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Aims and Scope

The Journal of Shinawatra University's main objective is to publish high quality, peer-reviewed previously unpublished papers on topics related to the fields of Liberal Arts, Business and Management, Information Technology, Management Technology, Public Administration, Health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

Welcome to the Vol.3, No.2 issue of the *Journal of Shinawatra University*. The *Journal of Shinawatra University* is a double-blind peer-reviewed academic journal accepting papers in either English or Thai language in any field of scholarly endeavor. Although Shinawatra University itself has moved to emphasized certain fields of activity, its journal is open to any school of thought.

In this issue, I am happy to welcome three peer reviewed research papers as well as the customary book reviews. In the first paper, Sirirat Ngamsang considers China's relationship with Thailand through adopting a neo-Gramscian framework of analysis. Her work leads her to extend the field of international relations to incorporate non state actors and structural historical forces within a framework based on both substructure and superstructure of society.

In the second paper, Surabhi Singh examines the marketing issues related to the Social Welfare and Planning for Rural Development Society in India. Her work is an important example of how academic, participatory and action research approaches can be combined.

In the third paper, Khin Kyi Zin considers issues related to the marketing of Paw San rice in Shwebo township in Myanmar. Based on a questionnaire approach supplemented by focus groups with various farming communities, she finds the difficulties that farmers face in trying to connect with regional or international value chains and, thereby, realize the full potential of the superior crops that they are growing. Infrastructure problems combined with lack of capital and access to inputs tell a story that will be quite familiar with those interested in development of agricultural areas around the world. The difference in this case is that the produce is of genuinely international potential, according to various expert reports.

The papers in this issue come from Thailand, India and Myanmar and I am pleased that our journal continues to make a modest contribution towards promoting authorial and geographic diversity in academic publishing.

Please submit papers to me directly at jcwalsh@siu.ac.th.

John Walsh, Editor

PEER REVIEWED PAPERS

The Sino-Thai Relationship in the Context of Various Perspectives of International Relations

Sirirat Ngamsang

Abstract

China and Thailand have had a long and mostly fruitful relationship which might be entering into a new phase in the near future. The relationship has many elements to it, including the personal, the military, economic, political and diplomatic. To be able to understand and characterize this relationship, it is necessary to view it in a framework that takes account of the different elements involved. Within international relations, the evolution of thought away from the basic realist framework towards more complex understandings of the nature of relationships between states that has made that perspective more possible. This paper explores the changing nature of international relations and shows the ways in which this has developed in the light of the Sino-Thai relationship. It is argued that neither realism, neo-realism nor liberalism is sufficient to explain the relationship considered and that it is important to include not just non-state actors but social and class relations in the analysis, in the way that an approach such as neo-Gramscianism can provide.

Keywords: *China; liberalism; neo-Gramscian analysis; realism; Thailand*

Author: Sirirat Ngamsang is a PhD candidate at the School of Management, Shinawatra University.

1. Introduction

In common with other Mekong region states, Thailand and its predecessors have had a long, complex and mostly asymmetric relationship with China. This was based on the tributary system, by which the Chinese throne would graciously accept appropriate tribute from neighbouring rulers in return for peaceful relations, inferred legitimacy and access to the Chinese market. The tributary system began worldwide at around 300-500 BCE and continued, in the west, until the creation of the capitalist system in around 1500 CE (Amin, 1991). The *Yugong* – or Tribute of Yu – had been conceptualized by the C5th BCE as a means of locating China as the centre of the world and other states occupying one of a series of concentric geo-psychic circles around it (Wade, 2000). Chinese agents might actively seek to incorporate newly-identified states within the system, as in the case of Okinawa in 1372 CE (McCormack, 2010) but it was more likely that the would-be supplier of tribute would seek out the opportunity to do so. Tais of the Shan State in modern-day Myanmar, for

A Study of Marketing Issues in Social Welfare and Planning for a Rural Development Society

Surabhi Singh

Abstract

This case focuses on the various marketing issues pertaining to development taking place in non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The Social Welfare and Planning for Rural Development Society is committed to promoting and undertaking sustainable development measures in the under-privileged sections of society by designing tools for turning self-development possibilities into sustainable development plans utilizing the available resources around them without any discrimination on the grounds of religion, caste or sex. There are many NGOs who still do not have proper marketing departments. The issue of fund raising can be effectively dealt with if the marketing issues are dealt with appropriately. This case provides a guide as to how effectively this NGO tackles these issues while taking up various projects and what are the key marketing strategies for the success of any non-profit organizations.

Keywords: *resources, society, sustainable development, under privileged*

Author: Surabhi Singh is Associate Professor in Marketing and Data Analytics at Jaipuria Business School, Ghaziabad.

1. Introduction

This case proposes to highlight the marketing issues of the Social Welfare and Planning for Rural Development Society, which is a social and charitable organization. This non-governmental organization (NGO) was registered in the year 2006 and the registered office is in Lucknow in Uttar Pradesh. This organization was established by eminent social activists for promoting and undertaking development measures.

A big challenge for all existing non-profit organizations operating today in this competitive environment is their survival in the form of their human resources, committed volunteers and financial resources, in the form of donations and other funding from individuals, foundations, corporations and government. Marketing in an NGO usually means attracting human and capital resources. NGOs today use various marketing principles and techniques to influence a target audience voluntarily to accept, reject, modify or abandon a form of behaviour for the benefit of individuals, groups or society as a whole. However, this is true only in the case of some NGOs, since many of them are experiencing

Paw San Rice Marketing in Shwe Bo

Khin Kyi Zin

Abstract

Paw San was awarded a prize as the world's best rice at the World Rice Conference 2011 held in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Paw San rice is very special, excellent in eating quality, with a soft texture and with very delightful fragrance. The Paw San rice plantations are located in Shwe Bo Township, Sagaing Region. This research study focuses on quality control, lifestyle development, innovation and investment, all of which are essential for the success of the rice farming industry. If farmers have access to capital, better seeds and better technology, the agricultural sector in Myanmar has the potential to see rapid growth. Efficient marketing infrastructure such as wholesale, retail and assembly markets and storage facilities is essential for cost-effective marketing, to minimize post-harvest losses and to reduce health risks. This study is focused on well-functioning marketing systems to necessitate a strong private sector backed up by appropriate policy and legislative frameworks and effective government support services. In this study, the research seeks to understand the constraints that poor farmers face and to guide research priorities accordingly. Success relies on good quality and timely information on farmers' technology needs, rice ecosystems, yields, input use, rice markets and prices. To analyse data on household and farm characteristics, household resources, labour, income, perceptions of technology needs, technology adoption patterns and constraints, and farm-level effects of technologies have all been considered. The purpose is to study the needs of Paw San rice farmers and others involved in rice production from different socioeconomic groups and the effects of labor-saving technologies on their employment and income.

Keywords: *efficient marketing, Myanmar, Paw San, rice farming*

Author: Khin Kyi Zin is a graduate student of Shinawatra University, Mandalay Campus.

1. Introduction

As much as 92% of all rice is farmed in Asia and Myanmar is the 7th biggest rice growing country in the world. It is cultivated principally in two regions, which are the Ayeyarwaddy Delta region and Sagaing region. Rice farming is one of the most important agricultural industries in the world. The demand for specialty rice products is increasing globally. Rice provides natural nutrients, fibre and proteins and is an excellent source of niacin (Vitamin B3).

BOOK REVIEWS

Future Cities

Camilla Ween

London: Hodder and Stoughton, 2014

ISBN: 978144419608

XVII + 142 pp.

Faced with the proposition of a world of 10 billion people, most of whom will be living in cities constantly increasing in size and a hotter world with less water and increasing pressure on food security, it is evident that many challenges await if disaster is not to be avoided. One important set of challenges will be to plan and implement suitable systems for the cities of the future and it is these challenges that Camilla Ween addresses admirably in this book, which is part of the All That Matters series.

She does so in an optimistic manner, noting that our species of homo sapiens has been characterized throughout history by its resilience and its problem-solving ability. However, with a rational approach (and the political dimension is somewhat missing from the analysis overall), it will be possible to prepare for the future: “Delivering potentially in a decade a further 10 megacities and hundreds of cities with populations over a million that are pleasant, attractive and well-functioning is probably the biggest challenge society has faced since humankind conceived urban living (p.xiv). Part of these changes comes from deliberate policies. For example, the Chinese government has announced plans to move some 250 million people from rural locations to newly built cities in just over one decade and there are many reports of enormous urban developments in that country that have been announced to reduce current overcrowding, pollution and pressure on public services or have been built but remain almost entirely uninhabited. Other changes will result from climate change crises and the refugees these will produce. Ween largely ignores chaotic changes such as these and prefers to emphasise what it should be possible to achieve. Here, for example, after explaining the problems caused by continued use of fossil fuels and a discussion of the possible alternatives, is her summation of what is to be done.

“As with water and other systems, energy strategies have to include reducing consumption of energy. We will need to be smart about our energy use, capturing waste energy, particularly heat, which is very often a by-product of many processes. There will have to be emphasis on creating energy-efficient machines and buildings, upgrading the energy performance of old buildings, and capturing wasted energy

from manufacturing processes as well as all small machines. This will require strong leadership, policies and enforcement, together with incentives for people to carry out upgrades themselves. Planning energy delivery must also focus on ensuring that city systems are integrated to maximize efficiency, and should incentivize innovation (p.51).”

This is all undeniably true but gives rise to a number of questions of some importance. What is the meaning of ‘strong leadership?’ Is that something that is compatible with democracy as it is widely understood? Is it a guided form of democracy such as is found in Singapore? Given the way that a section of libertarian-minded people behave in the USA as well as elsewhere, what should be done with those no doubt self-declared energy rebels? The current situation does not inspire much confidence in the ability of people voluntarily deny themselves short-term benefits so as to achieve long-term goals they themselves will not experience. Of course, it would be asking a great deal of the author to have solved all such problems within a work of limited size but it nevertheless remains the case that answers will eventually be required.

There are many good ideas in this book, particularly with respect to drawing together the different elements required to manage sustainability and creating a livable city. Some of the text is a little too optimistic: “Future cities will be different, but if we get it right, they will be delightful democratic places where social interaction thrives and people have equal opportunity to lead fulfilling lives (p.113).” Some of this can be achieved. Seoul now is almost completely unrecognizable from what it was twenty years ago, when I lived there. Where there were aerial cobwebs of cables, nose-to-tail traffic and unresponsive citizens, now the pavements are clear and there are many places for people to sit together and recreate their social relations, amid free flowing streets and the better environment may have something to do with the much more amiable way its citizens now tend to interact with foreigners. However, it is difficult to imagine that equal opportunities to lead fulfilling lives could be achieved without the revolutionary overthrowing of capitalism.

The concept of smart cities (which is what is being described here) has suffered from the retreat into jargon that affects authors unable to contain all the complexity involved in the subjects it would be necessary to combine. Ween overcomes this complexity by presenting a clear and readable text and, if the book reveals the difficulties that must be faced, then that should not be considered a bad thing.

John Walsh, Shinawatra University

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The SEA Is Ours

Jaymee Goh and Joyce Chng, eds.

Petaling Jaya: Gerakbudaya Enterprise, 2016

ISBN: 9-789832-344490

212 pp.

Why is Southeast Asian literature so little regarded internationally? This is a question that I try to address in my Greater Mekong Subregion Studies undergraduate course, which includes a section on the arts generally. My answer comes in three parts. The first is the form of much of the work, which appears unusual to the western mind and, therefore, is difficult to critique accurately (for example, normative Khmer *chbaap* poetry). Second is the lack of access – few works are available in good English (or French) translations that are available outside of the region. Third and this is perhaps the most important reason and one which extends to other parts of Asia is the lack of psychological analysis of the characters. Since Freud wrote, psychological understanding of the actions of the characters portrayed has been inescapable and an important method in appreciating the world and the reasons for the characters to act in the way that they do. Even before Freud, some understanding of the ways that characters think has been incorporated within all kinds of literature, including drama, verse and fiction. Hamlet soliloquizes, for example, while Pamela reveals her inner thoughts through her many letters. Yet in Asian literature, particularly but not only in Southeast Asian literature, characters act in different ways for reasons that are not always easily explicable without access to local knowledge. There are familial and social relations which are embedded in everyday life but which are opaque to people from other parts of the world. There are also ways of behaviour that result from the Buddhist philosophy that are also difficult to understand. Much of Southeast Asia, for example, is Theravadin Buddhist in belief and, as a result, dominated by right doing rather than right thinking. From the perspective of the western monotheistic religions, it appears wrong to have one's acts valued while conducting them with a selfish or poorly adjusted mindset, yet this is entirely possible in the East Asian context, as demonstrated by the ability of monsters or evil gods in the Ramayana to achieve enlightenment.

Other reasons also exist for obscuring behaviour and so this particular collection of short stories is to be valued because it relates to a form of science fiction, which is a genre that notoriously limits psychological evaluation of its characters and which, perhaps more importantly, places those characters in situations beyond the normal and, hence, requires them to act according to their

values rather than their social norms. Here, in Alessa Hinlo's *The Last Aswang*, the protagonist Udaya acts in a social setting in which power is held by supernatural creatures who are able to organize affairs to have their own liking. As one such, Udaya acts according to her instincts and, indeed, appetites. This is straightforward and, so, more possible to judge accordingly. A similar situation exists with respect to Paolo Chikiamco's *Between Severed Souls*, which also places the characters in the context of unexpected technology.

The steampunk sub-genre posits contemporary or recent historical settings with unexpected technological advances from apparently anachronistic sources, for example steam power. The punk part comes from the attitude of the characters, which is based on antagonistic social relations often connected with crime of some sort. This is very evident in the case of Olivia Ho's *Working Woman*, which combines Chinese-style triad gang action with artificial life in an enjoyable romp. In common with several other stories, *Working Woman* has a post-colonial element to it, in this case explicitly with the presence of British authorities controlling society. Elsewhere, for example, in *The Chamber of Souls*, z.m. quynh portrays a miraculous transition from a miserable war-torn world into a wonderful other place ruled by benevolent but inscrutable giants. Postcolonialism often envisages empowerment of this sort which transforms a present marred by structural issues that have systematically prevented people from realizing their potential. Steampunk seems to be a useful means of exploring this set of issues and it is not surprising that authors have used the opportunity to put the boot of power on the other foot.

The title of the volume makes a pun of the sea, which is so important to island Southeast Asia and the abbreviation for the region itself. The sea offers opportunities for travel and trade, of course and also the opportunity for people to reinvent themselves, since people on distant islands without the internet (which does not appear at all in this steampunk universe) do not know who newcomers might be or what their history reveals. This is an option taken by many authors here who, in some cases, struggle to move beyond the exotic details of everyday life. These are not the best stories in the world but they are not bad and it is certainly good to see a collection which genuinely comes from the region and is properly engaged with it. This one is published in Malaysia and I found a copy when I was attending an ERIA workshop in Kuala Lumpur recently (I note that a previous version was published in 2015 by Rosarium Publishing, which is based in the USA according to the website and specializes in "... speculative fiction, comics, and a touch of crime fiction – all with a multicultural flair." This is admirable, even if it does mean that it continues the tradition of works about Southeast Asia being produced outside the region). I hope that the book has a wider circulation and I will certainly be looking out for other collections.

John Walsh, Shinawatra University

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The Food Wars

Walden Bello

London and New York, NY: Verso, 2009

ISBN: 9-781844-673315

X + 176 pp.

The memory of the international protests against high food prices has been rather diminished by the subsequent banking crisis and crisis of austerity. However, the factors that contributed to high food costs have not gone away and, in this excoriating account of the state of food production around the world, veteran activist and public intellectual Walden Bello investigates what is real and what is imaginary. Official accounts have tended to focus on a similar set of factors:

“... the failure of poorer countries to develop their agricultural sectors; strains on the international food supply caused by dietary changes among China’s and India’s expanding middle classes; speculation in commodity futures; the conversion of farmland into urban real estate; climate change; and the diversion of corn and sugarcane from food production to the production of agrofuels (p.4).”

Bello contends that, while some of these factors certainly have been influential, the more important issue has been the implementation of neoliberal structural adjustment plans by the World Bank and associated transnational organizations. This he links to the sustained campaign being waged to bring about the death of the peasantry as a class. Noting that Marx considered the peasants of the world to resemble a ‘sack of potatoes’ lacking in solidarity and class consciousness, Bello argues that the peasant class continues to struggle against the odds, despite being increasingly marginalized by the forces of globalization. Large numbers of peasants are becoming involved in cross-border labour migration with the idea that the land will still be there for them in the event of last resort. In some cases, peasants are able to organize themselves so as to fight for their own interests, as in *Via Campesina* in South America. By promoting re-peasantization in the sense of empowering autonomous groups of people with a self-governed resource base, this might represent a means for the poor of navigating the crisis of globalization.

Bello provides an introductory chapter in which he outlines the contours of his argument, which are summarized above. This is followed by chapter-length case studies of Mexico, the Philippines, Africa and China. In each of these, structural adjustment policies were enforced to enhance export-oriented agricultural production dominated by market mechanisms rather than food security and sustainable production. These policies have failed: “As in Mexico and the Philippines, structural adjustment, with its gutting of government budgets, especially the drastic reduction or elimination of fertilizer subsidies, was the key factor that turned relatively underpopulated Africa from a net food exporter in the 1960s to the chronic net food importer it is today (p.84).” Combined with the extensive and politically important agricultural subsidies provided in the USA and EU, the possibilities for market-based success for peasants in the developing world are greatly diminished by the workings of advanced capitalism. This is true even though it has been shown, in many cases, that productivity on many small-scale farms (which are the majority of all farms) is much higher than on larger farms. The connections between people and the land are important and setting them aside for commercial purposes has been shown to be unhelpful.

The next chapter concerns agrofuels and the role that reallocating land to them played in the surges of costs of food types. The evidence Bello presents is that it is this factor that was most influential, while claims for the direct-changing habits in India and China are rather over-stated. The growth of these fuels has also been linked with a number of adverse environmental effects, from forest clearing to the creation of carbon sinks. As an inherently capitalist activity, it is also indelibly linked to exploitation: “The promise of development to small communities has not materialized. Instead we have stories of human rights abuse and slavlike labor practices, conflicts between leasing land to foreign investors and agrarian reform, displacement of small-scale farmers, on misappropriation of land-for-food to land-for-fuel, and hunger even in traditionally food-secure countries (pp.123-4).”

The final chapter is more optimistic, showing how some movements have helped to re-peasantize communities and demonstrating that it is possible for land-people links to be re-established. This is a movement that valorizes traditional modes of production but not through romanticisation of the past. Bello notes that “... many proponents of peasant agriculture are pursuing a symbiotic relationship between advanced science and small-scale peasant farming that builds in the latter instead of destroying it (p.149).” Indeed, there are examples of how former subsistence agriculturists can be incorporated into regional and international markets with a reasonable degree of equity and this is what has happened, to some extent, in Thailand. There was a role for the private sector in this transformation and that should be true for developments in neighbouring Mekong region countries. However, the private sector must of

course be properly monitored and supervised to make sure it is state level people-centred developmental plans that are met. Bello has helped to show the importance of tending the land and its connections with local communities with trademark vigor and clarity of thought.

John Walsh, Shinawatra University

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