Hiroshi Kurushima, Director-General, National Museum of Japanese History

1983, Doctoral course, coursework completed without degree, University of Tokyo. Assistant Professor at Chiba University, Faculty of Education. From 1998, Assistant Professor of National Museum of Japanese History. From 2003, Professor. April 2012, Director-General. Degree: 2002, Doctor of Letters, University of Tokyo. Field : Early Modern Japanese History. Publications (in Japanese): "The Administration of Bakufu Land: The Role of Village Cooperatives in Late Tokugawa Japan," University of Tokyo Press, 2002; "Exhibiting Other Culture and Exhibiting Own Culture," Bulletin of the National Museum of Japanese History, 2008, Vol.140.

1) Address of Welcome

From July 7 to September 6, the special exhibition "Relations between Germany and Japan: 150 Years of Friendship Between Germany and Japan" was organized at our museum. It was the first full-scale exhibition on the history of the relationship and exchanges between the two countries in Japan. It is our greatest pleasure that the exhibition led to the opportunity to have this symposium at our museum in celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the German JSPS Alumni Association which has contributed significantly to the cultural and academic exchanges between Germany and Japan.

2) What features the National Museum of Japanese History

Our museum belongs to the National Institutes for the Humanities, the biggest organization of social science and humanities in Japan. There are total of six research institutes including our museum and the National Museum of Ethnography. All of them are inter-university research institutes and promote collaborative research in cooperation with universities.

The first mission of our museum is to systematically promote integrative research on the history and culture in collaboration with researchers in research institutions including universities in Japan and overseas. The 220,000 artifacts of collection at the museum are not only for exhibitions (about 9000) but also for the focus of such collaborative research. The second mission is to share the insights gained through research with the public in the form of exhibitions. Our museum is the only national museum of history in Japan and it exhibits the history of Japan from the primitive and ancient periods to modern times in 6 galleries. In addition to having special exhibitions three times a year, our museum has the "Botanical Garden of Everyday Life" which introduces plants that have been closely tied to the daily lives. The third mission is to provide doctoral courses of the graduate studies and to foster researchers of the next generation.

3) History of Sakura City and National Museum of Japanese History

Our museum stands on the remains of Sakura Castle built in the early Edo period. In the late middle ages, the castle was built in Moto-Sakura, a little farther away from here. In the early 17th century, the full-scale castle and its castle town were built on the plateau which was an important place of land and water transportation. It was the nearest castle from the Edo castle in the east areas. As it played an important role in the defense of Edo, each Shogun at the time appointed the capable retainers, Fudai Daimyo, to govern the castle with the estates around 100,000 koku. The feudal lord in the 19th century, Hotta Masayoshi was interested in Dutch studies and he founded a domain medical school, Juntendo. Referred to as "Nagasaki in the west and Sakura in the east," it became the center of the Dutch medicine. After the seventh year of Meiji era, the Sakura Regiment settled and it continued until the 20th year of Showa era. The site of the regiment still remains.

Around 1968, the plan to establish the national museum of Japanese history was envisioned in celebrating the 100th year of Meiji Restoration. From around 1978, collaborative studies by many researchers were conducted in planning out for the exhibitions. After 1983, the exhibition galleries started to open, one by one, and reached its final phase in 2010 with the opening of Gallery 6 (contemporary history).