
Editorial

The First Year of *UrbanScope*

UrbanScope is an online, open-access journal that constitutes a “strategic” front for the Urban-Culture Research Center (UCRC) of the Graduate School of Literature and Human Sciences at Osaka City University (OCU). By “strategic” we mean that this journal has a clear objective to internationally promote research on urban culture and related subjects at UCRC using Internet technologies and the international academic networks UCRC has constructed. Unlike international commercial journals, the journal seeks for alternative ways to circulate itself internationally and non-commercially.

It has been almost one year since the inaugural issue of the journal was published in June 2010. As soon as it was published, we posted job advertisements on the Internet to recruit Japanese-to-English translators for future issues. The first peak of online access to the journal came immediately after the postings, meaning that many freelance translators visited our website. After conducting translation trials for applicants, we successfully recruited two translators, one of whom has also supported the overall editing of the journal. With these additions and further clerical support from the UCRC office, the editorial capability of the journal has significantly improved over the last year.

One of the advantages of an online journal is that it enables continuous analysis of access data. As of March 2011, the first issue of the journal had been accessed by more than 500 viewers more than 900 times; each translation article was downloaded (or at least clicked) more than 200 times. Out of more than 900 hits, approximately 90% were from Japan, followed by the U.S., the U.K., Thailand, Australia, Germany, and nineteen other countries around the world. Such analyses give hints as to how to promote the journal and how to improve its accessibility. The next step for international promotion should be the establishment of effective mutual web links with universities and academic institutes outside Japan

For the second issue of the journal, we translated into English one selected Japanese papers as we did last year. We also called for contributions mainly from graduate students and junior researchers at OCU. After international peer reviews for three submitted papers, we finally accepted one research note by a graduate student. We have also strongly recommended the authors of the rejected papers to resubmit their papers for the next issue. The Graduate School of Literature and Human Sciences at OCU has programs to support English academic writing, and we hope that authors and potential contributors will use these programs to contribute their papers to the journal in the future. We are aiming to help them grow into professional scholars with the abilities necessary for international publication.

For the coming year, we will continue to translate selected Japanese papers mainly on Japanese history and literature and call for contributions fitting the research scope of the journal: cutting-edge urban studies with international values, theoretical and applied studies on problems in globalizing cities, interdisciplinary area studies on Asian cultures and creativity, and other related subjects. We would also like to extend the call for contributions to the Graduate School’s and UCRC’s partner universities and institutes such as Chulalongkorn University in Thailand, Gadjah Mada University in Indonesia, and the University of Illinois in the U.S. to deepen our academic partnership. Hopefully, the journal will soon become truly international both in its nature and circulation.

Finally we would like to express our sincere gratitude to our contributors, translators, peer reviewers, and readers for their continuing support for and interest in *UrbanScope*.

Takashi Yamazaki
Editor-in-Chief, *UrbanScope*