

Editor's Note

The *Seoul Journal of Japanese Studies* has marked an unusual milestone in global Japanese studies by introducing the fruits of related Korean research to international academia. When the *Journal* was founded, there were some expressions of doubt as to whether it could make a unique and valuable contribution to discourse in its field and the associated body of scholarly research. Now, the *Journal* has established itself as a source of insight that appeals to Japan-watchers all over the world. It is my pleasure to receive positive feedback on the *Journal* from Japan specialists around the globe.

This volume presents a special topic, “the return of Japonism.” This section covers unique Japanese phenomena in contemporary society, including smallness in Japanese houses, the revival of the Ukiyoe artistic style, and the popularization of art history. It presents a view that Japonism is back on the contemporary scene, offering a new sense and experience of Japan.

This volume also includes a range of topics that conventional Japan-related journals rarely present. The issue of “comfort women” draws attention from a diversity of angles; an article on the topic is dealt with from the perspective of the politics of memory. The issue of Korean spies mobilized by Japanese military police was all but taboo, but we uncover their clandestine activities. Representations of ethnicity are not rare, but the handling of the issue from the perspective of US Cultural Cold War diplomacy represents a new avenue of inquiry. Looking at fertility surveys in the 1940s and 1950s is also a rare undertaking. Wage system reform in Japan is often discussed, but the analysis presented here traces the development of the system from a seniority-based arrangement to a performance-based one. All of the articles within this edition of the *Journal* deserve special attention, and the *Seoul Journal of Japanese Studies* is proud to introduce them to the global community of scholars who nurture an interest in Japan.

On this occasion, I would like to express my special thanks to Mr. LEE Yeon Hyeon, chief director of the Hakbong Scholarship Foundation, who graciously made a financial contribution to the *Seoul Journal of Japanese Studies* this year.

His contribution made it possible to improve the translation of our Korean-language articles into English. Thanks to his generous donation, the *Journal* was able to take advantage of the services of a native-English speaking editor to review all of the translated articles. I firmly believe that the *Journal* will become a cutting-edge addition to the field with the help of the Hakbong Scholarship Foundation and the Japan Foundation.

With excitement and anticipation of an even brighter future, I sincerely hope that all our readers continue to enjoy the special contribution and unique features of the *Seoul Journal of Japanese Studies*.

PARK Cheol Hee

Editor-in-Chief,
Seoul Journal of Japanese Studies