LEARNING FROM INDIVIDUAL NARRATIVES:

POST-1995 GREAT HANSHIN EARTHQUAKE LITERATURE

A Thesis

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INTRODUCTION

It was not a disaster in which 20,000 people died. It was the incident that "a person died" happened 20,000 times.

—Beat Takeshi, Japanese comedian, 2011

Ruins. Debris. Fires. Smoke. Corpses. Blood. Panicking people. Distortion of the city. Colorlessness. Chaos. These were the fragmented images of Kōbe after the Great Hanshin Earthquake. On January 17, 1995, an earthquake with a seismic intensity of shindo 7 hit the Kansai area of Japan in the early morning. Thousands of people lost their lives in the transitory 20 seconds, and millions continued to be affected for the following months and even years due to the difficulty of reconstruction. The disaster remained a nightmare for many Japanese for a long time.

Decades after the calamity, what I learned of it from textbooks, news reports, and governmental documents provided a miserable picture of the collapsed Hanshin area and left a melancholy atmosphere in the national memory. I believed I totally understood the sorrow and pity—until I read Murakami Haruki's *After the Quake*.[1]

This book was Japanese writer Murakami Haruki's response to the national tragedy. A collection of six fictional short stories staged in the earthquake-vulnerable Japan, *After the Quake* portrayed individuals' delicate feelings of living through the depressive post-disaster days. What made these stories unique was the characters' peripheral position in the disastrous event; they lived outside the disaster region and thus were not impacted by the earthquake. However, they suffered from the strike of the earthquake in their hearts, particularly the feelings of emptiness. In the second story of the collection "Landscape with Flatiron," for example, a young girl and a middle-aged man, both frustrated by the meaninglessness of their lives, agreed to commit suicide together after their driftwood bonfire extinguished. The story ended with the two waiting for the last moment of the dying bonfire, "Most of the burning driftwood had turned to ash and crumbled, but the biggest piece still glowed orange, and she could feel its gentle warmth against her skin. It would be a while before it burnt itself out" (Murakami, *After the Quake* 54). The sense of emptiness, together with elapsing hope, revealed the characters' subtle psychological traumas, which were the consequences of the earthquake that I hardly thought of while reading the casualty statistics of the official reports.

In contrast to the governmental, media, and scholarly reportage on the 1995 Great Hanshin Earthquake that dedicated to generating a collective and unified narrative at institutional level, literature written by ordinary people restored individual accounts of trauma that was often subordinated to the mainstream depiction. Rather than describing how the disaster *looked* like, the post-earthquake literary responses documented how it *felt* and thus were capable of drawing the audience back to the horrible situation irrespective of whether they shared the experience.

With the expectation of discovering a pattern of individuals' internal struggle in the post-1995 earthquake situation, I select three after-the-quake literary works for analysis.

Besides Murakami Haruki's *After the Quake* introduced previously, the novel *Fukai Oto* (Deep Sound) by Oda Makoto and the documentary writing *Kōbe Shinsai Nikki* (Kōbe Earthquake Diary) by Tanaka Yasuo were chosen.[2] *Fukai Oto* was an account of the middle-aged woman Hashimoto Sonoko who survived the earthquake and lived through post-disaster life. She was rescued by the elderly Kurokawa Kiichiro and his grandson who passed by the ruin of her house by chance, and she developed a strong friendship with Kurokawa later in the story. The title "Deep Sound" referred to the horrific sound of the rumbling ground during the earthquake, which was a symbol of the frightening disastrous experience that could only be understood by the survivors. The deep sound, though as a part of the survivors' painful memory of which they did not want to be reminded, ironically connected them to one another and comforted their hearts.

On the other hand, *Kōbe Shinsai Nikki* was a diary that documented the activities of the author Tanaka Yasuo. Although he lived in Tokyo, he made up his mind to go to the disaster area as a volunteer. He bought a 50cc motorcycle with a big box attached to the back seat to efficiently reach the emergency shelters with bad road conditions and distribute relief goods to the victims. In his volunteering time, he documented the infuriating, moving, and inspiring scenes he observed in the disaster-affected area.

These three literary works were selected due to their well-balanced positionality of narration. *Fukai Oto* provided an insider account in which the main characters were direct victims of the earthquake; *After the Quake* offered six stories told from outsider perspectives as the protagonists were unaffected by the earthquake but still lived in the broad context of post-earthquake Japan; *Kōbe Shinsai Nikki* demonstrated a dynamic process of an outsider (in Tokyo) who went local (to the Kōbe area) and gradually became a semi-insider. I intend to cover a relatively wide, though not comprehensive, scope of post-1995 literature through the three representative works.

In her book *Fukushima Fiction: The Literary Landscape of Japan's Triple Disaster*, Rachel DiNitto posited that post-disaster literature had to be narratives of cultural trauma: "…in order for such disasters to remain relevant and rise above the specifics of the immediate victims—in other words, to be successfully transformed into a collective representation—they must be narrativized as trauma" (DiNitto 25). Though post-disaster literary works demonstrated a great diversity in writing style, focus, and perspective, they all delivered a similar traumatized message and contributed to the formation of collective trauma that was expected to be maintained in national history and memory.

In the following chapters, I argue that in a post-disaster context, literature on personal traumatic experience not only served as an unforgettable historical record, but also commented on the practical lessons that people learned from the catastrophe and from surviving it, which would potentially educate and influence people who struggled in similar coping process in the future. Looking through the methodological lens of close reading, I analyze the texts to discover the patterns of individuals' recovery process.

In Chapter 1, I discuss the context in which post-disaster literature revealed its significance. Traditional documentation of a historical event was usually a top-down process; institutions with political or social power—specifically government, media, and academy—had the ability and responsibility to write the history. While narratives of these institutions provided a macroscopic picture of the event, personal stories were neglected and failed to become a part of history. Thus, literature written by individuals that told individual's stories in the event will help complete the comprehensive picture. Another question of concern is why the 1923 Great Kanto Earthquake and the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake drew more literary discussions than the 1995 Great Hanshin Earthquake has done. I provide several considerations for this issue as well.

In Chapter 2, I compare the three literary works to extract common patterns of people's traumas and their corresponding coping strategies. Traumatic feelings discussed included sense of abandonment, outrage, and emptiness, and the two coping strategies covered were adopting religious beliefs and creating sense of connection/community.

In Chapter 3, I analyze volunteerism as a common theme in the three works. I argue that people's coping strategies converted to their motivation to practice volunteerism. Moreover, volunteering endowed people with the unified identity as "Japanese" and thus allowed them to share a sense of belonging with each other.

In the Conclusion, I evaluate the significance of post-disaster literature in terms of its contribution to the bottom-up policy making for future disaster relief. The application of the lessons learned from the after-the-quake literature, in addition to the domination of institutional narratives, would benefit more of the common people in future disasters by responding directedly to their demands. Besides, I also discuss the role of post-disaster literature in promoting volunteerism in Japanese civil society.

CHAPTER 1: TENSION BETWEEN INSTITUTIONAL AND INDIVIDUAL NARRATIVES

Every page a victory.
Who cooked the feast for the victors?
Every 10 years a great man.
Who paid the bill?
So many reports.
So many questions.
—Bertolt Brecht, 1935

In 1935, the prominent German playwright and poet Bertolt Brecht wrote the poem "Questions from a Worker Who Reads" to criticize the limitation of conventional histories focusing on heroic individuals. Influenced by Marxist ideology in his early years, Brecht developed an antibourgeois attitude that reflected his generation's disappointment in the civilization that had come crashing down at the end of World War I, which urged him to stand on the common people's side and speak for them ("Bertolt Brecht"). In the poem, the speaker, a worker, asked about people who were missing from stories of well-known historical monuments and events: who were the laborers who constructed the Great Wall of China, the soldiers who followed the young Alexander when he conquered India, or the cooks who prepared feasts for the kings' victories? While most of us admired the magnificent achievements and the feats of charismatic leaders, few, as the worker did, bothered to pay attention to the invisible mass of individuals who worked, fought, and died for the historical accomplishments—who not only contributed to but also constituted the history—yet did not even have their names recorded. The orthodox historical narratives, usually composed at an institutional level, were like sieves with large holes that only kept figures with great historical significance in the national memory and filtered out the underlying majority, and as a result, the history of millions of people was often simplified into one collective story told from the perspective of the few topmost leaders.

The British historian E. J. Hobsbawm regarded Brecht's questions as "typically twentieth-century question[s]" as he insightfully asked why most of the history written so far (by "the end of the nineteenth century" for him) "[told] us so little about the great majority of the inhabitants of the countries or states it was recording" (Hobsbawm 13). His concern was shared by many historians in the twentieth century, and one of the most distinguished among them was George Rudé. Specializing in "history from below," a non-traditional method to approach history, Rudé devoted his academic life to the study of common people in opposition to the mainstream focus on dominant social groups and elites (Krantz 3). His research was dedicated to "ordinary pre-industrial urban and rural laborers and artisans, participants through various forms of 'popular action'" in the French and Industrial Revolutions (3-4). Employing the bottom-up methodology against the prevailing top-down narratives, Rudé was a pioneer in recovering the position of ignored majority in history as he viewed the crowd as living and thus should have a voice.

Yet the dichotomy between institutional and individual narratives of history was not resolved in the twentieth century but persisted and remained an issue to recent days. In contemporary society, the role of presenting institutional narratives was taken on by media and researchers. In order to quickly provide a general understanding for their audience, both parties were dedicated to generating macroscopic pictures of a specific event. This pattern was also true in the context of post-disaster Japan. Respectively after the two major natural disasters that happened in the past decades, namely the 1995 Great Hanshin Earthquake and the 2011 East Japan Earthquake (commonly known as the 3.11 Earthquake), media and scholarly attention concentrated on rationally practical aspects such as conditions of physical damage, aid and relief, and life recovery.

In terms of media coverage, social scientist Anthony S. Rausch tracked the trends in columns of three local Japanese newspapers issued after the 3.11 Earthquake. The statistical result indicated that the keywords which most frequently appeared were "aid (*shien*)," "recovery (*fukko*)," and "damage (*higai*)"; "aid" and "damage" had higher frequency right after the earthquake, and "aid" and "recovery" appeared more often for later monthly periods (Rausch 285-6). The newspaper columns tended to treat the earthquake as eventful "news" at first and later switched to the "post-news" contents for the long-term coverage (290). Employing the strategy of "a combinative 'independence-eyewitness' amalgamation" in which the journalists determined the themes in advance and then collected detailed evidence from the local resident sources (292). The media, while seemingly involving personal voices into the narratives, sustained the top-down order of information distribution. As Rausch noted, the newspaper columns, as the "memory agents," contributed to the formation of public memory of the disaster by establishing and maintaining the event awareness (293). The public memory created by media manifested itself mainly in commemoration, and thus individual stories hardly had a place in this collective narrative.

On the other hand, some academic researchers, especially those of post-disaster studies, conducted relatively large-scale research and maintained their discussions at the structural level to provide broad perspectives of the earthquakes. The sociologist Tatsuki Shigeo, for example, has been researching disaster survivors since the 1995 Kōbe Earthquake. His focus, unlike the newspapers' multiple concerns, was principally on life recovery processes. By distributing a large number of social surveys to the survivors, in which he inquired their post-earthquake recovery experience in terms of the "seven elements for everyday life recovery,"[3] Tatsuki kept track of the social, political, and economic recovery outcomes at different stages after the earthquake and in turn suggested further intervention methods (e.g. Tatsuki, "Long-Term"; Tatsuki and Hayashi, "Determinants of the Changes"). Tatsuki's research represented how natural disasters were typically understood and portrayed in the academic field: an earthquake was a set of social problems waiting to be solved, and thus systematic solutions were necessary and were expected to be offered by the researchers. While scholars and media were effectively making progress on societal reformation and public commemoration of the disasters, voices of individuals talking about their complicated feelings and distinct survival experience largely remained unheard.

One of the few sources of grassroots history of Japanese disasters and post-disaster responses was literature. The bottom-up narratives provided alternative and supplemental perspectives in response to the institutional depiction by media and researchers. Problems faced by individuals were largely different from the institutional concerns, yet were equally significant: food to eat, water to drink, place to stay, and unease to relieve. In this situation, everyone could be a writer if he or she wished to express and be heard. Each personal story told potentially served as a comfort, as empathy, and even as guidance for people who struggled in a similar situation and needed courage to move forward. For example, the book *The Sky Unchanged: Tears and Smiles*, a collection of short poems (*tanka*) written by fifty-five Japanese affected by the 2011 East Japan Earthquake, documented the ordinary moments of grief, of pleasure, of hopelessness, and of hope that coexisted in the post-disaster Japan. Asano Etsuko, one of the victims, recorded a warm moment in her tanka, “when the rescue vehicles file by, with tears brimming I pray with palms together—he salutes in return” (Tsujimoto 72). Struggling to live in the post-disaster ruins, she had a moment of relief when she saw the rescue vehicles—the symbols of the victims’ hope of living. The driver also saluted back to pay his respect to her effort of striving in the arduous situation.

Merely facing the survivors at first, the short poems recording small moments like this were mainly posted in the special columns of various newspapers issued in disaster-affected areas, but as they spread to other regions in Japan and as their translated version reached overseas, the poems touched and encouraged many more people than the disaster victims, as the review of an American high school student said, "when I read the short poems, although I felt sad, I was able to hold the hope with me" (translation mine) (154, 156-157). More importantly, the "poets" revealed in their interviews that as they wrote the short poems, they felt their own hearts were healed and had the courage to live a normal life again (86, 91, 94, 112). With its salient significance in recording the historical moment using an individual-based approach, post-disaster literature was more valuable in its power of psychologically healing people when they found empathy in these personal stories.

Admittedly, one could argue that fictional literature, unlike the documentary ones, did not reflect the reality and thus was a less reliable discourse either as a historical source or as empathy-evoking consolation. While my analysis indeed involved two fictional works, of which I could not ensure they were based on the actual experience of individuals in the post-disaster Japan, at least the emotions presented were not fabricated. The sense of emptiness, hopelessness, anger, forgiveness, and redemption depicted in the books reflected the authors' psychological state and thus served as their personal responses. These emotions, though not objective or factual, were still important components of the destructive events, and the fictions thus should be considered as helpful as documentary literature to understand individual narratives.

Before stepping into the discussion of the three literary pieces which formed the focus of my analysis, I would like to point out the gap between the 1995 Great Hanshin Earthquake and the 2011 East Japan Earthquake (3.11 Earthquake) in terms of the amount of post-disaster literature and research focused on them respectively. Research on post-disaster Japan concentrated in the past decade—in other words, after the 2011 earthquake—and studies on the 2011 earthquake outnumbered the ones on the 1995 one, from which we can see a gap in academic and professional attention. I offer here two possible explanations for this phenomenon. First, the 3.11 Earthquake's impact had a larger scope and severity compared to the 1995 one. As its other widely known name "2011 Triple Disaster" suggested, the shindo-7 earthquake, the following tsunami, and the consequent nuclear meltdown caused a great scale of destruction in Japan and thus justifiably deserved more scholarly and literary attention than the 1995 earthquake. Second, the occurrence of the 2011 earthquake triggered the still vivid national memory of the 1995 earthquake that happened sixteen years ago. However, the previous earthquake did not teach a good lesson and thus did not help reduce the national unpreparedness in the 3.11 Earthquake, which possibly made researchers and writers reflect on the lack of attention on the 1995 disaster and urged them to write more about the current one to prevent future regret. Social scientists Eyal Ben-Ari, Jan van Bremen, and Tsu Yun Hui suggested that Japan had an "extensive and consistent preoccupation" with past and with memories, and they further indicated that a crisis would usually intensify the search of the past; when people's identity was challenged by the catastrophe, their need of rethinking of it from the past emerged (Ben-Ari et al. 2). As the 1995 Japan had the last natural disaster too far away in memory—given that the Great Kanto Earthquake happened in 1923, seventy-two years before the 1995 earthquake—the negligence of extracting lessons from the Great Hanshin Earthquake right after the calamity was rather reasonable.

To further broaden the vision on Japanese post-disaster literature, one could add the 1923 Great Kanto Earthquake into consideration. Researcher of Japanese literature Inkyung Um provided a list of representative literary works in the post-disaster literature genre (see Appendix).[4] For the most part, writers chose poetic and novelistic formats. Poetry made an enormous contribution by “showing how culture could serve as a memorial to disaster and also act as a means by which those who lived through it could cope with the event” (Morton 273). As Japan has a cultural tradition of writing poetry—including the traditional form of waka and haiku and the more modern one of tanka—and all Japanese children learn how to write poetry in compulsory education, it is natural for Japanese people, especially local amateurs, to consider poetry as a primary literary tool to respond to traumatic events. Compared to writing a novel, poetry was a more convenient method to record people’s thoughts and feelings and to share with and even comfort others who also experienced the events.

A novel, on the other hand, required higher writing skills and took much more time to compose. Thus, masters in Japanese literary circles, if not directly affected and inspired by the disasters, would only write about the earthquakes if the restlessness elicited by the disastrous events went nationwide and reached where they lived—most likely Tokyo. The 1923 Great Kanto Earthquake was a typical example. In that period of time, major writers generally concentrated in Tokyo. Originally from places all over

Japan, many of these writers chose to "jōkyō (go upward to Tokyo)" to study with a recognized literary master. As a result, when the disaster devastated Tokyo, dozens of these great writers wrote on this event, as they were directly impacted (Kodama, 24-41). On the other hand, the theory potentially explained the lack of famous authors writing for the Great Hanshin Earthquake: since its seismic focus, unlike the Great Kanto Earthquake and the Great East Japan Earthquake, was away from Tokyo, the impact of this disaster hardly "permeated the layers of local amateurs to world-renowned masters" (Haga xv).

Admittedly, the point made by the researcher of Asian languages and cultures Haga Kōichi in his book *The Earth Writes: The Great Earthquake and the Novel in Post-3/11 Japan* could be generalized to all three catastrophes: they all "disassembled the social hierarchy among masters, mainstays, new writers, and amateurs, at least for a moment, and caused a flood of literary works related to [their] aftereffects" (xv). As long as the writers were all concerned with the disasters and wished to contribute to the documentation of the moments with their personal accounts, their literary responses should be regarded as significant.

The three authors of the selected literary works in this thesis all expressed their concerns for the tension between institutional and individual narratives. Murakami wrote in his other book *Underground* that he did not want to write on "a collection of disembodied voices" : "Perhaps it's an occupational hazard of the novelist's profession, but I am less interested in the 'big picture' as it were than in the concrete, irreducible humanity of each individual" (Murakami, *Underground* 6). Murakami's stories gave a voice to individuals' feelings of isolation and alienation, usually erased by the mainstream accounts, to help his readers make sense of reality without losing individuality in the institutional proposal of "Japanese spirit" (Suter 306). On the other hand, both Oda and Tanaka angrily attacked the media and governmental narratives that presented a false appearance of peace and prosperity. Both referred to the disaster as "man-made," they saw the nonfeasance and corruption of government officials who disregarded the thousands of victims struggling to survive (Oda, "The Hanshin Quake" 24; Tanaka 89). Media, they noted, spoke with the same voice as the government did by interviewing the so-called "specialists" on earthquakes and city planning to justify the institutional proposals on continuing city development and construction, instead of focusing on reconstruction (Oda, *Fukai Oto* 27; Tanaka 59). The reluctance of the three authors to contribute to the collective yet uninformative discourses as well as their aspiration to challenge and smash such unrealistic top-down narratives motivated them to write *for* the individuals and *about* the individuals who actually lived through the earthquake and the post-earthquake life—to write about their shared psychological struggles, their distinct coping strategies, and their altruistic actions that also pushed themselves to move forward towards new lives.

CHAPTER 2: INTO THE NARRATIVES: INDIVIDUALS' SHARED FEELINGS AND COPING STRATEGIES

Patterns of Traumatic Emotions Depicted in Literature

In his preface to the Chinese translation of Murakami Haruki's *After the Quake*, Lin Shaohua commented on the characters' lack of direct encounter with the earthquake, that "the earthquake was transplanted by Murakami from Kōbe to the protagonists' hearts, and the cracks on the ground became cracks and holes on the land of hearts"[5] (Lin 6). Similar to the portrait of post-war sentiments, traumatic feelings caused by the earthquake was also elevated to a national level by media; the 1995 Great Hanshin Earthquake was depicted and disseminated as Japan's "national tragedy and a test of national character every bit as challenging as a war" (Schencking 119). As a result, people in Japan, no matter whether they experienced the earthquake, regarded the national post-disaster melancholy as their collective trauma. Murakami was not the only writer who revealed the psychological pain through his narratives; all three authors—Murakami Haruki, Oda Makoto, and Tanaka Yasuo—had a shared focus on individuals' complex feelings in response to the earthquake. As Rachel DiNitto noted, they came to "observe, experience, document, re-create, historicize, and provide hope for the victims" (DiNitto 1).

People appeared in the narratives unfolded themselves as the stories developed, and their various and intertwined emotions gradually emerged. Facing the unexpected disaster, some of them expressed their straightforward fear and helplessness, while others responded with anger towards institutions or people they thought should bear the blame; some compared their feelings with their previous experience, while others concentrated on their psychological struggles in the current event. In comparing the three books, I discovered some patterns of their common emotions. The following discussion focuses on three of the feelings most frequently expressed by the characters in these works.

Sense of Abandonment

After the physiological reactions of panic and helplessness faded away, one of the remaining feelings mentioned most frequently was the sense of abandonment. People felt left behind by the government policies that forged ahead: while those impacted by the disaster were still struggling to digest the situation, the government did not seem to need as much time to brace itself up and already planned to initiate reconstruction as well as new construction projects, including a five-year touristic project of an earthquake exhibit in the disaster region (Tanaka 86). Tanaka Yasuo pointed out this dichotomy by referring to the anxious entities as the "private (*shi*)" abandoned by the "public (*kō*)" (98). To describe the feelings of misplacement and void, he also used some metaphorical expressions close to Japanese people's ordinary life. For example, he compared the victims' long-term tent life to the school festival (*gakuensai*) that was not allowed to stop even after the festival season (131), and he regarded the individuals forgotten by the "public (*kō*)" as "the skipped buttons (*botan no kakechigai*)," describing their frustrating status in the society as not only neglected but also mistreated (153). Later in the book, a crucial all-encompassing term appeared in Tanaka's language to unify and name these nuanced emotions: "abandoned people (*kimin*)" (156).

This was a term also widely used by Oda Makoto. In his fictional work *Fukai Oto*, the characters at one point gathered and complained about the poor living conditions in the emergency shelters. The protagonist Sonoko's savior and friend Kurokawa lamented that they, the victims, were the "abandoned people (*kimin*)": "At the beginning there was almost nothing in the shelters and one banana was shared [among] a family of three. It was awful; those who didn't even get that much were to receive it the next day and were given a short ribbon to identify them. We were abandoned citizens, just like *kimin*" (translation by Roman Rosenbaum) (Oda, *Fukai Oto* 37). Later he used the concept again when he complained about his difficult work life that was necessary for his survival, in which he had to travel for hours to reach his workplace, yet his bosses refused to pay for his rather expensive commuting costs (202). People like Kurokawa felt disappointed for not being taken seriously, and the frustration would remind some of them, if old enough, of their post-war experience in which people bore a similar neglect by the government (Rosenbaum 160).

Kurokawa, who was in his mid-seventies, was a representative of the connecting generation who had experienced both World War II and this natural disaster. The horrible scene of a sea of fire caused by the earthquake visually triggered a memory of firebombing in the war and thus stirred their emotions. This unease partially explained why contemporary earthquakes in Japan was usually compared to a war (Schencking 113). Historian of Japan J. Charles Schencking argued that in the context of the 1923 Great Kanto Earthquake, the parallel of earthquake and war was drawn by the Japanese elites not only to help describe the similar totality of destruction, but also to serve as a strategic promotion of national-wide commitment to reconstruction (126). By contrast, when evaluated from the perspectives of common people in the post-1995 context, people's memory of war contrasted with their earthquake experience, yet reinforced their sense of abandonment. Tanaka Yasuo, for example, assigned a hopeful definition to the close of war: "the situation in which everyone agreed and believed that no more harm would be generated was the defeat (of Japan)…in the ravages of war where things could be freely talked about, people had their hope" (Tanaka 81). Nevertheless, Tanaka viewed the post-earthquake life as moments of abandonment, since the victims knew people other than them were enjoying the affluent life, which made them feel more trapped in the sense of being left behind.

Outrage

While some people passively lamented their sense of loss as they felt abandoned, others adopted a more active way of response: to speak out their anger. This was usually not a direct reaction to the disaster, since being angry at nature did not seem rational and meaningful. However, through their insecure life experience as victims, people would soon find out that nature was not the only reason they suffered; the irresponsible government and media also deserved their legitimate blame.

In seeking the subject of blame, the government was a large target. The poor living conditions in the emergency shelters were likely to initiate the victims' dissatisfaction towards the government, and as they learned more about the institutional nonfeasance and corruption before and after the earthquake, their outrage was justified. In *Fukai Oto*, for example, Kurokawa explained his anger towards the government due to the death of his best comrade-in-arms. He heard from others that because the local government desired faster development on enterprises, it concealed the fact that there were active underground layers beneath the city and demanded scholars to claim that only an earthquake with a maximum seismic intensity of shindo 5 would happen here, hundreds of years in the future. Thus, infrastructures of the city including water pipelines were only built with the anti-seismic degree of 5. As a result, the pipeline system was completely paralyzed and unable to provide water to put out the fires after the earthquake, which undoubtedly caused more casualties (Oda, *Fukai Oto* 138-39). After retelling this rumor to Sonoko, Kurokawa did not bother to hide his anger: "my comrade-in-arms was killed" (139). This was a very powerful accusation against the government; the diction "killed" was employed to condemn the misconduct of government—it was human crime, rather than the natural disaster, that had actively caused Kurokawa's comrade-in-arms' and many others' death. Tanaka shared the same viewpoint as he called the earthquake a "man-made disaster" and revealed the story that the prefectural head, who lived only three kilometers away from the city hall, insisted on waiting for his car to pick him up after the earthquake happened and thus largely delayed the rescue activities (Tanaka 80).

As people's outrage towards the government intensified over time, tension between public and private exacerbated.

In addition to the government, media was another primary target of people's anger. Tanaka used the verb "hunting (*'emono' motomete*)" to describe the behaviors of journalists in disaster zone (147). As discussed in Chapter 1, the journalists observed by Tanaka also determined the stories ahead of interviews and then went to the disaster area to collect well-suited evidence. They traveled around in comfortable cars, did not even attempt to reach the centric area with terrible road conditions as long as they would get enough materials, and only cared about their filming of the victims without lending them a helping hand, which Tanaka harshly censured (59, 147). His angry blame was widely shared by the victims, who also expressed their strong discontent against the journalists in *Fukai Oto*: "what did those bastards come here for? [They] regarded our misery as commodity and consumed the fire scenes as spectacles. No, they were just completely fire scene thieves" (Oda, *Fukai Oto* 53).

People's pervasive outrage naturally led to a reflection on media's role in the post-disaster context. Journalists headed to the disaster area right after the earthquake because they held the belief that their audience was eager for the first-hand information. As more people understood the great severity of this national tragedy through newspapers, they craved for more information from the disaster scene due to their strong empathy for the disaster victims. A positive feedback loop was thus formed, and more and more journalists were justified in going to the disaster area in response to their audience's expectations. However, while the journalists' presence was supposed to be effect-free, if not beneficial, their indifference in practice gave an additional psychological strike against the victims. There was a scene in the semi-documentary television show *Kōbe Shimbun no Nanokakan* revealing a journalist's realization of the potential harm that he could cause. When he held up the camera lens and tried to take a photo of a miserable victim, he was afraid to press the shutter button, as if using the camera lens to point at the victim was nothing different from using a gun (Shichitaka and Shigehara). If the journalists could not stay empathetic—or simply be sympathetic—and would only bring harm to the disaster region, their necessity there should be reconsidered.

Emptiness

Emptiness was the main theme of Murakami Haruki's *After the Quake*, which focused on the psychological depiction of people living outside the disaster zone yet were still bound to the context of post-earthquake Japan. According to Murakami's portrait, the peripheral Japanese people, in comparison to the direct victims, suffered different psychological struggles imposed by the earthquake. Given that they were advantaged outsiders—specifically, they were lucky to be unaffected by the earthquake and thus did not need to strive to survive in the destroyed city—these people viewed the earthquake as an opportunity to review their life so far. Several characters in Murakami's stories reached the conclusion of emptiness. In the first story "UFO in Kushiro," for example, the protagonist's wife, after staring at the television news about the earthquake for five days, suddenly disappeared with a note saying she would never come back again.

"Living with you is like living with a chunk of air" was the explanation she provided to him (Murakami, *After the Quake* 6). Later he agreed to help his colleague transport a mysterious box to the colleague's sister living in Hokkaido. After he arrived and handed over the box to the young woman and her friend, he asked what was in the box and got the joking reply that it was his essence, which he lost when he gave the box away (27-8). The protagonist felt overwhelmingly angry when he heard the answer, possibly because he found it echoed his emptiness. It was unfair to state that the earthquake destroyed his marriage; nevertheless, it indeed served as a trigger. For the protagonist's wife, the unexpected disaster smashed the disguise of mediocrity of the couple's daily life and allowed her to see the meaninglessness of her marriage; for the protagonist, the divorce elicited by the earthquake forced him to face his underlying lack of passion for life. Throughout Murakami's stories, emptiness brought by the earthquake dimmed the light of a clear and hopeful future either for individual citizens or for the country, and the sense of loss, like the disaster, went beyond local and became a national melancholy experienced by all Japanese.

Moving Forward: Coping Strategies Employed by Individuals

Throughout the three literary works, although various types of traumatic emotions were revealed, none of the books ended with a pessimistic note on the victims' misfortune. Instead of remaining in their painful traumas, most people in the books attempted to move forward. Some adopted religious beliefs as cures for their mental scars, while others mitigated their pain by establishing warm connections with people around them. While there were reconstruction teams responsible for repairing the collapsed city, the ruin in people's hearts could only be fixed by themselves.

Religious Beliefs

Tim Graf, a researcher of Japanese Buddhism, pointed out the profound role played by Buddhism in helping people coping with catastrophes. In Japan, people do not necessarily need to believe in a specific religion when they practice a tradition or follow a fashionable trend in their daily lives, such as visiting a Shinto shrine, having a Christian wedding, or participating in a Buddhist funeral (Graf 157). However, as they live in the multi-religious Japan, they naturally have some religious consciousness, and in the post-earthquake context, they would go to the priests to consult about their afterlife or the appropriate ways to commemorate the dead (164). Graf believed that in this situation, Buddhism provided "spiritual care," as opposed to religious care, to the victims by responding to their spiritual pain without imposing religious beliefs on them (168). Religions like Buddhism functioned in such a grievous context as a mental comfort.

Sonoko, the protagonist of *Fukai Oto*, was a representative of people employing this coping strategy. After she recovered from physical injuries, she began to visit the ruins and practice personal ceremonies for the dead. She set simple graves in front of piles of debris, in which she claimed no human body was buried beneath but people's "thoughts, emotions, and memories" instead (Oda, *Fukai Oto* 125). In her ceremonies, she sat in front of the "graves" and bowed to them with her hands placed together devoutly, yet she did not *pray* for the people passed away as she believed they were the deceased of "this life (*genshi*)" and thus should not to be prayed for reaching the "next life (*ano yo*)" (124).

This seemed to be an atypical adoption of Buddhist ideas as she denied the significance of next life, yet it was actually a demonstration of Japanese adaptation of Buddhism. According to David Gardiner, professor of East Asian religions, Japanese Buddhism, unlike Indian and Chinese ones, had a unique "this-life affirming" ideology (Gardiner). It believed this life was the focus, and people should strive to be enlightened in this life instead of worrying about the rebirth in the next life. Sonoko's refusal to pray reflected this ideology: she did not imagine she had the power to manipulate the dead's next life with her prayer, so she simply showed her awe by merely bowing. Her ceremonies, therefore, had more significance to herself than to the dead; this was her therapy of opening herself up and embracing the current situation. Given that Buddhism, unlike many other religions, did not have an ultimate savior; people in the post-disaster situation could only attempt to save themselves. The graves of debris and the small ceremonies were Sonoko's self-rescue.

Sense of Connection and Sense of Community

Living the post-disaster life could be a psychologically painful and highly private experience. In *Fukai Oto*, Sonoko once identified her loneliness as a distinct feeling different from the sense of abandonment, "I felt that I was by myself in the field hospital, which was not to say I felt lonesome as I was abandoned by people I knew. To put it a bit exaggeratedly, no matter how many humans stayed and lived together, they would still be alone" (Oda, *Fukai Oto* 23-24). This loneliness, which isolated people from each other, might be a primary cause of the high rate of “isolated death” (*kodokushi*) among the disaster survivors.

Actively mending the destroyed social network, then, would be a reasonable solution. It would be foreseeably difficult to initiate the process if everyone felt caught in a confined personal space. In the moment like this, shared experience of the earthquake was a good entry point. Sonoko, for example, made her first friend after the earthquake through a dispute over the earthquake experience. Sonoko angrily found out that Yoshimi, the young woman in the hospital bed besides hers, concealed her experience of the earthquake from the volunteers came from Tokyo. When she asked why Yoshimi did not reveal the fact, Yoshimi replied as she stared into Sonoko’s eyes, “do you think those people would understand the earthquake if I told them? The sound of the ground rumbling, the deep sound from underground that you talked about. Do you think they would understand the horror of that?” (112). Sharing their feelings of the terrifying moment of the earthquake, the two women created a sense of connection with each other, which later made them very good friends.

For people outside the disaster zone, this sense of connection was equally important for overcoming the situation. In the last stories of *After the Quake*, “Honey Pie,” the protagonist Junpei resolved to protect his good friend Sayoko and her daughter Sala from negative impacts of the earthquake. The four-year-old girl Sala recently had trouble falling asleep after she saw the provoking news of the earthquake on television, and she also had bad dreams about the imaginary Earthquake Man who wanted to lock her into a box. Junpei, empowered by his love to Sayoko and Sala, determined to eliminate the gloomy atmosphere caused by the earthquake and create a bright future for the two. It was his emotional connection with the two women that saved him from his bland life and later saved Sayoko and Sala as well.

Establishing a community was a similar strategy. There was a subplot in *Fukai Oto* about a Vietnamese community of survivors. If, according to Rosenbaum, the victims in general were considered as "abandoned people (*kimin*)," the additional identity of Vietnamese immigrants would make these people even more marginalized (163). However, these Vietnamese people connected with each other and constructed a new community in the lonely situation as they lived, cooked, ate, and talked with each other as well as with outsider volunteers who came to help every day, and as a result, they survived as a community since their negative emotions of feeling abandoned were offset by their positive sense of community.

To conclude, the sense of connection and of community offered an alternative solution to the post-earthquake plight besides self-rescue. Recognizing the current issues yet admitting that one could not solve them by him/herself, individuals who were brave enough to confront their weakness were in turn empowered by the support of others like them. If everyone, as Sonoko claimed, would have to suffer from loneliness, they could at least share the pain with one another.

CHAPTER 3: COPING STRATEGIES AS MOTIVATIONS: VOLUNTEERISM AND BEYOND

> *"…At this time, please walk towards the future with large steps. Didn't we experience that live-or-die moment? Didn't you, as well as me, didn't we both hear that deep sound of the ground rumbling? If we don't proceed towards the future, Yoshimi-san, that's our loss."*
>
> *—Oda Makoto, Fukai Oto (201)*

Like Sonoko, the protagonist of *Fukai Oto* who encouraged her friend Yoshimi to proceed towards a new life, many characters depicted in the three literary works resolved to pick themselves up from their traumas and start over. In the quote above, as Sonoko stated that it would be a "loss (*son*)" if they, the survivors, did not move on, she referred to the thousands of victims who failed to survive the disaster, either during the earthquake or afterwards. The tragic event adopted a cruel Darwinism: those who were not lucky enough died in the earthquake, and those who were not mentally strong enough were also eliminated as they committed suicide in the suffering post-disaster life. According to researcher of disaster recovery Tanaka Masato and his colleagues, the number of "isolated death[s]" (*kodokushi*) in Kōbe sharply increased several years after the earthquake (Matsubayashi et al. 130; Tanaka et al. 1814). Thus, when Sonoko—who successfully survived both—thought of them, she determined to not waste her life but face the future fearlessly, not only for herself but also for the departed.

Sonoko's words demonstrated a transformation of her identity and stance: she no longer regarded herself as a victim but instead a survivor. Through analyzing a survivor-volunteer group in Kōbe, Leng Leng Thang, a socio-cultural anthropologist, elaborated on this shift that identifying with the label "victims" showed people were passively controlled by the disaster, but when the term "survivors" was employed, these people became agentive as they actively lived against the earthquake (Thang 198). Whether one identified with either reflected his or her stage in the recovery process. For survivors like Sonoko who actively looked for a coping strategy and finally obtained the courage for living a new life, their survival proved their strategies effective, which further encouraged them to share the approaches with others to help them go through the same victim-survivor conversion. This motivation of supporting others promoted a significant phenomenon in the post-disaster Japan: the flourish of volunteerism.

The year 1995 in Japanese history was named by various scholars as the "renaissance of volunteerism," "first year of the (disaster) volunteer," or "volunteer revolution" (Atsumi and Goltz 221). While the concept of volunteerism was not new in Japan, the scale of volunteer convergence after the 1995 Great Hanshin Earthquake was unprecedented: about 1.4 million volunteers responded to the Kōbe disaster (224). The major components of this huge volunteer group were people from areas remote from the disaster-impacted region and the local disaster survivors. As people across Japan all gathered in the disaster area to provide urgent support, volunteering in Kōbe became a national trend, and thus it was not surprising that the theme of volunteerism appeared in all three selected literary responses. The characters' motivations for participating in volunteer works coincided with the patterns of their coping strategies discussed in Chapter 2, which suggested that their adopted strategies not only pulled them out of the swamp of trauma, but also motivated them to help others.

The coping strategy of employing religious beliefs did not come to the fore in the narratives of volunteerism; people did not publicize their beliefs as much as actually practiced them in such situations. Since major religions such as Buddhism and Christianity encouraged people to love and help others, their believers became a main force of volunteering. The fourth story of *After the Quake* "All God's Children Can Dance" had a subplot of the believer volunteers. After the earthquake, the protagonist Yoshiya's mother went to the Kansai area with other believers to assist with disaster relief. Yoshiya, unlike her mother, was not a believer and ironically referred to her mother as "a volunteer servant of God" (Murakami, *After the Quake* 56). Her son's rejection of religion, while frustrating her a lot, did not stop the mother from practicing her beliefs. She viewed her religion as comforting and dedicative, as she preached "be sure to come see us if you ever have any pain or difficulties…We never push, we only offer" (69). This altruistic idea encouraged her to head to the collapsed part of Kōbe, which was far away from where she lived in Tokyo.

Yoshiya formed a contrast with his devout mother. He hardly felt connected to the disaster region as he claimed "Kōbe felt light-years away" from his life (68). He represented the group of people who failed to adopt a coping strategy for the disaster trauma, as he let himself get drunk and remained trapped in his own "dark, heavy, silent heart of stone" (69). While the author Murakami did not necessarily advocate for religions as a good solution, he indeed used Yoshiya as a foil to present his religious mother as becoming inspired and agentive through volunteering.

On the other hand, people saved by the sense of connection and of community were in turn motivated by it as well. They hoped to contribute to the disaster relief by making connections with others. For example, the author Tanaka Yasuo was one of the volunteers who went to the disaster region to help satisfy the immediate needs of the victims. Though he lived in Tokyo, Tanaka revealed his strong affection towards the Kansai cities: he used to get inspired by the local customs for his novels and even used these places as settings of his stories (Tanaka 11). After the earthquake happened, he resolved to head to the disaster region, as he wanted to "pay a debt of gratitude (*on gaeshi*)" to the Kansai area (11). Refusing to let the earthquake undermine his emotional connection with Kōbe, he went there to fix and reestablish his social networks.

In *Fukai Oto*, the first time Sonoko decided to volunteer was due to her sense of connection with other victims based on their shared earthquake experience. Unlike Yoshiya's mother, Sonoko was one of the disaster survivors and thus understood the pressing demand for volunteers even more. She was convinced by her friend Yoshimi, who told her about the frustrating experience of a group of Vietnamese victims: they came from a country that rarely had earthquakes, so after the horrific earthquake, they did not dare to stay inside anymore; even if they wanted to go to the emergency shelters, they would not feel comfortable to go in as many Japanese were already in there; as a result, they chose to set up tents in a park as their new residence (Oda, *Fukai Oto* 100). This conversation ended with Yoshimi emphasizing that one of her Vietnamese friends also heard the deep sound of the ground rumbling, just as Sonoko and Yoshimi did (102). Since Sonoko shared the same horror during the earthquake and the same struggles for surviving after the quake as the Vietnamese victims had experienced, she felt emotionally connected with them even though they never met. Later in the book, the term “comrade-in-arms (*senyu*)” was used to depict this empathetic relationship (208). As Sonoko and Yoshimi regularly volunteered at the tent village, they became friends with the tent residents and even further became a part of the community.

As the characters’ participation in volunteering showed, they spurred themselves with their respective coping strategies and were willing to pass on the power they gained to the dispirited others. In the NHK documentary series on the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake *Anohi Watashi Wa* (On that Day, I Was), a high school student Kobayashi Aya expressed her aspiration of becoming someone who could help others in the future (“Hisai shite Tsuyoku natta Watashi”). As one of the disaster victims, she received a lot of help when she stayed at the emergency shelter, which moved her a lot and made her resolve to pass on the heartwarming support to others in need. Kobayashi’s experience reflected another reason to devote to volunteer works: to pay the debt of gratitude (*on gaeshi*). If we say that motivations derived from the individual’s coping strategies initiated the prevalence of volunteerism, the grateful feelings of people like Kobayashi efficiently sustained it. This TV series has gone on for years, which allows survivors’ memories and emotions like Kobayashi's to remain alive.

In his article "Kōbe 1995: Crisis, Volunteering, and Active Citizenship in Japan," history professor Simon Avenell pointed out the role of volunteering in establishing new communities in disaster-impacted region. He indicated that when people all over Japan gathered in Kōbe area to help the vulnerable communities, volunteers and victims created solidarities regardless of their ethnicity, nationality, age, place of living, and other originally discriminative factors (Avenell 187). Through the process in which new communities were formed, volunteering *for* vulnerable communities along with volunteering *by* themselves "cultivated new practices and imaginations of citizenship beyond formal, legal, national state citizenship, and based on interethnic, multicultural communities of cooperation" (202-4). In the post-1995 context, volunteerism redefined the identity of "Japanese"; as long as people shared the national post-disaster sentiment and strived together towards the same goal of overcoming it, they were regarded as not only united but also homogeneous—at that moment, they were all Japanese.

Volunteering, thus, went beyond the mere extension of the coping strategies. While people expected to obtain some power to move forward, they actually gained more. The unprecedented solidarity generated by volunteerism, especially in the disaster region, endowed people with a sense of belonging guaranteed by the recognition of their similarities with each other instead of an emphasis on difference, and this belongingness in turn promoted people's will to live for a promising future. The altruistic idea of volunteerism was one spirit of the survival lessons taught by the earthquake.

CONCLUSION

Up through 2019, NHK maintained a tradition of regularly showing educational television programs on earthquake preparedness. The morning show *Asaichi*, for example, sometimes invited experts of earthquake precautions to give helpful advice on improving the safety level of domestic living environment in order to enhance people's survival rate during an earthquake. The experts suggested people to get prepared starting from everyday life (*fudan kara*) by, for example, stocking drinkable water at home and by storing food ingredients separately in food bags in order to easily make dishes during an emergency ("Kyodai Jishin"). This TV show also introduced the distribution of emergency shelters in Tokyo, informing people where to go if they were outside when an earthquake occurred. While they could stay in the shelters to take refuge, people were requested to try their best to help others at the shelters; in other words, during the earthquake, people were encouraged to view themselves less as victims but more as survivors and volunteers ("Moshi, Kitaku Konnansha ni Natte Shimattara").

One of the key phrases of such TV programs was "for the 'if' moments (*moshimo no toki no tame*)." From the 1995 Great Hanshin Earthquake to the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake, Japan did not let the disasters remain in history but incorporated them into the "if" statements for the future. The current complete precautionary measures were not formed from the beginning, at least not before the 1995 earthquake; while introducing the anti-seismic strategies, one guest in the NHK show *Asaichi* recalled her experience of the 1995 earthquake: people at that time were ill-prepared and thus felt extremely helpless ("Kyodai Jishin"). The contemporary disasters taught bitter lessons to Japan, which forced this calamity-prone nation to develop and improve the systematic measures against earthquakes.

The 1995 Great Hanshin Earthquake was the first lesson of this learning process, and post-earthquake literature undoubtedly served as an important component of the teaching materials. As previously discussed, post-1995 literary works reflected the common patterns of individuals' emotional reactions during and after the earthquake, such as sense of abandonment, outrage, and emptiness. In response to these traumatic feelings, many people actively looked for appropriate coping strategies to cure their scarred hearts, and the two major strategies among them were adopting religious beliefs and generating a sense of connection or a sense of community. These coping strategies further motivated people to participate in volunteering, which in turn gave them power to live positively. The recorded stories of these individuals' psychological recovery processes functioned as exemplars for future disaster victims to survive through the same paths, and more importantly, they constantly reminded people to keep the bitter experience in mind.

Though the three authors mentioned in this thesis wrote from three different points of view as discussed in the Introduction—specifically Murakami as outsider, Tanaka as semi-insider, and Oda as insider—I believe they all wrote *for* the same audience: people who were unaffected by the disaster. Murakami wrote as one of them; through his stories, he expressed these people's shared restlessness for their future as well as the nation's. Tanaka served as a model for this group of people; originally as one of the fortunate outsiders, he voluntarily went to the disaster area as a "one-person red cross" (Ōmori) and showed what every outsider could do to help the victims. Oda told his experience to the public as one of the victims; he pictured the post-disaster life for those who did not share the experience and thus could not imagine the tough situation that the survivors faced. While the authors all meant to speak to the audience who were geographically away from the earthquake-affected area, their messages were also effectively conveyed to readers who were distant from the disaster in time—the point was to never forget the catastrophe and its painful impact.

These narratives also potentially contributed to the future policymaking on disaster relief. For example, after the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake, temporary residences were allotted based on communities; instead of separating members of a community who lived together before the earthquake, the whole community was moved to a new place of living, and thus connections among community members were maintained. This policy did not exist in the post-1995 earthquake Japan. The temporary apartments then were composed of single rooms in order to efficiently fit in more victims. As a result, while their connections with their past friends and community were broken, many people failed to repair their social networks and committed suicide in loneliness at last. Reflecting on the importance of social connections and community, post-earthquake literature in 1995 raised an alarm and potentially promoted an introduction of the new policy of assigning victims to the same community in 2011.

Another potential influence of the post-1995 literature was the great increase in numbers of volunteers and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Japan. Given that more than one million person-days of volunteer activities were logged right after the Great Hanshin Earthquake, volunteerism became a key element of the Japanese civil society since then (Atsumi and Goltz 221). As volunteer activities continued beyond the emergent needs of disaster-affected areas, NGOs were gradually formed. Tatsuki Shigeo introduced the A-R-T-D (Activities-Resources-Tasks-Domain) model in his book *Saigai to Fukkō no Shakaigaku* (Disaster and the Sociology of Recovery) to interpret the function of NGOs, especially volunteer organizations. Beginning with an immediate dedication to volunteering activities, the volunteer organizations regarded the guarantee of relief resources as their second priority, followed by the confirmation of general goals and an overall strategic plan (Tatsuki, *Saigai* 122). The administrative organizations, by contrast, followed the opposite direction (D-T-R-A) and thus were less efficient in terms of emergency response. However, it did not mean that governmental organizations were unnecessary and unfunctional; as Tatsuki pointed out, NGOs should cooperate with the existing governmental organizations until they determined their comprehensive implementation plan (122). Generally speaking, NGOs' role in disaster relief process was to take up the empty spaces that government failed to address.

Post-disaster literature's effect on the development of volunteer NGOs was not necessarily direct; it rather promoted the value of volunteerism through individual narratives. For example, Tanaka Yasuo's book *Kōbe Shinsai Nikki* recorded his experience as a one-person volunteer, and as a result, many of his readers reflected in their book reviews that they appreciated his devoted attitude and took him as their model. Volunteer literature like Tanaka's work advocated for a national value characterized by "empathy and community regarding values to counteract the individualism and alienation fostered by urban life of the post-World war II era" (Atsumi and Goltz 236). Moreover, it helped reinforce the value by identifying the NGOs' future roles and practically creating new resources for the volunteer groups (Nagai 50).

Although post-disaster literature was usually not treated as a reliable source of understanding catastrophes due to its subjectivity, it showed its significance in the applications of the microscopical lessons learned from it for future earthquake relief. While the dominance of institutional narratives penetrated the top-down solutions to the earthquake—which meant the countermeasures derived from them also mainly benefited the institutions—the policies that elicited from individual experience satisfied more of common people's demands. Post-1995 earthquake literature not only recorded personal narratives of the historical event, but also provided guidance for institutional policy makers to improve future relief strategies. More importantly, it laid a solid foundation for more literary works written after the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and set the stage for future development of Japanese post-disaster literature.

Notes

[1] Originally published in Japanese, this book has the title of *Kami no Kodomotachi wa Mina Odoru* (All God's Children Can Dance), which is the same as the title of the fourth story in the collection. In this thesis, I use its translated English title *After the Quake* for the following discussion since the quotes are cited from the English translation by Jay Robin.

[2] Since neither the books *Fukai Oto* nor *Kōbe Shinsai Nikki* has an English translation, the titles are maintained in Japanese in my discussion.

[3] "Seven elements for everyday life recovery" is a structural theory that Tatsuki Shigeo developed for disaster recovery, including elements of housing, social support network, land use planning, physical and mental health, preparedness, government assistance policy, and economic and financial situation (Tatsuki and Hayashi, "Total-Quality-Management-Based Assessment").

[4] The chart (see Appendix) is adopted from Inkyung Um's essay "Prospect of a Research about Disaster Literature in East Asia: Focusing on a Study, The Literary Responses to Disasters in East Asia and a Genealogy of Disaster Narratives." I have translated and expanded on the chart. Admittedly, this is not an exhaustive list of Japanese post-disaster literature, yet it is significant as it provides enough examples to show certain patterns.

[5] This quote and the following ones from the books *Fukai Oto* and *Kōbe Shinsai Nikki* appeared in this thesis, unless specified otherwise, are my translations.

Appendix: Examples of Post-Disaster Literature and Related Disasters in Contemporary Japan

Date	Author	About the Author/the Work	Title	Genre	Related Disaster
1923	Akutagawa Ryūnosuke 芥川龍之介	(1892-1927) Born and raised in Tokyo; "Father of the Japanese Short Story"	*Ōmu* (Parrot)*	Novel	Great Kanto Earthquake
1923	Akutagawa Ryūnosuke 芥川龍之介		*Mōmonmōtō* (Absurd Questions and Absurd Answers)	Novel	
1923	Akutagawa Ryūnosuke 芥川龍之介		*Daishin Zakki* (Miscellaneous Notes on the Great Earthquake)	Experiential Writing	
1923	Kikuchi Kan 菊池寛	(1888-1948) Born in Kagawa and lived in Tokyo since 1916; playwright, and journalist	*Saigo Zakkan* (Miscellaneous Thoughts after the Disaster)	Informal Essay	
1923	Hagiwara Kyōjirō 萩原恭次郎	(1899-1938) Born in Gunma and lived in Tokyo since 1922; Dadaist poet; later became Anarchist	*Fukiagare Shinjijitsu no Chi* (Pour out the Blood of New Fact)	Poetry	
1923	Fukao Sumako 深尾須磨子	(1888-1974) Born in Hyōgo; poet, translator, and social activist	*Wasureta Aki* (Forgotten Autumn)	Poetry	
1923.11	Yoshiya Nobuko 吉屋信子	(1896-1973) Born in Niigata and lived in Tokyo since 1916; romance novelist and pioneer in Japanese lesbian literature	*Kanashiki Rodai* (Sorrowful Balcony)	Poetry	

1923.11	Hamana Tōichirō 濱名東一郎		*Sensōji Nite* (At Sensōji)	Poetry	
1924	Masamune Hakuchō 正宗白鳥	(1879-1962) Born in Okayama and lived in Tokyo since 1896; novelist, playwright, and literary critic	*Tanin no Sainan* (Others' Disaster)	Novel	
1924	Tokuda Shūsei 徳田秋聲	(1872-1943) Born in Ishikawa and lived in Tokyo since 1892; Naturalist novelist	*Fu'an no Nakani* (In the Uneasiness)	Novel	
1924	Shiga Naoya 志賀直哉	(1883-1971) Born in Miyagi; lived in Kyoto when the earthquake occurred; novelist and short story writer, "God of Novel"	*Shinsai Mimai* (Sympathy for Earthquake Victims)	Diary	
1924	Chikamatsu Shūkō 近松秋江	(1876-1944) Born in Okayama and lived in Tokyo since 1896; I-novelist	*Daishinsai Isshunen no Kaiko* (Retrospection on the First Anniversary of the Great Earthquake)	Experiential Writing	
1927.1	Tsubouchi Shōyō 坪内逍遥	(1859-1935) Born in Gifu; lived in Tokyo when the earthquake occurred; novelist, literary critic, translator, and playwright	*Daishinsai yori Etaru Kyōkun* (Lesson Learned from the Great Earthquake)	Experiential Writing	
1930	Kume Masao 久米正雄	(1891-1952) Born in Nagano and lived in Tokyo (since 1918) and Kanagawa (since 1925); novelist, playwright, and haiku poet	*Kamakura Shinsai Nikki* (Diary of Kamakura Earthquake)	Experiential Writing	
1930	Kume Masao		*Kiwamono* (Seasonal Goods)	Novel	

	久米正雄				
1995.1	Sase Minoru 佐瀬稔	(1932-1998) Born in Kanagawa; journalist and nonfiction writer; wrote on wide-ranging social topics	*Daijishin: Sei to Shi* (Great Earthquake: Life and Death)	Nonfiction	Great Hanshin Earthquake
1995.1	Murakami Haruki 村上春樹	(1949-) Born in Kyoto and raised in Hyōgo; was in New Jersey, US when the earthquake occurred; writer and translator	*Kami no Kodomotachi wa Mina Odoru* (All God's Children Can Dance)*	Novel	
1995.4	Art Aid Kōbe アート•エイド•神戸	An artist organization with an art project supporting victims of the 1995 earthquake disaster	*Shishū: Hanshin Awaji Daishinsai* (Poems: The Great Hanshin Earthquake)	Poetry	
1995.7	Ro Jin-yon 盧進容	(1952-)	*Akai Tsuki: Hanshin Awaji Daishinsai Tamashizume no Shi* (Red Moon: Requiems for Great Hanshin Earthquake)	Poetry	
1995.7	Great Hanshin Earthquake: Anthology of Experiential Writing, Editorial Committee 阪神•淡路大震災体験 集編集委員		*Sonotoki 1995.1.17: Hanshin Awaji Daishinsai Taikenshū* (That Moment 1995.1.17: Great Hanshin Earthquake Experiential Writing Collection)	Experiential Writing	

1996.1	Art Aid Kōbe アート•エイド•神戸	Same as above	*Shishū: Hanshin Awaji Daishinsai Dainishū* (Poems: The Great Hanshin Earthquake Volume 2)	Poetry	
2002.6	Oda Makoto 小田実	(1932-2007) Born in Osaka and lived in Tokyo since university; writer and political activist; paid attention to serious social issues such as WWII, Korean War, and the Kōbe Earthquake	*Fukai Oto* (Deep Sound)	Novel	
2005.7	Yokoyama Hideo 横山秀夫	(1957-) Born and raised in Tokyo; mystery novelist and journalist	*Shindo 0* (Seismic Degree 0)	Novel	
2011	Wagō Ryōichi 和合亮一	(1968-) Born and raised in Fukushima; was in Fukushima when the earthquake occurred; poet, radio personnel, and high school teacher; created the NPO "Project Fukushima"	*Shi no Tsubute* (Pebbles of Poetry)	Poetry	Great East Japan Earthquake
2011	Takahashi Genichirō 高橋源一郎	(1951-) Born in Hiroshima and lived in Tokyo since 1959; novelist and essayist	*Koisuru Genpatsu* (A Nuclear Reactor in Love)	Novel	
2011	Hasegawa Kai 長谷川櫂	(1954-) Born in Kumamoto and lived in Tokyo since university; haiku poet	*Shinsai Kushū/Shinsai Kashū* (Collection of Earthquake Poems)	Poetry	

2011	Kawakami Hiromi 川上弘美	(1958-) Born and raised in Tokyo; novelist and haiku poet	*Kamisama 2011* (God Bless You, 2011)*	Novel	
2012	Tawada Yōko 多和田葉子	(1960-) Born and raised in Tokyo; lived in Germany since 2006; novelist and poet	*Fushi no Shima* (The Island of the Eternal Life)*	Novel	
2012	Tawara Machi 俵万智	(1962-) Born in Osaka and raised in Fukui; lived in Miyagi since 2006 yet moved to Okinawa in 2011 due to the earthquake; tanka poet	*3.11 Tankashū Arekara* (3.11 Tanka Collection: Since Then)	Poetry	
2013	Itō Seikō いとうせいこう	(1961-) Born and raised in Tokyo; novelist, lyricist, and actor; *Sōzō Rajio* was adapted into radio drama	*Sōzō Rajio* (Radio Imagination)*	Novel	
2013	Tsushima Yūko 津島祐子	(1947-2016) Born and raised in Tokyo; novelist	*Yamaneko Dōmu* (Wildcat Dome)	Novel	
2014.1	Okada Toshiki 岡田利規	(1973-) Born and raised in Kanagawa; lived in Tokyo since 1992; playwright, theater director, and novelist	*Jimen to Yuka* (Ground and Floor)	Drama	
2014	Tawada Yōko 多和田葉子	Same as above	*Kentōshi* (The Last Children of Tokyo)*	Novel	
2016	Furukawa Hideo 古川日出男	(1966-) Born and raised in Fukushima; novelist and playwright; held requiem recitation live shows after the earthquake	*Aruiwa Shura no Jūokunen* (Or One Billion Years of Asura)	Novel	

2017	Itō Seikō いとうせいこう	Same as above	*Donburako* (Donburako)	Novel	
2017	Numata Shinsuke 沼田真佑	(1978-) Born in Hokkaidō and raised in Fukuoka; novelist; *Eiri* won several literary prizes and was adapted into movie	*Eiri* (Behind the Shadow)	Novel	

*The literary work has English version available. All other English titles are my translation.

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