Editor’s Message

We hope readers are enjoying the holiday season and may 2018 be a prosperous and happy year for all! This issue of EAA includes the special section “Demographics, Social Policy, and Asia (Part I)” as well as an ample amount of non-thematic articles, essays, and reviews. Most readers who have Asian studies backgrounds are aware that Wm. Theodore de Bary, an internationally famous scholar, former President of AAS, and a dedicated and effective proponent of integrating the study of Asia into survey-level courses intended for non-specialists, died last summer. Although it was too late to include a fitting tribute in our fall issue to his life and work on behalf of Asia-related pedagogy, we’ve taken the unprecedented step of reprinting an article by Professor de Bary that was previously published in the inaugural issue of EAA entitled “Asia in the Core Curriculum.” My hope is that every EAA subscriber will read the article. Professor de Bary’s essay is in no way dated and is perhaps even more relevant today than when it was originally published in 1996.

Han Li, in our second non-thematic related feature, “Another World Lies Beyond: Three Chinese Gardens in the US” introduces readers through both prose and images to three impressive gardens and, as important, those who are unfamiliar with what to see and ponder will learn basic philosophical and symbolic concepts embodied in many Chinese gardens.

Authors of the nine demography-related feature articles and teaching resources essays in this issue and its online supplements clearly depict some of the thorniest demographic challenges facing various Asian nations, and in several cases provide readers practical teaching suggestions. Economist Thomas Feldhoff in “Child Poverty in a Rich Country: Measuring and Influencing Policies in Contemporary Japan” describes and discusses a problem in Japan that has received too little attention outside the archipelago. National security in Japan for obvious reasons is more of a high profile issue than a decade ago and former Osaka University Professor and US Defense Department employee Robert D. Eldridge in “Japan’s Changing Demographics and the Impact on Its Military” discusses the difficulty filling the ranks with quality personnel and introduces possible choices for policymakers. Paige Tan in “Indonesia Doesn’t Want to Be Number Three” helps readers learn more about Indonesia in general through addressing the positive and negative ramifications of current national demographic trends. Chris Hudson in “Singapore: Immigration and Changing Public Policies” examines how a successful nation with low birth rates faces both increased opportunities and escalating social tensions due to government policies regarding recent newcomers. Prajakta Gupte in “’The Emergency’ and the Politics of Mass Sterilization” tells the story of the effects in India of one of the most extensive sterilization campaigns of the twentieth century.

Phillip O’Brien’s and Byron Haast’s “Japan’s Declining Population: Beyond the Textbook” and Jayson’s Evaniuck’s “Aging Populations: A Comparison between Japan and Germany” include classroom activities and assignments that should be applicable to a wide range of high school and college-level survey...
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