

## AFTERWORD

---

# The Potential and the Future of Human Sciences:

## Contributing to Disaster Recovery

---

*Hiroaki Kumano MD, PhD <sup>\*1 \*2 \*3</sup> (Psychosomatic and Behavioral Medicine)*

---

*Key words: historic disaster, awakening, role of human sciences*

On March 11, 2011, the Japanese people faced the greatest disaster in the nation's memory when an earthquake struck off the coast of Fukushima Prefecture in north-eastern Japan. That event is now known as the Great East Japan Earthquake Disaster, or more simply as the 2011 Tohoku earthquake, after the Japanese name for the region. This publication brings together the records of the educators and researchers of the Faculty of Human Sciences at Waseda University in their continued efforts to help the region rebuild.

The 2011 Tohoku earthquake was the catalyst for a great awakening among the people of Japan, who, 70 years after the end of the Second World War, had come to view "peace" as the norm. First, it sparked off political and social movements required to overcome the national crisis, and to a greater or lesser extent, all citizens found in that tragedy the motivation to take the first step towards living a life of greater awareness. Waseda University's Faculty of Human Sciences, alongside its affiliated Advanced Research Center for Human Sciences, aims to "solve the problems of humanity". The circumstances surrounding the earthquake led the members of both institutions to resolve to do all they could to help rebuild the country, and the individual who has played the central role in these efforts is Takuya Tsujiuchi, supervising editor of this book and professor at the Faculty of Human Sciences.

---

\*1 Director, Advanced Research Center for Human Sciences, Waseda University

\*2 Professor, Faculty of Human Sciences, Waseda University

\*3 Waseda Institute of Medical Anthropology on Disaster Reconstruction (WIMA)

Professor Tsujiuchi conducted work in the disaster area, but began to consider what he and his colleagues could offer that no one else could. That led to the building of a collaborative relationship with the Shinsai Shien (Earthquake Disaster Support) Network Saitama to help people who had evacuated from Fukushima Prefecture to Saitama, where our faculty is located. It was also the beginning of our efforts to conduct interview surveys in various forms and to provide a multi-faceted support framework based in the data gathered there. However, through that process, Professor Tsujiuchi realized that in order to become a more substantial part of recovery efforts we needed the knowledge and skills of experts, so he visited the US to study with the Harvard Program in Refugee Trauma at Harvard University's School of Public Health. On his return to Japan, he established the Waseda Institute of Medical Anthropology on Disaster Reconstruction, and since then, he has continued to conduct his work as the institute's director.

Bringing the institute's members together, Professor Tsujiuchi was able to acquire the competitive funding offered by the Advanced Research Center for Human Sciences to conduct his research into the human science of reconstruction, and the publication of this book is yet another achievement.

Part I provides a concrete look into the fieldwork and practical efforts the Tsujiuchi laboratory conducted in collaboration with the Shinsai Shien Network, to provide evacuees with the support they needed during the emergency evacuation phase and afterwards, when disaster victims were settling into life as evacuees. Part II brings together a vast array of research conducted by members of the laboratory, made up of educators in the Faculty of Human Sciences teaching a diverse array of specialties, and in particular, visiting researchers who collaborated with us and provided guidance in multiple ways.

Our hope is that you will carefully read about the research conducted by the individual team members, but it is worth noting that the diverse range of research projects included within this book were conducted simultaneously, and through that experience in research, practical implementation and education, we at the faculty have taken a major step forward in the development of Human Science as a discipline. It was a valuable experience which, when the Human Sciences aim to resolve issues as historic as these, the discipline can be best summarized as an "academic integration of practical sciences." This is also reflected in Professor Tsujiuchi's written statement on the purpose of the project, namely, "The Tohoku earthquake was an event of historic proportions, and the Human Sciences were born the moment we took up the shared objective of conducting research that would help the disaster area, as a truly academically integrated and practical discipline able to overcome the multiple issues requiring different types of expertise." I am convinced that Human Sciences will con-

tribute more and more to disaster reconstruction in the future by returning the results of our research to the disaster areas, which will result in the further enhancement of practical implementations.

This book is the culmination of the continuous efforts to help rebuild the Tohoku region made by the many researchers and practitioners connected to the Faculty of Human Sciences at Waseda University. However, it is of the utmost importance that the Japanese people never forget this event, and in view of that, this book can be considered no more than a milestone on our journey to rebuild Japanese society as a whole. We at the Waseda University's Faculty of Human Sciences and Advanced Research Center for Human Sciences aim to grow as individuals as we contribute wholeheartedly to the reconstruction and continued evolution of Japanese society, by gaining an ever-broadening perspective and working to resolve the issues facing humanity with ever-increasing awareness.