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Asia Policy, Number 17, January 2014, pp. 155-159 (Review)

Published by National Bureau of Asian Research

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/asp.2014.0001>

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suggesting that Japan adopt a more centralized framework in order to bring about greater change? Or is he thinking of the possibility that a strong leadership would emerge in such a crisis?

I would approach the question of politics and change in a different way. Given the limited political tools in Japan, piecemeal change is what we can expect following a crisis, when available resources must be used to support refugees and compensate severe accident-related losses. However, when serious incidents are ongoing, they usually stimulate more change over time, while maintaining good practices like the public trust shown in the immediate days after the crisis. It may be worth mentioning that the earthquake happened under the newly in power and politically unskilled Democratic Party of Japan. My hope is that the bottom-up, piecemeal accumulation of small changes will lead Japan to greater change. To this end, a large number of Japanese social scientists are engaged in research on 3.11 through a grant from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science. I am one of them. This book will be among the most important resources guiding our efforts.

3.11 and the U.S.-Japan Alliance: Building on Success for the Next Generation

Suzanne Basalla

Richard Samuels' provocative and engaging book, *3.11: Disaster and Change in Japan*, offers a timely and broad framework for examining Japan's response to the complex disaster caused by the Great East Japan Earthquake. Samuels asks whether Japan is on a path for restoration or for renaissance, and while he judges that it is "too early to know," he argues for the value of understanding why either outcome may be in the offing and shows why elements of both outcomes are likely to persist. A reader seeking a neat, unambiguous argument will be disappointed by the number of questions Samuels raises that remain unanswered. But for those looking for a current account of Japan's

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response to the 3.11 disasters, this book is an excellent English-language resource. The assembled statistics and case studies will undoubtedly serve future researchers well as they tackle the issues discussed here. Samuels concludes that many observers (and he humbly includes himself in this category) overestimate the transformational potential of crises and suggests that we should not be surprised that Japan has basically chosen to “stay the course” rather than adopt what he calls a “put it in gear” narrative (p. 26).

That Samuels generally concludes that Japan’s observed change thus far is neither a game changer nor structural does not in any way detract from the value of his analysis. He offers a useful framework for exploring dueling narratives of change, focusing on leadership, risk, and community in the context of security, energy, and local governance. Samuels brings a rich set of data to this analysis. He has assembled an impressive review of statistics, reports, and interviews, drawing on bilingual sources, social media, a broad network, and years of experience. Even for those of us who lived through some of the events Samuels describes, the comprehensive approach offers new insights and perspective. The book also includes a fascinating chapter on historical examples of how Japan dealt with previous large-scale disasters; the parallels it draws to the country’s recovery from the Kanto earthquake of 1923 (and the U.S. military’s “disaster diplomacy” at the time) prove quite revealing. Samuels’s explanation of the dynamics between central and local leaders provides some of the freshest and most provocative insights of the book. Having had the privilege of visiting some local communities in Tohoku after the disaster, I, too, was struck by the extent to which the quality of local government can mean the difference between life and death for its citizens. Describing the extensive horizontal cooperation among local governments (the scale and impact of which I had no idea about before reading this book), Samuels says of the solidarity among local governments, “there was something special in this development” (p. 170), which he later calls the “biggest untold story” after 3.11 (p. 196). His account reminds us why it is critically important that we include local leaders, from mayors to governors, in our understanding of Japan’s leadership and factor them in when we think about Japan’s future.

On 3.11, I was serving as senior advisor to U.S. ambassador John Roos and had a front-row seat to much of the U.S.-Japan coordination that the book details. Samuels captures well the breadth and scale of U.S. official support to Japan, much of it through the U.S. military’s Operation Tomodachi. The military’s immediate response, eventually involving the nearly 20,000 troops, 140 aircraft, and 20 ships cited by Samuels, was massive and meaningful. Additional support poured in from across the government, reflected in the

145 officials who joined the U.S. embassy to help coordinate efforts. This was coupled with an outpouring of civil-society and private support from Americans that highlighted just how special and unique the U.S.-Japan relationship really is.

In describing the initial challenges in establishing coordination between the U.S. and Japanese governments, Samuels references some of the more sensational reports of tensions as a frustrated U.S. government pushed Japan's Kan administration for better access and more timely information. Many accounts of friction during those early days mistakenly suggest that at issue was a U.S. "demand" that American experts be placed in the *kantei* (prime minister's office) and a Japanese refusal on grounds of protecting sovereignty. This misses the point, which was the countries' different approaches to utilizing experts when decisions needed to be made in real time based on partial information while an incident unfolded. In the U.S. approach, experts worked with the decision-makers (they certainly worked closely with Ambassador Roos) on-site and helped reach, communicate, and modify decisions as the situation evolved.¹ The United States sought to place experts not only where they could be the most helpful and receive the most relevant information to assist in U.S. decision-making, but most importantly where they could share their expertise with Japanese officials. This approach did not immediately mesh with Japan's, as Samuels conveys. Once the communication channels were streamlined with the Hosono Group, however, coordination went much more smoothly (p. 23).² None of this should be surprising: both governments had to integrate information, assessments, and capabilities from within their governments, private sectors, and civil societies—many of which do not normally work together.³ The broader point is that the two sides did quickly establish excellent coordination mechanisms and were therefore able to work together to support Japan's response efforts.

While I found that the book's account of U.S.-Japan cooperation generally tracked with my recollection of key decisions and activities, my own take on the implications of the U.S. response in terms of what Samuels calls "disaster diplomacy" is different. He lists a number of cynical motivations variously

¹ For an example of lessons that some of these experts learned from 3.11, see C. Norman Coleman et al., "Recovery and Resilience after a Nuclear Power Plant Disaster: A Medical Decision Model for Managing an Effective, Timely, and Balanced Response," *Disaster Medicine and Public Health Preparedness* 7, no. 2 (2013): 136–45.

² As Samuels describes, Japanese politician Goshi Hosono led a dialogue framework as the U.S.-Japan key institutional problem solver and solution coordinator and the "highest decision-making body for Japan-U.S. cooperation" (p. 23).

³ My colleagues and I shared some of the lessons from this coordination. See Suzanne Basalla, William Berger, and C. Spencer Abbot, "Managing Foreign Assistance in a CBRN Emergency: The U.S. Government Response to Japan's 'Triple Disaster,'" *Joint Force Quarterly* 68 (2013): 25–31.

ascribed to the U.S. response (p. 103), none of which track with my experience. Indeed, I was in awe watching the top-down, all-encompassing, unequivocal, and immediate response from the U.S. government, and I am confident that the United States responded in this way simply because it was the right thing to do for our friends. While Samuels does not necessarily endorse the more cynical motives, he does examine the “Tohoku effect” on the alliance and generally finds the results disappointing. However, perhaps Samuels examined a too limited and transactional set of measures. Even in the specific field of security cooperation, developments such as the robust 2+2 security statement in October 2013 suggest more progress than he found when the book went to print. More importantly, I think the goodwill generated through U.S.-Japan cooperation after 3.11 has carried forward to an overall strengthening of the bilateral relationship, which has seen the redoubling of commitment by both governments, as well as the private sector, to invest in strategic relations. In this sense, I think the U.S.-Japan alliance has benefited from a Tohoku effect. Indeed, unlike many of the examples of failed disaster diplomacy cited in the book’s comparative review, the United States has made a conscious effort to stay engaged in Japan’s long-term recovery after 3.11 and to ensure that there is an infrastructure to nurture the foundational relations between the two countries that proved so necessary in the crisis response. One successful example is the TOMODACHI Initiative, which is a public-private partnership led by the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo and the U.S.-Japan Council, supported by the government of Japan, and funded by the contributions of many Japanese and U.S. companies.

Overall, Samuels does an excellent job examining the lessons Japan learned after 3.11 and how it has acted (or not acted) on those lessons. I would value his similar assessment of what the United States has learned and how it has acted on these lessons. Undoubtedly, there are a number of important implications for U.S. disaster response and consequence management. One of the key lessons, I hope, has been the importance of ensuring that the foundational relations between the two countries that made U.S.-Japan cooperation after 3.11 such a success are maintained for the next generation of Americans and Japanese. In the almost three years since 3.11, I have been gratified to see a deep and sustained commitment to investing in that next generation from both U.S. and Japanese leaders in government, civil society, and businesses.

Samuels concludes his book by comparing a more pessimistic and a more optimistic interpretation of Japan’s lack of transformational change thus far. He seems to sympathize more with the optimism evoked by a close observer of Japan’s response, Kiyoshi Kurokawa, who describes a robust Japanese democracy filled with the emergence of well-informed, active citizens. I share

that optimism, but would even go further to suggest that since 3.11, Japan's leaders, civil society, and American friends have been planting the seeds of change in the next generation, and that Japan will certainly see the fruits of these investments both domestically and in the context of U.S.-Japan relations. Whether or not that is what Samuels considers a "renaissance" remains to be seen, but there is no doubt in my mind that the novelty of the 3.11 crisis and the adaptive leadership it engendered will, over time, shape a generation.

3.11 and Japan's Shift to Smart, Distributed Power

Andrew DeWit

Richard Samuels's book *3.11: Disaster and Change in Japan* is, to date, the most authoritative English-language study of the impact of history's costliest natural and man-made disasters on Japan's political economy of energy and the implications for intergovernmental relations. The book uses a narrative approach, deftly outlining the institutional terrain prior to 3.11 and presenting the key actors and core arguments for a return to business as usual versus alternatives advanced by reformists. Samuels maps Japan's fights over energy and regional governance, providing a valuable resource for examining those linked conflicts in the larger context of accelerating global paradigm shifts in energy and the character of the city regions that consume the vast majority of it. In Japan, as is true elsewhere, energy is the fundamental economic sector. For decades predictable and taken for granted, energy is suddenly dynamic, with disruptive change being spurred in particular by communities' search for resilience and sustainability in the face of multiple crises.

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NOTE ~ This review essay draws on Andrew DeWit, "Just Gas? Smart Power and Koizumi's Anti-Nuclear Challenge," *Asia-Pacific Journal*, December 16, 2013 ~ <http://japanfocus.org/-Andrew-DeWit/4049>.