

Historical Perspectives on Disaster Memory - the Case of Lake Biwa

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This paper presents the preliminary steps in exploring commemorative monuments of disasters as a tool for better understanding the transmission of disaster memory. In order to do so, this study considers instances of commemorative stones found in Otsu City, Shiga Prefecture.

These commemorative stones, as elements of material and immaterial culture, show the existence of a memorialization of disaster, and supposedly reflect the will to commemorate and transmit significant past events to current and future generations, having a potential role to play in a more informal risk mitigation system.

We will therefore present the group of commemorative monuments found around Lake Biwa in Otsu city, describing their location and physical characteristics, and end with a discussion on the potential of such material culture in the development and strengthening of risk prevention efforts.