

Science against Natural Hazard 1960-1993: Has the Natural Disaster Science Overcome the Disasters?

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The disastrous Ise-wan Typhoon of 1959 triggered the emergence of the field of Natural Disaster Science in Japan, which was proposed by the geophysicist Hasegawa Mankichi (1894-1970), President of Fukui University. The project, funded by the Ministry of Education and well organized especially by the geologist Matsuzawa Isao (1906-1990), Professor of Nagoya University, was continued until 1990s and provided many opportunities for the researches and activities of geoscientists. This article focuses this project considering the following contexts: 1) the post-war defense conversion in the field of earth sciences; 2) the interrelationship between the two major disciplines, geology and geophysics, in the sciences; and 3) the inclusion of the human and social sciences to cope effectively with such hazards and disasters.

Keywords: Natural Disaster Science, contemporary history of earth sciences, defense conversion, interdisciplinary domain, Hasegawa Mankichi, Matsuzawa Isao