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Disaster and risk: from empiricism to criticism

International symposium – CERI-Sciences Po & EHESS

17th-18th June 2010, Paris

The widespread media coverage of disasters and our growing and unavoidable awareness of their increasing frequency and intensity under the influence of global warming have been prompting social science to treat disasters and “at risk” situations as research questions during the last two decades. Besides, a lot of studies – from the sociology of politics to the sociology of rights through the sociology of sciences or organisations – have developed in France during the last decade in order to understand risks generated by technological and industrial progress (GMO, mobile phones, nuclear...) and the social and political processes appearing in their wake on the public scene (“framing a public problem into collective risk”, mobilisations, formation of “victim groups”...). However, despite the relevance and importance of these studies, the angles chosen sometimes lead to a reduction of the analysis of disasters to presuppositions such as an exception or an emergency, and confine the understanding of risk to the practical categories of vulnerability/resilience/prevention. Moreover, the approaches focusing on the representations elaborated by the populations are sometimes used to propose a culturalist analysis that relies on a dichotomy between experts and laypeople. In order to go beyond these reductions and frontiers, this symposium proposes to consider disasters and risk as a continuum of construction (the disaster being presented as the horizon of risk), by dealing with the local processes that arise during such situations, and by highlighting the complexity of involved dynamics. The “local” is here considered in a permanent interaction with other scales (global or national through the post-emergency assistance world and the operational systems of prevention, care or reconstruction...).

Location : CERI, 56 rue Jacob, 75006 Paris / Métro : Saint-Germain des Prés.

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PROGRAM
17th of June, 2010

9:00-10:30

Opening : Christian Lequesne, director, CERI-Sciences Po

Introduction : Sandrine Revet et Julien Langumier

Inaugural conference by Anthony Oliver-Smith, Anthropology Department of the University of Florida

10:45-13:00

From the event to the research object - 1

Frédéric Keck, Institut Marcel Mauss (UMR 8170)

Avian Flu, between food safety risk and health catastrophe

Laura Centemeri, Centre for Social Studies – Risk Observatory University of Coimbra (Portugal)

Analyzing communities response to disasters: historicity, controversies and realism

Anne-Marie Granet-Abisset - Professeur d'histoire contemporaine, Université Pierre Mendès France Grenoble 2, UMR LARHRA Laboratoire de Recherche Historique Rhône-Alpes

Historians and political actors as regards risks and natural disasters: a difficult questioning of norms. Lessons from research programs

Moderators : Françoise Zonabend, LAS EHESS and Thierry Coanus, RIVES ENTPE

14:30-16:00

From the event to the research object - 2

Séverine Durand, Cemagref – UMR G-EAU et Université de Provence – LAMES - CNRS

Living with possible flooding: risk and routine

Susann Ullberg - Department of Social Anthropology, Stockholm University

Facing floods: Recurrent disasters and translocal ethnography in the city of Santa Fe (Argentina)

Moderator: Julien Langumier, RIVES ENTPE.

16:30-18:00

Beyond the “risk culture” : confrontation and circulation of knowledge and practice – 1

Théo Blanchard - Grenoble 2, UPMF, LARHRA

Experiencing the risk of flooding in the 18th century: confrontation between risk cultures

Julie Hermesse - Université de Louvain (Belgique)

Hybridity of the representations of the natural phenomena to the vulnerability in view of their risks of occurrence

Moderator : Grégory Quenet, Université Versailles Saint Quentin

18:15-19:15

Screening of the film of Elia Romanelli and Maria Anita Palumbo – Doctorante anthropologie urbaine, EHESS/ Laboratoire Architecture Anthropologie (ENSAPV)

Belice68/08. A journey trough Belice Valley, 40 years after the earthquake.

Moderator: Sandrine Revet, CERI-Sciences Po

18th of June, 2010

9:00-12:45 **Beyond the “risk culture” : confrontation and circulation of knowledge and practice 2**

Mara Benadusi - University of Catania and University of Bergamo

Cultivating community of practice in post-tsunami Sri Lanka (2005-2006)

Cloé Vallette - Centre d'Études et de Recherches sur les Risques et les Vulnérabilités, MRSH – Université de Caen

When stakeholders appropriate our concepts (Quebrada Seca River, Costa Rica)

Moderator: Nicolas Dodier, GSPM, EHES

Fabien Nathan - Sogreah Consultants, Grenoble

Disaster Risk Perception of the People Exposed: Insights to go Beyond the Dominant Paradigm

Juanita López Peláez - Universidad Eafit, Medellin

Small Disasters, Big Impacts: Social representations of Risks and Disasters in Informal Settlements of Medellin.

Moderator: Virginia Garcia-Acosta, CIESAS, Mexico.

14:30-18:30

The politics of disaster and risk

Marc Elie – Centre d'études des mondes russes, caucasien et centre-européen (UMR 8083)

Alma-Ata waiting for “the mudflow of the century”: protecting the capital of Soviet Kazakhstan, 1921-1991

Samuel Bordreuil - LAMES, Université de Provence and Anne M. Lovell - INSERM, Paris V

Rebuilding New-Orleans and the public sphere

Moderator : Claude Gilbert, PACTE/MSH-Alpes, CNRS

Irénée Zwarterook – collectif de chercheurs en économie, sociologie, aménagement, science politique, géographie, Université du Littoral Côte d'Opale, Institut des Mers du Nord et IEP de Grenoble, laboratoire PACTE

The “Expert” and the “Uninitiated” versus the “Resident”: How to make a strategic use of the figure of the resident in participatory bodies on industrial risks

Pascale Metzger – Institut de recherche pour le développement

La construction politique et institutionnelle de la crise du chikungunya à La Réunion

Moderator : Olivier Borraz, CSO, Sciences-Po-CNRS

18.00-18.30 : **Conclusion** : Sandrine Revet et Julien Langumier

Closing speech : Bruno Latour, Professeur des Universités, Directeur Scientifique, Sciences Po.