The Japan Society of Commercial Sciences (JSCS), whose membership includes some 678 academics and practitioners in the fields of commerce, distribution and marketing, held its 39th annual meetings at Kyushu International University in Kitakyushu-shi between May 31 and June 2, 1990. This year's unified theme was “Internationalization and New Dynamism in Distribution,” under which such diverse topics as the international comparisons of distribution systems, internationalization of distribution activities, (domestic) distribution of imported goods, and governmental policies on distribution, were discussed.

The first day (June 1) of the meetings was devoted to the presentation of the papers on the unified theme in the morning and a symposium in the afternoon, in which the authors and commentators of the papers in the morning session gave their own views and exchanged opinions with the floor. A lively discussion revolved around many important issues, particularly the problems associated with adaptation to different cultures and social structures in other countries and the need for collection and more penetrating analysis of information on international distribution.

At the end of the first day the general business meeting of members was held and, after the reports of activities of local divisions, the 1988 fiscal report and the 1989 budgets were both approved. Also at the business meeting new officers of the Society were elected. These were:

President: Yukichi ARAKAWA (Hiroshima College of Economics)
Vice Presidents: Masao UNO (Waseda University)
Hitoshi YAMANAKA (Konan University)

The second day (June 2) was allotted to the presentation of individual papers under the following five separate heads: Distribution Policies, Distribution/Marketing and Cultural Dynamism, Marketing Theories, and Miscellaneous Topics.

The proceedings of the 39th national meetings, titled “Globalization and New Dynamism of Distribution” was published by the Society on December 20.

In addition to the national meetings and divisional meetings, the Hokkaido and Kanto divisions of JSCS held an inter-divisional symposium on April 22 at Gakushuin University, the theme of which was “Public Policy Tasks on Distribution in the 21st Century.” After the Distribution Policy section chief at MITI presented the contents of a report on its vision on Japanese distribution in the 90's, a panel discussed the directions which public policies on distribution should take as the 21st century approaches. The Chubu, Kansai and Kyushu divisions of the Society held an inter-divisional meetings on October 27 through 28 at University of Marketing and Distribution Sciences in Kobe. The theme was “What is missing in the current research on Marketing and Distribution?” Reports on the current research in the fields of Marketing Strategies, Consumer Behavior, Distribution Channels and Macro-Marketing were presented and all participants joined in a general and enthusiastic
discussion.

An international conference, the second Japan-Korea Marketing Seminar, was held in Osaka on December 2, 1989, at the Cultural Exchange Center of Osaka City University. This was the first such international academic conference sponsored by JSCS, although this year's seminar was actually organized by the Kansai division of JSCS. Twenty one members of the Korea Marketing Association (KMA) and 54 members of JSCS participated in this seminar. Two speakers from each country presented papers on the impacts of internationalization on the respective economy on marketing and distribution systems. Despite translation problems, an enthusiastic discussion followed each presentation. There was an increased awareness among the seminar participants that the marketing and distributional problems of two countries despite being similar in some respects, had large areas of profound differences. The meeting was adjourned with a general feeling that this seminar should be continued in the future as a valuable opportunity for dialogue between the two national academic communities. The KMA President, Il-Chung WHANG, announced the KMA's intention to hold the third seminar in Seoul, Korea, in 1990.

In retrospect, the year 1989 marked an important turning point for JSCS during which the Society began to reevaluate its previous stance of solely focusing on the domestic problems. It is obvious that an academic society cannot ignore the increasing interaction of world economies and cultures. It was no coincidence that the Japan-Korea Marketing Seminar was held at this time. If our Society were to make contributions toward the evolution of Japanese marketing and distribution systems, we should take this opportunity to look at the internationalization of the Japanese economy as a major focus of its research and educational efforts.

(Masao NAKANISHI)