

## Editor's Preface

We are happy to release Vol. 6 of *Asia-Japan Research Academic Bulletin* as our online academic periodical in English. The purpose is to disseminate research findings on Asia, Japan, and Asia-Japan relations globally and to report on research activities in these areas. While the other academic periodical of ours, the *Journal of the Asia-Japan Research Institute of Ritsumeikan University*, is published once a year both online and in print, this Bulletin is published online throughout the year. We accept our contributors' papers whenever they are submitted and publish each one individually as soon as its review is complete. If you are engaged in disciplinary, multidisciplinary, or interdisciplinary work on Asia and Japan, we will welcome your contribution whenever you have finished your writing.

Nowadays, we are entering a new stage of the AI Revolution across many domains of our societies, and the academic world is no exception. Rather, those in research and education are feeling a strong, direct influence from developments in AI, since it is related to knowledge generation. We are currently examining how to handle papers that use AI-assisted tools during writing. Grammatical corrections for English sentences, for example, are apparently permissible. However, if the construction of the logic of the content is assisted by AI, can it be accepted as the author's own original work? The editors of academic journals worldwide are facing challenging questions as AI-assisted services continue to expand their scope.

Meanwhile, the ultimate question of "if and when AI goes beyond human capabilities" is of concern to some of our colleagues. Please permit me to state a personal view on this point. Although I am not in computer science or any related fields, I am optimistic (Please do not hesitate to give me your feedback if I sound too optimistic). It seems clear that AI's magnificent performance depends on its ability to process "big data" beyond human limitations. In other words, AI can process vast amounts of information gathered online and synthesize it. So far, AI has not invented or created original knowledge. Its strength lies in its ability to amass vast amounts of data on the known, and in the incredible speed with which this can be processed.

Scientists in any field, by definition, ought to generate new knowledge. AI may quickly grasp the latest expertise and utilize it immediately. Still, it is our task to develop truly original knowledge from the unknown. Before AI, we were constantly asked whether our "findings" were truly uncovering the unknown. This has not changed at all. Though the AI revolution may accelerate our competition over time, our basic scientific task will remain the same for a long time.

We will continue to observe and review technological innovations in these fields and strive to take the most effective action to support scientific development. We will, through our Bulletin, continue our efforts to support the delivery of scientific findings and original thoughts by our contributors. Your continued encouragement and support for our endeavors will always be greatly appreciated.

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