

Preface

We hope this third issue of *Inter Faculty* will reflect the very considerable efforts made to take transdisciplinary research even further than in the past few years, for we are more convinced than ever that this is the way forward for the scientific community.

We had just finished the previous issue when the triple catastrophe of March 2011 struck. A major earthquake and tsunami followed by a nuclear power plant explosion left our would-be specialists powerless and incapable of action. Over the months the events of those terrible days have become clear, the specialists called in, though numerous and highly qualified, were from a single field of expertise with a single restricted perspective of the unfolding situation. With hindsight, it is obvious that in the face of such an enormous disaster they would have been powerless to find solutions or take effective decisions as this would have required specialists from across the spectrum of the sciences, not only from nuclear physics but also from psychology, archaeology, architecture, risk and crisis management and so many more, and all with a determined will to work together towards resolving the situation. This is the lesson to be learnt from this terrible event. Thus, in our small way, we would again like to emphasize the vital importance of a transdisciplinary approach to research.

We are in a world of conflict which is in need of dialogue, of understanding and of solidarity. We are in a world of confrontation of means of expression, of communication and of representation. For a vision of tomorrow's world we need to reflect on the world of today. In the scholarly article section of this issue the authors address the complexities of religion (Tinka Delakorda), reconsider archaeological resource (Takamune Kawashima), discuss identities of nation and language (Nami Odagiri) and question educational methods and approaches (Craig Smith). As ever, we would welcome your comments on the present research or related themes for posting under the Comments and Discussion section of this journal.

Alongside transdisciplinary research we also strongly believe in the importance of creating and developing networks for academic co-operation. Such networking is indispensable for our scientific community. Therefore, as from this issue, *Inter Faculty* will also be presenting research from a new educational project, the Global Negotiation Program.

This programme was established in 2011 in collaboration with the three Graduate Schools of Human and Social Sciences, Business Sciences and Comprehensive Human Sciences of the University of Tsukuba (for details see gnp.hass.tsukuba.ac.jp/index.html). Under the truly transdisciplinary framework of GNP, workshops, research forums and symposia were organized throughout 2011, creating and strengthening the international network of researchers and their respective institutions.

With just such a supportive framework our research can now progress from written page to conscious action.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized, cursive 'A' followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

Saburo AOKI

Director, Inter Faculty Education and Research Initiative

March 16th, 2012