

Comment I

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Thank you for the kind introduction. My name is Kawashima. Before I begin, as I do not understand English well, please forgive me for probably only being able to provide half the amount of information compared to other, preceding teachers' lectures.

The presentations of all three teachers have been truly stimulating, and I would like to express my thoughts on each presentation.

I would like to begin with Professor ZAYAS's presentation, from this morning. The presentation was very informative, touching mainly on both the blessings and misfortunes associated with nature in Ayata that surrounds the volcano, Mount Pinatubo.

The volcano of Mount Unzen in Shimabara in Nagasaki Prefecture, Japan, generally erupts once every 200 years, but the land of Shimabara at the foot of the volcano is, all the same, a town blessed with hot springs and spring water. Meanwhile, even in the fisheries near Sakurajima in Kagoshima Prefecture, there are places where sea urchins named *Diadema*, found only in the volcanic rock in the sea bed, can be captured.

Although practical goals such as disaster prevention, for example with the use of picture books, are found in teaching, I think it is the perspective that comes with being a cultural anthropologist that enables one to see the blessings and misfortunes associated with nature.

This is also associated with observations of the daily life in the settlement. That is to say, the professor is able to consider the both life of before and after the disaster simultaneously, and this is the perspective that enables one to see what constitutes a happy life for the people.

I would like to vehemently thank Professor ADHURI from Indonesia, who spoke in the afternoon. We have learnt a lot from Professor Adhuri about the restoration of fisheries over the course of 12 years, from 2004 till now. This is especially so with respect to the disaster-affected area of the Sanriku fishing village, struck by the Great East Japan Earthquake, about which we learnt a lot from the Professor regarding the theme of post-disaster restoration including practical involvement.

There is a saying in Japan that a natural disaster is followed by a man-made disaster. Efforts are underway now, to rapidly restore through reconstruction, especially through government-led infrastructure development. I think it is necessary to relate this to the "modern restoration" from the Meiji era, and seawalls are also "modern disaster prevention."

Professor Adhuri has made us rethink about the process from competitive humanitarianism to the need for meetings. As a cultural anthropologist, it has made me think

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about how one can maintain distance from the government and NGOs.

The third presentation, by Professor GOPARAN, discussed the tsunami in India in the same year of 2004. The presentation dwelt upon the changes after the tsunami, especially those at the level of daily living, with the second half focusing on the problems associated with disaster reporting.

What particularly fascinated me was the post-disaster replacement of a wooden ship that was swept away in the tsunami with an FRT (reinforced plastic boat).

In an example that is opposite of this, a week ago at a place called Yuriage (perhaps tomorrow the teachers and all of you will visit this place) a launching ceremony for a Japanese boat (made of wood), the lowering of the boat, was conducted. I was told it has been 50 years since the last time, but as everything got swept away in the tsunami, it was made on the request of a fisherman who wanted by all means, to ride a wooden boat that gave a sense of stability.

However, as carpenters who make boats are on the decline, the boat was made at a far-away place within the prefecture, and its construction was extremely difficult, as wooden pegs used to build ships are being currently made only in Tomonoura, in Hiroshima prefecture. I felt that such a revival of traditional technologies can occur due to a disaster.

Next, we take up the issue of disaster reporting. We especially learnt a lot about the sensational reporting of photojournalism. In Japan too, at the time of the Sanriku tsunami in Meiji 29 (1896), using not photographs but drawings, we had *fuzoku gaho*, a kind of journalism that appealed to the visual. This was also an extremely sensational and topical writing.

We then have the concept of the tsunami depicted as a monster, and earlier, in Japan, tsunami was thought to be sent by a dragon. I felt that ultimately, even cultural anthropologists have to make efforts to understand disasters objectively, including the legends associated with disasters.

In conclusion, in the torrential rains in Kanto and Tohoku in September last year, the city of Osaki in Miyagi prefecture suffered damage. At the time, the administration only considered the amount of rainfall to be the problem, but actually it was as much a problem of what was happening in the sky above as what was happening on the ground. In earlier times, people did things such as mowing the grass on the bank as fodder for horses and they had a connection with rivers, but now it is the responsibility of the prefectures to manage them. The fact is that the prefectures did not even conduct dredging.

Disasters are not just issues associated with the field of natural sciences. Studies targeting folklore and history are also important, and it can be said that it is important for cultural anthropologists and folklorists to be involved in a significant way.

Today, given the vast expanse of Asia, we are able to learn about the commonalities and differences among the victims of disasters and for this I would like to express my profound gratitude to our three instructors. That is all for now. Thank you very much for listening.