

# The Representation of The Touhoku Disaster in the Movie Shin Gojira

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## Abstract

*In the year 2011, Japan was faced by a major disaster that affected the Touhoku region. The disaster was the largest natural disaster Japan has ever experienced. In 2016, TOHO Studios released a movie titled Shin Gojira. This movie draws direct inspiration from the 2011 great disaster. This research aims to analyze how the movie Shin Gojira represents the Touhoku disaster in terms of the natural disaster, the Japanese government, and Japanese society. The research was conducted using qualitative methods and the content analysis method. The author also used Roland Barthes' semiotic theory to analyze the connotation and denotation meanings of the primary data. Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that in representing natural disasters, the movie Shin Gojira uses Gojira itself to represent the earthquake, tsunami, and Fukushima nuclear reactor disaster. In representing the Japanese government, Shin Gojira criticizes the Japanese government for being unprepared for a disaster, and the complicated government bureaucratic process. In representing Japanese society, Shin Gojira criticizes Japanese citizens who do not obey the rules and exploit a disaster. However, Shin Gojira also represents the trauma of the victims of the 2011 disaster.*

**Keywords:** *Disaster; Gojira; Government; Kaiju Movie; society*

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## 1. Introduction

In the aftermath of a major disaster, there are various works created that depict the disaster. These works contain the authors' views on the disaster that has just occurred. After the earthquake that hit Japan in 2011, there were various works depicting the disaster such as *Nihon Chinbotsu: Kibo no Hito* (2021), *Fukushima 50* (2021), and *Suzume no Tojimari* (2023). *Nihon no Chinbotsu: Kibo no Hito* depicts a scenario where the Kanto Region sinks into the sea, forcing Japanese Citizens to seek asylum outside of Japan. *Fukushima 50* is a series that shows

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the response to the Fukushima nuclear reactor disaster caused by the Tsunami that hit Japan in 2011. *Suzume no Tojimari* tells the story of a character who lost his parents in the 2011 Japan earthquake and must go on an adventure to stop another earthquake. Of the various media and works depicting the 2011 disaster, one of the famous media is the film *Shin Gojira*.

*Shin Gojira* was directed by Hideaki Anno and Shinji Higuchi, and it is the first Godzilla film in the Reiwa era. According to Bae K (2022) Unlike in previous films, where Godzilla symbolised the devastating effects of nuclear bombs, in this film Godzilla is a representation of the natural disaster that struck Tohoku region in 2011. The film focuses on the reaction of the government and politicians in facing the crisis of Godzilla's attack, from press conferences, government meetings and the movement of national defence forces to face the threat. This research was conducted to analyse the depiction of the Tohoku disaster that struck Japan in 2011 in *Shin Gojira*.

In compiling this research, the author found several studies related to disaster representation in a film. One of the studies that examines disaster representation in a film is a study entitled "Fiction from Unstable Ground: The Imagination of Disaster in the Aftermath of the Kantou Earthquake". Written by Alex Bates (2023). In this study, Alex Bates discusses the various fictional media that emerged after the Kantou earthquake in 1923. The research emphasises two different approaches to depicting the disaster: trauma and differential vulnerability. In a work entitled "*Shinsai Ibun*" by Togawa Sadao, it tells the story of the author's trauma of losing a loved one in the 1923 earthquake. In contrast, Fujimori Seikichi's "*Nogaretaru Hitobito*" focuses on the different vulnerabilities faced by each class of society. The story depicts the conflict between classes and how the impact of the earthquake was different for higher and lower classes of society. This research helped the author in analysing the depiction of disasters in digital media.

For the next study, the author uses a study entitled "*Managing The Days: Personal Responsibility and the Fukushima Nuclear Disaster*" written by Mick Broderick and Robert Jacobs (2023). In this study, the researchers criticised the depiction of the Fukushima nuclear reactor disaster that occurred due to an earthquake in 2011 in the series *The Days*. The series is considered to show a depiction of the reaction and handling of the disaster that is very unrealistic and even untrue. In the series, the Japanese bureaucracy is portrayed as working optimally and heroically. The series also said that the Fukushima reactors lost control and eventually stabilised. In reality, the reactors experienced a meltdown, not a loss of control.

Also in the other studies on disaster movies, Lili Febriyani (2024) analyzes the impact of cultural context on Japan's intercultural negotiations through the drama *Nihon Chinbotsu: Kibo no Hito*. Japan faces a major disaster causing the Kanto region to sink, forcing Japanese citizens to emigrate to other countries. Negotiations are conducted with the United States, China, and Australia, using intercultural communication theory to understand the cultural values influencing the negotiation process. The main findings indicate that differences in high-context and low-context cultures, collectivism vs. individualism, and the concept of reciprocity (on'gaeshi) significantly affect negotiation success. Japan and China share similar values, while the United States and Australia have different values from Japan. While this paper discusses the cultural context of the communication of Japan with other countries, *Shin Gojira* depicts the internal problem within the Japanese Government itself.

In addition to natural disasters, the film *Shin Gojira* also deals heavily with nuclear metaphors. In discussing nuclear metaphors in the film, the author uses references in a study entitled "*Atomic Metaphors, Victims, and the Contestations of Nuclear Discourse*" written by Rachel Dinitto (2023). The research conducted by Rachel Dinitto contains an analysis of the media that emerged after nuclear disasters such as the Hiroshima bombing and the Fukushima reactor disaster. In the results of her research, many of the media depicting nuclear metaphors faced controversy regarding the perspective of victims in dealing with these disasters. Many argued that stories about nuclear disasters should come from direct victims of the disaster itself. After the disaster, Japanese society was classified into *Toujisha* (direct victims), and *Hitoujisha* (non-victims). Japanese society argues that the *toujisha* are the ones who have the right to give stories about the disaster.

With *Shin Gojira*'s connection to the 2011 disaster, the film can help people understand and remember the impact of the disaster. In discussing how media can help to see, understand, and remember a disaster, the author uses a study entitled "*Imaging Disaster: Tokyo and the Visual Culture of Japan's Great Earthquake of 1923*" written by Gennifer Weisenfeld (2023). In this study, Gennifer Weisenfeld explains how various depictions of the 1923 earthquake through various media helped to print the 1923 Kanto earthquake in history. In those days, media was not as sophisticated as it is today, so spreading news and recording phenomena was not as easy as it is today. To understand the scale of the 1923 earthquake, researchers collected hundreds of postcards, newspapers, and photographs. This research can help writers analyse how media portrayals of disasters can help to understand the disaster.

While previous studies have focused primarily on the portrayal of disasters in the media and the trauma experienced by victims, they have largely overlooked a critical dimension, the depiction of governmental and societal responses to such crises. In the context of increasing global concern over disaster preparedness and crisis management, particularly following 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake, this omission is significant. By examining the film *Shin-Gojira*, which allegorically addresses bureaucratic inefficiency and collective action in the face of catastrophe, this study aims to fill that gap. The film offers a compelling lens through which to explore how Japan's government and society are represented in responding to unprecedented threats, thus contributing to a deeper understanding of national identity, governance, and resilience in contemporary Japanese Media.

Looking at the representation of the major disaster that hit Japan in 2011 in the film *Shin Gojira*, the author will examine the depiction of the disaster. In addition to representing a natural disaster, *Shin Gojira* is also a political satire that criticises the Japanese government's response to a disaster. Based on the background that has been conveyed, the author wants to examine how the natural disaster that hit the Tohoku region in 2011 is represented in the scenes of *Shin Gojira*. The author will also examine the social criticism conveyed in the film.

## 2. Methods

The main method used in this research is qualitative research method. Qualitative research methods are used because this research is conducted by means of media analysis. According to Sidiq and Choir (2019), qualitative research is an inquiry strategy that emphasises the search for meaning, understanding, concepts, characteristics, symptoms, symbols and

descriptions of a phenomenon. This research is natural and holistic. Presentation of data from qualitative research is presented narratively. By using qualitative research methods, the author examines the scenes in the film *Shin Gojira*. The author examines how *Shin Gojira* represents disasters, the government, and Japanese society through the scenes shown.

In this study, the primary data used is the film *Shin Gojira* that was released in 2016. The movie will be analysed using the content analysis method. According to Asfar (2019), content analysis is a research method that is an in-depth discussion of the content of written or printed information in mass media. Data collection is done by watching the film *Shin Gojira* as a whole. The author observes scenes that represent natural disasters, the Japanese government, and Japanese society in dealing with disasters. The author takes these scenes which are then analysed and linked to the theoretical basis. The data that has been collected will be analysed using three theoretical foundations. Roland Barthes' semiotic theory is used to examine the connotation and denotation meanings of some scenes in the film. The disaster work theory is used to relate *Shin Gojira*'s film to the 2011 Tohoku major disaster. The theory of film as social criticism was used to analyse the criticism conveyed by the film to the Japanese government and society. A total of 15 data sets were collected. The 15 data sets consist of 20 images and 11 tables. The results of the analysed data will answer the problem formulation of this research.

In Barthes' semiotic theory, myth is a second-order sign system in which a connotation becomes naturalized and functions ideologically. While connotation deals with implied meaning within the text, myth goes beyond the text to reproduce dominant societal beliefs as if they were "common sense." In *Shin Gojira*, the recurring image of paralyzed government officials consulting binders and forming endless committees, even in the face of disaster, at first connotes inefficiency and over-bureaucratization. However, on the level of myth, this representation naturalizes a deeper ideological critique: the belief that Japan's political system is inherently risk-averse, overly hierarchical, and ultimately powerless in the face of global or existential threats. This myth reflects and reproduces public disillusionment with postwar technocratic governance, particularly exposed during the 2011 Fukushima crisis. As Barthes suggests, these cinematic representations are not neutral; they encode values and power structures that appear invisible unless critically dismantled.

### 3. Result and Discussion

#### 3.1 The representation of Tohoku Disaster in *Shin Gojira*



Figure 1 *Gojira* wrecking the city (Source : *Shin-Gojira* (2016))

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As can be seen in the image above, the earthquake in *Shin Gojira* is depicted when the creature that was previously monitored by the government starts walking on land. The ground shaking that occurs during an earthquake is depicted when the creature stomps its feet on the ground, and the surrounding area is also shaken. The damage and cracking of the roads is also depicted when the roads are heavily damaged. The scene also depicts the collapse of buildings caused by the earthquake when the creature knocks down a tall building by crashing into it.

In depicting the casualties of the earthquake itself, *Shin Gojira* portrays the casualties through the perspective of one of the apartment residents. As can be seen in the Figure 2, the family of the apartment dweller was hit by the building because Gojira collapsed the building.

In depicting the earthquake, the film *Shin Gojira* uses the character Gojira as a representation of the earthquake itself. Gojira causes massive ground shaking and damages the streets he walks on. Similar to the casualties in 2011, the casualties in the film are depicted through civilians who were crushed by the collapsed buildings due to Gojira's attack.

As seen in the Figure 3, in the film *Shin Gojira*, the tsunami is depicted through the overflow of sea water caused by the monster forcing themselves ashore through the river that flows into the sea. The surrounding water level overflows and spills onto land. The seawater carries debris and collapsed buildings. It also submerged and washed away the surrounding buildings. Residents around the monster had to evacuate to areas away from the river and to higher ground.

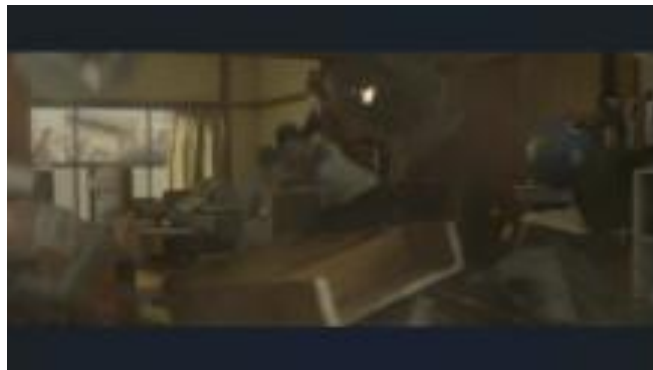


Figure 2 Victims of *Gojira* (Source: *Shin-Gojira* (2016))



Figure 3 *Gojira* causes tsunami (Source: *Shin-Gojira* (2016))



The depiction of the 2011 tsunami disaster in *Shin Gojira* reflects the impact of the disaster in the real world. From the sinking and drifting of neighbouring buildings to boats and other sea objects being washed ashore. This depiction is also reinforced by showing the overflow of sea water. Similar to the depiction of the earthquake, the tsunami is also represented by the character Gojira. The tsunami that occurred in the film was caused by Gojira forcing himself onto land, and as a result of Gojira's behaviour, the sea water overflowed and washed away the surrounding buildings. The scene also depicts the trauma of the Japanese people who lost their homes due to the tsunami.

As shown in the Figure 4, the depiction of the Fukushima nuclear reactor disaster is not depicted directly with the reactor explosion. Instead, the nuclear reactor explosion is depicted through the character of Gojira itself. Previously, Gojira only left traces of radiation and metabolised like a nuclear reactor. However, in the middle of the film, Gojira burns the city of Tokyo using his fire breath and contaminates the entire city with radiation. As can be seen in the audio transcript of the scene, the city was contaminated with high levels of radiation and neighbouring residents were advised to stay indoors for 49 hours. Similar to the incident in 2011, the area around the centre of the explosion was exposed to high radiation. As a result, neighbouring residents had to be evacuated and the surrounding area became uninhabitable.

Audio transcript:

アナウンサー：高い放射線量が予想されます。都民の皆さんは発生時 -49 時間は屋内待機・・・

Anaunsā: Takai hōshasenryō ga yosō saremasu. Tomin no minasan wa hassei-ji -49 jikan wa okunai taiki..

Translation:

Announcer: Radiation levels are expected to be high. All city residents must stay indoors for 49 hours.

(Source: *Shin Gojira*, 2016, 1:07:21-1:07:28)

It can be concluded that in describing the Touhoku disaster in 2011, Shin Gojira used Gojira's own character as the disaster. Gojira destroying buildings and shaking the ground depicts the earthquake, the overflow of sea water caused by Gojira depicts the tsunami, and the burning of Tokyo city and radiation contamination depicts the Fukushima reactor disaster. The portrayal of these events shows the trauma of Japanese citizens to the impact and destruction of the natural disasters i2011. The results of the study are also reinforced by the words of the director of the film Shin Gojira.



Figure 4 Tokyo city fire and radiation (Source: *Shin-Gojira* (2016))

### 3.2 The representation of Japanese Government in *Shin Gojira*

In addition to depicting the disaster that occurred in 2011, the film *Shin Gojira* also depicts the Japanese government responding to a disaster. The majority of the film's scenes are from the perspective of government meetings, and all the characters in the film are part of the government. In researching the representation of the Japanese government in *Shin Gojira*, a two-stage interpretation is needed. The first stage is denotation meaning, which is the original meaning in the scene. The second stage of meaning is connotation meaning, which is the implied or hidden meaning. The slowness of the Japanese government in dealing with a disaster is shown in the following Figure 5.

Audio transcript:

人1: それより第76条の武力攻撃と解釈して防衛出動の方が武器使用に対応しやすいんじゃないか。

人2: 武力攻撃と解釈するのは難しい。76条では武力攻撃を加えてくる主体を国または国に準ずるものと想定している。防衛出動は出せない。

Hito 1: Sore yori dai nanajūroku-jō no buryoku kōgeki to kaishaku shite bōei shutsudō no hō ga buki shiyō ni taiō shi yasui n janai ka.

Hito 2: Buryoku kōgeki to kaishaku suru no wa muzukashii. Nanajūroku-jō de wa buryoku kōgeki o kuwaete kuru shutai o kuni mata wa kuni ni junzuru mono to sōtei shite iru. Bōei shutsudō wa dasenai.

Audio translation:

Person 1: It would be easier to deal with the use of weapons if it is interpreted as an armed attack under Article 76.

Person 2: It is difficult to interpret this as an armed attack, as article 76 assumes that the entity carrying out the armed attack is a State or the equivalent of a State. Defense mobilization cannot be issued.

(Source: *Shin Gojira*, 2016, 18:50-19:04)

In the scene shown Figure 5, the members of the government are busy discussing what legislation to use to deal with Gojira. Denotatively, the scene shows a government that has to face a new disaster that has never been faced before. The denotative meaning is shown by the two government members who are confused on what basis they should send the JSDF to attack Gojira. But connotatively, the scene shows a government that is more concerned with the bureaucratic process than taking immediate action to prevent further damage. The scene has such connotative meaning because when the debate took place, Gojira was destroying the city.



Figure 5 Politician debate in *Shin Gojira* (Source: *Shin-Gojira* (2016))

For the issue of criticism regarding the Japanese government's unpreparedness in the face of a disaster, it is depicted in the following Figure 6.

Audio transcript:

矢口: いえ 2 時間強あっても 初期対応が至らず。残念です。

牧師: 想定外の事案だ。仕方がないだろ。

赤坂: 完璧ではないが 最善は尽くしている。うぬぼれるな、矢口。

Yaguchi: Ie, nijikan kyō atte mo shoki taiō ga itarazu. Zannen desu.

Bokushi: Sōteigai no jian da. Shikata nai daro.

Akasaka: Kanpeki de wa nai ga saizen wa tsukushite iru. Unuboreru na, Yaguchi.

Audio translation

Yaguchi: No, even after more than two hours, the initial response did not come back. Embarrassing.

Minister: This was an unexpected incident. There was no other choice.

Akasaka: It's not perfect. Everyone did what they could. Don't get smug Yaguchi.

The scene depicted above shows Yaguchi's dissatisfaction with the government's response to Gojira. Denotatively, the scene shows the devastating impact of Gojira during the 2 hours it landed in Tokyo, and Rando Yaguchi's disappointment in the government's unsatisfactory response, due to. The denotative meaning is shown through the government group visiting the area destroyed by Gojira, and from Yaguchi's words. But connotatively, the scene shows that the Japanese government thought they had done all they could, and the destruction was unavoidable. The scene above has this connotative meaning because Yaguchi himself expressed his disappointment with the government's slow action. However, Yaguchi's co-workers prefer to defend themselves and even look down on Yaguchi.



Figure 6. The government visiting the damaged area (Source: *Shin-Gojira* (2016))



For the scene that shows Japan's inferior position compared to the United States, it is shown in the following Figure 7.

Audio transcript:

首相: 米軍を中心とした、対巨大不明生物の多国籍軍結成を国連安保理が決議した。当事国として我が国も参加。その指揮下で動くことになる。まあ、これを総理に全権委任する特別立法を成立させてくれ。

赤坂: 東京での核兵器使用の容認もですか。

hushō: Beigun o chūshin to shita, tai kyodai fumei seibutsu no takokuseki-gun kessei o Kokuren Anpori ga ketsugi shita. Tōjikoku to shite wagakuni mo sanku. Sono shiki-ka de ugoku koto ni naru. Maa, kore o Sōri ni zenken inin suru tokubetsu rippō o seiritsu sasete kure.

Akasaka: Tōkyō de no kakuhēki shiyō no yōnin mo desu ka.

Audio translation

PM: The UN Security Council decided to establish a multinational force for giant unknown creatures, led by the US military. As one of the parties, our country will also participate. This force will operate under American command. Pass a special law giving the Prime Minister full power to do this.

Akasaka: To allow the use of nuclear weapons in Tokyo?

(Source: Shin Gojira, 2016, 1:19:26-1:20:11)

The scene shown in the Figure 7, shows the moment when other countries urged Japan to authorise the use of nuclear bombs in the city of Tokyo. The prime minister agrees to the option and orders the passing of a law that gives full power to the Prime Minister. Denotatively, the scene shows a precarious situation where the threat from Gojira requires the use of nuclear bombs in Tokyo. This is shown through the prime minister's words. Connotatively, the scene implies Japan's fragile sovereignty and subordinate position in global politics, particularly in relation to the United States. This is illustrated through the Prime Minister's passive reaction to the U.S. decision to deploy a thermonuclear bomb on Japanese soil for the third time.



Figure 7 Discussion about nuclear bomb usage in Tokyo (Source: *Shin-Gojira* (2016))

Rather than protest or resist, the Prime Minister simply resigns himself to the situation—symbolizing a government that lacks autonomy in critical matters of national security.

This portrayal reflects Japan's post-war ideological structure shaped by the U.S. – Japan Security Treaty (Anpo), which limits Japan's military independence and reinforces its dependence on U.S. power. The Prime Minister's inaction may also critique the seniority-based bureaucratic system and risk-averse leadership culture, which are often criticized for slow decision-making and deference to foreign authority (Allison, 2011; Kingston, 2013). The film, therefore, uses this scene to comment on Japan's lingering postwar identity crisis and its entanglement in global hierarchies.

It can be concluded that in representing the Japanese government, Shin Gojira criticises the government in taking action and the complicated bureaucratic process that slows down the response. The criticism is shown through scenes such as the debate on the use of laws, seniority on the part of the government, and Japan's submission to America. Shin Gojira represents how the Japanese government is more concerned with processes and international relations than taking action to protect their own country.

### 3.3 The representation of the Japanese society in Shin Gojira

In examining the representation of Japanese society facing disaster in Shin Gojira, a two-stage interpretation is needed. The first stage is denotation meaning, which is the original meaning in the scene. The second stage of meaning is connotation meaning, where the meaning is the implied meaning or hidden meaning. In representing Japanese society, Shin Gojira criticises and represents the trauma of Japanese society. Shin Gojira criticises Japanese society through the following two scenes:

Audio transcript:

アナウンサー: 避難勧告が出ています。直ちにここから退避してください。

警官: 警察が誘導します 皆さん急いで乗車して、木更津方面へ避難してください。

Anaunsā: Hinan kankoku ga deteimasu. Tdachini koko kara taihi shite kudasai.

Keikan: Keisatsu ga yūdō shimasu. Minasan isoide jōsha shite, Kisarazu hōmen e hinan shite kudasai.



Figure 8 Citizens taking picture (Source: *Shin-Gojira* (2016))

Translation:

Announcer: An evacuation order has been issued. Please evacuate to a safe place immediately.

Police: The police will guide you. Everyone please hurry to get on the bus and evacuate towards Kisarazu.

(Source: *Shin-Gojira* 03-23)

The scene shown in the Figure 8 shows Japanese people taking pictures of the mid-ocean eruption when the evacuation order was issued. Denotatively, the scene shows the evacuation order issued for the area around the disaster. However, connotatively, the scene shows Japanese citizens ignoring official evacuation announcements and instead prioritizing capturing photos of the disaster. This visual suggests a critique of how modern society, even in the face of danger, can be distracted by the desire to document rather than respond appropriately.

This behavior may reflect a broader societal issue in post-disaster Japan, where individuals struggle to balance personal agency with collective responsibility. The act of taking photos during an emergency may point to a growing reliance on social media culture, even in traditionally collectivist societies like Japan. It also suggests a shift in public attitude after events such as the 2011 Tōhoku earthquake, where some were criticized for either underestimating the threat or relying too heavily on personal judgment over official directives (Slater, Nishimura & Kindstrand, 2012). The scene shown in the Figure 9 shows a live broadcast of the evacuation of the victims of an undersea tunnel accident. In the scene, a man shows the scene of the accident and broadcasts it live on social media with excitement. Denotatively, the scene shows a man holding his phone and live streaming the disaster scene while victims are being evacuated. He appears cheerful and animated during the broadcast.

Audio transcript:

男性: すげえな、これスクープ映像ってやつじゃね?

Dansei: Sugē na, kore sukūpu eizō tte yatsu ja ne?

Translation:

Men: Unbelievable, this is a scoop right?

(Source: *Shin Gojira* 03:38-03:40)



Figure 9. Evacuation livestream (Source: *Shin-Gojira* (2016))

Connotatively, this sign suggests a critical view of modern media culture, where individuals exploit real-life tragedies for personal attention or digital clout. His cheerful tone contrasts with the surrounding chaos, highlighting a detachment from human suffering. This reflects a broader commentary on society's desensitization to disaster when mediated through social platforms. The depiction of the trauma of the Japanese people is shown in the following two scenes:

Audio transcript

警官: ゴジラに対し米軍の攻撃が開始されます。

消防隊員: ここは危険です！ 地下に！ 地下鉄や地下街に逃げてください！

男性: 押すなよ！

Keikan: Gojira ni taishi Beigun no kōgeki ga kaishi saremasu.

Shōbōtaiin: Koko wa kiken desu! Chika ni! Chikatetsu ya chikagai ni nigete kudasai!

Dansei: Osu na yo!

translation

Police: The American military will launch an attack on Gojira.

Firefighter: It's dangerous here! Down! Please escape to the subway or the basement!

Man: Don't push!

(Source: *Shin Gojira*, 2016, 1:01:03-1:01:20)

The scene shown in the Figure 10, shows the panic situation that occurs in the process of emergency evacuation. In the scene, the US military is about to launch an attack on Gojira, and the surrounding area is threatened by the bombing. The Japanese government issued an emergency evacuation order to local residents. Denotatively, the scene shows the emergency evacuation of residents to underground shelters. This is shown through an appeal from the fire brigade to flee to an underground location. Connotatively, the scene shows the panicked condition of the Japanese people in the evacuation process, this is shown from the depiction of Japanese people jostling and pushing each other so that they get a place in the evacuation site.



Figure 10. Underground evacuation (Source: *Shin-Gojira* (2016))

The scene shown in the Figure 11, shows the moment when all citizens living in Tokyo have to leave Tokyo because Tokyo will be nuclear bombed. Denotationally, the scene shows the process of evacuating citizens before the disaster comes. This is shown through the evacuation process assisted by the JSDF to bring the citizens to a safer place. Connotatively, the scene shows residents who have to give up their homes in a disaster. This is because the evacuation process was carried out due to the nuclear bomb plan that would destroy the city of Tokyo.

It can be concluded that in depicting Japanese society in the face of a disaster, In Shin Gojira, the film offers a layered critique of contemporary Japanese society. It portrays the trauma of disaster victims while also highlighting the problematic behavior of some citizens. For instance, the film depicts individuals who ignore evacuation orders or use the unfolding disaster as an opportunity to gain attention on social media—suggesting a loss of collective responsibility. This can be seen in scenes where civilians film the destruction rather than seek shelter. These depictions reflect director Hideaki Anno's criticism of passive or self-serving responses in times of crisis, echoing real-world issues observed during the 2011 Tōhoku disaster (Orbaugh, 2018). By weaving such commentary into its narrative, the film not only represents trauma but also questions the ethical behavior of the public in disaster scenarios. However, the film also shows the trauma of the victims of a disaster from the depiction of the chaotic evacuation process and the victims who lost their homes.

#### 4. Conclusions

In representing the great Touhoku disaster of 2011, Shin Gojira uses the character of Gojira himself to depict the disaster. In representing the Japanese government in dealing with disasters, Shin Gojira criticises the unpreparedness of the Japanese government in dealing with a disaster. In representing the Japanese people, Shin Gojira criticises and also represents the trauma of the Japanese people who are victims of the disaster.

Shin Gojira takes the perspective of politicians and government as the main perspective. Many political cultures and government work systems are shown in the film. For further research that uses Shin Gojira as the main data, the author suggests examining more deeply the various political aspects shown in Shin Gojira.



Figure 11. Tokyo evacuation (Source: Shin-Gojira (2016))



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