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## On the Special Feature

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The following four articles in this special feature are revised versions of the original papers which have been read at the international symposium, “How to construct regional histories in the Balkans and East Asia: From historiography toward history education”, held at the Komaba campus, The University of Tokyo on November 17, 2007. The aim of this symposium was to discuss the way to describe and teach regional histories and to continue the discussion that we could not have much at the last international symposium, “In Search of a Common Regional History: the Balkans and East Asia in History Textbook”, (Cf. *European Studies*, No.5, 2006) held in November, 2005.

Six papers have been read at this symposium consisting of two sessions. The first session is about the way to describe regional histories and the second one is on regional histories in history education. Prof. Mishkova (Center for Advanced Studies in Sofia) gave a stimulating presentation that regional history was the valid framework for overcoming national history, but regional history inevitably faced the problems which national history contained if national history is just replaced with regional history. She raised a question on the conditions regional history could have its validity. Prof. Iordachi (Central European University) insisted that Balkan regional history should be constructed from the comparative perspective of citizenship. Ms. Schneider (The Georg Eckert Institute in Braunschweig) analyzed the framework of national histories in Chinese and Taiwanese history textbooks and referred to alternative possibilities of this problem. Prof. Stojanovic (University of Belgrade) as an editor of Serbian version of Balkan History Workbooks in English gave presentation about how they were used in the classroom and which kind of problems have been brought in Serbia.

From Japan, Prof. Kimijima (Tokyo Gakugei University) read a paper as a main editor of a common history textbook, *A History of Relationship between Japan and Korea* (2007) which had taken them ten years' hard work to finish, giving a few examples of different perception of the region between Japan and Korea. Mr. Torigoe (Azabu Junior and Senior High School) gave presentation as a history teacher, showing concretely how regional history, East Asian History in particular, was treated in a subject, “World history”, in Japan.

Toward these papers, Prof. Namiki (The University of Tokyo), a specialist of modern history of China, gave several general comments, Prof. Lee (Waseda University), a specialist of Korean History, emphasized the importance of region (Balkan and East Asia or Northeastern Asia) as the place of recognition for overcoming each national history and Prof. Kawakita (The University of Tokyo) gave us interesting comments, mentioning a common history textbook between Germany and France published recently in the two countries.

We could make sure of the importance of adopting the view of regional history into history education through this international symposium. At the same time, we shared the



difficulties of the way to teach regional history in the classroom of each country both in the Balkans and East Asia. It is necessary to continue to address this problem and deepen our discussion by holding another international conference in the near future.

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