

**ABSTRACT**

The Trinidad and Tobago Oil Industry : A Case Study of  
TRINTOC, A Politicised Machine Bureaucracy

Heather Elizabeth Ricketts

This thesis is a case study of the Trinidad and Tobago Oil Company (TRINTOC), a state-owned enterprise, the result of a merger between a TEXACO branch plant, TEXACO Trinidad Incorporated (TEXTRIN), and a former branch plant of the transnational SHELL which was nationalised in 1974, and renamed the Trinidad and Tobago Oil Company (TRINTOC, Point Fortin). The structure and culture of the company are examined and evaluated in relation to the company's mission statement and within the broader context of current issues in organisational theory.

The theoretical basis of the study is the argument that modern day organisational theory is increasingly being affected by Japanese practice. This practice is a synthesis of scientific management, human relations theory, and industrial engineering and is having a profound effect on modern organisations. The structure, culture and merger problems of TRINTOC are analysed/evaluated from this point of view.

The argument is that TRINTOC 1985 is a politicised machine bureaucracy. It was nationalised by the government as a result of political pressure from below to save jobs and without any careful examination of the structure. The current structure is simply a superimposition of two merged structures, one positioned on top of the other.

The thesis also examines the cultural problems which have arisen as a direct result of the merger, pointing out the effects of the merger on them, and the reactions of the workforce. The culture is fragmented, since two cultures exist side by side in the same organisation. What is more, national ethnic divisions impact on the organisation and make it politically difficult to restructure.

The conclusion makes some recommendations for improvements, suggesting refocusing of operations on refining, and the privatisation by leasing, of the remainder of the operations. It steers clear of any suggestions to further merge the operations of TRINTOC with any other oil company, and also any suggestion of divesting the enterprise to foreign ownership and control. A call is also made for a re-examination by TRINTOC of its internal human relations and human resources problems in light of the important issues and questions raised by the theoretical chapter.