PRESIDENT'S SPEECH GIVEN ON JANUARY 21ST, 2007.

It is indeed a great honor for me to address you on the occasion of this commencement. On behalf of all administrators, faculty and staff of the University, and our honored guests, permit me to congratulate each and everyone of you on your splendid achievement after years of hard work. We welcome your parents and family, and we share their pride in your achievements. Like them, we are certain that you will contribute to making the world a better place. You can be proud of this support by your family and the University and treasure it in your heart.

I know that all of you are excited and restless. You are looking forward to finishing the ceremony and meeting family and friends afterwards. Yet, please take a deep breath, savor this special moment, and listen attentively to what I will say.

As you all know, the year 2006 had been considered to be a special year for the Kingdom of Thailand. The whole nation celebrated the 60th Anniversary of the Reign of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej the Great on June 9, 2006. Our University has also joined the nation in this celebration.

On the other hand, you could observe the unrest and the terrorism in the three southern provinces of Thailand; the frequent reports of graft and corruption in major public projects; doubts about the neutrality and honesty of various bodies, to mention just a few items that marked the year. Because of these ills in our society, moral development has been receiving more attention in Thai society recently.

Especially during the political impasse that happened last year (2006), much was written about and discussed concerning the quality of our citizens. Prime Minister Surayud Chulanond touched upon the issues when he stated the government's policy platform before the National Legislative Assembly (NLA) on November 3, 2006. Then on December 8, 2006, the government made a morality, good governance and anti-corruption campaign in the state sector a part of the national agenda.

As a student of Assumption University who are professionals of today, many of you will confront moral issues of importance directly. It is no longer a matter of merely pursuing your careers in different fields. Rather, it is a matter of having to make the right choices in moral issues. You must be able to exhibit a certain level of moral maturity. We are living in a chaotic world, but without morality our society will experience even more chaos.

Elements of Moral Maturity

First we need to try to understand the concept of "moral maturity". While it cannot and need not be defined in a single, universally accepted way, nevertheless some conceptual clarity is essential if we are to comprehend its complex and multifaceted nature.

Mathieson (2003) identifies seven elements of moral maturity. They provide an image of what a morally mature person is like.

1. **Moral agency and sense of self**

A person is entitled to one's own identity. She must be able to develop a sense of self and establish the authority of her own voice. Therefore, moral agency means that people see themselves as having the right and the ability to make decisions, and to act on them.

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There is recognition that there is a self, the self chooses behaviors, and the behaviors affect the self and others. This recognition is fundamental to moral maturity.

2. Harnessing cognitive ability

Cognitive ability is the cornerstone of moral reasoning. It helps people identify situations that have a moral component. A well-developed mind can better imagine the impact of various courses of action. The morally mature people harness their intellectual powers to work for what is right.

3. Harnessing emotional resources

Emotions drive much of our behavior. They are important in initiating and sustaining action. Therefore, resisting impulses, the virtue of self-discipline, is critical to goal achievement. At the same time empathy, where someone feels the emotions of others, helps someone understand how events affect other people.

4. Using social skill

Morally mature people have the skills to participate in the social world. They can understand others, make themselves understood, and sometimes persuade others to adopt their own point of view. Morally mature people know that group norms affect behavior, and that social pressure is used to encourage obedience.

5. Using principles

The ultimate sign of moral development is principle-based reasoning. A principle is an abstract moral idea applied across situations. Morally mature people do not slavishly obey one principle however. They understand community standards and the relationships that bind communities together.

6. Respecting others

The morally mature person’s respect for others shows itself in several ways. First, people are valued, recognizing the value of people simply because they are people with inherent worth. Second, morally mature people know they are part of an interdependent social system. People move from dependence, where they define themselves by others’ opinions, to interdependence. In the last stage, people recognize the complex web of relationships that tie us to each other. Third, a morally mature person recognizes that knowing is dependent to some extent on the knower. However, social facts vary widely across cultures. Someone who recognizes that knowledge is in part socially defined can better deal with the realities of interpersonal exchange. Finally, a morally mature person can interact with others without feeling that one’s own worldview is threatened.

7. Developing a sense of purpose

The final element of moral maturity is a sense of purpose. It may be a way of living life, a dedication to certain processes rather than specifics. Service to a higher power is another recognizable life purpose, which may or may not entail service to others.

Morality and Character Development

We need not only the knowledge that we receive through our education,
but also moral principles to guide us. This morality needs to be developed just like knowledge.

Just as the limbs are developed and strengthened through exercise, so morality needs to be developed through our individual and social interaction. You graduates have undoubtedly noticed this during the years of your education. You were developing knowledge in your courses, but you also were developing your sense of morality and sense of self in your interaction with your friends, teachers, and acquaintances. The development of morality is an ongoing process. You will continue to struggle to shape it as you go on with your lives.

Our moral principles give us only guidelines for our moral actions. But our moral maturity is the development of a capacity, which goes beyond principles. We are not bound by moral prescriptions because we naturally live them. In other words, we do not need to carry around a manual to tell us how to act, because we instinctively live our morality. And this capacity is something developed over the years.

Moral maturity is interwoven with social, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual development, all of which are interdependent. They cannot be clearly separated. A morally mature person is a moral agent and is aware of this role. It helps people appreciate their responsibility and act according to the good.

The common view of moral development holds that children acquire moral values either by observing adults or by being instructed in moral virtue at the hands of adults. Moral development, according to this view, is a process of replicating the codes and standards of adult society in the behavior of the developing child. The moral child is instructed in moral virtue, the better his or her moral behavior will be, at least in the sense that this behavior should increasingly conform to the prevailing moral norms of adult society.

Yet the structural-developmentalists have tried to capture both the creativity of an individual's moral development and the uniqueness of the individual's moral knowledge during each of several distinct developmental periods.

- The basic notion is that a person works out his or her own sense of morality through actively structuring and restructuring his or her social experience.

- The key underlying assumption is that person's own behavioral representation of moral rules and values is uniquely organized at each developmental level. Progress consists of a series of reorganizations of which radically changes the nature of the individual's moral knowledge. These developmental organizations occur in an invariant sequence—that is, in the same order for all children—because each mode of moral organization is necessary for the emergence of its successor.

Moral maturity clearly calls for the internalizing of values and a personal and self-conceived strategy to address problems whose concrete details cannot be foreseen. Mature young persons should possess a distinct sense of their uniqueness as a person, a realistic appraisal of their capacity to make a positive difference for others through their skills and caring, and some sense of direction about what in life offers unifying motivation for their continuing growth and education.

The mature youth can go beyond mere rule-conformity according to precise norms and can think of fitting responses to unforeseen situations on the basis of internal principles that have become their own.

Moral maturity is a combination of both mature moral judgment and mature moral conduct. Both moral judgment and moral conduct are important aspects of morality. We cannot become good or bad people without good or bad conduct. As Jean-Paul Sartre points out, "Man is nothing else but what he makes of himself". Yet the moral conduct component is, by itself, inadequate as a measure of moral maturity because the moral conduct of some individuals is motivated simply by the desire to conform to collective norms. Mature moral judgment is necessary as a safeguard against conformity to the potentially immoral norms of the community.

Gene Bedley states that the "Morally mature person understands universal moral principles and accepts responsibility for applying them". As Aristotle pointed out, "It takes a fine and well-grounded character to react immediately with the right approvals and condemnation". Thus character is very essential in our life. Gandhi considered "Knowledge without character" as one
of the seven deadly social sins to be aware of.

According to John Dewey, the cultivation of habit has moral significance, for it is the process by which the disposition of a student to respond to and act in the world is formed. Through habit formation, patterns of action and perception are developed that not only structure moral agents' tendencies to respond and act in certain ways—they also structure the way moral agents see and interpret the world by determining what kinds of stimuli they attend to and what kinds of features they recognize as relevant.

The cultivation of moral maturity thus requires not only that moral agents actively attune themselves to the morally relevant details of their environments but also that they develop a stable disposition to respond and to act appropriately (through a sustained, mindful, and directed cultivation of habitual practice).

As moral agents’ actions begin to reflect the initial untrained insights of their moral sensibilities, those sensibilities are strengthened and stabilized, thereby expanding their capacities to transform their insights into a stable foundation of what Francisco Varela has called embodied "ethical know-how". Through repeated activity such know-how is employed and, by way of direct feedback, fine-tuned and increased. Through this process, moral maturity is achieved.

No two situations, and no two people, are ever exactly alike. Even a single individual is constantly changing, for, as one acquires experience, one's responses become constantly more refined. Thus there is no final answer as to what the appropriate response in a particular situation should be. Each person must simply respond as well as one can to each unique situation with nothing but experience-based intuition as guide.

Finding life's purpose is a difficult philosophical task. To choose one's own goals (and to respect others while pursuing them), to use one's cognitive, emotional, and social skills well, to keep fast to one's own principles) is not so easy. Most people probably don't reach full moral maturity during their lifetimes. However, the image offers an end point toward which students can strive. They can recognize the elements, appreciate them, and perhaps approach them in later life. Further, understanding moral maturity can help students evaluate statements by others.

During their years on campus at Assumption University, students were given opportunities to develop moral maturity in different ways—from their classes on professional ethics, to the conformity to certain rules and regulations, to their interaction with lecturers, staff, and friends on campus. But the most important strides in the development of moral character were the ones they achieved themselves. It would be wise to approach moral development programs in a spirit of meaningful educative activities.

Dear Graduates:

We can recall the Royal Wisdom given to the Thai citizens by His Majesty the King on July 8, 1967 on knowledge and morality. He stated:

"To achieve desired results that are also beneficial and morally just, you need more than just knowledge: You need honesty, sincerity and justice. Knowledge is like an engine that propels a vehicle. Moral principles are the steering wheel or rudder that leads the vehicle safely in the right direction."

In light of His Majesty's wisdom, I wish to encourage you to continue to develop moral maturity which AU has already initiated. Venture a bit further than you've gone before each day. Dare to dream bigger. Do not allow complacency to keep you up in mediocrity. You can restructure your past to affect the future. Try to experience the abundance of life to become cultured and learned people. Begin today looking beyond where you are to where you want to be.

Once again, I congratulate you on your success. Work hard to develop your professional skills as well as your spiritual well-being. Remember that your success is not the product of your hand only. As such, always be thankful to those who contributed to your success. In particular, remain grateful to your parents for their generosity, and the way they have supported you in

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THE LAUNCHING OF THE JOHN PAUL II CENTER FOR CATHOLIC SOCIAL THOUGHT

Assumption University launched the John Paul II Center for Catholic Social Thought on January 29, 2007. This initiative was to honor and commemorate the late Pope John Paul II, particularly for his encyclicals on the doctrines of Catholic Social Thought. The long-term contribution of the Center would lie in research, seminars and eventually, a degree program in Catholic Social Thought.

His Eminence Cardinal Renato Raffaele Martino, the Holy See's Prefect for the Commission on Justice and Peace delivered a keynote address at the launching ceremony thus inaugurating the center. Prior to the ceremony, His Eminence Michel Michael Kifuru, Archbishop of Bangkok blessed the statue of the late Pope John Paul II which had been kindly sponsored in part by His Excellency Archbishop Salvatore Pennacchio, the Papal Nuncio to the Kingdom of Thailand. The three-meter statue of the late pope stands at the entrance of the University Museum at the Bang Nacampus and was fashioned by Italian and Thai sculptors at a Sriracha factory.

The launching ceremony, held in the exquisite plenary hall of the John XXIII Conference Center attracted a multi-faith audience of hundred representatives from various walks of life. Ambassadors and special representatives from 15 countries also attended.

In his keynote address, His Eminence Cardinal Renato Raffaele Martino delineated the values and meanings of Catholic Social Justice in fine academic reasoning. The discussion which ensued was indeed illuminative and animated, drawing forth cross references between the approached to social peace and justice from the various faiths represented at the forum.

Assumption University then hosted a high lunch for all the guests at the concourse of the conference center. His Eminence Cardinal Martino was immensely satisfied with all the arrangements and commended Assumption University on its very proactive gesture of launching the John Paul II Center for Catholic Social Thought.

A cross section of the Inter-Faith Conference representatives at the launching ceremony.

The John Paul II Centre was to be based on the Graduated School of Philosophy and Religion and slowly built up on the principle.
TROJANS NIGHT 2007

The Au Alumni Association, known as ABACA hosted the Trojans Night 2007 at the Queen Sirikit National Convention Center, on January 21, 2007.

Captioning the gala evening with "a walk to remember" the organizers pulled out all stops in feting the fresh graduates from Assumption University. Many of the invitees dressed to their best for the occasion, not least among them President Emeritus of Assumption University who graced the evening in a leather tuxedo, thus setting the stage for Trojans night to resonate the ABACA response to the Night of the Oscars at Hollywood!

Speaking on the occasion, ABACA President Mr. Viwat Awarsiripong welcome the new graduates into the Alumni fold, challenging them to live up to the high national and international expectations that all Assumption University graduates contribute through their efforts and intelligences to economic growth and progress.

The President of Assumption University Rev. Brother Dr. Bancha

Dr. Saenghiran’s Speech: From page 4

various ways. Be also thankful to your faculty members who patiently educated and encouraged you. Your friends also deserve your thanks, for they also have been an important part of your life and education. They have cheered you up when you were down. Always remember that gratitude is an important trait of an educated and morally mature person. Behave yourself accordingly as an ambassador of AU to mankind. Please come back to your alma mater to visit us from time to time.

May God grant you graces to face life’s challenges and may you be filled with happiness and prosperity always.

Bancha Saenghiran, f.s.g., Ph.D.
President, January 20, 2007

Saenghiran congratulated all the graduates and wished for them and their families prosperity and happiness.

The rallying call for all Au Graduates to live their lives like the brave Trojans of yore was given by Rev. Brother Prathip Martin Konomas, the President Emeritus of Assumption University. He called upon the graduates to have Perseverance, Character, Stamina, Intelligence and their sights on success to be able to cope with the wherewithal of life.

The evening was perfect with a high sit-down dinner, an unforgettable fashion contest and music which elated the spirits of all the party attendants.

By the time the curtains came down on the evening, the Assumption University community and all guests left the hall with elated spirits and renewed vigor to go conquer the world and never to yield.

Reported by Glen V. Chatelier.
IRANIAN STUDENTS HOST "THE GLORY OF PERSIA" CULTURAL EXHIBITION AT THE HUA MAK CAMPUS

The Iranian Ambassador, H.E. Moshen Pakaein and his wife were guests of honor at the opening of "The Glory of Persia" cultural exhibition hosted by the Iranian students of Assumption University, on February 14, 2007. The exhibition in the lobby of the Assumption Building, Hua Mak campus ran from February 14-16, 2007.

H.E. Moshen Pakaein personally toured Assumption University President, Rev. Brother Bancha Saenghiran to the various exhibits, explaining their cultural and historical significances in minute detail. The historical letters exchanged between the Thai Kings and the Shahs of Iran were poignant in detail, tracing back to 400 years the relations between Thailand and Iran. The exhibits on the Persepolis were also striking. Scenic books on Iran and books on Iranian Poetry absorbed the attention of the President. The exhibits on Iranian tea vessels and cutlery were eye-catching for the turquoise stones and the intricate paintings on them, suggesting an almost similar style to that of the "Thai Bejarong". Before taking leave of the President and other exhibition attendees, the Iranian Ambassador gifted the President of Assumption University with a wholesome Iranian copper pot, with exquisite carvings on it. The President reciprocating the gesture by the Ambassador handed him a Benjarong tea set with the Au Logo set on it very prominently.

While the President promised to place the Iranian Gift in the University Museum, the Ambassador thanked the President for encouraging the Iranian students to engage in useful cultural activities and promised to host another exhibition at the Bang Na campus, sometime very soon.

Reported by Mr. Glen Chatelier
FIRST ORIENTATION: SEMESTER 3/2006

Opening address delivered by Bro. Bancha Saengtharan, f.g., Ph.D. President of Assumption University on 6th January 2007 at Hall of Fame, Hua Mak campus.

Dr. Kittip Phothikittik, Dean, Graduate School of Business, gave a welcome speech on introduction to students on 6th January 2007.

Introduction to speech given by Prof. Dr. Srisakdi Charmonman, Vice President for Information Technology and Dean, Graduate School of Information Technology

Group photo taken in front of “C” Building, Hua Mak campus of MBA, MBA Tourism, MMOD, MIT programmes on 6th January 2007.

The picture shows Ms. Punnisa Punnviroj, ID 4630044, major IBM (International Business Management), GPA 3.8, TOEFL score 240, granted permission to study Kansai Gaidai University for one year by President Dr. Bancha Saengtharan.

BBA students received a reward from Tharero Enterprise Public Company Limited by Mr. Wasan Kiengsiri, managing director on 13th March 2007.
Dr. P. Martin Komolmas, Dr. Kittiphrikitti of the Graduate School of Business were glad to have Dato' Vijay Eswaran Group from Malaysia for joint activities on the Dusit Resort, Pataya on 17-18 March 2007.

Prof. Dr. Srisakdi Charmonman and Dr. Kittiphrikitti were guests of honour for the presentation of the gifts on the 17-18 March 2007 to Mr. Dato' Vijay Eswaran group.

Students participants in the freshmen welcome ceremony, at the "Bai Sri" to live and spend years of happiness and auspiciousness in the present society.

Students join in maintaining their positions in games after the ceremony in which they were given the vote on 17-18 March 2007.

Dr. Kittiphrikitti explains the position in which teachers would be taking up positions to facilitate work in the various assignment on 6th January 2007.

Dr. Kittiphrikitti and staff are full of punch to teach the new semester after they were given the role on 6th January 2007.
THE FOLLOWING IS A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR, CEO, MARQUIS WHO'S WHO.

Dear Pimpong Chandee,

Congratulations on being selected for *Who's Who in the World*, 2007! Your inclusion in this exclusive directory distinguishes you as one of the leading achievers from around the world.

The new 2007 Edition will feature over 57,000 leaders from all fields of endeavor and from 215 countries and territories. Included will be biographies of international political leaders, notable religious and humanitarian figures from developing nations in Africa and the Mid-east, multinational business executives from Europe, scientists and engineers from the Pacific Rim, and many more. This indispensable directory, which will include your complete biography, can be one that you and future generations refer to again and again.

Once again, congratulations on your inclusion in *Who's Who in the World*, and best of luck for your continued success.

Sincerely,

Gene McGovern
CEO, Marquis Who's Who

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**Simba in Action: ABAC Social Innovation in Management and Business Analysis**

ABAC Social Innovation in Management and Business Analysis (SIMBA) is established by the Graduate School of Business, Assumption University, in cooperation with ABAC Poll Research Center on February 14, 2007.

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**The 7th International Conference in Urban Planning and Environment (UPE #7)**

**World Class Cities: Environmental Impacts and Planning Opportunities?**

A. Elfren Bringas Paz from the School of Architecture, Assumption University, participated in the 7th International Conference in Urban Planning (UPE #7) of the International Urban Planning & Environment Association, held at Princess Chulabhorn Research Institute, organized by the Organizing Committee, through the Faculty of Architecture, Kasetsart University, Bangkok, Thailand.

Elfren Bringas Paz presented his paper entitled "Impediments on the Transition of Bangkok as a World Class City". A. Paz limited his scope to leisure-cultural travel and medical tourism. Worldwide, Thailand is best value-for-money in leisure-cultural travel, while medical tourism is a new niche in world-class tourism industry. The city of Bangkok is acclaimed "Why do so many people seek medical services especially to countries foreign to their own?"

A. Paz paper discussed the rational and challenges of medical tourism. In architectural terms, although medical tourism has only recently emerged as a phenomenon worth studying, it has great market potential: medical tourism - is the immigration of people; the movement of large amounts of money; the expansion of health services; and training for more doctors, healthcare givers, and hospitality service providers as well as providing for the safe and comfortable accommodations of those who accompany the patients.

More than 200 papers were submitted. The conference was a great opportunity to introduce the School of Architecture of Assumption University to the international community of Architectural Schools.
Opening Address: ACSA Conference, March 31, 2007, Hall of Fame

Dear organizers, presenters and participants of this, the first Asian Cultural Studies Association annual conference. First & foremost, allow me to welcome foreign participants to Thailand, welcome to AU & to this Conference:

It is my pleasure to deliver the opening address to this conference which is entitled "New Old Worlds: The Changing Faces of Asia". Today, I would like to talk about the themes of this conference by considering the key words in its title: "new", "old", "worlds", "change", "face(s)", and "Asia". And I would like to consider the meaning of these terms in the context of a larger important question that I believe is implicit in the title of this conference. The question is, I think: "What is Asia now? What does it look like?" These are two important questions that we as teachers in universities must understand and answer. If we can do these things then we may teach our students not only about the new ideas in business and science, but the old ideas that have made us culturally who we are today.

As you are already aware, we in Asia are in a rapidly changing environment, and this is true not only for our economies and our societies, but also for our universities. As we in the university work to fulfill our mission of helping our societies develop new and effective responses to these changes, we should remember that we do so as part of a dynamic and fluid process. This process must focus on the ways we develop new perspectives on who we are and what we are doing.

The question of new perspectives and what these perspectives will look like, I believe, is central to the continued success of the university in Asia.

To understand what we should be, we also need to look back at what we have been in the past. We need to see what in that past we can use to help us in the future. To understand where we come from helps us to understand where we now are. We should remember our roots and traditions, the things that make us who we are.

These are important for a number of reasons. Without them, we will be rudderless in the sea of changes that may otherwise sweep us away in the increasingly competitive and complex world in which we live. We cannot simply change our face every time we face a new difficulty or challenge. Nor can we attempt to transform ourselves as others may want us to do ... at least not without asking ourselves whether we are doing so while remaining true to ourselves.

Instead, we must try to understand that the new technologies and sciences that seem to come predominantly from the U.S. and from Europe, come with their own traditions and multiple pasts. Those in the West understand that vibrant past well and can tap into it so as to adapt themselves and grow within those pasts, those old worlds.

However, we in Asia have our own "old worlds" too. This means that for us here, we have to look not at one old world but at two old worlds: the Western and our own Asian one.

In the West, the term "new world" was first coined by the Europeans to refer to the Americas. Shakespeare has his character Miranda says, "Oh brave new World" in The Tempest. The term seemed appropriate then in the early seventeenth century ... the wonder of that new world, the Americas, with its offer of a new start and new opportunities clearly affected the Europeans in their "old world". But then, we must also remember that Shakespeare's new world became Huxley's Brave New World in the nineteen thirties ... not a utopia, but a dystopia, a nightmare where unthinking abuses of technology and de-humanised philosophy run amok to the detriment of the society they were originally designed or meant to help.

Is this change in the meaning of the phrase "brave new world" significant? The OLD meaning of hope is transformed into a new meaning: one of despair. A de-humanized world that has forgotten its traditions and reasons for being should not be the world we teach our students to accept.

For us in Asia, we need to ask are we the new "brave new world" as seen from Europe and America?
Do we see these new forces of modernity as our own versions of a "brave new world" as Shakespeare saw that world ... or as Huxley saw it?

We should also remember that for many, we in Asia are "the new world". When we look around at our cities and our enterprises, we certainly can understand such a perception. A new world of opportunities and hope, of change and development: that is usually how we look at ourselves. The dynamism and productivity that characterize our own enterprise has already transformed our societies in ways unimagined by those who went before us, by our ancestors.

Would they recognize this new world we have built for ourselves in Asia? If we have successfully managed to preserve our traditions and our roots, if we have successfully defined ourselves in our own, specifically Asian terms, then those who went before us very well may recognize us. But if we haven’t so maintained our face...? Then, I suppose, we would be unrecognizable to our ancestors. They would not recognize our faces now.

And, equally importantly: if we have forgotten how to look at our old, past life, then we would not be able to recognize their faces or ourselves in those faces.

Confucius once said "He who by re-animating the Old can gain knowledge of the New is fit to be a teacher" (Analects, II, 11). These words were spoken over 2,500 years ago by a philosopher in Wei, a dukedom in what was not yet China. He seems to have anticipated the themes of this Asian Cultural Studies Association conference by 2,500 years. To make the old worlds new, to re-animate ourselves, to give our past new life: these are the concerns as I understand them of a humanities-based approach to understanding the challenges and opportunities of those studying the world in Asia and who want to understand how we in Asia see things in our world. Without this skill to re-animate our past, we may lack the ability to express who we really are. This mistake could lead us away from the Shakespearean vision of the new world and towards the dystopian vision of European optimists.

I just mentioned Confucius. He is what we now call "Chinese", while many of us in this room are not Chinese. But this need not concern us too much. If we can understand that Confucius’s words still speak to us in the twenty-first century in Thailand, then we have evinced the skill I have already mentioned: we have managed to build a bridge between us and so taken a step along the way to self-mentation of who we are and, more importantly, who we want to be.

This brings me back to the association, Asian Cultural Studies Association (ACSA), which we have launched here at Assumption University. This association is, I believe, the first of its kind in Asia in that this association seeks to bring together academics and others who practice the liberal arts so that they can dialogue about what it means to be in Asia at this exciting time in our world.

Our Asian faces or identities are multi-faceted. To study this quality and to explore what this means to us can best be done in a multi-disciplinary way. The papers at this conference are not from only one field. They come from teachers, philologists, business writers, film-studies students, architects, sociologists etc. The task as I see it, is to put these many different faces together in a multi-cultural, multi-disciplinary dialogue so that we can see ourselves from many different angles and through many different eyes. By understanding how the Thais, Chinese, Pakistanis, Indians, Singaporeans, Japanese, Koreans, Europeans, and other westerners who are presenting papers at this conference see Asia and its faces, we may come to see ourselves in a "New" way while also insisting on the validity of our own "Old" faces and ways.

By putting these two faces together, we are simultaneously doing something that seems to be characteristic of Asian cultures in general. That is, we are insisting on an understanding of our traditions and cultures in their own terms; we are seeing that our old or past worlds are still with us. They are alive and well. The vibrancy with which these faces and worlds are articulated in conferences and associations such as the
ones we are welcoming here today are strong indicators of the good health of our universities and academies here in Asia. This vibrancy is also evidenced, I might add in passing, by the fact that we at Assumption University are also launching today a new journal: the Asian Journal of Literature, Culture and Society. This journal too may become a "new face" in Asia: one that gives voice to the different ways of seeing Asia and its many varied pasts as somehow similar while recognizing the powerful differences or varieties of those pasts and traditions.

If we are to manage how we change ourselves and how we are changed by others, we need to understand how we have changed and been changed in the past and BY that past. That is why conferences, associations and journals such as those I have just been mentioning are important.

Over the past few decades, with the explosion of new ideas and forces of technology and science, we in Asia may have advanced in many spectacular ways. This is testimony to the power of science and the skills of those in Asia to adopt, adapt and change those forces to our own advantage. This is the face of Asia seen by the rest of the world.

But there is another face: the one of the traditional Asia that we have grown up with and which has made us who we are. This "Old" face of Asia has not as yet received the emphasis it deserves by us ... at least not when we compare our emphasis of it with the emphasis we have placed on the more scientific aspects of our cultures and societies. Yet, if we are to shape all of these new economic and scientific forces to address the issues that are important to us here in Asia, we should try to do so in our own way.

What this "new" way may be has yet to be determined. One may suggest that if it is to be characteristically Asian then it will have a poly-synchronous aspect. What this means is that our way of defining our faces, our pasts and our new worlds will be more than one thing at the same time. In other words: there is more than one face to Asia, just as there is more than one Asian face. Against the stereotypes that we may sometimes fall into, we should always try to emphasize the variety of experience and cultures that together comprise Asia. This is the task of the humanities which hopefully have some important things to contribute to the development of the new old faces of Asia along side the images of that world that business, science and technology have so far given us.

The one thing that such a humanities-based approach offers that is not offered by the sciences is a sense of the past and how our cultures have important things to say to us as we shape our modern world here in Asia. This cultural face of Asia when seen together with the technological face of Asia may be put together so as to express the qualities of Asian learning, thinking and experience in a new holistic way. The two faces need to be complementary, not necessarily antagonistic.

The old and the new, the past and the present, Shakespeare/Confucius and Huxley, Confucius and technology, Thailand and China, Japan and India, science and the humanities: all of these permutations are Western and Asian, similar and different.

Our task as academics working in Asia is to put all of these things together. By doing this we may well define who we are and what we have to say that makes us specifically Asian in this global village. This putting together of things that up to now have all too often been forgotten or even ignored may very well help us to understand better who we really are and what we have to say to each other both here in Asia and in the West. This new dialogue between cultures in Asia about what it means to be culturally aware of Asia in Asia is yet another aspect of the role of the University as a source not only of traditional knowledge and identity but also of new knowledge and new identities. We must make our own images of ourselves by giving space to those who have other ways of studying themselves and the world.

There is more than one way to do these things. And it is my hope that through conferences such as this and through associations such as the Asian Cultural Studies Association, new opportunities are created for under-
standing and explaining ourselves to each other and to the rest of the world.

It is through such activities as you are about to embark on here today that we may "re-animate the Old" and so gain new knowledge of the past as well as of the new worlds we have developed in modern Asia.

At this point, I would like to close my remarks by returning to where I began. Our new and old faces must be put together so that we can see ourselves in our complexity and in multi-sensory, multi-disciplinary ways. We must be open to other faces and cultures. And these cultures should be Asian as well as Western.

If we can do this, then perhaps we will be able to teach our students about what it means to be Asian in this "brave new world" we are making in our own image. We can re-animate the past and change our present by expressing these different qualities of our own societies. This is what fits us to be good teachers.

But to say this is not to say something necessarily "new". It has been part of our cultural knowledge for thousands of years. What is new is the way we express this knowledge in our current environments in our universities and societies. Our universities must have at least two faces: the old and the new: the cultural and the technological: the scientific and the humanistic faces of the university as a force for change AND traditions.

To "re-animate" our old worlds through our arts and cultures will make us better understand what we are doing with our new technologies and sciences. We preserve our past by reinvigorating it, re-interpreting it in light of who we are now. In this way, we can be better teachers of both the new and the old.

Honored Guests, Ladies & Gentlemen:

Welcome to Assumption University, where the East and West meet. And in particular, welcome to the first Asian Cultural Studies Association (ACSA) Annual Conference (2007). Wish you every success in this Conference.

May God bless you all and thanking you for listening.
Most of Japanese consumers are prefer simple modern furniture style and not much change in lifestyle and wooden furniture is a core of Japanese's furniture style. Due to the limited area of house in Japan, so the consumers are prefer furniture with compact size, high utility, good quality, and unique in design. The most preferable of wood furniture the kind of furniture that made of Para wood. Trend of demand on high price furniture with high utility and safety, low price with unique style are increasing, while the demand of medium price furniture without uniqueness is decreasing. The demand is depend on the season, usually during February and April; demand for office furniture of government and school are high. Because it the ending annual budget, and April is the start of school semester.

Government and large private sector use the bidding mechanic considering in production capacity and financial statement to determine the supplier for the large quantity purchase.

And the criteria to make a decision for the companies only meet the JIS standard (Japanese Industry Standard) and to survive the competition, Japanese manufacturer have moved their factory, OEM (original equipment manufacturer) production to base in Asian country, especially China. And now consumers purchase furniture according to their lifestyle without consideration of brand and country of origins. The leader of Specialty shop and wholesaler have agreed to do business together with manufacturing in other country and focus in product development together to strengthen their competitiveness.

It is a good opportunity to export furniture to Japan since Japanese government encourage this business by exempt import duty for any kind of furniture except the Leather-covered furniture, as it is 3.8%-4.3%.

Key to success to penetrate Japanese market is emphasized on quality and defective products, because to export furniture to Japan market required consistency of quality control. Thai exporter also needs to consider is design development of furniture to have unique character, and quality demanded by Japan market with appropriate size the priority of focus should be in quality, safety and utility respectively.

Thai has best quality of Para wood that is the good material to make high quality furniture therefore we need to block the export of wood to be used as same raw material in furniture production in competitive country by setting up tax wall especially to China, Indonesia and Philippines.

Moreover, Thai furniture should have communicated outstanding traditional design to export market. Government should support in term of international agency to provide more information of Thai manufacturing source to the market such as create useful directory for international trade, and arrange more Thai top quality furniture trade fare to Japanese importer.

Other than competitive advantage, joint venture also benefit Thai manufacturer in terms of lower investment in sales promotion because Japanese existing resource can be used such as showroom, distribution channel and sales person. With this strategy, Thai manufacturer also don't need to concern about marketing and promotion since they are more experienced about the market.

Japanese imported furniture market is very attractive considering the upward trend of the market and country economy, also the support of Japanese government in this business by import tax exception of all kind of furniture except only Leather-covered furniture. The opportunity of Thai furniture manufacturer and exporter is still wide open since unique Thai style furniture is already well known and demanded by Japanese. And the great demand of Thai style furniture from Japanese is still exist and waiting to be fulfilled.

Reported by Dr. Chittipa

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**Quote.**

If art is to nourish the roots of our culture, society must set the artist free to follow his vision wherever it takes him.

We must never forget that art is not a form of propaganda, it is a form of truth.

John Fitzgerald Kennedy
VISITORS AT THE BANG NA CAMPUS OF UNIVERSITY

H.E. Dr. Wichit Sri-Sarn, the Minister of Education, the Royal Thai Government visiting Dr. Bancha Saenghiran, the President of the University on April 1, 2007.

H.E. Dr. Wichit Sri-Sarn, the Minister of Education and his team mates arriving at Dr. Bancha Saenghiran's Office on April 1, 2007.

The visit by Dr. Sombat Thanyathamson, President of NIDA, and a team of administrators met by Dr. Bancha Saenghiran, President of the University on March 30, 2007.

H.E. Mr. Ioannis Papadopoulos, the Ambassador of Greece to Thailand, seen exchanging ideas with the President, Rev. Bro. Bancha Saenghiran on his official visit to the University on March 15, 2007.

H.E. Dr. Radu Gabriel Mateescu, the Ambassador of Romania to Thailand to meet the President Dr. Bancha Saenghiran, the President of the University on February 6, 2007.

Professor Dr. Vladimir Babac, University of Paula Josefa Salafka V. Kosiciach Slovakia on meeting the President Dr. Bancha Saenghiran on March 1, 2007.