❚ Article ❚

An Analysis of Reporting of the 2011 East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami: The Construction of an Idealized Narrative in Western Media

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Abstract

This paper will examine the foreign media representation of Japanese people and their behaviour following the 2011 earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear crisis and put it in the context of other media accounts of disasters. To investigate the media representation of the 2011 disaster, a corpus of texts from both Japanese and non-Japanese media sources is assembled. This is then analysed through a combination of corpus linguistics and critical discourse analysis techniques. It is found that non-Japanese media sources frequently used cultural stereotypes to construct a narrative of idealized Japanese behaviour following the earthquake and tsunami. This paper will discuss how this idealized representation was then contrasted with media representations of other disasters such as Hurricane Katrina and used as a way to both implicitly and explicitly criticize the behaviour of victims of other disasters.

1. Introduction

At 2:46 pm on March 11, 2011, a 9.0 magnitude earthquake occurred off the coast of northeast Japan. This was followed by a tsunami which left widespread devastation and caused thousands of deaths. As a result of the damage caused by this natural disaster, the nuclear power plant at Fukushima melted down, creating a nuclear crisis.

This triple disaster attracted worldwide media attention. This paper will examine how non-Japanese media reported the disaster and its aftermath. In particular, it will focus on how the Japanese people and their behaviour following the earthquake were represented and evaluated in comparison to how similar disasters are usually reported. Because reports of the nuclear crisis followed a very different narrative, this paper will concentrate on the discourse surrounding the earthquake and tsunami and the related themes which began to emerge in Western media reports. Many media accounts focused on the apparent lack of looting and crime in the areas affected by the earthquake. This representation was rooted in common stereotypes of the Japanese that have long existed in Western culture. The disaster was also contrasted with similar events such as Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans or the earthquake in Haiti. In fact, the media frequently used the events in Japan as a way of criticizing the people involved in these other disasters.

This analysis of the reporting of the disaster will combine critical discourse analysis and corpus linguistics approaches and techniques. This will allow the use of statistical techniques to identify salient terms in the discourse, which can then be examined more closely in the context of individual texts. By using this combined approach, this paper will discuss features which were important to the reporting of the disaster, as well as how they were used to construct a representation of the Japanese people and their reactions to the earthquake and tsunami. It will look at how the events and social actors were represented and how they were linked to common myths and stereotypes prevalent in Western depictions of Japan. It will also show how the image of the Japanese built up through these representations was used as a way of criticizing the people, often minorities, involved in similar disasters in other countries.

2. Context

To understand the narrative constructed of this disaster, it is necessary to place it within the context in which it was produced by the media and consumed by readers. This context includes both ideas about disasters and ideas about Japan and the Japanese.

2.1. Disaster Myths

The media reporting of the 2011 earthquake can be best understood in the context of how disasters are typically reported. There is a discourse which frequently appears in media accounts. It is commonly thought that people react to a major disaster by panicking and engaging in behaviour such as looting and other crime. Research has shown that these beliefs are exaggerated or untrue so they are usually referred to as "disaster myths" in the literature on the subject (Goltz 1984, Wenger & Friedman 1986).

These disaster myths inform popular ideas about how people typically behave in a disaster such as an earthquake or hurricane. These myths also play an important role in shaping media coverage of disasters (Tierney, Bevc, & Kuliogowski 2006, Wenger & Friedman 1986, Goltz 1987). In turn, these beliefs are reinforced by media focus on behaviour which fits this stereotype of lawlessness and disorder (Tierney et al. 2006).

A great deal of research has been done into both how people behave in a disaster and into how people are commonly believed to behave. When confronted with a disaster, panic is actually rare. The Disaster Research Center at the University of Delaware has examined approximately 700 field studies and found "but a very few marginal instances of anything that could be called panic behaviour" (Quarantelli 2001, quoted in Clarke 2002, p. 24). Instead, people tend to work together as a community to aid victims. In addition, they come together to help each other cope with what is happening. It has been found that there is actually less antisocial behaviour during a disaster than there usually is in a given society (Tierney et al. 2006, Solnit 2009).

Although panic and social disorder tend to be uncommon in communities hit by disasters, media accounts tend to be based on the myth that such behaviour is a typical reaction to events such as hurricanes, floods, and earthquakes. This type of reporting perpetuates disaster myths and tends to reinforce the popular belief in them (Quarantelli & Wenger 1990).

For example, looting is very uncommon in disasters in the United States. However, the media tends

to focus on the possibility that looting may occur. It also often shows residents of a disaster stricken community preparing against potential looters. Media reports are often based on what has been called a "looting frame" (Tierney et al. 2006). Reports focus on alleged looting and also on steps which people in the community are taking against looting. In some cases, the media may report on the fact that looting did not occur and on how unusual this is (Fischer 2008).

The idea that society breaks down following a disaster was a major part of media discourse following Hurricane Katrina (Tierney et al. 2006, Solnit 2009). The media presented an overly simplified picture of the disaster in which people in New Orleans were represented as belonging to one of two groups; either they were criminal looters or they were helpless victims (Tierney et al. 2006). In such depictions of the disaster, reports of crime were exaggerated (Voorhees, Vick & Parkins 2007). In many cases, reports of crime which received wide media coverage turned out to be untrue (Sommers, Apfelbaum, Dukes, Toosi, & Wang 2006).

2.2. Stereotypes and Beliefs about Japan

In both Japan itself and in foreign countries, there is a widely accepted idea that the Japanese are different from other people (Dale 1986). It has been argued that in western countries, two opposite stereotypes about Asians have developed, one positive and one negative. These tend to alternate between Japan and China, depending on relations with each country. For example, in World War II, a negative stereotype of sneakiness and cruelty was associated with the Japanese. Now that relations between Japan and the West are good, it is more common to see Japanese stereotyped as patient, clean, polite and hardworking. Stoicism is also part of this stereotype (Johnson 1991). These stereotypes form part of the perspective through which these news reports were produced and consumed.

3. Critical Discourse Analysis and Corpus Linguistics

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) focuses on the idea of language and discourse as social practice (Fairclough & Wodak 1997). As well as this focus on the interconnection of language and society, CDA provides a critical look at how power and ideology are encoded in language (Wodak & Meyer 2009).

In particular, CDA provides a useful perspective for analysing news stories. To represent an event in a news report, it is necessary to delete, add, substitute, and rearrange elements (Van Leeuwen 2008). This process of retextualization changes the actual events into a representation of that event (Fairclough 2003). This means that the description on the events is not the same thing as the events themselves. There are also a variety of ways to represent the people involved (Van Leeuwen 1995, Fairclough 2003). For example, a person can be included in or excluded from the story. Other choices include referring to people as individuals or as members of groups, specifically or generically, and personally or impersonally.

The study of evaluation is also an important aspect of CDA. This refers to the ways in which an author commits themselves to a particular set of values (Fairclough 2003). One way of indicating evaluation is by appealing to assumed values. In these cases, there is no explicit marker of evaluation. Instead, the author is using the fact that he or she shares a common set of values with the audience. Both the writer and reader use this set of values to make assumptions about what is good or bad (Fairclough 2003, Partington, Duguid, & Taylor 2013).

However, CDA has been criticized for its subjectivity (Widdowson 2004). Using corpus linguistics techniques in combination with a CDA approach can reduce this subjectivity (O'Halloran 2010, Mautner 2009). Despite this, however, subjective decisions have to be made by the researcher, such as what texts to include and what features to analyse (Wodak & Meyer 2009). Concordances have to be visually examined by the researcher in order to identify patterns, which also introduces an element of subjectivity (Baker et al. 2008). In doing this kind of research, it is important to remember that although using corpus linguistic techniques can reduce researcher subjectivity, a subjective element always remains.

There are a number of other advantages of combining the two approaches of CDA and corpus linguistics. CDA focuses on three main objectives (Fowler 1987): to study texts in their social context, to reveal the ideology underlying the texts, and to point out the effect the choice of particular words rather than others has on the meaning and tone conveyed. Using corpus linguistics can help with the second and third of these aims (Hunston 2002).

Combining corpus linguistics with critical discourse analysis usually involves several stages. These include compiling a corpus to allow investigation of research questions, using software and corpus linguistics techniques to calculate frequency lists, keywords, and collocations, examining concordances qualitatively to determine patterns and comparing the results from this purpose-built corpus to a large reference corpus to provide context (Mautner 2009). How this procedure was used for this paper will be described in the next section.

4. Procedure

The earthquake and tsunami naturally resulted in a great deal of media attention to the disaster. The initial media focus on the natural disaster gradually shifted to stories about the nuclear disaster at Fukushima and eventually began to be replaced in foreign news reports by stories about Libya and the Arab Spring. Because of this, a decision was made to focus on the two weeks following the disaster, in which the disaster in Japan was a major story in world media sources. A LexisNexis search was made for the keywords Japan and earthquake for the period from March 11th, 2011 to March 25th, 2011 from the following sources: CNN. com, The New York Times, The Guardian, The Daily Mail, MSNBC.com, The Daily Yomiuri, and The Japan Times.

The corpus was then edited to remove articles which mentioned the Japanese earthquake in passing but were mainly about other subjects. Other articles appeared twice, especially in The Daily Mail sub-corpus, which included articles from both The Daily Mail and The Mail On Sunday. These duplicates were also removed.

A list of keywords for the corpus was then created. There are several different definitions of keywords including cultural keywords, corpus-based cultural keywords, and corpus-comparative statistical keywords (O'Halloran 2010). This paper will focus on corpus-comparative keywords, which are words which are statistically more frequent in a particular corpus than in a more general reference corpus (Mautner 2009). For this study, keywords were calculated using Wordsmith Tools 6.0 (Scott 2012) with the Open American National Corpus (OANC) as a reference corpus.

Collocations of selected words were then calculated. Collocations are combinations which appear in a

corpus more often than would be expected based on the frequency of the individual parts of the collocation (Kjellmer 1982, Kennedy 1998). Collocation can be measured by a variety of statistical measures including t-score or MI score. Because using t-score results in an emphasis on high-frequency grammatical words, MI score was used to calculate these collocates (Hunston 2002, Mautner 2007). These collocations were then examined to shed further light on the discourse used in reporting of the 2011 disaster.

However, simply looking at collocates can be misleading. It was necessary to closely examine occurrences of these words in the corpus to determine in which context they were being used. This is essential when using corpus linguistics in combination with a CDA approach, in which context is especially important. Looking at a concordance allows more specific and detailed observations to be made (Hunston 2002).

In addition, selections from articles which deal more explicitly with the behaviour of Japanese people in the days after the disaster and which sometimes contain direct comparisons to other disasters will be examined closely. This analysis will be carried out using a framework based on a CDA approach, based on the ideas of Fairclough (2003) and Van Leeuwen (1995, 2008). As mentioned above, this will include a discussion of how news reports represented both events and social actors and how they used evaluative language and comparisons to other disasters. This paper will also examine how articles about the disaster in Japan refer to other disasters. In addition to explicit references, media representations of past disasters form part of the context through which the audience will interpret these reports.

5.　Limits of This Paper and Possibilities for Further Research

The sources for the corpus were chosen to give a mix of Japanese, American, and British sources. Unfortunately, only English language Japanese media was included. Although the corpus included two Japanese newspapers, the present paper will focus on how the disaster was reported in American and British media. A possibility for further research would be to examine the discourse surrounding the disaster in Japanese language media and how it reflects cultural beliefs.

In addition, this study originally included data on the representation of the nuclear crisis in Fukushima. Although the natural disaster and the nuclear crisis were obviously closely linked, the media narratives were very different. However, for reasons of space, it was necessary to limit the present paper to a discussion of how a representation of the natural disaster was constructed in the Western media.

6.　Results and Analysis

In this section, four themes will be examined and discussed further. Some words were selected for analysis from the keyword lists, as discussed above. Other words were chosen because of their associations with disaster myths or with Japanese stereotypes.

These four themes are words related to panic and fear, words related to calm and stoicism, words related to crime and looting, and references to other disasters. A number of words connected with panic and fear appear as keywords in the corpus. Words such as calm and stoicism were selected for study because of their importance in stereotypes of the Japanese and because an examination of texts in the corpus seemed to

show that these kinds of words were being used to characterize victims of the disaster. The group of words related to crime was chosen because the prevalence of disaster myths in media reports of previous disasters raises the question of whether or not these ideas about behaviour following a disaster appear in reports about the 3/11 disaster. Finally, the corpus was also searched for references to other disasters such as Hurricane Katrina to examine how the media placed events in Japan in the context of disasters in general.

6.1. Panic and Fear

As discussed above, there is a belief that panic is common in the aftermath of a disaster. Although panic has actually been found to be rare in these situations, the media often perpetuates this disaster myth. Because of this tendency, it was decided to investigate how the media used the ideas of panic and fear in reporting the 3/11 disaster.

The term "panic" does not appear on the complete keyword list. However, it does appear as a keyword in the subcorpus of non-Japanese news sources, perhaps indicating that panic was more of a theme in the American and British media than in the Japanese. There are sixty occurrences of "panic" in the non-Japanese news sources subcorpus, with a keyness of 186.81.

Although this may give the impression that there was widespread panic in Japan, a closer look at the results presents a different picture. Included among the collocates of "panic" were "no" and "not". In fact, sixteen of the references to panic were actually references to a lack of panic, as shown below:

> Even in the most horrific videos, you don't hear screaming. In place of the stampedes and panic that often accompany national catastrophe, in Japan you see neighbors coolly helping neighbors, noodle shops offering free meals, grocery stores lowering prices and consumers voluntarily rationing. (CNN. com, March 18, 2011)

> First Lieutenant Hideo Amagai, of the Self-Defence Forces, said his unit arrived on Sunday night and rescued 200 people. "They have been extremely calm and polite. There is no sense of panic. People don't shout 'Help!', they ask, 'Please assist me'." (The Guardian, March 16, 2011)

Many of the other references to panic are not related to the reaction to the natural disaster. For example, many instances are referring to panic in other countries. Many of the references to panic in Japan are to "panic-buying" of gasoline, food, and medicine or are mainly associated with the nuclear crisis in Fukushima. There were only seven instances of "panic" which can be said to be connected with the natural disaster.

1	and flow into the room. In a **panic** to reach the roof, younger residents began p
2	Mutko Chiva said. "I'm so scared. I am **panicked**." Prime Minister Naoto Kan
3	around. Traffic snarled the streets as **panicked** drivers crashed into one another.
4	minister, Naoto Kan, stared in growing **panic** as the tremors intensified. Outside,
5	hills!' The official's words sparked mass **panic**. Without pausing to gather even
6	water rushing into the first floor. Patients **panicked**, surgeon Dr. Yashuhiko
7	his life when his vehicle became trapped in the **panic**. LOAD-DATE: March 15,

All seven examples refer to panic at the moment the earthquake or tsunami occurred, except for the second one. In this example, a woman has been rescued after spending three days trapped in an office building following the earthquake. Aside from this instance, there are no references to panic as a reaction to the aftermath of the earthquake and tsunami.

Although "panic" was not found as a keyword for the full corpus, one related subset of keywords found in the corpus is of words associated with fear and anxiety. Examination of how these words are used in the media may also give an indication of how the feelings and attitudes of Japanese people are represented. Keywords related to this theme can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1.

Keyword	No. of occurrences		Keyness
fears	148		515.63
concern	156		252.23
worried	96		192.96
feared	44		106.04
anxiety	51		105.51
concerned	85		55.37
uncertainty	41		33.86

The appearance of these terms in the keyword list gives the impression that fear and worry were an important part of the events in Japan. However, it was found that although words like "nuclear", "reactor", and "radiation" frequently appeared as collocates, "tsunami" and "earthquake" were less common collocates. These results seem to indicate that fear was most closely related to the nuclear disaster at Fukushima and not part of the narrative of the initial natural disaster. Although social disorder is a common component of disaster myths, words such as "crime" and "looting" did not appear in the lists of collocates. This may indicate that panic and fear of social breakdown, which normally is an aspect of media reports of disasters, was not present in the 3/11 disaster narrative.

For example, there are 43 occurrences of the phrases "fears of" in the corpus. Thirty-six of these are followed by a term related to the problems in Fukushima, including "fallout", "radiation", and "meltdown". Despite what might be expected from disaster myths, there are no references to "fears of looting", "fears of crime", or other similar terms. It can be seen from the way in which terms such as "panic", "fear", and other related words are used in the corpus that the media did not focus on a narrative of panic as a reaction to the natural disaster of the earthquake and tsunami. It was not until a few days later when the nuclear crisis began to worsen that a panic narrative began to appear in the news.

In contrast to an atmosphere of panic and fear, reactions to the disaster were often described as calm and stoic. The next section will examine the use of such terms more closely.

6.2. Calm and Stoicism

A sense of calmness and order with which the Japanese faced the destruction was a major theme in media descriptions of the events. This was often contrasted with behaviour in other disasters such as Hurricane Katrina.

The word "calm" appears 68 times in the corpus, omitting examples which refer to the weather or the ocean. There are also 21 occurrences of "calmly" and three occurrences of "calmness". There were also nine occurrences of "stoic", "stoical", and "stoicism". These examples can be divided into two main categories. One of these includes calls for people to remain calm, primarily in the context of quotes from Chief Cabinet Secretary Yukio Edano or Prime Minister Naoto Kan. This call for calm referred to growing worry about the out-of-control nuclear reactors in Fukushima and not to the natural disaster. Other examples refer to efforts to calm investors and the financial markets. The other main category involves descriptions of the behaviour of Japanese people following the disaster, as can be seen in the following concordance lines.

1   and understated Emperor Akihito, in a **calm** and poignant oration delivered from
2   ocks continue. As he left, Ben spoke of a "**calm** chaos." It is true that faced with
3   are crucial and a sense of order and **calm** dominates daily life, but they were pani
4   or cries of children, remain subdued and **calm**. Japan's Emperor Akihito, in an
5   surrounding them, the crowds appeared **calm** and orderly. But more destruction
6   surrounding them, the crowds appeared **calm** and orderly, even as stores ratione
7   the government about whether he is being as **calm** and level-headed as he is call
8   rescued 200 people. "They have been extremely **calm** and polite. There is no sense
9   say their citizens are impressed with how **calm** the Japanese people have remai
10 of other stranded travelers. "Everyone is **calm**. People are trying to rest," she s
11 and he has walked the decks and all is **calm** on board," the cruise line's website
12 for that matter, across the country -- is **calm**. David Kitts, a licensed acupunctur
13 effects." As authorities tried to maintain **calm** in Tokyo, residents were racing
14 of Sendai have maintained a sense of **calm**. This is perhaps due less to the emot
15 management merely trying to keep people **calm**? And it was then that, without
16 It's natural that they try to keep people **calm**, do everything possible and not g
17 major outbursts, and people have stayed really **calm**." A video he shot on board
18 "The Japanese character is to remain **calm**," Mr. Stringer said. "There is no tim
19 many since childhood. So I remained **calm** when the shaking started on the sixt
20 is an orderly mass departure. Remaining **calm**, a mark of Japanese civility even
21 in 100 years, can the Japanese seem so **calm**? Food and water are both scarce.
22 of this blackout, but most people stay **calm**. Most accept the government's expla
23 accustomed to order and schooled to stay **calm** and constructive. "The few shops
24 not abandoning their city, is one of stoic **calm**. There is determination that life
25 were wearing when the tsunami struck is the **calm** with which they are acceptin
26 was being abandoned, in stark contrast to the **calm** maintained by Japanese m
27 Alt, who lives in Tokyo. "My wife was the **calm** one. ... She told us to get down
28 The scene around the building was like very **calm**, the search and rescue crews
29 rescue crews seemed to operate at a very **calm**, collected pace," Philipp said. "It
30 in the last few days, the people seem very **calm**," she said. Many families are fo
31 to New York for the procedure. But he was **calm** -- the electronics and media gi

The use of "calm", "calmly", and "calmness" to describe Japanese actions connotes a strong positive evaluation. Some examples of this are shown below:

Indeed, on the outskirts of the town, many feet above sea level, life continued with astonishing normality. People shopped, walked to work, chatted calmly on street corners. (Daily Mail, March 16, 2011)

What is most impressive about these people who have lost absolutely everything except the clothes they were wearing when the tsunami struck is the calm with which they are accepting their dire predicament. They might weep quietly, wring their hands to release some pent-up feelings, but there are no furious demands for action from the authorities. They sit and they wait. (Daily Mail, March 17, 2011)

As can be seen in the second and third examples, this calmness is seen as something unusual, "astonishing", and "impressive". As previously discussed, the idea that panic inevitably follows a disaster is a widely accepted part of popular discourse. By presenting Japanese behaviour as exceptional, the writers of these articles can create a more newsworthy story that connects with stereotypes of the Japanese as unemotional and stoic. These stereotypes of the Japanese character can be seen in these selected extracts, with the Japanese people described as "stoical, self- disciplined, highly organised and resourceful" (Daily Mail, March 16, 2011) and "patient, reserved, and stoic" (New York Times, March 16, 2011). There are also references to "stoic calm" (Mail On Sunday, March 20, 2011), "quiet stoicism" (New York Times, March 17, 2011), and "selflessness, stoicism and discipline" (New York Times, March 20, 2011). This evaluative language often refers to "the Japanese". Individuals are sometimes named, but usually as an example of an idealized "Japanese". One effect of using individuals as examples of a generic group such as "the Japanese" is to present a stereotype of that group which minimizes individual differences.

Further examples of the stoic stereotype can be seen in the following concordance lines, which all appeared in foreign newspapers.

1   have a reputation as patient, reserved, and **stoic**, but "now there are too many h
2   self-control of the Japanese means they are **stoic** in the face of this historic disast
3   Jones, who has reported on the awesome **stoicism** of the Japanese, asks, with so
4   me for not abandoning their city, is one of **stoic** calm. There is determination tha
5   the privations with a similar mood of quiet **stoicism**, and the strong sense of com
6   more tightly than ever. The selflessness, **stoicism** and discipline in Japan these
7   the Blitz. But while marvelling at their **stoicism**, I couldn't help wondering how
8   the Japanese don't really need it, for these **stoical**, self-disciplined, highly organi
9   even heard a few assertions that they're **stoic** -- experts say this is what keeps t

The frequent characterization of the Japanese as "calm", "stoic", and "orderly", in combination with terms related to panic and fear rarely being used in connection with the initial natural disaster, shows that the media appears to have covered the Japanese disaster differently than the way they covered disasters in other

contexts.

6.3. Crime and Looting

As previously discussed, media reports often focus on occurrences of looting and other crime following a disaster. This includes accounts of looting, stories about residents defending themselves from possible looting, or even reports that there was a surprising lack of looting. This is all despite the fact that looting rarely occurs.

In coverage of the disaster in Japan, this "looting frame" was not often part of the narrative. Only nine examples of the word "looting" were found in the corpus.

1   seek to make capital out of it. **Looting** I saw this happen for myself in America

2   orderly and friendly, and crimes like **looting** are largely unheard of. This commu

3   relief efforts continue nonstop, and no **looting** has been reported. Away from the

4   struck by the collective discipline: no **looting**, or rioting, or overt panic. This was

5   disasters where the world has observed **looting**, rioting and public outbursts of s

6   food." There have been instances of **looting** at supermarkets and liquor stores.

7   Katrina, there have been no reports of **looting** in Japan. Some supermarkets are

8   looked everywhere for an example of people **looting** merchandise from one of the

9   floodwater for days. There was widespread **looting**. In the football stadium where

These nine examples show that when the media focused on the theme of looting it was only to say that there had been no looting in Japan or to talk about looting in other places such as New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina. In addition, there were only five examples of the words "crime" or "criminal" in the corpus, two of which were in the same sentence.

1   he said. "I feel sorry for them but a **crime** is a crime." The humanitarian crisis is

2   or to eat," he said. "I feel sorry for them but a crime is a **crime**." The humanitarian

3   zone, there have been few reports so far of **crime** or violence, though several refug

4   alive. I can't die now because of some **criminal** out there." Captions: An evacuee

5   sporadic reports of theft and violent **crime**. "It's only natural that people get frust

In fact, all of these examples come from two articles in the Guardian, which seems to have been the only newspaper which reported on crime in the disaster area. Although the Guardian articles seem to indicate that there was at least some crime, it was not reported by the other newspapers in this study. The general media trend was to instead comment on the apparent lack of crime and compare it to other disasters.

6.4. References to Other Disasters

News reports on the disaster in Japan frequently made reference to other disasters. To investigate how these references were used by the media, the corpus was searched for occurrences of the terms "Katrina", "Haiti", "New Zealand", and "other disasters". There were several comparisons of the behaviour of people in

Japan with the behaviour of people involved in other disasters.

1	rica after Hurricanes Rita and **Katrina**. So many bogus claims for federal aid
2	natural disaster of 2005 - Hurricane **Katrina**. In the aftermath, workers in New
3	ral disaster of 2005 - Hurricane **Katrina**. In the wake of the devastating earthqu
4	week with the aftermath of Hurricane **Katrina** in New Orleans (when looters an
5	in the U.S. in the wake of Hurricane **Katrina**, there have been no reports of looti
6	Plight of quake victims renews **Katrina** questions BYLINE: Arthur Caplan, Ph.D
7	missing loved ones. But unlike **other disasters** where the world has observed lo

As can be seen from these concordance lines, other disasters such as Katrina are associated in media representations with looting and crime. Comparisons are made between events in Japan and what has happened in other countries, using terms such as "unlike in the U.S. in the wake of Hurricane Katrina" and "unlike other disasters".

Portrayals of the Japanese as calm and stoic were often used as a contrast with behaviour after other disasters such as Hurricane Katrina. For example, a reference to "selflessness, stoicism and discipline" in the New York Times comes from an article titled "The Japanese Could Teach Us a Thing or Two". In addition, a March 25th Daily Mail story is headlined "David Jones, who has reported on the awesome stoicism of the Japanese, asks, with some despair...how would Britain have coped with a tsunami?" The writer continues:

For an Englishman of a certain age, one of the ironies in all this is that the Japanese, who were to become our enemies in the war, are today showing precisely the sort of forbearance and unity that saw Londoners through the Blitz.
But while marvelling at their stoicism, I couldn't help wondering how we in modern-day Britain might react if stricken by a disaster of similar proportions.
Of course, one would like to think we would display the sort of selflessness I have encountered in Japan. We may have done so during the war, and the hard years of rationing that followed it, but at the risk of sounding unpatriotic, I doubt we would do so today.

This author connects these kinds of descriptions with stereotypes about the Japanese character. For example, "In Japan, however, they don't 'do' heroes. Glorifying the individual is simply not their way. Nor is it done to disclose intimate personal details, or express one's innermost feelings". Other descriptions of "the Japanese" in the same article include "hospitable to guests", "orderly", "sticklers for neatness", and "obsessive about hygiene".

Even when direct comparisons are not made, many of the readers will previously have read articles about disasters such as Hurricane Katrina with their exaggerated depictions of social disorder. This will form part of the perspective through which news about the events in Japan is consumed. As a result, words such as "calm" and "stoic", as well as actions like "offering free meals" and "volunteering rationing" will form an implicit contrast with readers' images of other disasters.

7. Conclusion

Following a disaster, it is common for reporting to focus on disaster myths. There is an idea that social disorder, crime, and panic are usual reactions to a disaster. This could be seen in the reporting of disasters such as Hurricane Katrina. However, in the case of the earthquake and tsunami in Japan, a different narrative was presented by the non-Japanese media. This narrative focused on the apparently surprising calm and lack of crime which was seen in Japan.

Building on the findings of the corpus analysis, close analysis of texts revealed how the non-Japanese media represented Japanese behaviour. For example, the corpus analysis revealed that terms such as "calm" and "stoic", references to a lack of crime, and comparisons to other disasters were part of the discourse used in reporting the natural disaster in the non-Japanese media. However, a qualitative analysis of individual texts was also necessary to examine how these parts of the discourse were used in context and how they combined with each other to form a representation of the events in Japan.

This analysis indicated that the non-Japanese media often referred to the Japanese as a homogeneous group, and examples of individual Japanese were given to provide support for this representation of "the Japanese". This idealized representation of Japanese behaviour was rooted in common stereotypes of the Japanese. In these articles, the Japanese people are frequently referred to collectively as "Japan" or "the Japanese". They are described as being clean, calm, stoic, and putting the collective before the individual. In this media representation of the Japanese people, it is something inherent in the Japanese character that is responsible for their ideal behaviour.

The representation of Japanese behaviour in the non-Japanese media was compared to the accepted narrative of other disasters. It was accepted that other disasters resulted in crimes such as looting. However, this was not seen in Japan. This lack of the expected behaviour was used as a way to make stories interesting and newsworthy and also as a way to criticize the behaviour of people following other disasters. An idealized and stereotypical image of the Japanese was seen as a model for how people in America and Britain should behave.

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