

## Waseda University Top Global University Project Last Symposium Report

Unit	Global Japanese Studies
Symposium Title	Opening up "Japanese" history
Symposium Details	
Date and Time	December 9, 2023, 13:00-16:50 December 10, 10:00-16:40
Venue	Conference Rm. 1, Bldg. 33, 3rd Fl. Toyama Campus, Waseda University and Zoom Webinar
Language	Japanese
Speaker	Akio Kawajiri (Waseda University Professor), Hidenori Jinno (Waseda University Professor), Kimiko Kono (Waseda University Professor), Nadia Kanagawa (Furman University Assistant Professor), Lee Sungsi (Waseda University Professor Emeritus), Fumio Tanaka (Waseda University Professor), David Lurie (Columbia University Associate Professor), Guillaume Carré (EHESS Professor), Pham Le Huy (Vietnam National University, Hanoi Lecturer), Hideto Tsuboi (Waseda University Professor), Naoyuki Umemori (Waseda University Professor)
Participation Details	
Number	12/9 in person: 27、Zoom: 59 total:86 12/10 in person: 6、Zoom : 50 total:56
Countries/Regions	Japan, Korea, Belgium, USA, Hong Kong
Organizations	12/9: 29 12/10: 37
Purpose of the Symposium	
<p>Since around the end of the 20th century, attempts to relativize the existence of "Japan" have been made in the field of "Japanese" history, with some success. However, the field has begun to become rigid once again, and this has continued to the present day. This symposium aimed to rethink the framework of "Japanese" history and "Japanese" culture based on these reflections, while taking advantage of the perspectives of researchers from abroad. It is also an opportunity to summarize the various activities conducted by Global Japanese Studies Model Unit, Waseda University Top Global University Project as Global Japanese Studies, and is considered to be an important activity in the search for the future of Global Japanese Studies.</p>	



At the beginning of the first day of the symposium, the purpose of this symposium was explained (Kawajiri), stating that there is a problem with Japanese historical research concentrated in Japan, and that more comparatively open historical research on "Japan" is needed. Then, the 10-year history of the Global Japanese Studies Model Unit was summarized from the standpoints of education and research (Jinno and Kono). Next, the merits and demerits of the term "Kikajin (naturalized citizen)" and the current status of Japanese studies in the U.S. were introduced (Kanagawa), followed by following reports: the country name "Japan" was a common noun in the late 7th century and the issue of the establishment of "Japan" as a country name reflects not only ancient history but also the position of postwar Japan (Lee); in the study of the "Toraijin (ancient naturalized Japanese)" it is necessary to go beyond the framework of nation-states and take into account multidimensional elements (Tanaka); and ancient religions in the archipelago need to be reconsidered from the perspective of two "pantheons," shrines and temples, mediated by objects and cities (Como).



On the second day, the following reports were made: northern and Ainu history is not only a part of Japanese history, but also a unique culture with rich content to be discussed independently (Minoshima); the introduction of guns should be comprehensively examined not only from the bilateral perspective of Japan and Portugal, but also from the perspective of Western nations and East Asian history as a whole (Igawa); regarding the significance of studying Global Japanese Studies, it would provide an opportunity to eliminate excessive specialization and nationalism in Japanese history, and that comparative research on Japanese history and the history of other regions could provide new research perspectives (Lurie); and Japanese silver may have influenced the history of

distribution in East Asia, suggesting the need for a broader perspective in the study of Japanese history in the early modern period (Carre).

Then, comments were made, including the need to "open up" national history not only in Japan but in many other countries (Pham), the fact that the content of Global Japanese Studies has changed with the demands of the times (Tsuboi), and comprehensive remarks about the difficulties and future possibilities of "opening up" history (Umemori).



Thereafter, a lively discussion ensued between the presenters and participants, focusing on (1) the merits and demerits of comparative history and the problems of national history, (2) the relationship between Japanese studies of the Middle Modern period and East Asian history, (3) the current state of Japanese studies in the United States and France, and (4) the future of Global Japanese Studies.

Finally, the symposium was closed with a summary of the significance of the symposium (Tanaka).

The symposium was successful in conveying the message that we should not set "Japanese history" a priori, but aim for a more open "Japanese" history while maintaining self-awareness. This is a significant achievement for the future of historical research.



Since this symposium was held in HyFlex format, participants came from Japan, Korea, Vietnam, China, the U.S., France, and many other countries, and included a wide variety of people such as university faculty, young researchers, graduate students, undergraduate students, and people from major publishing houses. Among them, the participation of not only Waseda faculty members but also young researchers, graduate students, and undergraduate students from Waseda University played an important role not only in terms of research but also in terms of educational effects.

In addition, the activities of the Global Japanese Studies Model Unit over the past 10 years were reviewed, and various opinions were expressed in comments and discussions on the significance of the existence of Global Japanese Studies and its future development, which was meaningful for the Unit's future activities.



Many positive comments were received from the participants, such as that there have not been many international symposiums on Japanese history like this one, and that they felt the need to conduct historical research from a bird's-eye viewpoint, that they reconfirmed the importance of relativism in historical understanding, and that they reaffirmed the importance of Global Japanese Studies in the field of history. Finally, there were many positive comments from the participants.

Last but not least, the participation of Naoyuki Umemori, Director of the Global Asia Research Center, Faculty of Political Science and Economics, as a commentator, although limited, was considered to have achieved a certain degree of relationship building between the Unit and the Global Asia Research Center.