

Editor's Preface

It is our great pleasure to deliver to our readers the sixth volume of the Institute's annual journal, the *Journal of the Asia-Japan Research Institute of Ritsumeikan University*.

This journal is the flagship of our Institute's publications and has been esteemed by our contributors and readers as such since its inception six years ago. It is the hub of the AJI's three academic periodicals: the Journal, the Bulletin, and the Annual Review. At the same time, we also publish the AJI Books series and the Ritsumeikan University Asia-Japan Research Series, while the AJI Journal serves as the basis for all these publications.

It goes without saying that all research institutions publish in order to disseminate new scientific findings. In doing so, it is also their intention to promote the names of the researchers who bring such valuable scientific findings. The old adage about a scientist's survival, "Publish, or perish," is still valid in today's academic world, although the forms and means of "publishing" have been drastically transformed and expanded in recent decades, thanks to the development of information and communication technologies (ICT).

The viability of our scientific lives also depends on the current vocational and socio-economic conditions since we are all humans first and foremost. In such contexts, the publication and dissemination of scientific findings in strictly peer-reviewed journals, including our own, is essential for both the institutions recruiting scientists and the scientists to be recruited.

This academic year, a substantial portion of the postdoctoral researchers in and around our Institute moved out to start a new life in tenured positions in various research and educational establishments. It goes without saying that their articles published in our Journal have been part of their scientific assets in the recruitment process. However, we would like to draw your attention to an important policy in our Institute vis-a-vis next-generation researchers. That is the emphasis we put on the broader perspectives they should attain in their postdoctoral research. During the doctoral programs, they are told to dig deep into their fields and topics to bring something unique and of high scientific value.

In our postdoctoral schemes, we encourage postdoctoral researchers to situate their unique findings in broader social contexts so that specialists in other fields and non-specialists can appreciate the value of their scientific endeavors. This policy is also implicitly indicated in our Journal's disciplinary and interdisciplinary orientations.

As we congratulate and bid farewell to our present generation of researchers, we also feel a sense of pride, as this reconfirms that our orientations and policies for fostering next-generation researchers are on the right track.

We hope that this volume embodies our aspirations to balance scientific depth and social width as

well as disciplinary rigidity and flexible scientific communication. We are very grateful to all those who contributed to our activities and to bringing out this volume by reviewing, advising, and encouraging us. Your sincere commitment and kind support make all of our endeavors possible.

As always, we depend on your continued support and encouragement for the coming volume. We especially appreciate the submission of your papers as research articles. As for the book review section, we are proud of our policy of publishing book reviews that introduce research works and primary sources in Asian and Japanese languages in fields related to Asia-Japan Research, since the vast majority of materials in these languages are not currently available in English. We will fervently welcome your submission of book reviews for this purpose.

In conclusion, we would like to express to all researchers, to senior members of our scientific communities and to next-generation researchers, that we are sincerely looking forward to receiving your prospective contributions.

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Prof. Yasushi Kosugi
Director of the Asia-Japan Research Institute
and Chair of the Editorial Board