความปลอดภัย ความก้าวหน้าและเทคโนโลยี และสังคมเศรษฐศาสตร์ ของ 3 พลังงานนิวเคลียร์ เป็นกุญแจสำคัญที่นำไปสู่การยอมรับทางสังคมต่อพลังงานนิวเคลียร์ ในบทความนี้ได้แสดงถึงแนวทางใหม่ในการนำความรู้ด้านพลังงานนิวเคลียร์เพื่อการนำไปสู่การยอมรับทางสังคม แนวทางใหม่นี้คือ การพัฒนาหลักสูตรพลังงานนิวเคลียร์ในระดับมหาวิทยาลัย โดยจัดทำหลักสูตรใหม่ที่เรียกว่า การจัดการพลังงานนิวเคลียร์-รีหลักสูตรนี้ถูกจัดทำขึ้นในระดับปริญญาตรี “เอก เป็นครั้งแรกของประเทศไทย โดยคณะเทคโนโลยีการจัดการ มหาวิทยาลัยชินวัตร และได้-โท 2555 ของปีการศึกษา 2 เปิดหลักสูตรนี้ในภาคเรียนที่

คำสำคัญ: พลังงานนิวเคลียร์ การพัฒนาหลักสูตร การจัดการพลังงานนิวเคลียร์ การยอมรับทางสังคม

# Integration of Nuclear Technology and Behavioural Science for Development of a Nuclear Energy Management Curriculum in Thailand

Vutthi Bhanthumnavin and Duchduen Bhanthumnavin

## Abstract

*At present, many countries are facing an energy crisis caused by various factors, including the high price of fossil fuels, the increasing emissions of greenhouse gases, increasing demand for energy and rapid depletion of energy sources. Furthermore, there exists a strong trend towards using clean and cheap energy for development in order to achieve a low carbon society. Nuclear energy is one of many choices offering cheap and clean energy. However, in the post-Fukushima world, public acceptance of nuclear energy is a main concern for its utilization. Three dimensions of knowledge, namely, safety, advanced technology and the economics of nuclear energy, are key factors for enhancement of acceptance. In this paper, the new approach to nuclear energy education for the enhancement of public acceptance is introduced in a form of a new curriculum, named the nuclear energy management program (NEMP). The programme is offered at three levels, i.e. Bachelor, Master and Ph.D. through appropriate courses in nuclear energy management. It is for the first time that the NEMP is being offered in Thailand at the School of Management Technology (SoMT), Shinawatra University (SIU) and it commenced in the second semester of the academic year 2012.*

*Keywords: curriculum development, nuclear energy, nuclear energy management, public acceptance.*

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## Book Reviews

### **The ‘Bare Life’ of Thai Migrant Workmen in Singapore**

*Pattana Kitiarsa*

Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books, 2014

ISBN: 978-616-215-075-3

Xiii + 187 pages

The term ‘bare life’ comes from the work of Giorgio Agamben, who described the *homo sacer* (accursed man) of the Roman Empire from whom all rights had been stripped and whom it was lawful for any citizen to attack or kill. This concept is transferred in this book by Pattana Kitiarsa to the lives of Thai workers – specifically male workers in the title of the book – from whom, it is implied, all forms of social capital and social relations have been removed and their identity is reduced to their ability to demonstrate labour power. Most of the Thai workers in Singapore have been employed in the construction industry (including the two large casino resort complexes) and it is possible to imagine them as ‘hands’ – commodified and hence interchangeable labour. Somewhat paradoxically, Kitiarsa then spends most of the rest of the book showing how the overseas lives of those concerned are actually more than ‘bare’ and that the workers have a significant level of agency over their actions and ability to establish and enact their own identities.

Pattana Kitiarsa was a gifted ethnologist and scholar and a man with genuine empathy and engagement with the people whose lives he shared. That his tragically early demise last year strongly affected his colleagues is attested to by the efforts that so many of them have made in ensuring that the manuscript was prepared for publication. I knew him only slightly but he worked a lot with my wife, who was Labour Councilor in Singapore for three years and who is mentioned in the acknowledgements, although the publisher has got her name wrong, which is one of several comparatively minor errors by the normally reliable Silkworm Books (not to mention the Americanization of the text). There are also some indications that editorial work has gone into completing the existing chapters but there remain some deficiencies which would have been removed if the author had been spared a little longer – some of the references and statistics are a couple of years out of date, for example, while another chapter exploring the implications of the ‘bare life’ more thoroughly would have

brought the whole book together. However, these are quite minor concerns and we can still enjoy and benefit from Kitiarsa's detailed and rich description of life in Singapore.

The situation and the type of work involved have a strong impact on the lives of migrant workers and there is often an important gender element involved. For example, domestic work takes place in the home and means that large numbers of migrant workers find themselves in workplaces which are dangerously under-regulated and have little visibility in society as a whole. Further, the women involved are isolated and so have neither social solidarity nor the opportunity to organize themselves for collective bargaining purposes. By contrast, the Thai workers considered here are present in large numbers and work together on large projects. This means that they are able to have friends and colleagues and that there are enough of them present to make it worthwhile for businesses to cater for their particular needs to be established – most notably at the Golden Mile Shopping Complex, otherwise known as Little Thailand. There is also the not inconsiderable support of Thailand's Embassy and Ministry of Labour, as well as the compassionate enthusiasm of the volunteers in Singapore. Further, since Singapore is such a highly-regulated geographical space, the working conditions are at least quite stable and have become as safe as might be reasonably expected in recent years. It is uncommon for those scams which are used by unscrupulous job brokers to separate workers from their money to have any component within the city state. Despite all of these advantages, the migrant life is still difficult enough: separation from friends and family; the cramped and unpleasant living conditions; the temptations to spend money on things other than remittances and the stress suffered by often quite poorly educated young men expected to live in an alien environment which they can find it difficult to survive. Thai workers also face the particular problem of Sudden Unexplained Nocturnal Death Syndrome (SUNDS), in which otherwise healthy-seeming young men die in their sleep. This continues to the present time and no convincing explanation has yet been provided.

It is the purpose of this book to examine the daily details of the lives of the men concerned and how they deal with the much larger forces that control these lives. This is considered to be a form of 'village transnationalism' and the workers here "... have by and large become 'out-classed others' and have been economically and socially confined to their worksites, foreign-worker dormitories, and certain noted 'ethnocultural enclaves' in Singapore (p.72)." This is generally true of all workers around the world and more obviously so in the case of, for example, South Asian workers in Qatar, where the safety standards are shocking and the living conditions apparently scandalous. The concessions that any workers obtain are not lightly given away by the bosses and their allies but they do make a differences and this might have been acknowledged. Perhaps it is more possible to see this in Singapore in 2014 than

it was a decade before. Besides, this is a work of ethnography rather than labour relations and the work is, therefore, framed by the literature that exists in that discipline.

Kitiarsa devotes considerable space to the sex lives of the workers and, also, the transnational sex workers who contribute to those sex lives. The role of the mobile phone is emphasized as a means not just of maintaining family and social relationships but, also, as a key tool in negotiating sexual or romantic relationships and, hence, inventing and reinventing the male identity of the workers. For those migrants who would like to establish a relationship with a locally-employed domestic worker, perhaps from the Philippines or Indonesia, the use of the phone is essential and so, too, is some ability with English, which has become the international language of intimacy in East Asia. These can be empowering relationships which re available to migrants in many categories: “... they have learned to adjust and live within the limited freedom, rights, and resources they are allowed to possess. The intensive use of mobile phones, their creativity in using the English language, their communicative skills, and the permission to have a day off on Sundays are among the valuable resources and rights which foreign workers have enjoyed in the Singaporean context (p.109).” This is careful analysis based on extensive and credible fieldwork.

It is, of course, a great pity that we will be able to hear no more from this talented and much-loved scholar. Let us hope that others will be inspired to follow in his footsteps and continue to tell the stories of those workers who sell their labour overseas.

*John Walsh, Shinawatra University*

**Preah Vihear: A Guide to the Thai-Cambodian Conflict and Its Solutions**

*Charnvit Kasetsiri, Pou Sothirak and Pavin Chachavalpongpun*

Bangkok: White Lotus, 2013.

ISBN: 978-974-480-108-1.

XIV + 104 pp.

Preah Vihear is the temple complex that has been used by the ultra-nationalist right of Thai politics as a means of trying to provoke a war with Cambodia so as to trigger the conditions for a military coup and an end to democracy. Since the right has such a prominent voice in the public media in Thailand, the campaign has been accompanied by a great deal of misinformation and, in some cases, outright falsehoods. There is a need, therefore, for a trustworthy and reliable rebuttal of these assertions and this challenge has been taken up by a trio of respected authors who have published a brief but clear and comprehensive treatment of the subject. Charnvit Kasetsiri scarcely needs an introduction as one of Thailand's principal historians and has also been rector of Thammasat University. Pou Sothirak is a former Minister and MP in Cambodia and ambassador to Japan, as well as now living the scholarly life in Singapore. Finally, Pavin Chachavalpongpun, whom I know slightly, was previously a civil servant at Thailand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and is now Associate Professor at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at Kyoto University. He is also a rising star of the popular media and his television appearances recently demolishing the arguments of various anti-democracy apologists have been revelatory. These scholars were among those who gathered for a workshop in Singapore with a view to assembling the materials for this book and then undertook a week of fieldwork and interviewing on both sides of the border. This time has been put to good use.

The temple itself – I will use the term Preah Vihear rather than the Thai Phra Viharn because it is how it is known in the international arena – was scarcely considered to be of any real significance since it was, in the eyes of people at the time, "... of no geographical or political importance and had disappeared from the realm of useful knowledge (p.23)." When a map was drawn up by the French to settle to border – possession of space had been of little value in the pre-modern Mekong region, when the crucial means of demonstrating and exercising status and power was the control of people in what was an under-populated region – Preah Vihear was included in Khmer territory and this was accepted by the Thai state. This settlement was subsequently used by the International Court of Justice to establish a verdict. However, as Chapter 1

points out, the temple became a useful means of starting an argument in Thailand not just because of the strain of nationalism that is promoted in school textbooks but because of the deliberate conflation of two strands of thought in Thai historiography: the superiority of Thais to Khmers in all aspects and the sense that territory has been stolen from Thailand through the years. The same process has taken place in Cambodia, in reverse and, in both cases, these efforts serve domestic political interests: “In the end, historical embeddedness is replicated or refined throughout the general recognition of the embeddedness at the elite societal levels. History has remained useful for the political elite, who manipulate the past to fulfill present political agendas (p.17).” Since history is presented in a black and white fashion and any contrary arguments suppressed, when conflict begins it can rapidly escalate into violence and bloodshed because the people involved have no common ground and cannot accept each other’s arguments as being valid. The resonance this has for the current political crisis will be apparent.

The intransigence of those who have taken positions on the Thai side is such that the two concluding chapters, which cover first bilateral and multilateral approaches to resolution and, second, possible solutions, feel a little bit redundant since not just is the conflict manufactured but the answers are obvious. It is evident that the ultra-nationalists will not accept any proposal that does not give them one hundred percent of what they want – of course, they are likely to be cut loose by their political masters one day when conditions change but seem to be making a virtue of intransigence, which follows the baleful example of the Tea Party in the USA. Consequently, any proposed solution which does not accommodate these interests is unlikely to be unsuccessful. That is indicative of larger problems in each of the societies concerned that is beyond the scope of the book to try to tackle.

One of the arguments that proponents of Thai ownership of the temple has been that, even if the building is located on Cambodian territory, it can only be accessed from the Thai side owing to the terrain. However, this is no longer going to be the case because Chinese money is behind an attempt to build a new road that will promote access from that side. The role of China in mainland Southeast Asia is likely to become increasingly important as time continues. In Cambodia, as in Myanmar, many important institutions and construction project rely upon Chinese support and resources and it is well-established that China would prefer stability and peace in its neighbours. This factor is not likely to put an end to the historical embeddedness of the relations between Thailand and Cambodia but it will increase the stakes and, so it might be hoped, help to encourage those responsible for doing so in the past and present not to put mobs on the streets in the future.

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**Asian Water Development Outlook 2013: Measuring Water Security in Asia and the Pacific**

Asian Development Bank and Asia-Pacific Water Forum: Manila, 2013.

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Available at: <http://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/pub/2013/asian-water-development-outlook-2013.pdf>

IV + 110 pp.

It seems quite possible that the year 2014 will come to be recognised as the year in which the people and governments of the world finally recognised that the impacts of global climate change are having significant impacts on society. Oxfam estimates that some 26 million people have already become climate change refugees and a further 200 million people are vulnerable to involuntary migration for the same reason. The current series of extreme weather phenomena around the world have been enough to persuade some forward-thinking governments that they need legislation to promote resilience to the threat of natural disasters. The Philippines, notably, has passed a climate change bill as the result of bitter experiences with typhoons. In the Asian Water Development Outlook 2013, jointly produced by the Asian Development Bank and the Asia-Pacific Water Forum, promotion of resilience to such disasters may be divided into the four categories of exposure, basic population vulnerability, hard coping strategies and soft coping strategies (p.64). Not only are these indicators defined and quantified but data has been obtained for the countries in the region and rankings calculated and provided. Further, policy levers are itemized to help government minds focus on what can be done and priorities suggested as to the order in which things should occur. This is the great strength of this report – not just for disaster resilience but for all five dimensions of water security that have been identified: satisfy household water and sanitation needs in all communities; support productive economies in agriculture, industry and energy; develop vibrant, livable cities and towns; restore healthy rivers and ecosystems and build resilient communities that can adapt to change. These dimensions illustrate some of the fundamental problems of water management within a geographic space. These include the complexity of the issues involved and the large numbers of stakeholders, who may not occupy the same geographical space and whose interests might be inimical, not to mention those other interests which can have an impact on water conditions but which cannot be controlled by governments.

A large variety of organizations have been involved in creating this document and the level of learning and research is evident throughout – as is also the

skilful writing which makes the report clear and coherent and even relatively straightforward throughout. Of course, it is possible to criticize the report and the approach behind it in a number of counts. For example, measuring everything by quantitative means can lead to some governments and their agencies focusing too much on box-ticking rather than seeking holistic solutions to problems, not to mention the temptation to concentrate on the easily-met targets and hoping success in those cases will hide failures elsewhere. On a deeper level, it is also possible to criticize the fact that the report owners at no point seem to countenance anything other than the continuation of advanced capitalism that has contributed so much to bringing us to the current situation, only with better management systems. Of course, the Asian Development Bank is wedded to the model of growth it has supported over the years and it is no surprise to see it being consistent here but, even so, some acknowledgement of the need for radical change in energy usage to sustain human societies in a recognizable form would have been appropriate. Further, one of the principal policy levers of change is the corporatization of government agencies, since “Helping water utilities to corporatize will increase their autonomy and accountability. These are key success factors for improving performance through better water governance and for attracting much-needed financing to expand networks and improve the quality and sustainability of water services (p.81).” This is not an uncontroversial statement and, although in theory management and governance are improved through exposure to some market-based mechanisms, experience shows that aggregate public welfare is not necessarily increased as a result. Quite the contrary, in fact.

Nevertheless, water management has become increasingly prominent on government agendas in recent years, because of the extreme weather phenomena, the 2008 economic crisis and the reductions in infrastructure investment as part of the austerity debacle and the periodic spikes in food prices that have reinforced awareness of security vulnerabilities in most countries (p.4). This report is a splendid example of contemporary thinking about water management in the Asia-Pacific and how it can be applied. The focus is on good water governance rather than technology or policy in its own right. The importance of this is evident here in Thailand, where there are quite literally dozens of government agencies responsible for different aspects of water management and both replication of efforts and bureaucratic empire-building. Some of the relevant agencies are part of the current behind-the-scenes struggle for control of the levers of power taking place between the democratically-elected government and the conservative establishment elites who would prefer the country to be run the way they have become accustomed to its being run. To try to find some positives in this situation, at least it can be said that there is obvious scope for improvement of the governance aspect.

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