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Disaster without borders: A humanities-oriented natural disaster studies perspective on the coronavirus pandemic

[Abstract]

This presentation presents a humanities-oriented natural disaster studies perspective on the novel coronavirus pandemic now sweeping the entire world, including Japan. Borderless nature of this pandemic has destructive potential on the following three fundamental theoretical assumptions in conventional humanities-oriented natural disaster science. First, disaster management can be planned and implemented spatially, reflected in a designation of “flood inundation area,” for example, which is a “zoning” assumption. Secondly, disaster management can be planned and implemented based on a temporal phase thinking, shown in a well-known “disaster management cycle,” which is a “phasing” assumption. Finally, disaster management can be planned and implemented in a role-positioning structure of a disaster experts vs. non-experts, which is a “positioning” assumption. It is also discussed how we can overcome these three basic assumptions, “zoning,” “phasing,” and “positioning,” to elaborate natural disaster science.

[Keywords]

Covid-19, pandemic, zoning, phasing, positioning