

## **From the Dean of the Faculty**

When the College of International Relations opened in April 1988, it started to publish a scholarly journal titled 『立命館国際研究』 (*The Ritsumeikan Journal of International Studies, RJIS*) to be devoted to multi-disciplinary research in global issues. The journal was published four times a year including one “special edition” written in languages other than Japanese. Despite many outstanding contributions, the “special edition” of RJIS discontinued in 1991 after which papers and articles written in various languages were included in the main volume. However, it was felt that the language barrier was insurmountable and that a new research site for international studies written in a common language was needed so that we can dispatch the result of our research beyond Japan. This resolution has led us to start publishing a new journal which includes only articles written in English this time. The choice of English as the language of publication was informed by a growing recognition that English is rapidly becoming a global language as indicated by the various contributions to this volume by Chinese, Singaporean as well as Japanese and Western scholars.

Fifteen years ago in the “statement of purpose of the journal” of the first volume of RJIS, the late Professor Hiroharu Seki, who was the first dean of this faculty, stated as follows:

“The area of a study of international relations is still unfolding and has not matured yet and even the scope of the discipline and core principle is subject to debate and thus ambiguous, vague and unclear. [...] Can the advance of science and technology continue without due consideration given to other socio-cultural aspects of the world? Or should globalization be allowed to be driven forward solely by economical incentives? It is time for us to give serious thought to the global issues the world is facing now and [...] we need to come up with a totally new paradigm to resolve them. The efforts of building a computer network connecting all places of the world from Kyoto, an ancient capital of Japan, is welcomed. But again it requires a serious discussion of the possibility to incorporate the view of humane and social sciences and reconstruct and reinterpret the global information network.”

In spite of the endeavor made since then by each faculty member to meet the challenge of these problems, professor Seki's opinion still holds true today. From the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to 21<sup>st</sup> century, the world has been facing unprecedentedly difficult problems. Among them are the advance of globalization,

the emergence of complex actors on a stage of world politics, environmental problems, and issues concerning inter-state and cross-cultural conflict and coexistence. Furthermore, both the rapid development and widespread use of information technology over the last decade has deepened and accelerated processes of globalization.

In order to contribute to a solution to those complex problems not only should an effort be made in each field of study to develop, modify or refine the prevailing theories, but also more work should be done to discover totally new paradigms in order for the discipline to progress. The new problems now facing the world seem to be multi-layered and, although apparently unrelated, interconnected. This naturally leads to the necessity of establishing an interdisciplinary field of study. It would be our great pleasure if this new journal can provide a forum for stimulating discussion as to how this can be achieved.

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