

A Word from the Editor

One of the critical missions of the Institute for Japanese Studies (IJS) at Seoul National University is to globalize the results of Japan-related research produced in Korea. How to expose this excellent research to a global academic community has been a decade-long challenge for the IJS, which commemorated the 10th anniversary of its establishment in 2014. In terms of the number of researchers engaged in Japanese studies, Korea is second to none in the world. According to a survey of the status of Japanese studies conducted by the Japan Foundation and the Sejong Institute in 2012, more than 1,077 PhDs are currently working on Japan in various educational and research institutions in Korea. However, as most of them publish their articles and books in Korean, the global academic community involved in Japanese studies had a hard time reaching out to the quality works produced by the Japan specialists in Korea.

After consulting a number of advisors and academics in Korea, I, as Director of the IJS, decided to publish a journal in English, which we named *The Seoul Journal of Japanese Studies* (*SJJS*). Its essential aim is to introduce Japan-related research produced in Korea to the global community through the medium of English. It is my wish at this stage to expose as many original articles as possible to scholars and policymakers interested in Japanese society, regardless of their nationalities and geographic locations. Most of the works appearing in this first volume of the *SJJS* have already been published in Korea in recent years. The article selection committee at the IJS went through a meticulous process of picking multiple articles in different academic disciplines and asked the editorial board members of the journal to select the best works to be translated into English. In order to reflect the distinct research directions of the IJS, we have also included two special articles published by the IJS members.

Starting from this first volume, the IJS aims to publish the *SJJS* annually to serve the purpose of exposing original research on Japan by Korean scholars to the global research community. It may not be an exaggeration to say that the works introduced in this journal reflect unique and distinctive perspectives developed in Korean academia, though many of the authors have studied in Japan and the United States, as well as in Korea. Eventually, as the journal

enriches its mission, it can serve as a platform for articles written in English, either by Korean scholars or by any researchers in the regional and global academic community. However, for the time being, the *SJJS* will stick to the modest policy of introducing translated works, which were originally written in Korean, to those people who want to gain more knowledge and wisdom about Japan.

It took much longer than expected to complete the translations to a level that can be accepted by international standards. Dr. Jung Ji Hee, associate editor of the *SJJS*, devoted a countless amount of time to make this venture successful. I would like to express special thanks to her, more than anybody else, for her devotion, enthusiasm, and loyalty. Without her efforts, this journal could never have been published. Also, I cannot forget to recognize the immense contributions made by Ben Forney and Sohn Sukeui, editorial staff of the journal. Sukeui did much work to make the draft translation ready for further review, and Ben, who understood the aims of the journal, willingly devoted his time for proofreading the articles. I cannot thank all three editorial team members enough for making this first venture meaningful and successful. All of the IJS members contributed, in one form or another, to realizing the dream of publishing an English journal at the IJS. I appreciate them all.

The IJS will continue to make utmost efforts in the future to become a leading academic institution in the field of Japanese studies not only in Korea, but also in the world. The first volume of the *SJJS* will be marked as the first stepping stone toward that ambitious goal.

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