

Editorial

I am pleased to present to you the second volume of *Rig Tshoel – Research Journal of the Royal Thimphu College*, which is an open-access, peer-reviewed journal that aligns with a key mission of Royal Thimphu College, that is: ‘to be a crucible of new ideas and knowledge that serves to enrich people’s lives and enhances the welfare of society.’ I am also pleased to introduce to you the Rig Tshoel editorial board that was constituted following the publication of the inaugural issue in 2018, and which consists of Leishipem Khamrang, Karma Lhaden, Priyali Ghosh and Sonam Tobgay who serves as the Dzongkha editor.

This issue features eight articles and two book reviews. The articles published here were researched and written by one or multiple members of the RTC community, and the themes and theories they explore reflect the wide-ranging interest and expertise of different RTC departments and existing research projects. While the inaugural issue only featured articles written in English, this issue also contains two articles written in Dzongkha and which were edited by Sonam Tobgay. Chapter 3 is titled རྒྱལ་ཆེན་ལེན་གྱི་ལོ་མོ། and is written by Tshoki Dorji, while chapter 6 is titled ལྷོ་མ་གནས་ལྗོངས་ལ་འབྲེག་གི་ཆགས་རབས། and is authored by Sonam Tobgay.

This issue, however, opens with an article titled ‘Banking infrastructure in Bhutan: An assessment of commercial bank branches.’ In this contribution, Roderick Wijunamai offers an examination of the evolution of the banking system in Bhutan, particularly with regards to its infrastructure and penetration across Dzongkhags. The second article is titled ‘Ecotourism and social cohesion: Contrasting Phobjikha and Laya Experiences’ and is written by a research team led by Jesse Montes. Through field research the impact of ecotourism on social cohesion was assessed in two popular tourist destinations in the country, and which revealed strikingly diverging experiences between these two places. The fourth article is by Rajitha Sanaka, is titled ‘The diversified form of manual scavenging and how it perpetuates the caste system’, and takes us to India where the author shows how manual scavenging, an occupation associated with a traditionally lowly ranked caste, continues to persist despite it being formally abolished, albeit so in different forms.

Next we have an article written by Tandin Pelden and Dolma Choden Roder which is titled: “‘Woah, that’s too personal’”: the Reported behaviour, knowledge, perspective

and sources of reproductive health education of RTC students.” This article was originally conceived as an undergraduate research project and appears here in revised and abridged form. Among other findings, the authors show how there exists a significant gap between students’ knowledge of safe sex practices on the one hand, and their self-reported actual behaviour on the other hand. Article seven is by Tshewang Dorji and is titled: “Environmental humanities in the Anthropocene: A new paradigm” and discusses the environmental humanities as a new way of seeing, understanding, and imagining the relationship between us humans and the environment that surrounds us. The final article of this volume is by Tenzing Choden and is titled: ‘Influence of family dynamics on the prevalence of substance abuse among emerging adults in Bhutan.’ Through interviews with those afflicted with addiction the author shows how varying family dynamics may influence substance use and abuse amongst Bhutanese youth.

This volume ends with two book reviews. The first is by Pema Yangchen and reviews *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind* by the acclaimed author Yuval Noah Harari. The second review is by Aakanksha Singh and is a review of Kunzang Choden’s *The Circle of Karma*.

Jelle J.P. Wouters
Editor