‘Typically Japanese’

An analysis of stereotypes and disaster myths: The manifestation of Western Orientalist preconceptions of the Japanese within photographs of the 2011 Tōhoku disasters

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The Orient was almost a European invention, and had been since antiquity a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences.
-- Edward Saïd, *Orientalism* (1978, 1)

Preface and acknowledgements

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Abstract

This research deals with how stereotypes about Japanese people manifest themselves in news photographs published in Western media. Hopefully this thesis will also shed a bit of light on how qualitative data analysis methods can be applied not only to textual narratives, but also to (news) photographs.

On March 11, 2011, Japan suffered two disasters. Off the Pacific coast of Tōhoku, the most powerful earthquake in Japan's recorded history occurred (9.0 on the Richter scale). As a result, the eastern coasts of Japan were hit by devastating tsunami waves, killing around 15,000 people. Another disaster quickly followed. Because of the quake and tsunami, there were level 7 meltdowns at the nuclear reactors in the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant complex. It would be the largest nuclear incident since the 1986 Chernobyl disaster.

It goes without saying that this was a major news story. But after a while, the discussion in the Western media seemed to shift from actual disaster reporting to assumptions about the Japanese mentality. Blatant stereotypes about Japanese people became more and more apparent in stories about the disaster. Stereotypes not only appeared in the textual narrative, but could also be found within its accompanying images. So it is within the photographs of Japanese people dealing with the tsunami and nuclear disaster that this research attempts to uncover certain stereotypical cues and tropes. These cues and tropes ultimately contribute to the collective manifestations of stereotypes about Japanese people.

Current psychological theory conceptualizes stereotypes as cognitive structures or schemas that represent widely shared beliefs about the defining characteristics of social groups. The media most commonly use stereotypical categorizations of individuals or groups based on race or ethnicity, nationality, religion, gender, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, employment, and age. These stereotypes are automatically activated when audiences encounter cues or symbols in mass media, according to Peffley, Shields and Williams (1996) and Abraham and Appiah (2006).

Stereotypes about Eastern people and cultures in particular have been widely researched. Edward Saïd first posited the revolutionary theoretical framework of Orientalism, which is how he coined the particular form that Western stereotypical understandings of Asian cultures has taken. He, and many other experts, claim that this Orientalism has evolved into a cultural myth permeating Western thought. It has been articulated through metaphors which characterize the East in ways which emphasize its strangeness and otherness. The Oriental person is made up of a single image which carries with it the taint of inferiority.

Kathleen Tierney and Erica Kuligowski postulate that the media help enforce already existing disaster myths among the general public and organizational actors. Examples of such myths are the notions that disasters are accompanied by looting, social disorganization, panic, and deviant behavior. This is relevant because the Japanese people after the disaster seemed to subvert many of those myths. Surprisingly, this subversion was seen as conformation of the Japanese supposedly stoic yet respectful nature, therefore affirming Orientalist stereotypes.

Through the application of these theories and a qualitative data analysis of a selection of 200 images, this research uncovers how stereotypical cues and tropes about Japanese people manifest themselves in these photographs. Whether or not Western news media possess that knowledge and thus deliberately choose to photographs with stereotypical elements, however, are two wholly different questions.

1. Introduction

On March 11 2011, disaster struck the Pacific coast of Japan in the form of a massive earthquake (9.0 on the Richter scale) and the resulting tsunami. Another disaster quickly followed, this one nuclear. Because of the quake and tsunami, there were level 7 meltdowns at the nuclear reactors in the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant complex, the largest nuclear incident since Chernobyl in 1986.

Behind all of this, there were many human stories to tell- 15,000 people lost their lives and many more lost their homes, and in the meantime plant workers struggled to prevent an even bigger disaster. And it is precisely these human stories that make for compelling journalism. Photography plays a huge part in disaster reporting as the cliché rings true: “A picture says more than a thousand words”.

Disaster photographs tend to focus on either the desolation, the massive scale of destruction, or it zooms in on human suffering. It is in the latter sort in which I intend to delve deeper. Since natural disasters are far more common in ‘Eastern’ parts of the world than in Europe, most people affected by disasters do not necessarily look like the ‘us’ who permeate our daily lives and the media we consume. Therefore, disaster photography often features what we in Western eyes regard as the ‘Other’ or ‘them’: a key concept in Continental philosophy opposing the ‘Same’ or ‘us’, often denoting a person Other than one's self; hence, the Other is identified as ‘different’; thus the spelling is often capitalized (Saïd 2003). In the case of images of the Sendai disasters, looking through a Western lens, the Others are the Japanese people seen in those photographs. This othering makes it difficult for Western audiences to relate to and sympathize with the Japanese people affected by the tsunami, and easy to apply upon them any preconceived notions they have about the Japanese, or Asians in general.

We saw this application of preconceived notions happen in the Dutch media- at some point the discussion seemed to shift from actual disaster reporting to assumptions about the Japanese mentality during this disaster. A mere two weeks after the tsunami an article called ‘Japanese also cry’ appeared in the Dutch newspaper *De Volkskrant*, in which reporter Malou van Hintum interviewed Leiden University Japan expert Henny van der Veere (incorrectly called ‘Van der Veer’ in the article). Van Hintum wrote that the Japanese people affected by the disaster seemed very calm, quiet, even stoical, and asked Van der Veere if that was something ‘typically Japanese’. The expert replied that this manner of categorizing the Japanese was indicative of Western stereotypical thought, rather than an truthful description of the Japanese response to the disaster. There is no such thing as ‘the [typical]’ Japanese person, in the same way ‘the [typical]’ Dutch person does not exist, Van der Veere says. Van Hintum later claims that given the cultural and religious background of the Japanese, ‘they’ must be different from ‘us’. Van der Veere sharply responded: “Many Westerners think that we have the technological knowledge, and that reflection comes from the East. Nonsense. Many people are disappointed when they first visit Japan. It is not the oasis of mystical wisdom they had pictured it to be. Japan is a modern western society, the third economy in the world. A country with a strict separation of church and state” (Van Hintum 2011).

Another example: during an episode of the popular talk show *De Wereld Draait Door,* visiting physicist Diederik Jekel and host Matthijs van Nieuwkerk had the following exchange about the so-called 'Fukushima Fifty'[1] plant workers fighting to prevent a nuclear disaster.

> Jekel: "[Despite the danger], the thought of abandoning their post is inconceivable to them. That said, these people are selected [for this job] precisely because they have this attitude. They are trained a lot, and we can only have respect for them---"
>
> Van Nieuwkerk: [interrupting] "---That seems like a typically Japanese thing to me."
>
> Jekel: "But they are watched carefully. There seems to be this sort of kamikaze[2]-like vibe, so to speak." (*De Wereld Draait Door,* 2011)

These are not isolated instances. In Western media, there exists a long tradition of perpetuating stereotypes about the Japanese. Japan regularly makes international headlines because of bizarre stories like the man who had supposedly stolen 700 girls' gym shoes, after which he cooked them and - topped with rice and egg - sold as food. This particular story was completely made up by *Kyoko Shimbun*, a fake news website (Poole 2011), but was widely picked up by international news media. Another such story circulated around the same time about a new craze among Japanese schoolgirls called 'LED smiles'. This supposed craze had Japanese schoolgirls wearing LED lights in their mouths as dental accessories. *The Daily Mail, The Guardian* and *The New York Times* ran this story without ever questioning its legitimacy. And again, this story proved to be completely false. In reality, the LED lights had been used as part of a promotional campaign for a fashion store in Tokyo (Matsutani & Lee 2011; Poole 2011). And more recently, news media ran the story of Japanese teenagers licking each other's eyeballs, thus spreading eye infections. Another false story (Burger 2013).

These examples are few among many. Why do news media pick up these easily debunked stories? These examples show that Japan is often thought of as an exotic and even bizarre country, one with a completely different, almost alien culture and society. In that strange country live a strange people who do strange things like cook gym shoes. The way the Japanese express emotion is also different from us- they are stoic even in the face of peril and are hyper-disciplined to the point of working themselves to death. And of a country thought to be so strange, the most bizarre false-

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[1] 'Fukushima Fifty' is the pseudonym given by the media to a group of employees at the troubled Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant. After 750 workers were evacuated from the site after the series of nuclear accidents caused a serious fire, fifty men remained on-site despite their safety being at risk. According to the Prime Minister at the time, Naoto Kan, they were "prepared for death". Afterwards, additional manpower was deployed from around Japan and hundreds of firemen, Special Defense Force personnel and Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO) employees joined the original Fukushima Fifty to stabilize the plant. The name stuck despite the figure having become incorrect.

[2] The kamikaze ('spirit wind'; common translation: 'divine wind') were suicide attacks by military aviators from the Empire of Japan against Allied naval vessels in the closing stages of the Pacific campaign of World War II, designed to destroy warships more efficiently than was possible with conventional attacks.

hoods are readily presented as factual news stories and readily believed as true. And so even high profile news media like *De Volkskrant* and *The New York Times* perpetuate these cultural myths about Japan.

These are examples widespread of stereotypical beliefs and assumptions about a certain ethnic group having taken root in our Western society. Japan has a long history being the object of the Western gaze and being exoticized by it. Westerners have long fantasized about this little country so far away. From the famous traveller Marco Polo in the thirteenth century, who described Japan as a land full of gold and other riches (Harada 2006), to the first tangible European encounters with the Japanese in the sixteenth and seventeenth century and to present day, numerous accounts and representations of Japan in different forms of art and media have been filled with cliches and stereotypes, consistently categorizing not only Japanese people, but Japan itself as the strange, exotic, bizarre and sometimes dangerous Other (Levick 2005).

Now, not all stereotypes are inherently harmful. It is generally not until stereotypes are used in negative ways that it becomes problematic, potentially leading to discrimination and intolerance of certain (ethnic) groups of people. And so it is important to understand how these stereotypes, positive or negative, are perpetuated in the media.

Because while some think that stereotypes come from personal interaction, in reality they are often acquired indirectly from exposure to mass media, who are powerful in developing, reinforcing, and validating stereotypical beliefs and expectations concerning certain groups, particularly when the audience's personal experience with those groups is limited (La Ferle and Lee, 2005). "Stereotypical images found in media messages are easily accepted because they are usually simple and have little ambiguity. They act as self-perpetuating expectations about groups and their members, by directing attention to information that is consistent with the stereotypes. Information that is inconsistent, on the other hand, tends to be ignored, discounted, or interpreted so that it confirms the initial impression" (Peffley et al. 1996, 311). And so it is especially problematic when the mass media perpetuate harmful stereotypes about minority groups, further contributing to their marginalized status.

But what is the origin of these stereotypes? How does a country become the object of Western fantasy? Stuart Hall (1997a) writes that 'things' acquire meaning when they are given a meaning by talking about them, thinking about them, feeling about them, classifying and conceptualizing them and representing them. Meaning is given by how things are represented - through stories, emotions, words and images. Things, or in this case, Japan and the Japanese people, acquire meaning once they are placed into a certain interpretative framework. And this framework employed by the West to describe, make sense of, and give meaning to Japan is called Orientalism. Edward Saïd coined this term in his monumental book *Orientalism,* first published in 1978. Although more than thirty years has passed since its initial publication, Saïd's work is just as relevant today as it was in 1978. It has been acknowledged as one of the most important and influential scholarly works in the humanities since the 1970s (Lockman 2010). Until his passing in 2003, Saïd maintained that Orientalism had continued to be the dominant mode of viewing and representing the Eastern world (Gray 2009).

Since *Orientalism* was published, the media landscape has greatly changed. The media have become increasingly important in shaping people's knowledge and images of the world (Hjarvard 2008). The media provide a 'window on the world', constantly reflecting and constructing cultural and social life (Smith & Bell 2007). Silverstone (2007) argues that most of us see the world and its people mainly or only through the media. Especially audiovisual media have the power to influence and shape ideas, images and perceptions consumers hold of other countries and people they will probably never visit and/or interact with (Haynes 2007). Alongside these media developments, Orientalism as a theoretical framework has evolved into an 'intriguing and compelling paradigm' not only suited to analyze representations of non-Western Otherness in literature, but also in film and on television (Bernstein 1997). This theoretical framework, then, can surely also be applied to im-

ages.

During this research, news photographs of Japanese people within the desolation after the Tōhoku disasters will be analyzed, attempting to find stereotypical cues or symbols. This will be done using theories of Orientalism, disaster myths, and stereotypical portrayals of ethnic groups. While there has been plenty of research done about the perpetuation of ethnic stereotypes in Western media such as television programs, news broadcasts, movies, and so forth, not as much attention has been given to the stereotypes manifested within images and photographs of Othered people (in this case, the Japanese). Thus, this study will hopefully add to the existing paradigm.

Eventually this research aims to answer the following research question:

"How do existing Western preconceptions and stereotypes about the Japanese manifest themselves within the photographs taken of the 2011 Tōhoku disasters?"

To answer this question, a qualitative content analysis of news photographs of Japanese people dealing with the consequences of the tsunami and nuclear disaster will be conducted. These news photographs must be published in Western media. But to properly answer this question, several sub questions must first be dealt with, of which the first one is:

1. "Employing the theoretical framework of Orientalism, which stereotypical tropes, cues, and symbols emanate from the photographs taken of Japanese people in the 2011 Tōhoku disasters?"

Secondly, the existing disaster myths and how they may add to furthering stereotyping and marginalization must be analyzed. Therefore, the second sub question is:

2. "How are disaster myths perpetrated by the media, and how do the Japanese in these photographs encourage and/or subvert these myths?"

In order to answer these questions, this thesis has been divided into six chapters. The next chapter, chapter two, provides outlines of the theoretical frameworks used in this research. The chapter first produces a broad outline of Orientalism a way of representing the Other with special focus given to Japan. Attention will next be given to stereotypes and their perpetuation by the media. A concrete overview of stereotypes about Japan and the Japanese will also be provided. Finally, in the second chapter light will be shed on disaster myths in the media. Having thus completed the theoretical framework, the third chapter explores the research method employed: qualitative discourse analysis. Some of the more problematic elements of this method will also be discussed. Chapter four provides a thorough account of the coding process, the research findings, and the analysis itself before moving on to conclusions and a discussion in chapter five.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1. Orientalism

This research makes extensive use of theories on Orientalism, which is widely regarded to be the dominant Western discourse about the 'East'. Employed by many scholars researching a wide variety of subjects throughout the years, Orientalism is an extremely valuable tool in analyzing media representations of Japan, as the following paragraphs will illustrate.

2.1.1. Edward Saïd's *Orientalism*

In 1978, Edward Saïd published *Orientalism,* a monumental book on the nature of Western thought regarding the 'East', or the 'Orient'. It is a ponderous tome, not only because Orientalism is a difficult concept to grasp, but also because of Saïd's elusive writing style. But generally speaking, Orientalism can be regarded as the dominant Western discourse about the Orient; in other words, 'Eastern' countries not part of the 'West'. Saïd claims the Orient is "an integral part of European material civilization and culture", and Orientalism expresses "that part culturally and even ideologically as a mode of discourse with supporting institutions, vocabulary, scholarship, imagery, doctrines, even colonial bureaucracies and colonial styles" (Saïd 2003, 1-2). In short: Orientalism gives word and meaning to, and therefore represents and constructs the Orient and its difference or Otherness compared to the West.

The Orient cannot simply be defined geographically. For where on the European continent would it start? The existence of the Orient and the Occident as opposite entities are human ideas, Saïd stresses (2003). Europe itself is not a geographical entity but an idea, while the Orient was created by the history of "thought, imagery, and vocabulary that gave it reality and presence in and for the West" (2003, 5). However, Orientalist discourse not only draws from this 'imaginative geography' that is the Orient, but also represents and constructs it as a political and cultural entity" (Bernstein 1997). And thus the Orient was created by the West "through the very operation of the discourse of Orientalism, which defined its object in a certain way, produced widely accepted 'truths' about it, and thereby made a certain representation of it appear real" (Lockman 2010, 188). So the idea of 'us', Westerners, as fundamentally different from 'them', the Orientals, was born into the world. Orientalism promoted the notion that Europe and the Orient were essentially radically different from one another (Lockman 2010). Therefore, Orientalism can be thought of as a "style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between 'the Orient' and (most of the time) 'the Occident'" (Saïd 2003, 2). This means that all Orientalist representations flow from this assumed distinction between West and East.

But the Orient was not solely seen as different from the West. It was also seen as inferior, an idea also implemented by Orientalist discourse. This is why Orientalism creates an Other, which is a "psychological foil created as a repository for characteristics, ideas and urges that one wishes to disown" (Gray 2009, 223-224). This makes Others projections of what we Westerners do not want to be. That Saïd, Orientalism is almost never solely based on aversion, but is rather a mix of fascination and repulsion. Orientalism is "profoundly ambivalent, part fascination and part disdain, oscillating between attraction and repulsion" (Nederveen Pieterse 2009, 123). The relationship between 'East' and 'West' as constructed by Orientalism is "a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of a complex hegemony" (Saïd 2003, 5). And from this idea of domination, of difference, of this Orientalist lens we gaze through that many scholarly works, literature, but also popular contemporary media texts have flowed.

Orientalism is not just a Western myth or fantasy, but rather a 'system of knowledge' (or discourse) about the Orient, through which the Orient is 'filtered' through to the Western conscious-

ness (Saïd 2003). But making sense of the unknown or strange, or the 'domestication of the exotic' is a normal human activity, according to Saïd. But in Orientalism this process of domestication lead to a limited vocabulary to describe Others. And so "Orientalism has been a sort of consensus: certain things, certain types of statement, certain types of work have seemed for the Orientalist correct. Orientalism can thus be regarded as a manner of regularized (or Orientalized) writing, vision, and study, dominated by imperatives, perspectives, and ideological biases ostensibly suited to the Orient" (Saïd 2003, 202). This regularized representation of the Orient has resulted in the normalization and acceptance of certain words, phrases and images in particular. These images function as symbols or representations of large groups of people, who would without these images be difficult to understand or comprehend. Such images tied to Japan are for example the geisha, the ninja and the samurai.

Orientalism as a system of discourse or knowledge is empowered by two things. First, by cultural hegemony and second, by its reliance on the distinction between Westerners, 'us', and non-Westerners, 'them' (Saïd 2003). Through the production, circulation and consumption of culture and media, cultural hegemony is created. The idea of 'us' and 'them' is - sometimes subtly, sometimes not-so-subtly - promoted by a vast array of media texts, from movies and television to literature and magazines. Orientalism can be found anywhere. And at the same time, nuance must be added: Orientalism is not simply a large collection of texts about the Orient, but rather a

> "*distribution* of geopolitical awareness into aesthetic, scholarly, economic, sociological, historical and philological texts; it is an *elaboration* not only of a basic geographical distinction [...] but also of a whole series of 'interests', [...] it *is*, rather that expresses, a certain *will* or *intention* to understand, in some cases to control, manipulate, even to incorporate, what is a manifestly different (or alternative and novel) world [...]" (Saïd 2003, 12)

This makes Orientalism a prominent framework that makes sense of, contains, represents and constructs the Orient and the Orientals.

Saïd extensively documents the long tradition of Orientalism. Once it had established itself in the academic world, the arts and philosophy, it became a powerful discourse. Numerous Western artists, writers and thinkers dealing with the East adopted the Orientalist framework (Lockman 2010). In contemporary society Orientalism is still the dominant Western framework and discourse on the East, especially within audiovisual media and creative writing. This is because the Orientalist - the Western writer, director, screenwriter, producer or artist - writes or paints about the Orient as an 'outsider'. This ensures that the Orient is always the passive subject, while the Westerner is the active, dominant actor who brings the Orient to life on film, television, in books and in imagery works of art. Orientalism remains the principal style of thinking of and representing the Orient, because of "anthropologists, historians, scientists, artists and travelers merely replicate the same tired stereotypes, seeing in other people the difference and strangeness they expect to find" (Gray 2009, 223-224). And so Orientalism is reproduced constantly and consistently. "Knowledge no longer requires application to reality; knowledge is what gets passed on silently, without comment, from one text to another. Ideas are propagated and disseminated anonymously, they are repeated without attribution; [...] what matters is that they are *there,* to be repeated, echoed, and re-echoed uncritically", Saïd explains further (2003, 116).

Saïd, however, was not the first to write about Orientalism. The framework had already been recognized and written about by scholars long before Saïd's book was published (Lockman 2010). One of these scholars was John M. Steadman, who published *The Myth of Asia* in 1970, which explored the fantasies and illusions the West had about the Orient. He defined the Orient not as Asia, but as the 'myth of Asia'. Saïd's work is noticeably similar to Steadman's, who writes that "many a writer on Asia treats the Orient as though it were a single entity (which it is not) - and thus postulates a unity that has no real existence outside his own imagination" (Steadman 1970, 14-15). The 'Orient' "can be seen as a collection of ideas, "a complex of varied and often contradictory meanings"

(Steadman 1970, 18). Here, Steadman's writing comes very close to Saïd's and his claims about 'geographical imagery' and the man-made distinctions between 'West' and 'East'.

While similar, Steadman and Saïd do have some different ideas. While the latter attributes the notions of difference between West and East and Orientalism to the Western need to understand, contain and ultimately control the East, Steadman thinks misconceptions about Asia result from oversimplification and the exaggeration of differences. He claims that the assumption of a fundamental difference between the West and East underlies all 'overstated' notions of difference between Europe and Asia. Steadman's argument can be summarized by the following passages he wrote:

> "Many Europeans and Asians still believe that these concepts distinguish fundamental differences between the civilizations of the Orient and the Occident. East and West, they maintain, are not merely demographic or geographical terms; they are also modes of thinking and feeling- modes so different as to be virtually irreconcilable. Underlying the manifold and obvious diversity of the Orient, there is nevertheless an Eastern psyche distinct from that of the West, a mentality peculiarly and characteristically Asian. The genius of the East, they insist, is static and introspective, while that of the West is dynamic and extroverted. The Orient, passive and contemplative, has displayed this genius in the cultivation of the spirit; the Occident, active and practical, in the amelioration of its environment" (Steadman 1970, 25-26).

Steadman also focuses on imaginations of the East, claiming many Western writers exaggerate the mysterious nature of the Orient and highlight its 'exotic aspects'. This is how the imagined Orient has become increasingly associated with the 'real' Orient, ultimately creating a 'geographical fantasia' (Steadman 1970). This imaginative Orient is characterized by exoticism and ambiguity. "Like most myths, the myth of Asia evokes romantic echoes, fantastic overtones. The West has always interpreted the East in poetic terms. Geographical remoteness has given it 'aesthetic distance'. Unfamiliarity has made it a byword for 'the marvelous'" (Steadman 1970, 37-37). This is the imagination and representation of Japan that is still created, spread and furthered by contemporary media.

Saïd talks about the Orient being "not only adjacent to Europe; it is also the place of Europe's greatest and richest and oldest colonies, the source of its civilizations and languages, its cultural contestant, and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other. In addition, the Orient has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience" (Saïd 2003, 1-2). Japan, however, is not adjacent to Europe nor has it ever been a Western colony, despite its temporary occupation after World War II. Furthermore, during the period of Western colonial power, Japan was characterized by *sakoku,* an isolationist foreign policy, closing itself off from the rest of the world save the trading contracts it maintained with China, Korea, the kingdom of Ryukyu and the Netherlands. So is the theoretical framework of Orientalism even applicable to Japan? According to Richard Minear, it is possible. He compared Saïd's work to the history of contact between Japan and the West and concludes that "even in the absence of overt Western domination, the attitudes manifested in the discourse on Japan seem to resemble closely those of Saïd's Orientalists" (Minear 1980, 515). Minear is not alone in this conclusion. Other prominent Western scholars (Steadman 1970; Rosen 2000; Lie 2001; Levick 2005; Burman 2007) and Japanese scholars (Iwabuchi 1994; Inokuchi & Nozaki 2005; Nishihara 2005; Harada 2006) have been employing Orientalism to understand and analyze relations between the West and Japan, proving that this theoretical framework can indeed be applied to Japan.

2.1.2. Criticism

This does not mean that Saïd's work has not been criticized. By accusing all American and European Oriental studies of reductionism, stereotyping and caricaturing, Saïd is doing the same of what he accused the Orientalists of, some say. Historians have criticized *Orientalism* for Saïd's 'sweeping' arguments, his focus on literature and occasional failure to properly situate authors and works of literature in their proper historical context (Lockman 2010). Saïd has also been accused of putting scholars in the same category as liberal novelists, while ignoring historians and social scientists' works on the Orient completely (Turner 2009). Another important point of criticism comes from Irwin (2009), who writes that by only analyzing seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth century European literature, Saïd disregarded popular culture. By elaborating solely on 'high' or 'elite' culture, Saïd completely ignored popular media which had and have a much greater impact on a much larger audience than any of the literary works he analyzed.

Luckily the field of Orientalist discourse is ever expanding and developing. Not only is this theoretical framework being applied to media like film and television (Bernstein 1997), but also to advertising, international news, art and anthropology (Gray 2009). And this is a good thing, considering our contemporary media-saturated world, which still widely circulates Orientalist tropes and images. Even Saïd himself mentions this when he writes that in the postmodern world, Orientalist stereotypes are reinforced instead of deconstructed. "Television, the films, and all the media's resources have forced information into more and more standardized molds. So far as the Orient is concerned, standardization and cultural stereotyping have intensified the hold of the nineteenth century academic and imaginative demonology of 'the mysterious Orient'" (Saïd 2003, 26). "Cultural images of the Orient [are] supplied by American mass media and consumed unthinkingly by the mass television audiences", he adds (Saïd 2003, 325). This perpetuation is not limited to television- the mass media as whole use common cues to help prompt stereotypes, which are automatically activated when audience encounter these cues or symbols (Peffley et al. 1996 and Abraham & Appiah 2006).

2.1.3. Orientalist representations of Japan

After almost 250 years of *sakoku,* Japan 'opened up' to the rest of the world in 1854. From this time, foreigners were allowed to set foot on Japanese soil. Westerners wrote about their exploits in this 'different and mystical' land, creating the first Orientalist accounts of Japan. Two early visitors of Japan, Basil Hall Chamberlain and George B. Samson, wrote about their travels in an Orientalist fashion. Both emphasized the division between West and East, the superior 'us' and inferior 'them' (Minear 1980). It can be said that these writings have contributed greatly to contemporary Orientalist ideas about Japan.

A more recent example of Orientalist depictions of Japan exists in the form of Ruth Benedict's book *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (1946), which remains one of the most influential English books about post-war Japan. The book greatly influenced ideas about Japan after World War II, which is interesting since Benedict never actually visited the country. Still, she wanted to research "what makes Japan a nation of Japanese" (Benedict 1946; as quoted in Lie 2001, 251). Benedict painted a picture of a homogenous, coherent country (Lie 2001) when compared to the multicultural United States, again emphasizing the 'difference' between 'us', Americans, and 'them', Japanese. Another influential book, *Japanese Society* (Nakane 1970), suggested that "the cultural composition of Japanese society, combined with the social persistence of these structural elements of society across history, has created a relatively homogenous Japanese culture and society", according to David Matsumoto (2002, 12). This is another example of an author proceeding from the presumption of a homogenous Japanese society.

According to Matsumoto, the aforementioned examples are similar in their description of imagined key elements of Japanese culture and the Japanese: "humility, perseverance, politeness,

modesty, frugality, chivalry, justice, courage, discipline, benevolence, sincerity, honor, loyalty, and self-control" (Matsumoto 2002, 9). Rosen calls these 'positive' notions about the Japanese a "romantic version of Orientalism", which "paints a picture of Japan whose sophisticated culture with its indigenous traditions are in close harmony with nature (a myth popular in Japan, as well, it might be added); tiny bonsai trees, exotic geisha girls in kimono, manicured rock gardens, the unfathomable mysteries of Zen Buddhism, shiatsu and macrobiotic cooking, signify for us a people who are deeply intuitive and aesthetically attuned in a way that we are not" (2000).

Negative ideas about Japanese people also existed-- they were sly, hard to read, sneaky and untrustworthy. According to Rosen, this romantic Orientalism is "less salient than its shadow side-- we could say, is overshadowed by its shadow, which sees the Japanese as basically fanatical, deceitful, with a tendency to cruelty in their private lives and totalitarianism in their public practices. The image which predominates here is of the unquestioning company man/woman who sacrifices all their individuality and humanity for the organization-- who submerges their entire identity to the group" (2000). These negative and positive views over time came to be "idealized, ritualized, and institutionalized to become part and parcel of the Japanese cultural landscape. As such, a fairly homogenous picture of Japanese culture and society emerged" (Matsumoto 2002, 9).

According to Matsumoto, these views continue to influence contemporary ideas and perceptions about Japan and the Japanese. As contemporary views often grow out of or resemble notions about Japan from the past, some of "these stereotypic images of the Japanese culture and people are no longer merely stereotypes; they *are* the Japanese" (Matsumoto 2002, 16). These notions have appeared in a wide array of not only scholarly works, but also in other media, adding to their popularity and eventually becoming synonymous to Japanese people and culture (Matsumoto 2002).

Orientalism, then, is not just a relic from our colonial past, and Saïd's book from 1978 is still extremely relevant. Since his publication, the theoretical framework of Orientalism has been used to analyze a wide variety of media texts. And although Japan was never a Western colony, Orientalism has been and is being used as a way to analyze and make sense of the relationship between the West and the East. And so Orientalism has proven itself to be a reliable tool in analyzing media representations of Japan.

2.2. Stereotypes and their perpetration in news media

The journalist Walter Lippmann introduced the notion of stereotypes in 1922, describing them as "pictures in our heads". Current psychological theory conceptualizes those "pictures" as cognitive structures or schemas that represent widely shared beliefs about the defining characteristics of social groups (Operario & Fiske 2004). Any group might be subject to stereotypes, but the media most commonly use stereotypical categorizations of individuals or groups based on race or ethnicity, nationality, religion, gender, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, employment, and age. These stereotypes are automatically activated when audiences encounter cues or symbols in mass media, according to Peffley et al. (1996) and Abraham & Appiah (2006). The media use common cues to help prompt the particular stereotypes to be applied in a given situation, a useful thing, since most groups are subjected to more than one stereotype.

Stereotypes contribute to media consumers coming to an understanding of other people and cultures ('the world') who are 'different' and 'not like us'. This usually happens through a system of binary opposites -- 'split figures' -- or 'tropes of representation' as Hall (1997b) calls them. Examples are 'West/East', 'Dutch/Japanese' and 'normal/bizarre'. An important thing to keep in mind, however, is that not all stereotypes are necessarily harmful. Difference and otherness are not inherently negative and sometimes stereotypes help to classify and make sense of the world by reducing reality to more comprehensible proportions (Hall 1997b).

2.2.1. Cultural stereotypes about Japan

Stereotyping is an important aspect of Orientalism, for they help essentialize difference by creating a hierarchical relationship between the one who stereotypes (the West) and the stereotyped (the Other). According to Hall, stereotypes reduce, essentialize and naturalize so that they become 'true' characteristics. They 'solve' difference and Otherness while maintaining social and symbolic order between 'us' and 'them' (1997b). This is why Hall calls stereotyping the 'symbolic fixing of boundaries', as stereotypes create and reinforce a ranking of 'racial' groups, resulting in the binary ideas of 'us' and 'them' and 'West' and 'East'. These binary ideas are rarely ever neutral and almost always carry a notion of superiority ('us') and inferiority ('them') with hem. So the relationship between representation, stereotyping, difference and power cannot be dismissed. Stereotyping classifies people, thereby constructing 'Others' who do not meet hegemonic standards.

Cultural stereotypes have long been made use of to differentiate and essentialize the Orient and Orientals, including Japan and the Japanese. Matsumoto, however, argues that contemporary Japanese culture differs greatly from traditional ideas and stereotypes about Japan. He compares the differences between contemporary Japanese society and culture with traditional Japanese society and culture, proving that younger Japanese generations differ greatly from generations before World War II (2002). While it is true that some cultural stereotypes applied to these older generations, the ideas of a 'collectivist mentality', 'controlled emotions' and 'unlimited loyalty to the company' are still used to describe 'the Japanese'. But Japanese culture has been and still is rapidly changing, resembling individualistic societies more and more. And so these generalizations and cultural stereotypes are no longer appropriate as contemporary Japanese society differs greatly from notions of a collective, homogenous society.

Matsumoto goes on to identify and debunk seven major stereotypes about Japan, hoping that this will encourage the reader to question other or all stereotypes about contemporary Japanese society. The seven stereotypes Matsumoto discusses are:

1. Japanese Collectivism
2. Japanese Self-Concepts
3. Japanese Interpersonal Consciousness
4. Japanese Emotionality
5. The Japanese Salaryman
6. Japanese Lifetime Employment
7. The Japanese Marriage

An important stereotype Matsumoto debunks is that of Japanese emotionality. Notions of Japanese people hiding their true feelings have lead to the idea of the Japanese as 'cold-hearted' or 'emotionless robots', a stereotype sometimes circulated in mass media. Another important (and arguably the most prevalent) stereotype about Japan debunked by Matsumoto is the one of Japanese collectivism. This stereotype is no longer appropriate as younger generations of Japanese become increasingly individualistic, opting out of collectivist traditions of the past. Young Japanese often openly strive for individuality and desire to express their unique selves. Matsumoto even goes on to argue that Japanese adolescents are more individualistic than young Americans.

Levick (2005) identifies four types of bias that have long been circulating in American news accounts of Japan. First, Japanese people are regularly depicted as caricatures, which reinforce stereotypes about a Japanese 'warrior society' and Japanese people being 'samurai in suits'. Secondly, Japanese society and culture is often presented as homogenous-- there is no cultural diversity, which has remained unchanged throughout history. Japanese people are framed as an 'anonymous mass'. Thirdly, American media rely on cultural determinism: 'culture' is used to explain everything. So "these articles often assume a fixed immutable cultural essence, assuming that certain traits are

unique and innate to Japanese people or society" (Levick 2005, 1). Finally, in typical Orientalist fashion, Japanese culture and society is often portrayed as irrational and/or inferior compared to the West in general. "There is a historic accumulation of reportage, literature and other forms of art and media that have long represented Japan and other Asian nations as exotic, submissive and backward", Levick writes (2005, 2).

Cultural stereotypes about the Japanese are also reinforced in pop culture. For example, from literature and film, several more clichés and stereotypes can be identified. These include the samurai warrior and the *bushido* ('way of the warrior') code (Heinz 1980, Iwabuchi 1994, Yoshioka 1995, Matsumoto 2002; Ueno 2002; Motoko et al. 2004; Levick 2005; Nishihara 2005; Shin 2010), the tranquility and spirituality of Zen Buddhism (Smith 1980; Rosen 2000; Motoko et al. 2004; Shin 2010), the exotic geisha (Smith 1980; Iwabuchi 1994; Rosen 2000; Nishihara 2005; Shin 2010), the sneaky ninja (Shah 2003; Shin 2010), the Japanese worker or 'salaryman' as a money-grubbing 'economic animal' offering him- or herself up completely to the company (Matsumoto 2002; Motoko et al. 2004; Shin 2010) and the 'ruthless *yakuza*' or Japanese gangster (Rosen 2000; Shin 2010). Since it has become apparent that news media also reinforce stereotypes about the Other, it can be expected that (some of) these stereotypes will show up during the analysis of the Tōhoku disaster photographs in chapter four.

However, as previously mentioned, not all stereotypes about Japan and the Japanese are inherently negative. Values attributed to Others might be negative and depreciative as well as positive and in exaggerated praise. As a result, Others are often represented though "images that are 'degraded', 'mystified', 'romanticized', 'exoticized' or 'glorified'" (Inokuchi & Nozaki 2005, p. 62). Rosen further brings home this point, writing that Western images, stereotypes and metaphors regarding Japan and Japanese culture and history have created a 'romantic version' of Orientalism, as mentioned earlier.

But while these stereotypes can be positive as well as negative, both ultimately create, maintain and accept difference and have great efforts as both limit and control, practices both prevalent in Orientalist discourse. Shah (2003) claims that these stereotypes can be understood as "'controlling images' in the sense that negative stereotypes provide justifications for social control and positive stereotypes provide normative models for Asian thought and behavior" (p. 1). Thus, wether positive or negative, stereotypes -- or even a romantic version of Orientalism -- essentialize the Other and construct and ascribe identities to the Other as well as to the Self (Woodward 1997; as cited in Shah 2003).

Many ideas about Japanese contemporary culture are more fantasy than reality. "The evidence [...] forcefully challenges the validity of stereotypic notions about Japanese culture and society, rendering them more myth than truth, more fantasy than reality" (Matsumoto 2002, 36).

2.3. Visual tropes

Zarzycka and Kleppe (2013) have another term similar to the 'common cues' that prompt stereotypes as discussed by Peffley et al. (1996) and Abraham & Appiah (2006). In their work, they discusses so-called 'visual tropes'. By 'tropes', they mean "conventions (e.g. a mourning woman, a civilian facing soldiers, a distressed witness to atrocity) that remain unchanged despite their travels across the visual sphere, gaining professional and public recognition and having a strong affective impact" (p. 1). But what are tropes, exactly? According to Zarzycka and Kleppe, "photographic tropes can be likened to the notion of the 'strong image', an image that can guarantee its own identity, independently of its specific time, space, and context; being single, the trope is nevertheless present in a multitude of separate instances without being split apart" (2013, 3). Tropes, then, may be perceived as being similar to icons, but "while icons can be seen as commemorating decisive moments of history [...], tropes can be compared to a frame that holds visually homogenous content" (Zarzycka 2012; as cited by Zarzycka and Kleppe 2013, 3). This makes them similar to the 'cues and symbols' Peffley et al. (1996) and Abraham & Appiah (2006) discuss in their work. According to them, stereotypes are automatically activated when audiences encounter certain cues, symbols, and -- new to this list -- tropes.

Symbols and images universally tied to Japan are for example the geisha, the ninja and the samurai. These strong visual tropes consistently appear, even in contemporary news photography. For example, the following photograph of a Tōhoku disaster relief worker recalls popular imagery of the ninja[3]:

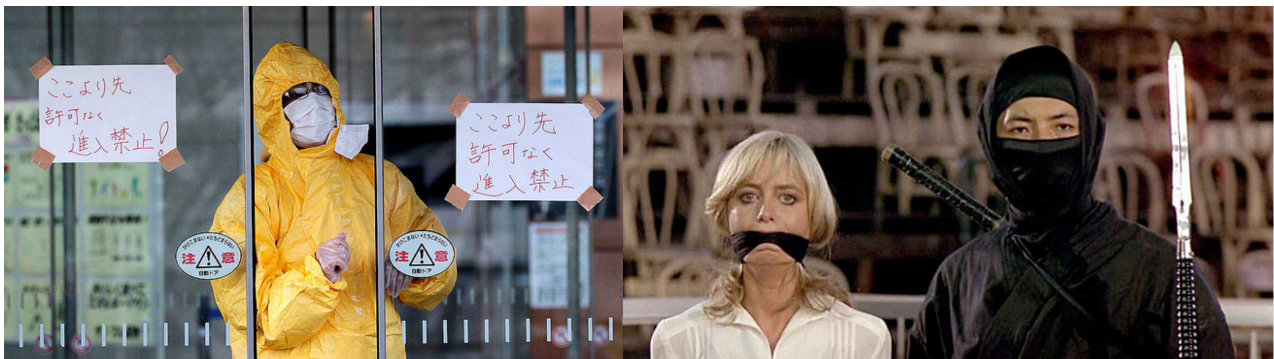

Image 1 (left): A disaster relief worker during the aftermath of the tsunami (*LA Times*); image 2 (right): a still from the 1981 American film *Enter the Ninja* (*Vintage Ninja*).

This particular photograph relies on a strong visual trope tied to an Orientalist imagination of Japan. It is expected that more of these visual tropes and cues pointing to stereotypes will be discovered within the corpus of photographs.

[3] While the image of a masked and hooded ninja clad in black is prevalent in popular culture and media, no actual evidence of ninja ever donning such garb exists. Instead, it was much more common for ninja to be disguised as civilians (Turnbull 2003).

2.4. Disaster myths

Tierney and Kuligowski (2006) postulate that the media help enforce already existing disaster myths among the general public and organizational actors. Examples of such myths are the notions that disasters are accompanied by looting, social disorganization, panic, and deviant behavior. But while such myths are perpetuated by the mass media, in actual empiric research on disasters such ideas have long been shown to be false. Looting, for example, is not a common occurrence during disasters, which seems to be forgotten. So when disaster myths cement themselves as truth, that is not only problematic merely because the myths do not reflect reality, but also because of their potential for influencing organizational, governmental, and public responses during disasters.

So why do media portrayals of disasters and their victims deviate so often from what is actually known about behavior during emergencies? Firstly, reporting conventions lead media organizations to focus on dramatic, unusual, and exceptional behavior. This can lead audiences to believe such behavior is common and typical. Secondly, the widespread use of standard frames that strongly shape the content of media messages. Although such frames are based on myths about disaster behavior, one such frame, the 'looting frame', appears almost invariably in disaster reporting. And finally, the media's almost universal lack of specialists in disaster-related phenomena, particularly those involving individual, group, and organizational behavior. Perhaps this lack of understanding of the fundamental of disaster-related behavior is one reason why disaster myths and their associated frames have had such a strong influence on media disaster reporting (Tierney and Kuligowski 2006).

Disaster reporting is also linked to what is judged to be newsworthy about particular events. Decisions about what and how much to cover with respect to specific disaster events are often rooted in judgments about the social value of disaster victims and on conceptions on social distance and difference. This is why there was such a large compassionate response to the Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami of 2004- there were many Western tourists in the impact region. Compare this to the lack of Western compassion for the victims of the 2005 Pakistan-Kashmir earthquake (Tierney and Kuligowski 2006). Disaster reporting also readily makes use of stereotypes, as the media have a long record of portraying non-mainstream groups, especially minority group members, in stereotypical ways.

At a more macro level, however, media treatments of disasters both reflect and reinforce broader societal and cultural trends, socially constructed metanarratives and hegemonic discourse practices that support the status quo and the interests of elites (Tierney and Kuligowski, 2006).

These continuously enforced disaster myths and the reasoning behind them provide a convincing explanation for the media's use of stereotypes within text about, or, in this case, images of a disaster. Japanese people during the Sendai disaster seemed to subvert many of the existing myths about disaster behavior. The media took note of the lack of looting; and quickly the story was that the Japanese behaved so exemplary because of their 'polite culture' and 'knack for bottling up emotions', clear Orientalist notions.

In the next chapter the method of research will be discussed. But first, providing a comprehensive framework is necessary. How the theories of Orientalism, stereotyping and disaster myths strengthen the research method must be made concrete. It will also be made clear which points and and notions are paid special attention to during the actual analysis.

3. Methodology

The previous chapter has provided the necessary theoretical framework with regards to Orientalism, stereotypes and disaster myths. Orientalism can be regarded as the dominant Western discourse about the Orient; in other words, 'Eastern' countries not part of the 'West'. Orientalism gives word and meaning to, and therefore represents and constructs the Orient and its difference or Otherness compared to the West. Orientalism is empowered firstly by cultural hegemony and secondly, by its reliance on the distinction between Westerners, 'us', and non-Westerners, 'them' (Saïd 2003). Through the production, circulation and consumption of culture and media, cultural hegemony is created. The idea of 'us' and 'them' is -- sometimes subtly, sometimes not-so-subtly -- promoted by a vast array of media texts, from movies and television to literature and magazines. Orientalism can be found anywhere. This makes Orientalism a dominant framework that makes sense of, contains, represents and constructs the Orient and the Orientals.

The powerful mass media and its various outlets have become a great part of daily life, with the images and messages it broadcasts regarded as normal and natural (Peffley et al 1996). Media outlets have a potentially large influence on their audience's perspectives, ideas and images of other countries and peoples (the Other). In stead of subverting stereotypes, the media tend to support and reinforce rather than challenge hegemonic discourse such as Orientalism. *De Wereld Draait Door's* segment on Fukushima and the *Japanese also cry* newspaper article are examples of this reinforcement.

Tierney and Kuligowski (2006) postulate that the media enforce already existing disaster myths among the general public and organizational actors. Examples of these myths are the notions that disasters are accompanied by 1) looting, 2) social disorganization, 3) panic, and 4) deviant behavior. But while such myths are perpetuated by the mass media, in actual empiric research on disasters such ideas have long been shown to be false. So when disaster myths cement themselves as truth, that not only problematic merely because the myths do not reflect reality, but also because of their potential for influencing organizational, governmental, and public responses during disasters.

3.1. Constructing a framework: Orientalism, stereotypes and disaster myths

Orientalism is the source of many of stereotypes about Japan and the Japanese, many of which have been identified previously. In his work, David Matsumoto debunks the following seven stereotypes about the Japanese: Japanese collectivism, Japanese self-concepts, Japanese interpersonal consciousness, Japanese emotionality, the Japanese salaryman, Japanese lifetime employment and the Japanese marriage (2002). Of these, the stereotype about Japanese emotionality (the idea of Japanese people hiding their true feelings and the Japanese as 'cold-hearted' or 'emotionless robots') and Japanese collectivism are most relevant to this research.

There are still more stereotypes to be identified. Levick (2005) identifies four types of bias that have long been circulating in American news accounts of Japan. First, the Japanese people as 'samurai in suits'. Second, Japanese people are framed as an 'anonymous mass'. Thirdly, American media rely on cultural determinism: 'culture' is used to explain everything. Finally, Japanese culture and society is often portrayed as irrational and/or inferior compared to the West in general. Other stereotypes often present in expression of popular culture include the samurai warrior and *bushido*, the tranquility and spirituality of Zen Buddhism, the exotic geisha, the sneaky ninja, the Japanese worker or 'salaryman' as a money-grubbing 'economic animal' offering him- or herself up completely to the company and the 'ruthless *yakuza*' or Japanese gangster (Heinz 1980, Iwabuchi 1994, Yoshioka 1995, Matsumoto 2002; Ueno 2002; Motoko et al. 2004; Levick 2005; Nishihara 2005; Shin 2010).

Meanwhile, Rosen identifies a 'romantic version' of Orientalism, which paints a picture of a sophisticated Japanese culture in close harmony with nature and the mystifying Zen Buddhism and

Japanese people who are deeply intuitive and aesthetically attuned in a way that we Westerners are not (2000). Matsumoto also describes several positive key elements of an imagined Japanese culture and the Japanese: "humility, perseverance, politeness, modesty, frugality, chivalry, justice, courage, discipline, benevolence, sincerity, honor, loyalty, and self-control" (Matsumoto 2002, 9).

While stereotypes can be positive as well as negative, both ultimately create and maintain difference, next to limiting and controlling. These practices are both prevalent in Orientalist discourse. According to Shah (2003), these stereotypes can be understood as "'controlling images' in the sense that negative stereotypes provide justifications for social control and positive stereotypes provide normative models for Asian thought and behavior" (p. 1). Thus, wether positive or negative, stereotypes -- or even a romantic version of Orientalism (Rosen 2002) -- essentialize the Other and construct and ascribe identities to the Other as well as to the Self (Woodward 1997; as cited in Shah 2003).

Because disaster myths (looting, social disorganization, panic and deviant behavior) prove to be overwhelmingly false (Tierney & Kuligowski 2006), the media framed the absence of such myths as 'proof' of the Japanese collectivist, respectful mentality. In reality, this imaged subversion of non-existent myths only seemed to further reinforce Orientalist stereotypes. It is these theories that form the theoretical framework, the 'lens' through which I will be examining the photographs.

3.1.1. Identifying stereotypes

Next to focusing on the affirmation or subversion of disaster myths, special attention will be given to the identification of the following stereotypes, which are divided into two categories called 'Insidious Orientalist stereotypes', and 'Romantic Orientalist stereotypes'. Since this research mainly focuses on the representation of Japanese *people,* not Japanese culture or society, attention will only be given to Orientalist stereotypes dealing specifically with the Other person, not the Other country.

An attempt will be made to identify how the following Insidious Orientalist stereotypes manifest themselves in the disaster photographs:

1. Japanese collectivism or the Japanese as an 'anonymous mass'
2. Japanese emotionality or the Japanese as cold-hearted, repressing their emotions, or as 'emotionless robots'
3. The Japanese salaryman or the Japanese as an 'economic animal' offering him- or herself up to the company completely
4. The Japanese as ruthless gangsters
5. The Japanese as sneaky ninja's
6. The Japanese as irrational, inferior, bizarre, and/or exotic

Also, in what way the following Romantic Orientalist stereotypes manifest themselves in these disaster photographs will be examined:

1. The Japanese as tranquil, spiritual, and mystical Zen Buddhists
2. The Japanese as hard-working, highly-disciplined, self-sacrificing 'samurai in suits'
3. The Japanese (women) as submissive, exotic geisha girls
4. The deeply intuitive Japanese as finally attuned with nature
5. The Japanese as endlessly humble, polite, respectful, and modest

Of course, it is entirely possible that several different stereotypes (both Insidious and Romantic) are recognized in one single photograph. According to Peffley et al. (1996) and Abraham & Appiah (2006), stereotypes are automatically activated when audiences encounter cues, symbols or visual tropes (Zarzycka and Kleppe 2013) in mass media. The media use common cues and visual

tropes to help prompt the particular stereotypes to be applied in a given situation. It stands to reason that these cues and tropes are also employed to prompt Orientalist stereotypes. Therefore, using this framework, identifying cues and tropes pointing to Orientalist stereotypes, it will hopefully become clear how the stereotypical nature of the portrayal of the Japanese in these disaster photographs comes about.

3.2. Content analysis

In this case, the most suitable research method would be content analysis, specifically qualitative content analysis. This part of chapter three will delve deeper into this method-- next to a general overview of content analysis, some attention will be given to the potential and possible problematic aspects of this relatively new research method. In chapter four, an in-depth description of the application of this research method to the corpus of photographs will be provided.

3.2.1. Types of content analysis

In recent years, content analysis has become increasingly popular in a variety of scholarly fields, among which media studies. Although this type of analysis was initially used to examine only spoken and written language, it has also increasingly been used to analyze images and sounds. Content analysis is employed to find the "meaning behind the social construction of words, sounds, and images" (Smith & Bell 2007, 80). To discover these underlying meanings, ideas, and messages, the connotative level (what can be seen and heard) as well as the denotative level (the underlying meaning) have to be analyzed, which means looking at images connect to broader meanings and themes (Hall 1997c).

The media play in an important part in our daily lives. Not only are the texts they produce vigorously analyzed and discussed, but so are the media themselves. In order to effectively analyze the media, media narratives and messages, researchers have been making use of different types of content analysis, a tool used to scientifically analyze precisely what kind of content is contained within media texts. Researchers often look for content that is not immediately visible recognizable or visible, but becomes apparent using this method of analysis.

Typically, during this kind of analysis, a corpus is demarcated: a certain part of media texts about which the researcher ultimately wants to make his or her claim. Since research is done about a wide variety of topics, different types of content analysis exist, of which qualitative and quantitative are the most prevalent. These methods differ quite a bit from each other, but one thing they have in common is the object of observation: media texts, from which certain claims and theories about the society in which they are produced are derived. This makes content analysis a tool with which scholars can make specific observations about media texts, from which conclusion can be made regarding reality. Pleijter stresses the importance of the distinction between the media texts researchers analyze and the phenomena they make claims about: "media texts are concrete, perceptible objects, while the phenomenon about which claims are made is a construction of the researcher" (2006, 9).

As mentioned, media narratives as a research object is a common denominator. But the two ways of content analysis differ in an important way: the researcher can analyze media texts either by counting (quantitative content analysis) or by reading-- not necessarily in the literal sense (qualitative content analysis). Further characteristics of quantitative content analysis are that is gives meaning to repetition and deals with numerical-based questions. Qualitative research gives meaning to patterns, deals with interpretative questions and works systematically (Koetsenruijter & Van Hout 2013, 176-177). Qualitative content analysis is a 'cyclical, iterative process' and 'reduces data', according to Koetsenruijter and Van Hout, citing Coffey and Atkinson (1996), who differentiate between data-reducing and conceptual coding of data (p. 150-151). The former is a way of labeling and focuses on indexing data within one theme and therefore creating connection between different data mate-

rials. This type of coding is purely descriptive and reduces great quantities of data to a handful of general terms. Conceptual coding is described as a way of 'asking questions' of the data. In order to do this effectively, connections between data and concepts must be made. It is an analytical process that aids the researcher in constructing a theory about the data. Coding data this way is a conceptual process, meaning that by creating codes one identifies part of the data as an example of the given concept at the same time (Koetsenruijter & Van Hout 2013, 151).

Two ways exist in order to determine which content analysis method is most useful. The first way emphasizes the fact that qualitative and quantitative research methods are based on different epistemological principles that provide the basic foundation from which scholars derive knowledge about researched reality. In the case of quantitative research, the researcher assumes there is such a thing as an objectively observable reality, while qualitative analysis is based on the notion that reality cannot be objectively determined, but is rather constructed by the ideas and images people about the world around them. Therefore, it is imperative scholars educate themselves on the different meanings people give to the world (Pleijter 2006). The second way to explain the difference between qualitative and quantitative analysis is of a more practical nature. This is because, in practice, it seems that rather than their epistemological vision, the scholar's research questions often determine the type of analysis. Therefore, since some types of questions simply cannot be answered properly by numbers alone, there exists a need for qualitative research. Looking at it in this manner, the difference between the two types of analysis is best characterized by the research findings and whether they exist as numerical data or not, in the case of qualitative content analysis. And so, when choosing a research method, the properties of the subject of research must first be determined.

3.2.2. Choosing for qualitative content analysis

Within journalism studies, qualitative content analysis is often used as a research tool as much research is based on interpretation and hermeneutics. And since the topic of this research -- how Western preconceptions and stereotypes about the Japanese manifest themselves within photographs of the Tōhoku disasters -- readily fits into the broad spectrum of journalism and media studies, qualitative content analysis is the preferred research method. Furthermore, this research deals with a *how*-question, instead of a *how many*-question. Finding out in *how many* photographs Orientalist stereotypes are perceptible within this particular corpus is simply much less relevant or interesting than discovering *how* Orientalist stereotypes manifest themselves within these photographs.

There are, generally speaking, two reasons why a researcher opts for qualitative content analysis within journalism studies. Firstly, one could consider qualitative research analysis in order to discover something about the results of journalists' work without having to interview journalists themselves (Koetsenruijter & Van Hout 2013). The second reason to choose for qualitative data analysis is because it has proved itself to be a useful way to make further sense of societal discourse and issues. This is because media can be thought of as a reflection of society because it is indicative of ideas that permeate a society. What appears in a society's media can tell us something about that society's discourse. Also, the media has proven to greatly influence and even shape ideas held by its consumers (Koetsenruijter & Van Hout 2013). Therefore, critical analysis of media texts can show how groups and individuals and their (supposed) identities are represented and stereotyped not only in the media, but also in society (Smith & Bell 2007). Since this research is concerned with issues of Orientalist discourse, executing a qualitative content analysis is a logical extension and a useful way to explore and analyze Orientalist discourse within Western societies.

3.3. Possible problematic factors

Qualitative research analysis deals with content. And it is that content that forms its primary limitation. Because gaining knowledge about that content and answering *how*-questions does not necessarily mean the big *why*-questions will not remain unanswered. In order to tackle the *why*, further research and different methods of analysis would be necessary (Koetsenruijter & Van Hout 2013). This is also the case with this research and will be further elaborated upon in chapter five. Qualitative content analyses are of a more complex nature than their quantitative counterparts since they deal with more ambiguous matter. Therefore, the researcher plays a substantial part in the process of interpretation that forms the base of qualitative content analysis. Since every scholar is unique and interprets the world differently, he or she carries within them certain expectations when researching. Some critics argue that this qualitative analysis provides 'subjective' and 'arbitrary' readings of media texts, as this type of analysis is per definition more interpretative and speculative in nature than its quantitative counterpart (Creeber 2006a, Creeber 2006b).

While this subjective interpretation could indeed be considered problematic, Hall (1997a) argues that analyzing culture is always interpretative, as meaning is ambiguous and there is no such thing as a 'true', 'fixed', or 'final' meaning.

It is also important to remember that societal issues and problems are no objectively visible phenomena, but instead constructed by that same society. This idea of construction is applicable to news stories as well. Koetsenruijter and Van Hout (2013) use stalking as a good example of this. While this crime has always existed, it did not become explicit until a group of people called it 'stalking' and labeled it a problem. A problem only becomes a problem when we label it as such, and the media play a big part in this labeling and process of construction.

Finally, interpretations are unavoidable and necessary when investigating media texts, but these interpretations need to be backed up with theory and evidence from other studies (Smith & Bell 2007). The discourse analysis carried out in this research is supported by the extensive use of literature and theory.

As to the analysis of media texts for Orientalism and stereotypes, Saïd (2003) provides assistance: "the things to look at are style, figures of speech, setting, narrative devices, historical and social circumstances, *not* the correctness of the representation nor its fidelity to some great original" (p. 21). Levick (2005) additionally provides three important points to look for in a media text about Japan, based upon portrayals of Japan in the American news. The first thing to look for, according to him, is if Japan is exoticized, for example by the use of words as 'mysterious', 'unique', or 'strange'. The second thing to look for is if Japan and Japanese society are presented as monolithic, by using words like 'The Japanese are...' or 'fundamentally' or 'typically Japanese' should be treated with suspicion. Thirdly, images of samurai or warriors are often misappropriated when representing Japan. While these tips and pointers obviously deal with written or spoken media texts, they were kept in mind during the analysis of the Tōhoku disaster photographs.

4. Execution and research findings

4.1. Constructing a corpus

When executing a qualitative discourse analysis, it is important to carefully construct a corpus, meaning a body of text to be analyzed by the researcher. In the case of this study, 200 news photographs of the 2011 Tōhoku disasters were chosen as a corpus-- 100 photographs of the tsunami aftermath and a 100 photographs of the repair work at the Fukushima Daiichi Power Plant complex. The reason for analyzing both disasters is that the situation was unique, even for a country as prone to natural disasters as Japan. Two different types of disasters occurred within a short timeframe, the nuclear meltdown as a direct result of the devastating earthquake and the tsunami caused by it. The discovery of how Orientalist stereotypes manifest themselves in different types of disaster photographs will hopefully yield interesting research, was the reasoning behind the choice. Determining what the size of the corpus would be proved to be a simple matter. Less than a 100 photos per disaster would not yield a substantial enough corpus, more than 100 photos per disaster would probably prove to be too much for a single researcher. The objective was to select the photos in a random fashion, surfing the Internet in search of images and then indiscriminately picking 200 for the corpus. It is important to note that it is impossible for a researcher's own gaze, feelings, and preferences to color the corpus, as was very likely also the case with this study.

Since this research is dedicated to how stereotypical ideas and notions about the Japanese manifest themselves in Western media consumers and the societies they live in, it was imperative that the corpus was made up of photographs published in Western media. Most of the photographs were taken by international press agencies like AP and Reuters, and some were taken by the Japanese non-profit news agency Kyodo News. All of them, however, were published in Western media, to be consumed by a Western audience. Because most photos were taken by international press agencies, the same images were published by a wide variety of media. This study does not deal with accompanying written language such as captions, headers and titles. It is, however, interesting to mention that Orientalist buzzwords like 'samurai' and 'kamikaze' often accompanied the photographs, especially those of the nuclear plant workers.

4.1.1. Coding

Qualitative content analysis is cyclical by nature (Koetsenruijter & Van Hout 2013). This means that the researcher first browses through the data to be analyzed, jotting down any first impressions and other thoughts that spring to mind. Saldana (2005) calls this First Cycle coding. During the research and the developing of theories and frameworks, the researcher keeps coming back to the data. This was also the case during this study. By examining the photographs repeatedly, new thoughts and ideas kept springing to mind, adding to the theory and frameworks. Van Gorp (2006) describes this process as 'open coding'. It is during this process that common cues and symbols were extracted from the data, which, after revisiting the data repeatedly, eventually lead to the development of a clear list of codes (available in Appendix I). These codes are labels that are figuratively stuck to parts of the collection of data. Saldana (2009) defines the term 'code' as follows: "A code in qualitative inquiry is most often a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data" (Saldana 2005, 3). For example, during a study dedicated to violence in news photographs, 'violent action' is a label, or, in academic terms, a code that one ascribes to a photograph or not. If analysis is the "search for patterns in data and for ideas that help explain why those patterns are there in the first place" (Bernard 2006, as cited by Saldana 2005, 8), coding is "a method that enables you to organize and group similarly coded data into categories or 'families' because they share some characteristic-- the beginning of a pattern [...]" (Saldana 2005, 8).

In this study, which deals with Orientalist stereotypes, the gaze was dedicated to finding cues,

symbols or tropes leading to Orientalism within the photographs. Taking 'Japanese-as-an-anonymous-mass' stereotype, several codes were developed that pointed to this, for example 'big crowds', 'uniforms', 'people standing in line', and so forth.

4.2. General impressions

4.2.1. Photographs of the aftermath of the tsunami

The central actors in this visual news story seem to be the rescue workers and the civilians affected by the tsunami. Both rescue workers and civilians clearing rubble or rescuing elderly people are prominent images, inviting the reader to admire the Japanese' stereotypical respect for their elders.

Image 3. Rescue workers carry an elderly man among the rubble (*LA Times*).

Also prominent are heavily zoomed-out pictures where the people in them have their backs turned to the camera or their faces otherwise hard to see, for a dramatized effect where humans look small and hopeless in the midst of such utter destruction. This, however, also leads to an emphasis of the photographed person's anonymity, especially in the case of the rescue workers, who are often in uniforms and face masks. Even when the photographs are not very zoomed out, one cannot help but notice how often the subjects' faces are hard to see or obstructed, or appear to be void of emotion, again emphasizing anonymity, uniformity, and a lack of emotionality.

Image 4. Civilians walk anonymously among the rubble *(LA Times)*.

The close-ups of victims' faces form a stark contrast to this anonymity. Goal here is to capture the myriad of emotions on the subject's face, which is often obscured by those for Westerners often confusing face masks, or by blankets or hands. Women are, compared to men, more likely to be photographed showing emotion, perhaps in an allusion to the cliché that women are more emotional and irrational than men. In this selection, they are also seen embracing each other more often than men. Most children in this selection of photographs sport surprisingly calm and neutral facial expressions.

Image 5. A group of women tearfully embrace each other *(LA Times)*.

One picture shows a woman asleep on the floor of a rescue shelter in a makeshift bed, four pairs of rubber boots lined up in front of it in an endearing, albeit cliché'd photographic display of Japanese culture (it is custom to take one's shoes off before entering a home).

Image 6. A woman sleeps in a rescue shelter, behind a row of boots *(LA Times)*.

Other such cliché'd images of Japan emerge in the form of a grieving woman, hands clasped in prayer. The photograph is poorly lit except for the spotlight illuminating the woman's face, invoking a sad, romantic image of Zen Buddhism.

Image 7. A woman prays *(LA Times)*.

Another prominent visual theme was that of lines-- rescue workers walking neatly in lines, or civilians waiting patiently in them, emphasizing the Japanese's stereotypical orderliness.

Image 8. Rescue workers walk in an orderly line *(LA Times)*.

Other 'typical' aspects of Japanese culture appear in shape of that illustrious and for most Westerners undecipherable Japanese script made up of three alphabets: *kanji, hiragana,* and *katakana,* lending an 'exotic' feel to certain photographs. One photograph show the back of a woman facing a wall plastered with posters, which are made up of *kanji, hiragana,* and *katakana,* emphasizing her anonymity and those strange Japanese scribbles.

Image 9. A woman examines a bulletin board *(The Sydney Morning Herald)*.

As mentioned earlier, some photographs invoke certain visual tropes tied to Japan. The close-up of these people wearing face masks and hooded sweatshirts invokes stereotypical imagery of the ninja.

Image 2, again (left): a still from the 1981 American film *Enter the Ninja* (*Vintage Ninja*); image 10 (right): civilians in hoods and face masks wait in a rescue shelter *(LA Times).*

Rescue workers marching directly towards the photographer give thought to helmeted samurai warriors.

Image 11 (left): a still from the 2003 American film *The Last Samurai (IMDB);* image 12 (right): rescue workers march towards the camera *(LA Times)*.

And, lastly, the women in the foreground of the picture pouring water from teapots could remind the viewer of a geisha pouring tea.

Image 13 (left): a geisha pours tea during the plum festival (*Veooz)*; image 14 (right): women in the foreground pour water from teapots *(LA Times)*.

4.2.2. Photographs of the mission at the Fukushima Daiichi Power Plant complex

In this story, the plant workers trying to stabilize the plant play the biggest role. Other subjects are the power plant's office workers, its high-ranking officials and even a few prominent Japanese figures such as International Atomic Energy (IAEA) director general Yukiya Amano, Minister of the Environment Goshi Hosono, and Atsufumi Yoshizawa of Fukushima Fifty fame. The press, both foreign and local, as well as civilians affected by the nuclear accidents, also feature in several photographs.

Compared to the photographs taken of the aftermath of the tsunami, the heavily zoomed-out pictures emphasizing human smallness in the wake of such chaos are not featured in this selection. A logical explanation for this is that there is no photographically attractive apocalyptic landscape in which these subjects exist. There are, however, four zoomed-out photographs, one of a few small plant workers standing next to a crane and a large broken wall, emphasizing the damage at the plant, one of a single worker walking through J-Village (a sprawling soccer training facility that temporarily serves as a plant worker base). one of a few plant workers walking to their cars, and another one of a single worker inside the plant, emphasizing the massive structure inside.

Image 15. A plant worker inside the nuclear power plant *(The Guardian).*

J-Village is featured as a location in many images, as this is where photographers were welcomed, giving them the chance to photograph the workers in a more intimate manner. Many photographs taken at J-Village feature plant workers gearing up, meeting each other, and getting inspected for radiation. Other locations where the workers are photographed are directly outside the plant, inside the plant, inside office buildings and inside vehicles. The office workers are photographed in office rooms, as are the officials and prominent Japanese figures, who are also photographed at press conferences and at a civilian's home.

As with the photographs of the tsunami aftermath, the focus seems to lie on crowds, anonymity, and orderliness. Plant workers are seen grouping together in big crowds, walking or standing in lines, and their plastic suits, uniforms and facial protection gear are heavily featured. Once again the photographed person's anonymity is emphasized.

Image 16. Plant workers congregate outside *(The Guardian).*

In most photographs taken of the plant workers, their faces are hardly visible, not just because of their protective gear and face masks, but also because the photographers tended to prefer to focus on group portraits where individual faces are hardly discernible. Again, by doing this, anonymity, uniformity, hegemony and emotionlessness are emphasized. However, there are a few exceptions. When their backs are not turned to the camera and their faces are relatively visible, the focus clearly lies on facial expressions. Whether the subject of a close-up or in a group, the photographs clearly show saddened, distressed, and tired faces, subjecting the stereotype of the Japanese as emotionless robots.

Image 17. Close-up of a dejected plant worker *(The Denver Post).*

The plant workers are less likely to be photographed doing physical labor and more often to be pictured poring over documents, standing around in groups or crowds, holding little devices, carrying their gear, and inspecting vehicles and each other for radiation.

Photographs of the Fukushima Fifty working inside the dark plant have a mysterious, almost mystical touch to them. The lighting inside is very poor and the workers rely on flashlights, giving the pictures a hazy effect, making the Fifty appear rather ghost-like. Here they somehow invoke *yuurei,* the Japanese ghostly figures featured in some Japanese folklore[4]. The whole effect these photos have is rather spiritual and invoke stereotypical thoughts of Japanese mysticalness and exoticness.

Image 18 (left): plant workers in the dark *(National Geographic);* image 19 (right): movie poster of the 2002 Japanese horror film *Ju-On,* featuring a *yuurei (Twitch Film).*

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[4] *Yuurei* are thought to be spirits kept from a peaceful afterlife. They are usually dressed in white, sport black hair, float in the air and are frequently depicted as being accompanied by a pair of floating flames in eerie colors such as blue, green, or purple, called *hitodama.*

In two photographs, the press is featured. While the one photographs features Western members of the press facing the camera and looking expressive, the other one features Japanese members of the press. In stark contrast to the portrayal of the Western press, these Japanese journalists and cameramen are photographed with their backs to the camera, their black suits and hair adding to the image of an anonymous mass. The suits even invoke images of Japanese salarymen.

Image 20 (left): IAEA director general Yukiya Amano briefs foreign press *(The Guardian)*, image 21 (right): Japanese press interview plant officials *(Cryptome)*.

The office workers, power plant officials and prominent Japanese figures are subjected less to this treatment. While they are always in uniform or in suits, emphasizing conformity, uniformity, and the 'salaryman' stereotype, they are photographed smiling, looking sternly, concentrated, or even smirking smugly. This way they are portrayed in a nuanced and human fashion. The only exception is the photograph of the high-ranking officials visiting civilians affected by the nuclear accidents. Here they have there backs turned to the camera so their faces are invisible, and they are bowing deeply towards the civilians in apology.

Another photograph features bowing: plant officials are seen bowing to Minister of the Environment Goshi Hosono in greeting. By featuring bowing, a Japanese custom, cultural difference between 'them' and 'us' is emphasized, invoking stereotypes about Japanese extreme politeness and modesty.

Image 22 (left): plant officials apologize to affected civilians *(BagNewsNotes);* image 23 (right): plant officials greet Goshi Hosono *(The Denver Post).*

Another way these photographs exoticize Japanese culture is by featuring the Japanese script prominently. In one photograph, prominent *kanji* are accompanied by three pairs of shoes arranged in front of an area where one must take them off. Like in image 6, this portrayal of the shoes forms a stereotypical display of Japan's 'different' culture.

Image 24. Shoes are lined up at the entrance of a shoe-free area *(The Denver Post).*

Shoes are also featured when worn. One photographs zooms in on a plant worker wearing Converse sneakers encased in plastic wrap. Another one focuses on two officials' legs and feet, enfolded by black slacks and black leather dress shoes. They are holding a plan of some sort, featuring writing in Japanese. In both cases, the photographed subjects' faces are out of frame, once again emphasizing

anonymity. Novelty images come before portraying humans as a whole: Converse sneakers in plastic wrap and exotic *kanji*.

In this batch of photographs, visual tropes are also alluded to. For example, the following photograph of a plant worker invokes ninja imagery.

Image 25 (left): a plant worker poses *(The Denver Post)*; image 26 (right): a still from the 2013 American film *The Wolverine (Comicbookmovies.com)*.

4.3. Uncovering stereotypes

Within these photographs, several recurring stereotypical themes can be identified: Japanese collectivism or the Japanese as an 'anonymous mass', Japanese emotionality or the Japanese as cold-hearted, repressing their emotions, or as 'emotionless robots', and the Japanese as irrational, inferior, exotic, and/or bizarre all fall under the Insidious Orientalism Category. Romantic Orientalist stereotypical themes uncovered are the Japanese as tranquil, spiritual, and mystical Zen Buddhists, the Japanese as highly disciplined, self-sacrificing 'samurai in suits', and the Japanese as endlessly humble, polite, respectful, and modest.

These photos bypass the subjects' individuality and humanity by focussing on the picturing of groups: uniformed rescue and plant workers huddled in groups or walking in lines, and civilians waiting in line or otherwise congregating in big crowds. By doing so, Japanese collectivity and the stereotypical idea of the Japanese as an 'anonymous mass' are promoted and perpetuated. The prominent presence of uniforms, suits, anti-radiation masks, and face masks is another way to emphasize anonymity. The two pictures featuring press is stark evidence of this approach: the Western press is photographed from the front, clearly showing their faces and highlighting their individuality, while the photograph featuring the Japanese press again depicts them as an anonymous mass.

Another way this anonymity is highlighted is by depicting people with their backs to the camera so their faces are invisible, or by photographing them in ways that cause their faces to be out of frame, partially obstructed or otherwise hard to be seen. This also enforces the stereotype about Japanese emotionality: if their faces are obstructed and their expressions hard to discern, it is easily assumed there is no emotion there. Pictures that prominently and clearly feature people's faces seem to subvert this idea of the Japanese as 'emotionless robots'. These photographs explicitly depict the Japanese as human beings expressing a wide array of emotions. Some photographs feature Japanese people bowing, alluding to the stereotype of the Japanese as endlessly humble, polite, and respectful. The photographs featuring rescue workers carrying elderly people also point to this stereotype.

The notion of the Japanese as 'samurai in suits' is clearly promoted in the photographs of the uniformed rescue workers, who are depicted as 'marching' in neat lines, as well as in the photographs of the plant workers working diligently and bravely to stabilize the situation.

The photographs also express a certain fascination with the 'exoticness' of Japanese culture.

Japanese script, chopsticks, the removal of shoes, the man holding Japanese dishes, people wearing face masks, and bowing are all things considered 'foreign' in Western culture, and by featuring them explicitly and repeatedly in these photographs, a sense of 'exotic Japaneseness' is invoked. In the dark, poorly lit, and/or mysteriously illuminated photographs, especially in the one of the woman praying, a sense of mysticism and spirituality is promoted, alluding to Zen Buddhism. The photographs of the Fukushima plant workers in the dark even give thought to *yuurei,* ghostly spirits featured heavily in Japanese folklore.

Visual tropes associated with the Japanese also appear: certain photographs evoke imagery of geisha, ninja, and samurai. By photographing people in certain poses or manners of dress, visual tropes are evoked. For example, the women crouching while pouring water from teapots clearly heralds to geisha imagery, while the marching rescue workers not only allude to 'samurai in suits', but also to actual samurai. The plant workers climbing electrical poles in order to restore electric power while wearing face-covering gear remind one of nimble ninja warriors.

4.4. Subverting disaster myths

As mentioned, examples of disaster myths are the notions that disasters are accompanied by looting, social disorganization, panic, and deviant behavior (Tierney and Kuligowski 2006). But while such myths are perpetuated by the mass media, in actual empiric research on disasters such ideas have long been shown to be false. Looting, for example, is not a common occurrence during disasters. The use of these stereotypes and disaster myths also reflect and reinforce broader societal and cultural trends, socially constructed metanarratives and hegemonic discourse practices that support the status quo (Tierney and Kuligowski, 2006). Japanese people during the Sendai disaster seemed to subvert many of the existing myths about disaster behavior. But by capturing this subversion -- the Japanese people are portrayed as behaving in an orderly, respectful, disciplined manner -- disaster myths were not only debunked, but stereotypes about Japanese collectivism, 'samurai in suits' and the Japanese as having a polite, modest nature were promoted at the same time. In this case, subverting disaster myths leads not to further humanization, but to further dehumanization instead.

This chapter has presented an in-depth analysis of the photographs of the 2011 Tōhoku disasters, showing that even in news photographs of disasters, Japan is made into the strange, exotic and incomprehensible Other in accordance with Orientalist styles of representation. The qualitative content analysis shows that the underlying stereotypical themes of these photographs are the 'anonymous Japanese mass', Japanese emotionality, Japanese culture as exotic, spiritual and mystical Zen Buddhism and folklore, 'samurai in suits', and the Japanese as endlessly polite, respectful, and modest. The apparent subversion of disaster myths does not add to further humanization of the subjects portrayed, but instead adds to the reinforcement of stereotypes.

It would be hard to claim that the photographers taking these photos or the Western media publish them actively seek to promote Orientalist stereotypes. Rather, this analysis aimed to lay bare how Orientalist stereotypes manifest themselves in these photographs. With that, it is now time to turn to the conclusions of this research, which provides answers to the research questions posed in the introduction.

5. Conclusions and discussion

This research has looked at Orientalist stereotypical representations of Japan in contemporary Western news photography, specifically the photographs of the 2011 Tōhoku disasters. Since Edward Saïd wrote about and popularized the term in 1978, Orientalism has become an important analytical tool to analyze Western media representations of the non-Western 'Other'. Although it originally dealt with the analysis of literature about the Near-East or Middle-East, other scholars have picked up where Saïd left off and expanded Orientalism to the Far-East, Japan included. It is now also used to analyze not only literature, but other types of media and images as well. Analysis of these images confirm the writings of Saïd that standardization and cultural stereotyping have increased in visual representations of non-Western Others. The analysis of Western photographs representing the Japanese support these findings.

Stereotypes as well as Orientalist narratives based upon cultural essentialism -- 'us' and 'them' -- often underlie Western media texts representing and mediating the Oriental Other, as Orientalism and Othering are still common practice in the media when it comes to constructing, describing, understanding and representing different cultures. This is no different in regards to Japan. In the West, the Japanese person is often depicted as strange, inscrutable, and exotic. In the news photographs analyzed, this is accomplished by visual tropes and cues alluding to Orientalist stereotypes, both Insidious and Romantic.

The answer two the first sub question, **"Employing the theoretical framework of Orientalism, which stereotypical tropes, cues, and symbols emanate from the photographs taken of Japanese people in the 2011 Tōhoku disasters?"** reads as follows: Within these images, stereotypes about Japanese collectivism or the Japanese as an 'anonymous mass', Japanese emotionality, the Japanese as strange and exotic, the Japanese as tranquil, spiritual, and mystical, 'samurai in suits', and the Japanese as endlessly humble, polite, respectful, and modest are alluded to. The images also invoke visual tropes of geisha, ninja, and samurai imagery. An answer to the second sub question, **"How are disaster myths perpetrated by the media, and how do the Japanese in these photographs encourage and/or subvert these myths?"** , was also found. It reads as follows: During the analysis, it has also become apparent that these photographs support the subversion of disaster myths. This subversion does not, however, lead to further humanization of the subjects depicted, but instead strengthens stereotypes about the Japanese' supposed polite nature, collectivism and 'samurai in suits'.

While some stereotypes are indeed benign, falling under the umbrella of Romantic Orientalism, they all contribute to the marginalization and dehumanization of a group of people in Western societies. As previously mentioned in this study, both Romantic Orientalist and Insidious Orientalist stereotypes ultimately create, maintain, and accept difference and have great efforts as both limit and control, practices both prevalent in Orientalist discourse. The stereotypes evoked in these photographs thus help essentialize the Other (Japan) and construct and ascribe identities to the Other as well as to the Self (Woodward 1997; as cited in Shah 2003).

Returning, then, to the main research question of this research:

"How do existing Western preconceptions and stereotypes about the Japanese manifest themselves within the photographs taken of the 2011 Tōhoku disasters?"

An extensive and detailed qualitative content analysis of 200 news photographs, 100 of the tsunami aftermath and 100 of the work at the nuclear plant, was carried out to answer this question. By providing the consumer with the visual tropes and cues present in the photographs, promotion and perpetuation of Orientalist stereotypes in ensured. By printing photographs that focus on Japanese people in uniforms, wearing masks, in groups, in lines, while their faces and facial expressions are often unclear or even indiscernible, stereotypical ideas of 'an anonymous Japanese mass', Japanese emotionality, and 'samurai in suits' are prompted. Also, by featuring photographs with mysterious lighting, showing Japanese people bowing, praying, or assisting elderly people, Western

media also reinforce more romantic stereotypes about the Japanese. And so it is in this manner that these photographs -- and by extension, the Western media publishing them -- confirm and reinforce both negative and positive Orientalist notions of Japan.

Naturally, some may have criticism regarding the outcome of this study. Skeptical readers may wonder 'the big deal' is with, for example, the pictures of Japanese people wearing face masks, since that could be perceived as simply what they are doing at the time the photo is taken, nothing more, nothing less. While it is true Japanese people tend to wear face masks, there seems to be a fascination with this practice emanating from these photographs. This is proved by the sheer number of photographs taken of people wearing face masks, which, admittedly, is a quantitative argument. However, there is also a qualitative argument. While there are some photographs of Japanese people in face masks clearly portraying the mask-wearers as individual humans, most of them strip the mask-wearer of his or her humanity by photographing them in ways that dehumanize them. One way in which this dehumanization is achieved is by photographing mask-wearers in such ways that their faces and facial expressions are barely visible, or sometimes not visible at all. The wearer, then, is reduced to his or her mask, and consequently Othered.

In retrospect, carrying out this analysis was very rewarding, as it provided information and insights not to be gotten from interviews of news photographers or Western media representatives. That said, the research was also limited due to its 200-photograph corpus and single researcher. More extensive research on the manifestation of cultural stereotypes in news photography would certainly prove beneficial. Also, to further investigate if and how much these Orientalist stereotypes and ideas permeate Western societies, a large-scale survey or focus research is highly recommended.

To conclude, then, by carrying out a qualitative discourse analysis of 200 photographs of the 2011 Tōhoku disasters, this study supports the writings and critiques of Edward Saïd, who until his death maintained that Orientalism was not a phenomenon of the past, but still the hegemonic discourse or dominant style of describing, understanding, representing, and ultimately controlling the non-Western Other. From this Orientalism flow numerous cultural stereotypes about Japan that permeate our society. Through the visual tropes, cues, and symbols discovered and discussed in this study, Orientalist stereotypes are even manifested in disaster news photography. This is valuable knowledge and a potential point of departure of future research, especially with the increasing global importance of 'the Orient', including Japan, China, India, and Indonesia.

Based on the outcomes of this study, it would be a good idea for not only media consumers, but also media creators, to be more conscious of stereotypes that exist both outside and inside their own person. While it is comforting to be continuously presented with familiar images, it is imperative to create and provide more diverse images of the 'Other' in order to combat stereotyping and the consequent dehumanization, which leads to larger societal issues and further marginalization of already marginalized ethnic groups.

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Appendix I. Qualitative content analysis coding scheme

Coding: 200 photos of the aftermath of the tsunami

Codes:
1. Rescue workers in the photo
> Carrying children
> Carrying seniors
> Carrying bodies
> Walking in a line
> Inspecting children
> Clearing rubble
> Among the rubble

2. Civilians in the photo
> Among the rubble
>> Clearing rubble
> Collecting belongings
> Carrying body
> Waiting in line
> Families
> Women
> Children
>> Civilians holding children
>> Civilians carrying children
>> Civilians feeding children
> Senior civilians
>> Civilians carrying seniors
> Big crowd

3. Appearance / dress
> Wearing uniforms
> Wearing full-body plastic suits
> Wearing face masks
> Wearing blankets
> Wearing suits

4. Locations
> Rescue shelters
>> Civilians sleeping in shelters
> Among the rubble
> In boats

5. Lines
> Rescue workers walking in line
> Civilians waiting in line

6. Emotions
> Expressive faces (sad, pained, shocked, happy, etc.)

> No expression on the faces
> Praying
> Embracing
> Faces invisible
> Face only partly visible
> Faces hardly visible
> Faces out of frame
> Hands covering face
> Back turned to camera

9. Close-ups
> Close-up of face
> Close-up of child
> Close-up of woman
> Close-up of elderly

10. Atmosphere
> Little light/darkness
> Mysterious feel
> Japanese text
> Shoes in a row
> Japanese dishes
> Japanese food
> Holding chopsticks
> Holding teapots

Codes into cues, pointing to Insidious Orientalist stereotypes:
1. Japanese collectivism or the Japanese as an 'anonymous mass'
> more than one person in photo, walking in a line, big crowds, faces not or hardly visible, faces out of frame, backs turned to the camera, uniforms, face masks (photos 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 19, 20, 21, 27, 30, 31, 33, 44, 46, 47, 48, 49, 52, 53, 54, 60, 61, 63, 67, 74, 75, 79, 80, 86, 88, 91, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99)
2. Japanese emotionality or the Japanese as cold-hearted, repressing their emotions, or as 'emotionless robots'
>no expression on faces, faces not or hardly visible, faces out of frame, faces partly covered, hands covering faces, face masks (photos 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 39, 40, 41, 44, 46, 47, 48, 49, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 70, 73, 74, 75, 76, 78, 79, 80, 82, 83, 84, 86, 88, 89, 90, 91, 94, 95, 96, 99, 100)
3. The Japanese salaryman or the Japanese as an 'economic animal' offering him- or herself up to the company completely
>civilians wearing suits (photo 86)
4. The Japanese as ruthless gangsters
>no cues pointing to this stereotype found
5. The Japanese as sneaky ninja's
>no cues pointing to this stereotype found
6. The Japanese as irrational, inferior, exotic, and/or bizarre
> holding chopsticks, uniforms, face masks, faces not or hardly visible, close-ups on faces, shoes neatly lined up, cooking Japanese food, Japanese text (1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 12, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22,

25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 42, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 52, 53, 54, 56, 57, 59, 60, 61, 62, 67, 69, 73, 74, 76, 77, 78, 79, 81, 82, 83, 85, 86, 88, 90, 91, 94, 95, 100)

Codes to cues, pointing to Romantic Orientalist stereotypes:
1. The Japanese as tranquil, spiritual, and mystical Zen Buddhists
> praying, photo not well-lit or dark, photo has a mysterious feel (photo 17, 18, 55, 75)
2. The Japanese as hard-working, highly-disciplined, self-sacrificing ‘samurai in suits’
>walking or standing in a line, big crowds, uniforms, (rescue workers) carrying (elderly) civilians or children, clearing rubble, rescue workers inspecting civilians (photo 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 13, 15, 17, 19, 22, 25, 27, 30, 31, 33, 37, 40, 44, 46, 47, 48, 52, 53, 54, 60, 61, 62, 67, 69, 71, 73, 74, 77, 78, 81, 82, 83, 86, 88, 90, 92, 95)
3. The Japanese (women) as submissive, exotic geisha girls
>no cues pointing to this stereotype were found
4. The deeply intuitive Japanese as finely attuned with nature
>no cues pointing to this stereotype were found
5. The Japanese as endlessly humble, polite, respectful, and modest
> walking or standing in a line, uniforms, (rescue workers) carrying (elderly) civilians, children or bodies, clearing rubble (photo 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 15, 22, 27, 30, 31, 33, 43, 44, 45, 46, 53, 54, 60, 61, 69, 74, 77, 78, 81, 82, 90, 91, 92)

The following photographs invoke visual tropes associated with Japanese people:
Ninja (photo 16, 20, 22, 30, 37, 40, 42)
Samurai (photo 19, 25, 27, 33, 44, 48, 60, 61)
Geisha (photo 13, 18, 32, 56, 70)

Coding per photo (tsunami aftermath):
1. Rescue workers carrying child, face masks, uniforms
2. Rescue workers carrying elderly, uniforms
3. Rescue workers among rubble, uniforms, no expression/emotion
4. Civilians among rubble, one with back turned to camera (face invisible), clearing rubble
5. Rescue workers carrying elderly, uniforms
6. Rescue workers carrying body, uniforms, no expression/emotion
7. Close-up of child, sad expression
8. Civilians in line, face masks, no expression/emotion, Japanese text
9. Civilians among rubble, with back turned to camera (faces invisible), carrying body
10. Civilians among rubble, with back turned to camera (faces invisible)
11. Civilians among rubble, with back turned to camera (faces invisible)
12. Civilians among rubble, with child, with elderly, one face mask, dejected expressions
13. Civilians in line, no expression, holding teapot
14. Civilians among rubble, with back turned to camera (faces invisible)
15. Rescue worker carrying elderly, uniform, grateful expression
16. Civilians, close-up on face, pensive expression, face masks
17. Rescue workers, uniforms, no expression, faces hardly visible, little light, dark atmosphere
18. Civilians (woman) praying, dark atmosphere, mysterious lighting
19. Rescue workers, in line, uniforms, face masks, no expression, faces hardly visible
20. Civilians (women) among rubble, face mask, backs turned to camera, no expression
21. Civilians in rescue shelter, faces hardly visible, Japanese text
22. Rescue workers, face masks, uniforms, clearing rubble
23. Civilians (man) among rubble, no expression
24. Civilians, elderly, in rescue shelter, faces hardly visible, with Japanese food

25. Rescue worker, uniform, among rubble, back turned to camera, no expression
26. Civilians, elderly, among rubble, face mask, face hardly visible, no expression
27. Rescue workers, in line, uniforms, face masks, faces hardly visible, no expressions
28. Civilians (women), close-up, face mask, sad expressions, embracing
29. Civilians (family), among rubble, cooking Japanese food, holding chopsticks
30. Civilians, in rescue shelter, in line, face masks, no expression
31. Civilians, in rescue shelter, in line, face masks, children, women, no expression, rescue worker, uniform, back turned to camera, no expression
32. Civilians (elderly woman), close-up, face partly visible, hands covering face, no expression
33. Rescue workers, in line, uniforms, face masks, faces hardly visible, no expressions
34. Civilians (man), among rubble, face mask, face hardly visible, no expression
35. Civilians (women) among rubble, face mask, faces hardly visible, no expressions
36. Civilians (women), face masks, faces hardly visible, no expressions
37. Rescue worker, face mask, uniform, Japanese text
38. Civilians (woman), among rubble, close-up, face mask, sad expression
39. Civilians (women, man, elderly), in rescue shelter, face mask, face hardly visible (elderly man), embracing, sad expression (woman), back turned to camera, no expression (elderly woman)
40. Rescue worker, among rubble, face mask, uniform, face hardly visible, back turned to camera, clearing rubble
41. Civilians, among rubble, faces hardly visible, no expression
42. Civilians (woman), in rescue shelter, Japanese text, face mask, sad expression
43. Civilians (elderly woman), among rubble, pained expression, clearing rubble
44. Rescue workers, in line, among rubble, Japanese text, uniforms, face masks, faces hardly visible, no expressions, carrying bodies
45. Civilians (woman), among rubble, face mask, pained expression, clearing rubble
46. Civilians (man), face hardly visible, pained expression (body language), among rubble, rescue workers, face masks, uniforms, faces hardly visible, backs turned towards camera, no expressions, Japanese text, clearing rubble
47. Civilians (elderly woman, child), rescue worker, backs toward camera, face mask, faces hardly visible, no expressions, Japanese text, inspecting civilians
48. Rescue workers, in line, uniforms, face masks, faces hardly visible, carrying body, sad expression (worker on the right)
49. Civilians (child, two adults) in rescue shelter, face mask (child), sleeping (child) faces out of frame (adults)
50. Civilians (woman and baby), face mask down, feeding child, gentle expression
51. Civilians, elderly, children, sleeping, in rescue shelter, faces hardly visible, no expressions
52. Civilians, in line, among rubble, faces hardly visible, no expressions, Japanese text
53. Civilians (women), in line, face masks, no expressions, Japanese text
54. Rescue workers, uniforms, face masks, among rubble, faces hardly visible, backs turned to camera, no expressions, clearing rubble
55. Civilians, close-up, dark atmosphere, mysterious lighting, face hardly visible, no expression
56. Civilians (woman), face mask, no expression, holding teapot
57. Civilians (young woman), in rescue shelter, sleeping, shoes neatly lined up, blankets
58. Civilians (women, children, one man), in rescue shelter, face masks (women), faces hardly visible (women), no expression (women)
59. Civilians (man), among rubble, no expression, Japanese text, clearing rubble, holding Japanese dishes
60. Rescue workers, among rubble, in line, uniforms, face masks, faces invisible, no expressions
61. Rescue workers, among rubble, uniforms, face masks, faces hardly visible, backs turned to camera, clearing rubble

62. Rescue workers, among rubble, uniforms, face masks, faces hardly visible, no expressions
63. Civilians (men, elderly man), among rubble, backs turned to camera, faces hardly visible, no expressions
64. Civilians (woman), among rubble, no expression, hand covering face, face only partly visible
65. Civilians (men and women), among rubble, no expressions
66. Civilians (man and woman), among rubble, expressive body language (woman), pained expression (man)
67. Civilians (women and children), rescue workers, uniforms, backs turned to camera (workers), sad expressions (civilians), no expressions (workers), Japanese text, in boats
68. Civilians (woman), close-up, sad expression
69. Rescue workers, among rubble, uniforms, Japanese text, concentrated expressions, clearing rubble
70. Civilians (woman and man), among rubble, blanket (woman), face only partly visible (woman), covering face with hand (woman), face hardly visible (man), no expressions
71. Civilians (elderly woman, child), civilians carrying child, pained expression, among rubble
72. Civilians (woman and child), sad expressions
73. Rescue workers, carrying elderly, among rubble, uniforms, Japanese text, faces hardly visible (workers), no expression (workers), pained expression (elderly woman)
74. Rescue workers, in line, uniforms, faces hardly visible, no expression
75. Civilians, in rescue shelter, backs turned to camera, faces invisible, no expressions, only a little light, dark atmosphere, mysterious feel
76. Civilians (elderly man and woman), face mask, faces hardly visible, no expressions, among rubble, with dog, Japanese text
77. Civilians (men), carrying elderly man, faces partly visible (men on the left), pained expression (elderly man), Japanese text
78. Rescue workers, among rubble, uniforms, face masks, faces hardly visible, no expressions, clearing rubble
79. Civilians, face masks, outside rescue shelter, backs turned to camera, faces hardly visible, no expression, big crowd
80. Civilians (man and child), among rubble, rescue worker, backs turned to camera, faces invisible, no expression
81. Rescue workers, carrying body, uniforms, face masks, faces partly visible, pained expression (worker on the right)
82. Rescue worker carrying elderly woman, among rubble, no expressions, uniform
83. Civilians (elderly man and two women), among rubble, rescue workers, face masks (workers), faces only partly visible (workers), no expressions (workers), sad expressions (civilians)
84. Civilians, among rubble, faces hardly visible, no expressions
85. Civilians (women and men), face mask (man in the back), among rubble, sad expressions
86. Civilians, in line, backs to camera, faces invisible, no expressions, big crowd, Japanese text, man in foreground wearing suit, face mask, no expression
87. Civilians (women), close-up, subtle expressions
88. Rescue workers, in line, face masks, uniforms, among rubble, faces hardly visible, no expressions
89. Civilians (women, child), close-up, sad expression (woman on the left), no expression (woman on the right, child)
90. Rescue workers, among rubble, face masks, uniforms, faces hardly visible, no expression, clearing rubble
91. Civilians, in line, big crowd, backs turned to camera, face masks, Japanese text, faces hardly visible, no expressions
92. Civilians (man, child), carrying child, among rubble, subtle expression
93. Civilians, elderly (woman), in rescue shelter, close-up, subtle expression

94. Civilians (woman), in rescue shelter, back turned to camera, face invisible, no expression, Japanese text
95. Civilians (child), rescue workers, no expression (child), faces hardly visible (workers), uniforms, face masks (workers), in line (workers)
96. Civilians, among rubble, backs turned to camera, faces invisible, no expressions
97. Civilians (women), embracing, big crowd, sad expression, faces only partly visible
98. Civilians (women), embracing, sad expression, face only partly visible, among rubble, back turned to camera, Japanese text
99. Civilians, big crowd, backs turned to camera, faces invisible, no expressions among rubble, elderly woman, face visible, sad expression (elderly woman), among rubble
100. Civilians, faces hardly visible, among rubble, Japanese text, no expressions

Coding: 200 photos of the nuclear crisis at the Fukushima power plant

Codes:
1. Plant workers
> Inspecting others
> Inspecting plans or forms
> Working on electricity
> Working in the plant
> Working outside the plant
> Collecting gear
> Holding gear
> Eating

2. Plant office employees

3. High-ranking plant officials

4. Prominent people
> in Japanese society
> foreigners

5. Civilians

6. (Foreign) press

7. Appearance / dress
> Wearing full-body plastic suits
> Wearing face masks
> Wearing anti-radiation masks
> Wearing suits
> Wearing casual clothing
> Wearing uniforms

8. Locations
> Inside the plant
> Outside the plant
> Inside J-Village facilities (originally a soccer training center; temporarily used as a plant worker

base)
> At a press conference
> In vehicles
> In office rooms

9. Lines and crowds
> Plant workers in line
> Civilians waiting in line
> Crowds of people

10. Emotions
> Expressive faces (sad, pained, shocked, happy, etc.)
> No expression on the faces
> Faces invisible
> Face only partly visible
> Faces hardly visible
> Faces out of frame
> Hands covering face
> Back turned to camera
> Bowing

13. Close-ups
> Close-up of face

14. Atmosphere
> Little light/darkness
> Mysterious feel
> Japanese text
> Shoes neatly lined up

Codes into cues, pointing to Insidious Orientalist stereotypes:

1. Japanese collectivism or the Japanese a an ‘anonymous mass’
   > more than one person in photo, walking in a line, big crowds, faces not or hardly visible, faces out of frame, backs turned to the camera, uniforms, plastic suits, face masks, anti-radiation masks (photos 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 34, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 43, 45, 47, 49, 50, 52, 53, 54, 56, 58, 59, 61, 62, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 74, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 85, 86, 88, 89, 90, 91, 94, 98, and 99)
2. Japanese emotionality or the Japanese as cold-hearted, repressing their emotions, or ‘emotionless robots’
   > no expression on faces, faces not or hardly visible, faces out of frame, faces partly covered, hands covering faces, face masks, anti-radiation masks (photos 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 47, 48, 49, 52, 53, 54, 56 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 64, 65, 66, 68, 70, 72, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 83, 84, 85, 86, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 95, 97, 98, 99, and 100)
3. The Japanese salaryman or the Japanese as an ‘economic animal’ offering him- or herself up to the company completely
   >people in suits (photo 46, 47, 50, 55, and 56)
4. The Japanese as ruthless gangsters
   >no cues pointing to this stereotype found

5. The Japanese as sneaky ninja's
   >smug expression (photo 46)
6. The Japanese as irrational, inferior, exotic and/or bizarre
   > in photo with Westerners, plastic suits, uniforms, face masks, faces not or hardly visible, shoes neatly lined up, bowing, Japanese text (photo 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 97, and 99)

Codes pointing to Romantic Orientalist stereotypes:
1. The Japanese as tranquil, spiritual, and mystical Zen Buddhists
   > photo not well-lit or dark, photo has a mysterious feel (photo 1, 3, 6, 10, 11, 49, and 58)
2. The Japanese as highly-disciplined, hard-working, and self-sacrificing 'samurai in suits'
   > walking or standing in a line, crowds, uniforms, plastic suits, suits, inspecting others, inspecting plans or forms, working on electricity, working in the plant, working outside the plant (photo 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 16, 19, 20, 22, 23, 34, 25, 26, 28, 30, 35, 37, 39, 40, 41, 42, 44, 45, 46, 47, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 65, 66, 67, 68, 71, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 88, 89, and 91)
3. The Japanese (women) as submissive, exotic geisha girls
   >no cues pointing to this stereotype were found
4. The deeply intuitive Japanese as finely attuned with nature
   >no cues pointing to this stereotype were found
5. The Japanese as endlessly humble, polite, respectful, and modest
   > walking or standing in a line, bowing (photo 19, 20, 21, 23, 25, 26, 31, 35, 40, 64, 66, 68, 83, and 85)

The following photographs invoke visual tropes associated with Japanese people:
1. Ninja (photo 1, 8, 9, 15, 40, 42, and 90)
2. Samurai (photo 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 25, 37, 66, and 82)
3. Geisha (none)

Coding per photo (nuclear crisis):
1. Plant workers, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks, inside the plant, working in the plant, strange lighting, mysterious feel, faces hardly visible, no expressions
2. Plant worker, inspecting other worker, face mask, uniform, Japanese text, close-up
3. Plant workers, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks, inside the plant, working in the plant, faces hardly visible, no expressions, dark atmosphere
4. Plant workers, inspecting plans, outside the plant, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks, faces hardly visible, no expressions
5. Plant workers, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks, outside the plant, backs to camera, faces invisible, no expression, Japanese text
6. Plant workers, inside the plant, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks, inspecting plans, backs to camera, faces invisible, no expression, dark atmosphere
7. Plant workers, outside the plant, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks, backs to camera, faces invisible, no expression
8. Plant workers, outside the plant, working on electricity, backs to camera, faces invisible, no expressions, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks
9. Plant workers, outside the plant, working on electricity, backs to camera, faces invisible, no expressions, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks

10. Plant workers, inside the plant, working on the plant, faces invisible, no expressions, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks, dark atmosphere, mysterious feel
11. Plant workers, outside the plant, inspecting plans, hand covering face, faces invisible, no expressions, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks, dark atmosphere
12. Plant workers, outside the plant, in a vehicle, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks, faces hardly visible, no expressions
13. Plant office employees, in office room, backs turned to camera, faces hardly visible, uniforms, no expressions
14. Plant workers, plastic suits, inside J-village, crowd, backs turned to camera, press
15. Plant workers, plastic suits, inside J-village, anti-radiation masks, collecting gear, no expressions, Japanese text
16. Plant workers, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks, inspecting others, faces partly visible, no expressions, Japanese text
17. Prominent person in Japanese society (Minister of the Environment Goshi Hosono), plant high officials, uniforms, in office room, smiling expressions, Japanese text
18. Plant worker, plastic suit, face mask, sad expression, close-up
19. Plant workers, in a crowd, plastic suits, face masks, dejected expressions, Japanese text, close-up
20. Plant workers, in line, in a crowd, plastic suits, face masks, dejected expressions
21. Prominent person in Japanese society (Minister of the Environment Goshi Hosono), plant high officials, office room, Japanese text, bowing, smiling expressions
22. Plant workers, outside the plant, in a crowd, backs turned to camera, faces hardly visible, no expressions, uniforms, anti-radiation masks
23. Plant workers, inside J-village, in line, uniforms, anti-radiation masks, faces hardly visible, no expressions, Japanese text
24. Plant workers, inspecting other, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks, faces hardly visible, no expressions, back turned to camera, Japanese text, inside J-village
25. Plant workers, plastic suits, face masks, carrying gear, inside J-village, tired expression, Japanese text, crowd, in line
26. Plant workers, inside J-village, in line, plastic suits, face masks, carrying gear, Japanese text, faces hardly visible, no expressions
27. Plant worker, inside J-village, face hardly visible, tired expression
28. Plant workers, inside J-village, inspecting plans, Japanese text, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks, faces hardly visible, no expressions
29. Plant workers, inside J-village, uniforms, face masks, collecting gear, backs turned to camera, faces hardly visible, no expressions
30. Plant workers, inside J-village, inspecting plans, Japanese text, faces hardly visible, no expressions
31. Plant workers, inside J-village, collecting gear, uniforms, Japanese text, worried expression
32. Plant workers, inside J-village, uniforms, face masks, Japanese text, shoes neatly lined up, no expression
33. Plant worker, inside J-village, face mask, Japanese text, face hardly visible, no expression
34. Plant workers, inside J-village, backs to camera, faces invisible, no expressions
35. Plant workers, inside J-village, backs to camera, faces invisible, no expressions, in line
36. Plant worker, inside J-village, back to camera, face invisible, no expression
37. Plant workers, outside the plant, backs to camera, faces hardly visible, no expressions, plastic suits, face masks, working outside
38. Plant workers, inside a vehicle backs to camera, faces hardly, no expressions, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks
39. Plant workers, outside the plant, backs to camera, faces invisible, no expressions, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks

40. Plant workers, outside the plant, worried expressions, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks, face mask, Japanese text, in line
41. Plant workers, outside the plant, backs to camera, faces invisible, no expressions, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks, doing electrical work, Japanese text
42. Plant worker, inside the plant, face hardly visible, no expressions, plastic suit, anti-radiation mask, working on the plant
43. Plant workers, inside J-village, face hardly visible, face out of frame, no expressions, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks
44. Plant worker, inside the plant, face hardly visible, no expression, plastic suit, anti-radiation mask, working in the plant
45. Plant workers, office employees, inside office room, Japanese text, crowd, backs to camera, faces invisible, no expressions, face masks, uniforms
46. Prominent person in Japanese society (International Atomic Energy Agency director general Yukiya Amano), foreign press, press conference, suits, smug expression
47. High-ranking plant officials, suits, Japanese texts, inspecting plans, faces out of frame, no expressions
48. Plant worker, plastic suit, face out of frame, no expression
49. Plant workers, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks, inside the plant, dark atmosphere, backs to camera, faces invisible, no expressions
50. Plant office employees, uniforms, crowds, suits, face masks, worried expressions
51. Plant office employees (PR staff), press conference, Japanese text, uniforms, stern expressions
52. Plant workers, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks, inside a vehicle, no expressions
53. Plant office employees, uniforms, crowds, face masks, no expressions
54. Plant workers, outside the plant, back to camera, face out of frame, faces invisible, no expressions, plastic uniforms, anti-radiation masks, working outside
55. High-ranking plant officials, suits, Japanese texts, inspecting plans, worried expressions
56. high-ranking plant officials, uniforms, Japanese texts, press conference, tired expressions, Japanese press, suits, backs to camera, faces hardly visible, faces invisible, no expressions
57. Plant worker, no expression, inside J-village, Japanese text, close-up
58. Plant workers, inside the plant, working on the pant, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks, dark atmosphere, mysterious lighting, faces invisible, no expressions
59. Plant workers, inside office room, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks, backs to camera, faces invisible, no expressions
60. Plant worker, outside the plant, plastic suit, anti-radiation mask, face hardly visible, no expression
61. Plant workers, inspecting others, in a line, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks, stern expression (man in front), faces hardly visible (men in background)
62. Plant workers, in a vehicle, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks, curious expressions
63. Plant worker, outside the plant, plastic suit, anti-radiation mask, stern expression
64. Civilians, high-ranking plant officials, uniforms, bowing, backs to camera, no expressions
65. Plant workers, outside the plant, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks, backs turned to camera, faces invisible, no expressions, Japanese text
66. Plant workers, outside the plant, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks, in a line, faces hardly visible, no expressions
67. Plant workers, inside J-village, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks, Japanese text, stern expression (man in front), in line, close-up
68. Plant workers, outside the plant, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks, faces hardly visible, no expressions, inspecting plans, in line
69. Plant workers, inside J-village, plastic suits, anti-radiation face masks, focused expressions, crowd

70. Plant workers, inside J-village, plastic suits, anti-radiation face masks, crowd, backs to camera, faces hardly visible, no expressions
71. Plant worker, outside the plant, plastic suit, anti-radiation mask, focused expression, close-up
72. Plant worker, inside the plant, plastic suit, anti-radiation mask, face hardly visible, no expression
73. Prominent person in Japanese society (Atsufumi Yoshida of the 'Fukushima Fifty'), prominent foreigner (a member of an International Atomic Energy Agency delegation), in an office rooms, welcoming expressions
74. Prominent person in Japanese society (TEPCO President Masataka Shimizu), in an office room, stern expressions, Japanese text, backs turned to camera, faces invisible, no expressions
75. Prominent person in Japanese society (Atsufumi Yoshida of the 'Fukushima Fifty'), no expression, close-up
76. Plant workers, outside the plant, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks, backs turned to camera, faces invisible, no expressions
77. Plant workers, outside the plant, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks, backs turned to camera, faces invisible, no expressions, crowd
78. Plant workers, outside the plant, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks, backs turned to camera, faces invisible, no expressions
79. Plant workers, outside the plant, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks, faces hardly visible, no expressions, inspecting plans, crowd
80. Plant workers, outside the plant, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks, backs turned to camera, faces invisible, no expressions, crowd
81. Plant workers, inside the plant, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks, backs turned to camera, faces hardly visible, no expressions, Japanese text
82. Plant workers, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks, faces hardly visible, tired expression, close-up
83. Plant office workers, plastic suits, uniforms, in line, Japanese text, no expressions
84. Plant worker, inside the plant, plastic suit, anti-radiation mask, face hardly visible, no expression
85. Plant workers, inside J-village, inside a vehicle, in line, face masks, plastic suits, no expressions, crowd
86. Plant workers, inside J-village, uniforms, eating, no expressions
87. Plant worker, inside J-village, uniform, tired expression
88. Plant workers, inside J-village, inspecting others, plastic suits, anti-radiation masks, face mask, Japanese text, back turned to camera, faces hardly visible, no expressions
89. Plant workers, inside J-village, inspecting others, plastic suits, face masks, Japanese text, back turned to camera, faces hardly visible, no expressions
90. Plant workers, inside J-village, plastic suits, face masks, faces hardly visible, no expressions
91. Plant workers, inside a vehicle, plastic suits, face masks, faces hardly visible, no expressions, crowd
92. Plant worker, inside J-village, back turned to camera, face invisible, no expression
93. Plant workers, inside J-village, face mask, backs turned to camera, tired expression, Japanese text
94. Plant workers, inside J-village, tired expressions, happy expression, Japanese text, uniforms
95. Plant workers, inside J-village, no expressions
96. Plant worker, inside J-village, tired expression
97. Plant workers, inside J-village, face masks, no expressions, holding gear, Japanese text
98. Plant workers, inside J-village, backs turned to camera, no expressions, Japanese text, collecting gear, uniforms
99. Plant workers, inside J-village, backs turned to camera, no expressions, Japanese text, collecting gear, face mask, uniforms
100. Plant worker, inside J-village, stern expression

Appendix II: Qualitative content analysis corpus

The images of the aftermath of the tsunami were retrieved from:

National Geographic at
http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2011/03/pictures/110311-tsunami-earthquake-japan-hawaii-science-world-waves/#/japan-tsunami-earthquake-hits-northeast-consoling_33141_600x450.jpg

Poynter at
http://www.poynter.org/how-tos/newsgathering-storytelling/123478/10-powerful-images-of-japan-earthquake-aftermath/

The Denver Post at
http://blogs.denverpost.com/captured/2011/03/11/captured-japan-earthquake-and-tsunami/2816

The Huffington Post at
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/03/11/japan-earthquake-photos_n_834391.html

The LA Times at http://framework.latimes.com/2011/03/11/earthquake-and-tsunami-hits-japan

The Sydney Morning Herald at http://www.smh.com.au/environment/bigpics/japan-disaster

The images of the work at the nuclear power plant were retrieved from:

Bag News Notes at http://www.bagnewsnotes.com/2013/03/nuclear-meltdown-anniversary-ritual/

Business Insider at http://www.businessinsider.com/the-fukushima-50-2011-3?op=1&IR=T

CBS News at http://www.cbsnews.com/pictures/first-look-inside-fukushima-nuclear-plant/

Cryptone at http://cryptome.org/eyeball/daiichi-npp6/daiichi-photos6.htm

Fukushima Song at http://fukushimasong.com/samurai/

GigaOm at https://gigaom.com/2011/04/19/25-photos-from-the-japanese-nuclear-disaster/

National Geographic at
http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/energy/2011/03/pictures/110323-inside-fukushima-daiichi-japan/#/rare-views-inside-fukushima-daiichi-japanese-nuclear-plant-panel_33633_600x450.jpg

Nature.com at http://blogs.nature.com/news/2011/05/understanding_the_complete_mel.html

Sott at
http://www.sott.net/article/226269-First-pictures-emerge-of-the-Fukushima-Fifty-as-they-battle-radiation-poisoning-to-save-Japans-stricken-nuclear-power-plant

The Atlantic at
http://www.theatlantic.com/infocus/2011/12/fukushima-inside-the-exclusion-zone/100202/

The Daily Mail at
http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2060680/Fukushima-nuclear-power-plant-1st-glimpse-inside.html

The Denver Post at
http://blogs.denverpost.com/captured/2011/11/14/inside-japans-fukushima-nuclear-reactor/5085/

The Economist at http://www.economist.com/blogs/banyan/2012/10/japans-nuclear-disaster

The Guardian at http://www.theguardian.com/environment/fukushima

The Week at
http://www.theweek.co.uk/politics/japanese-tsunami/6941/fukushima-workers-kamikaze-mission

Totally Cool Pix at
http://totallycoolpix.com/magazine/2011/04/inside-the-fukushima-nuclear-plant/single/5827