

## On the Release of Our Founding Issue

"Ars Vivendi - Forms of human survival", a global COE program began at Ritsumeikan University in 2007 and was chosen to receive funding from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Technology. This funding will end in 2011, however with the support of our university we intend to continue our activities at the "Research Center for Ars Vivendi". (To find out more about these activities please see our website. Updates and information can also be found in our English and Korean language email newsletters).

We are publishing this journal with the aim of disseminating our research findings, mainly in English. We have been planning to release this sort of publication for some time, but various questions, including what form it should take, took longer than expected to resolve. Having decided on an irregularly published online journal, we begin by releasing this first issue as a trial version. The task of gathering content for publication must now begin, but we have no shortage of things we would like to communicate and we are deeply committed to realizing this goal.

Up to now we have taken advantage of research conducted by people all over the world while neglecting disseminating of our own work. There are several reasons for this, one of which is that, many of our writings assume an understanding of the Japanese domestic context, so that even when translated into another language their meaning remains difficult to grasp. Furthermore, there exists in Japan a fixed "market" and we have been absorbed by writing for this Japanese audience and it has not been possible for each to individually undertake on his or her own the work required to adapt our writings into a form suitable for foreign readers. As this is not a difficulty that can be resolved by relying on the efforts of individuals working on their own, we decided to address this problem by undertaking this project as an organization, seeking the assistance of researchers both in Japan and overseas.

Nonetheless some difficulties remain. For instance, within this society there are ways of thinking and feeling that fundamentally differ from the ideas found in (mainstream) bioethics, and, to go a step further, from what lies at the root of modern/Western thought (I say this while acknowledging the enormous diversity this tradition contains). There are assertions that people make which arise from these differences, and there is academic work that incorporates them. To communicate these ideas well and to allow them to be understood may not be easy, but it is indeed because of this that I feel our attempts at going forward are so important. We intend to sustain and develop to the greatest extent these efforts that have only begun and look forward to your interest and cooperation.

Shinya TATEIWA, Editor