

## FOREWORD

The title of Dr. Ioan Voicu's article about relations between Asian and European countries speaks of a new partnership. This sets the major theme for this issue, relations between various groups and their difficulties. Such interrelationships are inevitable in the modern world precisely and as such essential. We are glad that this issue of the ABAC Journal can provide a focus on these issues. Dr. Voicu's article itself considers the Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM) and its various programs. While not a formal institution, Dr. Voicu notes that the nations represented by this partnership represents more than half of the world's population and economy and that its development is an important development for both regions. The developments reported by this article indicate the importance and continual expansion of the process of globalization.

As globalization proceeds, cultural interactions become more common and issues of the relationship between cultural conceptions of the world and humanity also become more important. Dr. David Tin Win considers the relationships that exist between scientific and Buddhist conceptions of human sensory devices for gaining information about the world. The relationship between traditional views and the results of science has many implications and this article helps us consider these implications.

As the world becomes more mobile, the role of minorities becomes important in nations throughout the world. The status, integration, and adaptation of such minorities thus become very important. Because of its history as a nation of immigrants, the United States plays an important role as a laboratory for such issues. Dr. Vikanda Pornsakulvanich's article on television portrayals of ethnic minorities provides an important analysis of the role of the media in developing and maintaining group identity. Given the importance of television throughout the world, this is an important topic for all countries.

Variety is the spice of life so we have included one article that is set a bit apart from the main theme of intergroup relations. Like television, mobile phones have become an important part of modern life and thus an important issue of scholarly investigation. Mohammad Muzahid Akbar considers an important economic variable in mobile phone services: whether a customer pays for the service before or after using it and concludes that in subscription plans an ongoing customer relationship plays an important role.

To conclude, we too very much value our ongoing relationship with our readers and promise them that the next issue will have another fascinating group of articles.

Executive Editor  
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